

Building a Computer – information sheet

To build your own computer you will need:

- a case
- a power supply unit
- a motherboard
- a processor (the CPU or Central Processing Unit) and a fan for the CPU
- some memory – called RAM
- a graphics card
- a hard drive to store things on

You'll also need: a mouse a keyboard a monitor screen and a screwdriver.
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Motherboard: the printed circuit board that all of the other components link to. It's usually a green board and takes up most of the space inside the computer

Central Processing Unit (CPU): the computer chip that does all of the processing. This is a highly specialised part that is very delicate. The CPU gets very hot when it's working so a fan is stuck on top of it to help keep it cool

Graphics Card: deals with the computer graphics which appear on screen

Memory (RAM): the memory stores everything that a computer is working on at any one point. This includes the Operating System (like Windows) and any files or pieces of software which are open. The more memory you have the easier it is to do more things at the same time. RAM stands for Random Access Memory. This is just memory that the computer can use for anything it needs to.

Hard drive: the place where data is stored when the computer is turned off. When the computer is turned on, data is moved across from the hard drive to the RAM so that it can be used. When you open a program or a file, the same thing happens

Power Supply Unit: the unit which provides power to the computer. This has a plug attached to plug in to the wall. The PSU controls the amount of power so that the components don't get overloaded