

1. Hardware

Hardware

Common Uses of Computers in Society

In the 1900s, Thomas Watson, a computer executive, said, "I think there is a world market for as many as five computers". This statement has been proved wrong several million times over. The world we live in is increasingly technologically driven – so much so that we often interact with computers without even realising it. This lesson explores the computers we find in our everyday lives and concentrates on the fact that all computers have input, processing, and output capabilities. Note: we introduce the concept of storage later on in the series.

Lesson Outcomes

By the end of this lesson you should be able to:

- State some examples of how computers are used in society;
- Identify input, processing and output as components of a computer system.

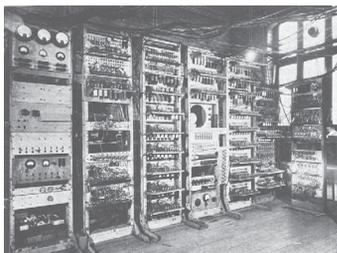
Curriculum Links

LO 1: Hardware and System Software

- Identify the main hardware components of at least two types of computer (linked to task).
- State and discuss the implications of the latest computer technologies.

Lesson Notes

Computers have changed considerably over time. In 1949 computers were very big and heavy, and took up large amounts of space.



Manchester Mark 1

Today computers are smaller, more powerful and much faster.



Laptop

In this lesson, we explore a world without computers and compare it to the world we live in today. In the 1900s many predictions were made about the use of computers in the future. No one knew just how much we would come to depend on computers. Computers come in a variety of forms depending on their use but all computers have the same three components: input, processing and output. Note: we introduce the concept of storage later on in the series.

Consider these examples:

Example 1: A supermarket experience

In a supermarket, a barcode scanner is used to input the price and details of each grocery item. The prices of all the items are added up or processed by the computer. The total amount due including VAT is displayed on the monitor screen. This displayed amount is the output. A till slip is printed out as another form of output.

Example 2: An ATM experience

When an ATM card is inserted and the PIN inputted, the ATM processes the details and verifies that they match. The user then inputs the amount of money required and the ATM processes this data and verifies that there is enough money in the account. The money is then issued and is one form of output from the ATM. The transaction slip is another form of output.

Task

1. Write down your own definitions of input, processing and output.
2. Watch the video segment of Selae using Excel to type in the rainfall figures for 12 months and print out a page with a graph showing this information. Identify input, processing and output in this example of computer use.