Le Cateau's A-Z of Computing



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A

Adverts
Short messages, pictures or videos that try to persuade people to buy something or find out about a product or service.

Algorithm
A set of clear, step-by-step instructions used to complete a task or solve a problem.

Align
To arrange text, pictures or objects in a particular position, such as left, right or centre.

Animation
A series of pictures or images shown quickly one after another to make something look like it is moving.

Area
A space or part of a screen, webpage or program where something is displayed or happens.

Attribute
A feature or piece of information that describes something, such as its colour, size or shape.

Audio
Sound that can be heard through a computer or digital device, such as music, speech or sound effects.

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B

Backdrop
The background picture or scene behind characters or objects in a computer program, such as Scratch.

Backspace
A key on the keyboard that deletes the letter, number or space just before the cursor.

Barcode
A pattern of black lines and spaces that a scanner reads to find information about a product.

Bee-Bot
A small, programmable robot that children can give instructions to make it move forwards, backwards, left and right.

Block
A single instruction in a block-based programming language, such as Scratch.

Blocks
Coloured shapes that fit together to create instructions and programs in block-based coding.

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B

Bold
A way of making text look thicker and darker so that it stands out.

Branching
When a program chooses what to do next depending on whether something is true or false, or whether a condition is met.

Brush size
How thick or thin a line or mark is when drawing using a computer program.

Brush style
The type or shape of a digital brush used to draw or paint on a computer.

Bug
An error or mistake in a computer program that stops it from working as expected.

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C

Cables
Wires used to connect computers and other devices together or to provide power.

Camera
A device used to take photographs or record videos.

Capital letters
Large letters, such as A, B and C, used at the beginning of sentences and for names.

Change
To make something different, such as changing the colour, size or position of an object on a screen.

Clear
To remove information, pictures or text from a screen or document.

Code
Instructions written or put together to tell a computer what to do.

Colour
The appearance of something, such as red, blue, green or yellow, which can be changed using a computer program.

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C

Commands
Instructions that tell a computer, robot or program what to do.

Computer
An electronic device that takes in information, follows instructions and helps us complete different tasks.

Conclusion
A final statement that explains what you have found out or learned after completing a task.

Connection
A link between two or more devices, allowing them to share information or communicate.

Content
The information, words, pictures, videos or sounds that are included in a digital document, website or program.

Copy
To make a duplicate of text, pictures or files without removing the original.

Create
To make something new using a computer, such as a picture, document, animation or program.

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D

Data-set
A collection of information or facts that can be organised and used on a computer.

Debugging
Finding and fixing mistakes (bugs) in a computer program to make it work correctly.

Decomposition
Breaking a big problem or task into smaller, easier parts so that it is easier to solve.

Delete
To remove text, pictures, files or other information from a computer.

Design
To plan and decide how something will look or work before creating it.

Device
A piece of electronic equipment, such as a computer, tablet, keyboard or mouse.

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D

Digital
Information or technology that uses computers or electronic devices.

Directions
Instructions that tell a person, computer or robot which way to move or what to do.

Double-click
To press the mouse button twice quickly in the same place, usually to open a file or program.

Download
To copy information, pictures or files from the internet or another device onto your own device.

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E

Edit
To make changes or improvements to text, pictures, videos or other digital work.

Effect
A change or special feature added to something, such as an animation, sound or visual change in a computer program.

Enter
To press the Enter key on a keyboard to start a new line, confirm an action or send information.

Erase
To rub out or remove something, such as a drawing, text or information on a computer.

Export
To save or send your digital work in a different file type so that it can be used or shared somewhere else.

External link
A clickable link that takes you from one website to a different website.

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F

Fewest
The smallest number or amount of something. In computing, this could mean finding the item or group with the least amount.

Files
Items of information saved on a computer, such as documents, pictures, videos or music.

Fill / Fill tool
A tool used in a drawing program to colour in a shape or area with a chosen colour.

Filter
A tool used to sort or show only information that matches certain rules or choices.

Flash
A quick burst of light or a sudden bright effect on a screen.

Flip book
A collection of pictures on separate pages that appear to move when the pages are turned quickly. It is similar to a simple animation.

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F

Focus
To pay attention to something. In computing, it can also mean making an object or image clear on a screen or camera.

Font
The style and appearance of letters and numbers on a computer, such as Arial or Comic Sans.

Format
The way information is arranged or presented, such as the layout, style or file type of a document.

Forwards
Moving or going in the direction ahead. In programming, it can be an instruction telling a robot or character to move ahead.

Frame
One single picture in an animation or video. Lots of frames played quickly together can make something look like it is moving.

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G

Glide
To move smoothly from one place to another. In programming, it can be an instruction that makes a character move smoothly across the screen.

Go
An instruction or command that tells a computer program, character or robot to start or begin moving.

Group
To put objects, pictures or information together so that they can be moved, changed or organised as one

H

Headphones
A device worn over or inside the ears that allows you to listen to sounds from a computer, tablet or other device.

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I

Image
A picture or photograph that can be viewed, created or edited using a computer or digital device.

Image
A visual representation of something, such as a photograph, drawing, icon or graphic on a screen.

Import
To bring a file, picture, sound or other information into a computer program so that you can use it.

Information Technology (IT)
The use of computers and other digital devices to store, find, create and share information.

Input
Information or instructions that are put into a computer using devices such as a keyboard, mouse, microphone or touchscreen.

Instructions
A set of steps that tells a computer, robot or program what to do.

Internet
A worldwide network that connects computers and devices so that people can share information and communicate.

Italic
A style of writing where letters slant slightly to the right to make words stand out.



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J

K

Keyboard
An input device used to type letters, numbers and symbols into a computer.

Keys
The buttons on a keyboard that are pressed to type letters, numbers, symbols or give instructions to a computer.

L

Label
A word or short piece of text used to name or describe something, such as a button, picture or part of a program.

Landscape
A page or screen layout where the width is greater than the height.

Layer
One level of a picture or design that can be placed on top of or underneath other layers.

Left
The direction opposite to right. In computing, it can also be used as an instruction to move an object or robot to the left.

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Letters
The characters of the alphabet, such as A, B, C and D, which can be typed using a keyboard.

Line tool
A drawing tool used to create straight lines on a computer screen.

Links
Clickable words, pictures or buttons that take you to another webpage, file or part of a website.

Loops
Instructions in a computer program that repeat a set of actions a certain number of times or until something happens.

M

Micro:bit
A small programmable computer that children can code to display messages, show patterns, play sounds and respond to movement.

Microphone
An input device that records or captures sound, such as your voice, so it can be used by a computer or other device.

Motion
Movement. In computing, motion can describe how a character, object or robot moves.

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Mouse
An input device used to move a pointer around a computer screen and select items by clicking buttons.

MP3
A type of digital audio file used to store music, speech and other sounds.

N

Network
A group of computers or devices connected together so they can share information and resources.

Non-digital
Something that does not use computers or electronic technology, such as a paper book, a printed photograph or a handwritten note.

O

Object
Something in a computer program that can be moved, changed or given instructions. For example, a character or shape in Scratch.

Organise
To arrange information, files or objects in a clear order so they are easier to find and use.

Output
Information or results that a computer produces, such as words on a screen, sounds from speakers or pictures printed on paper.

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P

Paint program
A computer program that allows you to create pictures, draw and colour using digital tools.

Paste
To put copied or cut text, pictures or other information into a new place.

Pattern
A design or sequence that repeats in a particular order.

Photograph
A picture taken using a camera or other digital device.

Pictogram
A way of showing information using pictures or symbols, where each picture represents an amount or number.

Pictures
Images or drawings that can be created, viewed, edited or saved on a computer.

Pitch
How high or low a sound is. A high-pitched sound is squeaky, while a low-pitched sound is deep.

Plan
To think about and organise the steps needed before starting a task or creating something.

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P

Playback
Playing a recorded sound or video so that you can listen to or watch it again.

Podcast
A digital audio programme that people can listen to on a computer, tablet or other device.

Portrait
A page or screen layout where the height is greater than the width. It can also mean a photograph or picture of a person.

Process
The steps a computer follows to work with information and produce a result.

Program
A set of instructions that tells a computer what to do.

Programming
Writing or putting together instructions to make a computer, robot or other device do something.

Pulse
A short burst of sound or electrical signal. In computing, it can describe a beat or signal used in digital music or electronic devices.

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Q

R

Record

To capture and save sound, video or information using a computer or digital device.

Reset

To return a device, program or game to its starting settings or original state.

Right

The direction opposite to left. In computing, it can also be used as an instruction to move an object or robot to the right.

Route

A path or set of directions showing how to get from one place to another.

Router

A device that connects computers, tablets and other devices to the internet or to each other through a network.

Run

To start or use a computer program so that it carries out its instructions.

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S

Saturation
How strong or bright a colour looks. High saturation makes colours look vivid, while low saturation makes them look dull or grey.

Save
To store your work on a computer or device so that you can open it and use it again later.

Scanner / Scan
A scanner is a device that copies pictures or documents into a computer. To scan means to use a scanner to make a digital copy.

Scratch/ScratchJr
A free programming language that uses colourful blocks to help children create games, animations and interactive stories.

Screen
The part of a computer, tablet or other device where pictures, words and information are displayed.

Search
To look for information, files, pictures or websites using a computer or search engine.

Select
To choose an item, piece of text or picture on a computer by clicking, tapping or highlighting it.

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S

Sepia
A picture effect that gives an image a brownish colour, making it look old-fashioned.

Sequence
A set of instructions or events that happen in a particular order, one after another.

Server
A computer that stores information and shares it with other computers or devices on a network.

Sockets
Places where cables or plugs can be connected to a computer or other electrical device.

Speaker
An output device that plays sounds from a computer, such as music, speech or sound effects.

Sprite
A character or object in a computer program, such as Scratch, that can be given instructions to move or perform actions.

Switch
A device or control used to turn something on or off. In computing, a network switch also connects devices together so they can share information.

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T

Technology
Tools, machines and devices that help us do things, such as computers, tablets, phones and cameras.

Template
A ready-made document or design that you can use as a starting point for your own work.

Text cursor
A flashing line on the screen that shows where the next letter or number will appear when you type.

Tool
A feature in a computer program that helps you complete a task, such as drawing, colouring or editing.

Toolbar
A row or group of buttons and tools on a screen that helps you carry out different tasks.

Trackpad
A touch-sensitive surface on a laptop that allows you to move the pointer and select items using your finger.

Trim
To cut away unwanted parts of a video, sound recording or picture.

Typing
The action of using a keyboard to enter letters, numbers, words and symbols into a computer.

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U

Underline
A way of formatting text by adding a line underneath words or letters to make them stand out.

Undo / Undo tool
A tool that reverses the last action you made, such as removing a change to a picture or document.

USB
Short for Universal Serial Bus. A type of connection used to plug devices into a computer to transfer information or provide power.

V

Value
A piece of information stored or used by a computer, such as a number, word or colour.

Vector
A type of digital image made using lines, shapes and curves. It can be made bigger or smaller without becoming blurry or losing quality.

Vignette
A picture effect that makes the edges or corners of an image darker or lighter than the middle, helping to draw attention to the centre.

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W

Web address
The address of a website or webpage that you type into a web browser to find it on the internet. It is also called a URL.

Web browser
A computer program or app that allows you to visit and look at websites, such as Google Chrome, Safari or Microsoft Edge.

Web page
A single page of information on the internet that can contain words, pictures, videos and links.

Website
A collection of connected web pages that can be visited using the internet.

Wireless access point
A device that allows computers, tablets and other devices to connect to a network without using cables.

Word processor
A computer program used to create, edit and format written documents, such as letters, stories and reports.

World Wide Web
A collection of websites and web pages that people can access using the internet.