



Getting To Know
Your Computer

EQUALITY

EDUCATION



DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Everyone is using computers these days – or so it seems. But there are still a significant number of people who, for whatever reason, have not had the opportunity to use them yet. Here at the CWU we believe that everybody deserves that opportunity.

With so many services being delivered online, over the internet, a computer offers you a wealth of things you couldn't access before.

Before you use a computer it seems quite daunting, but don't worry, it is just a collection of tools. And they are actually quite easy to use once you get the hang of them.

Once you understand the right buttons to press then the computer is a powerful tool to make your life easier – and once we've finished the next few pages you will be well on the way to doing just that.

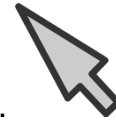
You can move through the course at your own pace, taking as much or little time on it as you need to.

We've added a few quizzes, to help you remember what you have learned. There is no pass or fail. You can take the quizzes as many times as you like.

Introducing The Computer

In this unit we will become familiar with the computer, itself; what goes where and what does what.

The first thing you need to know is that this is called **cursor**. You will see it on your computer screen. It might change shape, depending on what it is doing. We'll cover this later.



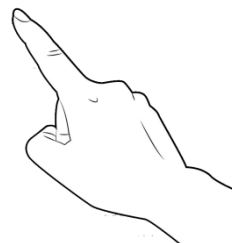
This is called a **mouse**. Think of it as a remote control. As you move the mouse around the desk it moves the cursor around the screen. We will have a look at the two buttons on the mouse in more detail in a minute.

If you are using a laptop your mouse will be built in – just, below the keyboard.



It looks a bit different but works just the same with the two buttons – but in this case, instead of moving the mouse around the desk, you have to move your finger around the touch-pad.

If you're using a tablet / i-pad or phone there is no mouse! Instead you have a touch-screen. Move your finger around the screen and tap the screen instead of your mouse button.



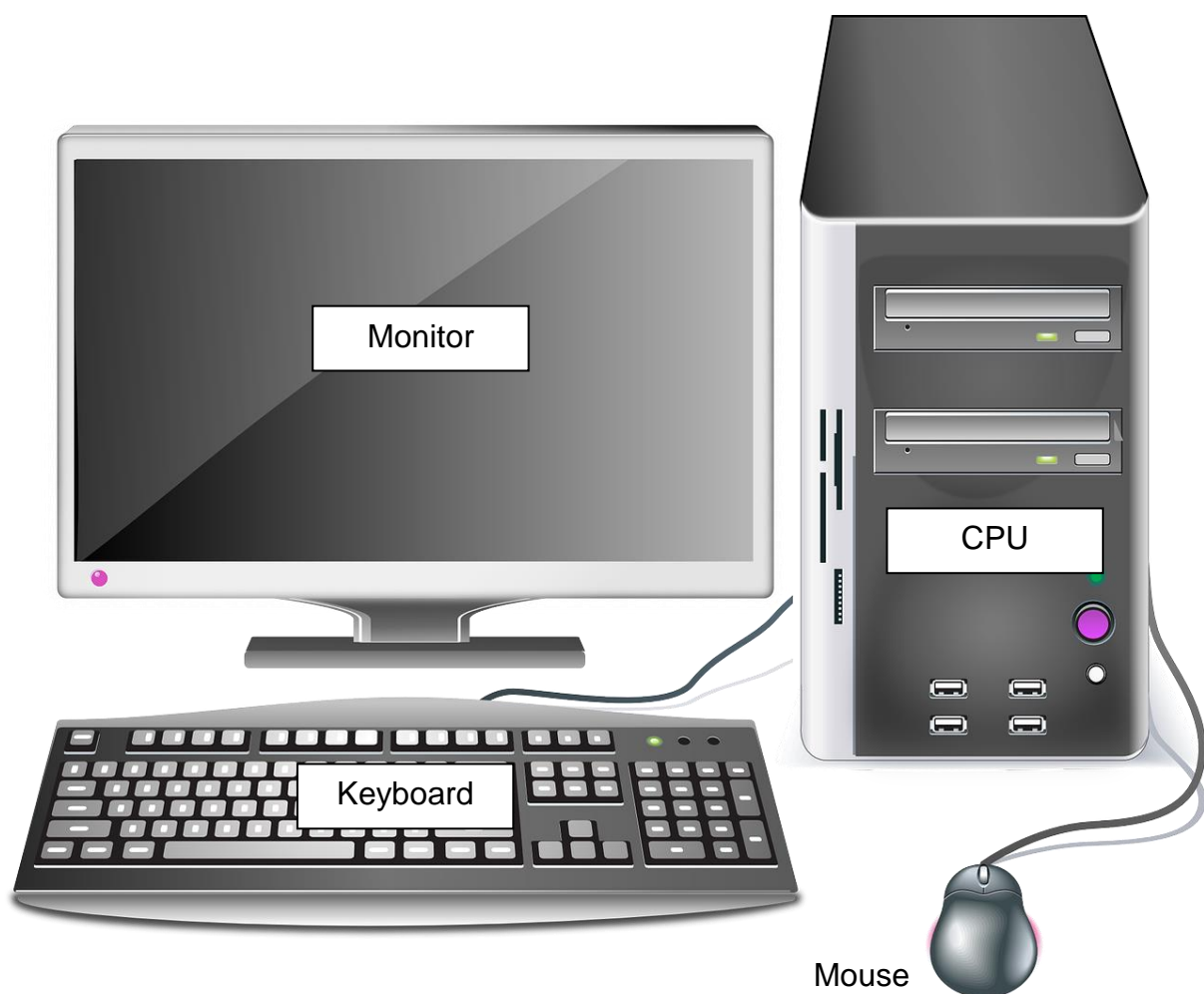
Now let's have a look at the main parts of the computer. You might hear these physical components referred to as **hardware**.

We will use a desk-top computer to explain how the computer works, just because it is where the components are most visible. The same components are in the other devices like laptops, tablets or even mobile phones, but are more hidden away.

Computers might look complicated but in fact they are not. In reality it's just one box and a number ways to communicate with it.

The heart of the computer is the **CPU** or central processing unit. This is where the work is done. Whatever you ask the computer to do is converted into code and dealt with by the CPU.

The **monitor** is the screen that allows you to see what the computer is doing. And what you are asking it to do.



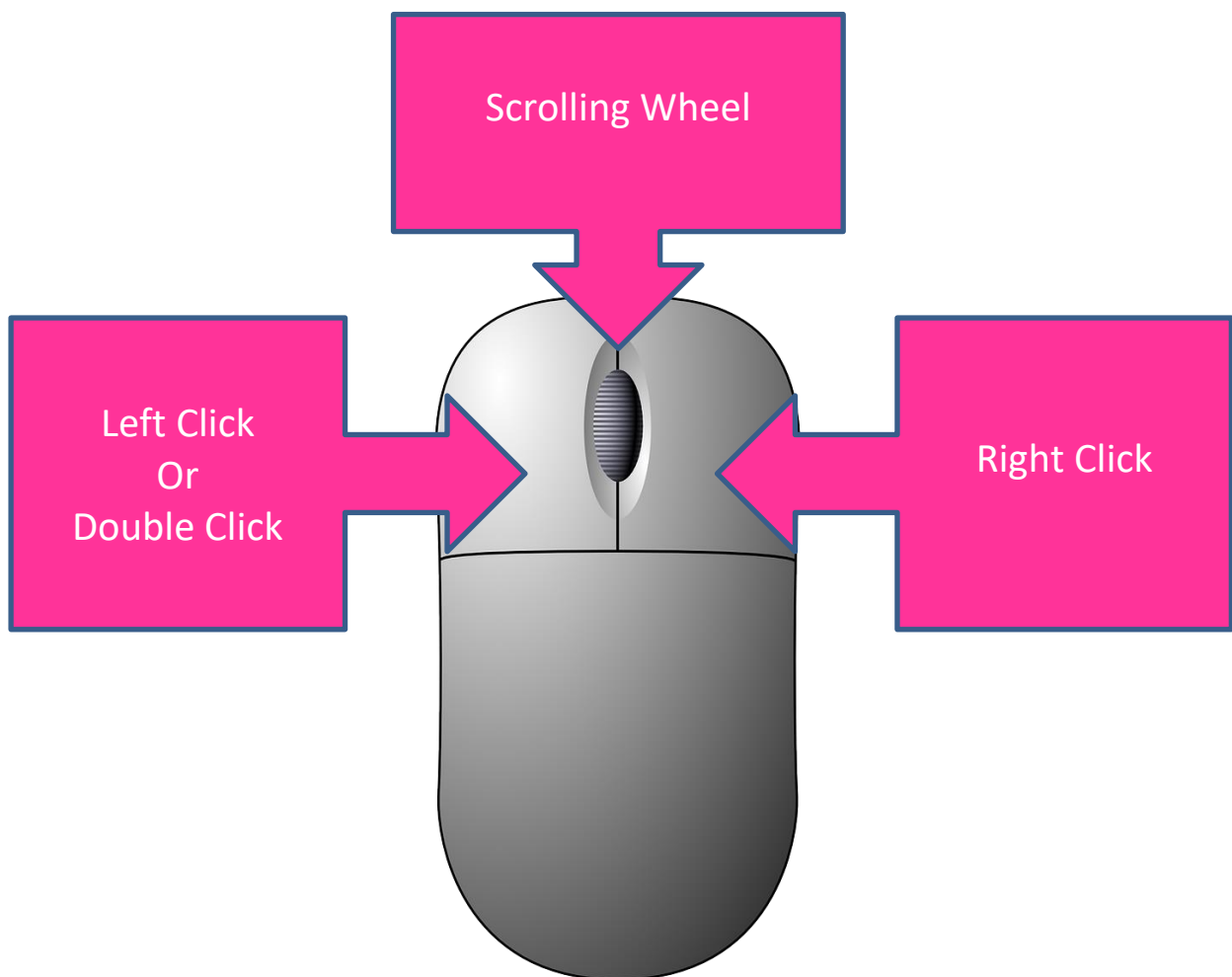
The **keyboard** is one of the main ways in which you tell the computer what to do. Usually by typing something in or using a keyboard shortcut.

Think of the **mouse** as a remote control. It moves the cursor around the monitor screen. When the cursor is where you want it to be you either click on the left button (left click) or the right button (right click). If you are just told to click, then click on the left button as this is the default option. Right clicking often brings up a menu of common actions for you to choose from.

Most mice also have a scrolling wheel between the buttons that you can use to scroll up or down the page.

Sometimes you need to double click. This requires two left clicks in quick succession. If you're too slow the computer might just interpret it as a single click. Don't worry, just go back and try again, faster this time. You soon get used to it.

You will often just be told to click on something (such as a button displayed on the screen). What this means is to move your mouse until the cursor is over the button. Then click the left mouse button. This is the most common thing you'll do.



Computers work in code. You might hear this referred to as a **computer programme** or **software** or an **application** (commonly abbreviated to **app**). We don't need to understand this code right now – or ever, if we don't want to. We just need to know that this is how the computer works. It takes the information we put into it and converts it into code – just like a telephone or a TV does. This means that anything that can be converted into code can be worked on by computer, so long as you have the right software or app.

You can get music software to play or make music, you can get photo software to edit your photos, you can get office software to write letters, make spreadsheets or slideshows. Whatever you need to do, there is probably some software out there to help you.

The software that is essential to your computer's function generally comes pre-loaded onto your device. Other optional software packages or apps can be purchased either in shops or, more often than not, downloaded from an online supplier.

For any new piece of software or app there will be a period of familiarisation. We all go through this. It's just like learning where the buttons are on the new TV. A good software developer will make this fairly self-explanatory.

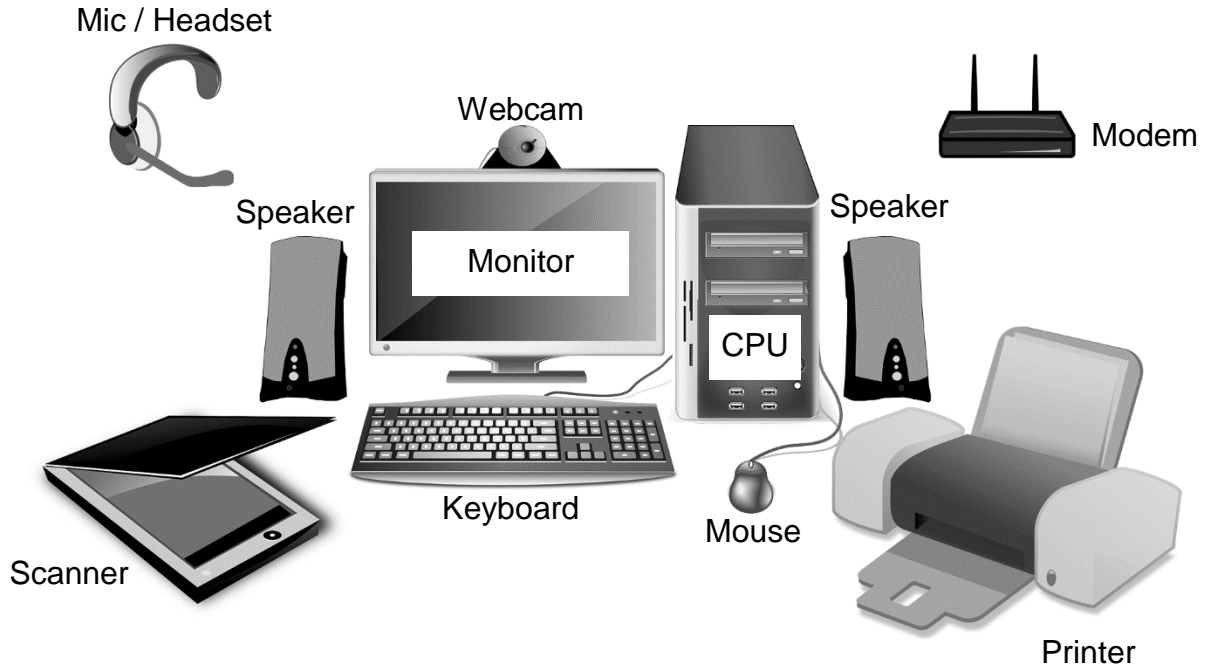


Peripherals are additional bits of hardware that compliment your computer but are not essential. **Speakers** enable you to hear what is going on. Some computer programmes have audible warnings. Others play videos or music, so you need speakers. A **webcam** enables you to film yourself or others. It allows you to make video calls or take photos. If you are having a conversation you will need a **microphone**. You can get these as part of a headset or free-standing, depending on your preference. All of the above might be built in could or come separately. On a laptop or tablet they will probably be built in. But if you are buying a new machine check if they are included.

Printers print out your documents, photos or whatever. They come in all shapes and sizes. **Scanners** enable you to take a document or photo and convert it into computer code. You can then save it, send it or alter it as you see fit. Printers and scanners often come combined into one machine.

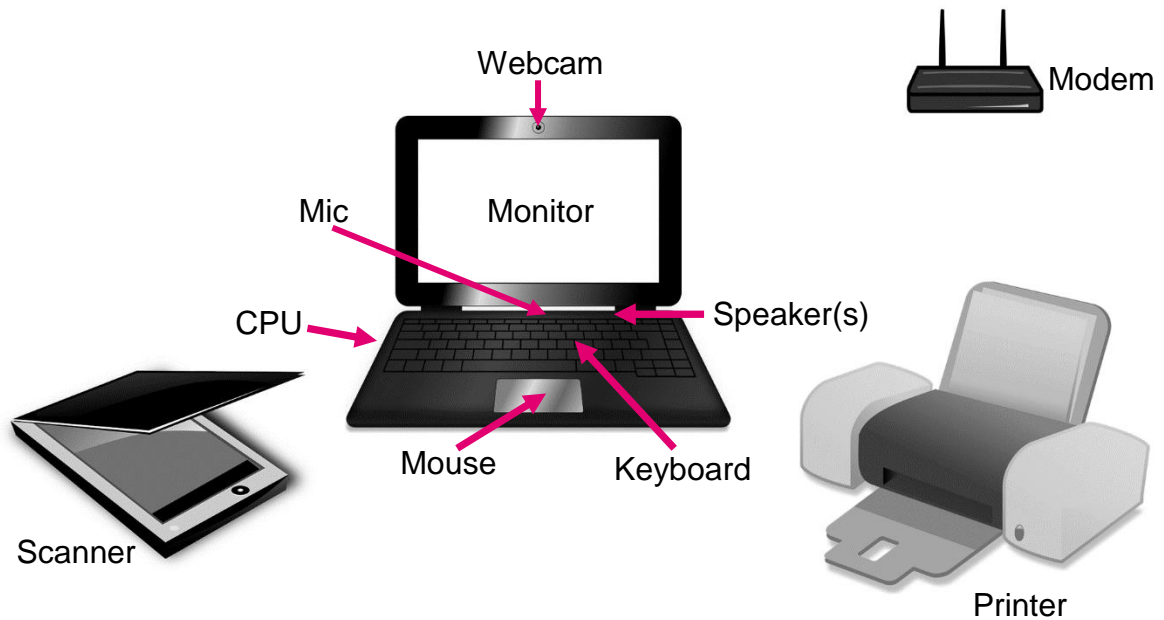
A **modem** enables you to connect your computer to the **internet**, the vast global network of computers that enable us to share knowledge and information around the world. These days your modem is likely to be wireless and connected to your phone line or cable TV. Most likely it will be provided by your internet provider when you first get connected.

Peripherals with a desktop computer



These are the main components of a computer. As technology gets smaller more of them may become integrated into your laptop or even your phone or tablet. But wherever they might end up hidden away, the fundamentals remain the same.

Peripherals with a laptop computer



Quiz

- 1) Fill in the blanks in the following sentence.
The mouse is a type of _____ that moves the _____ around your computer screen.
- 2) If you are asked to click on an item, you need to move your _____ until the _____ is over the required area on the screen. Then you left click / right click / double-click (*underline the correct answer*).
- 3) The _____ (or CPU is where all the work is done. The _____, _____ and _____ are devices that communicate with it.
- 4) _____ is the physical components that go to make up your computer. _____ are the computer programmes or apps that run on your computer.

On the following diagram label the following,

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1) CPU | 6) Headset |
| 2) Monitor | 7) Speakers |
| 3) Keyboard | 8) Printer |
| 4) Mouse | 9) Scanner |
| 5) Webcam | 10) Modem |



Answers

- 1) Fill in the blanks in the following sentence.
The mouse is a type of remote control that moves the cursor around your computer screen.
- 2) If you are asked to click on an item, you need to move your mouse until the cursor is over the required area on the screen. Then you left click / right click / double-click (*underline the correct answer*).
- 3) The Central Processing Unit (or CPU is where all the work is done. The keyboard , mouse and monitor are devices that communicate with it.
- 4) Hardware is the physical components that go to make up your computer. Software are the computer programmes or apps that run on your computer.

On the following diagram label the following,

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1) CPU | 6) Headset |
| 2) Monitor | 7) Speakers |
| 3) Keyboard | 8) Printer |
| 4) Mouse | 9) Scanner |
| 5) Webcam | 10) Modem |

