



GLOSSARY OF TERMS—PART 1

Confused by all those technical terms? Computing is full of jargon, so here's a plain English description of some the items you might meet along the way.

3G – Stands for 'third generation of mobile networks'. It can mean something close to broadband speeds can be achieved on mobile phones and laptops with dongles – provided you are somewhere with a good signal.

ADDRESS (or URL) - When you visit a website, you need to type the address into the browser, or select it from a link on a web page or search engine. Every individual page on every website on the internet has its own unique address.

Eg. the address of the home page for this website is www.ladybirdcomputing.co.uk/index.htm

ADSL – Stands for Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line, but all you need to know is this means using your normal telephone line to access the internet (otherwise known as a Broadband connection).

ADWARE – Any software which automatically plays, displays, or downloads advertisements to your computer.

ANTI-SPYWARE - Software that prevents and removes any spyware.

ANTI-VIRUS - Software that is designed to prevent, detect, and remove any malicious software (malware).

APPLICATION - A type of program that designed to help the user to perform specific tasks. Eg. a word processor or a spreadsheet package.

ATTACHMENT - A file that is sent with an email message. It can be any type of file, and can be opened by the receiver if the appropriate software to view the file attachment is installed or available. Often used as a simple method to share documents and images.

BLUETOOTH - A type of short range, wireless connection for transferring data between devices. Generally useful for headsets or hands-free mobile use.

BOOKMARKS - Also called Favorites or Internet Shortcuts, a collection of favourite websites visited and saved by the user.

BROADBAND - A permanent connection to the Internet, via cable or ADSL. Much faster than a dial-up connection which was the traditional way to connect.

BROWSER (or web browser) - An application software or program designed to enable users to access, retrieve and view documents and other resources on the Internet.

CACHE - Sometimes called a buffer, this is a small temporary storage area which can provide a quicker response to computer requests for information if it is already held in the buffer.

CD-R/RW DRIVE - A compact disc recordable (CD-R) or rewritable (CD-RW) drive can record data, images or music files onto blank discs.

COOKIE - Pieces of data exchanged between your web browser and websites you visit. Cookies were introduced to provide a way to implement a "shopping cart" -a virtual device into which users can store items they want to purchase as they navigate throughout a site which sells items.

CURSOR – An indicator used to show the position on a computer screen that will respond to input from the keyboard or mouse etc.

DESKTOP – The main screen you see when your computer has started up – from here you perform all operations using icons, buttons, lists etc.

DISPLAY – Also known as the screen, it is an output device for presenting information in visual form. Display size is measured diagonally from corner to corner.

DISPLAY RESOLUTION – Usually refers to the measure of how detailed an image on screen can look eg. a typical laptop screen resolution is 1,024x768 pixels.

DONGLE – Any small piece of hardware plugged into a computer for a variety of reasons eg. a 3G modem, wireless network card, USB pen drive.

DOWNLOAD – To receive data to a local system from a remote system, or to initiate such a data transfer. eg. Copying a file, such as a photo, from a website to your computer.

DRIVER – Software that allows your computer to communicate with hardware devices such as a printer.

DVD-R/RW DRIVE – Similar to a CD drive, this one can read and write to DVD discs. New computers tend to come with one of these now.

Email (Electronic mail) A way of sending messages from one person to another, or one computer to another, often over the internet.

Email client – A program for handling the sending, receiving and management of emails. This usually refers to one on your own computer, rather than Webmail.

FIREWALL – Software or hardware that blocks unwanted communication from and to the internet, it protects your computer and your information.