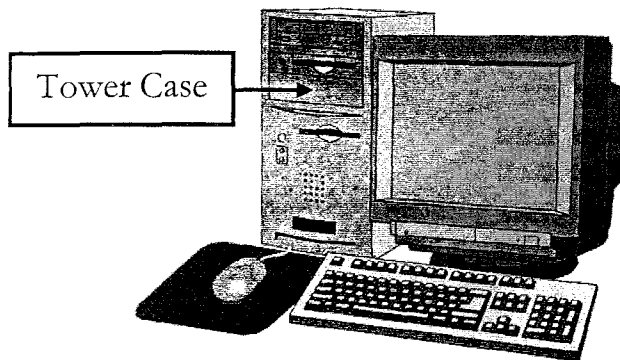


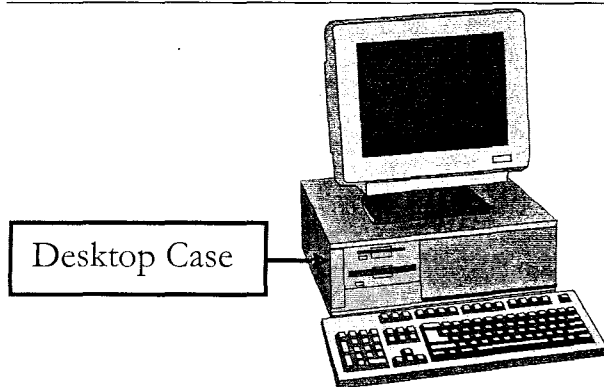
Introducing... Your New Computer!

QUESTION: I've been considering buying a computer and have noticed there are several different styles. What is the difference between them?

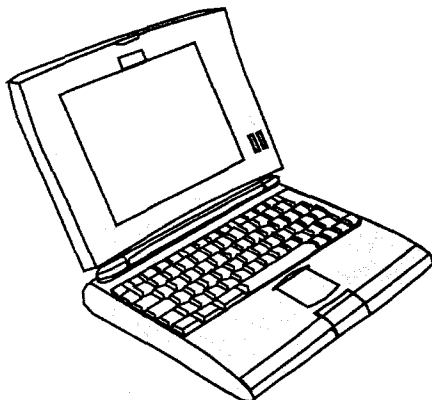
ANSWER: One difference is the size and configuration. Another is between computers that use the Microsoft Windows operating system and Macintosh computers.



Computer with Tower Case – This computer has a tower case that usually sits on the floor. All of the parts, monitor, keyboard, mouse, and speakers, plug into special connectors on the back of the case.



Computer with Desktop Case – This case sits on top of your desk, and the monitor usually sits on top of it. It has the same parts as the tower case and the cables plug into the back of the computer in the same way as the tower case.



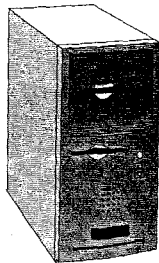
Laptop/Notebook Computer – A notebook or laptop computer is especially convenient if you travel frequently or if you have limited space for a computer. It operates like a full-size computer, but everything is built in, eliminating many of the cables. Because of the convenience and smaller size, these computers are more expensive.



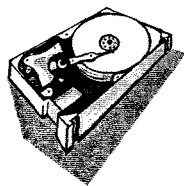
Understanding All Those Parts

QUESTION: I'm not familiar with the parts of a computer. Can you tell me what they do?

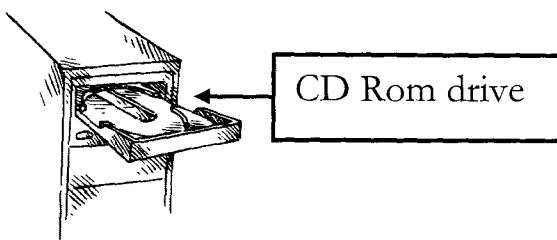
ANSWER: It can be confusing when you're just getting started. Computer systems are made up of several components or parts. Each has a special purpose. The pictures and explanations below should help.



Computer – The part of the system that contains a processing unit that does the “thinking.” Some people refer to the computer as the entire system: the processing unit, keyboard, screen, and mouse.



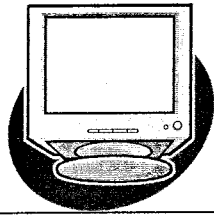
Hard Disk/Hard Drive –The storage area for the programs that have been installed on your computer as well as the documents you create. It is located inside your computer and you will probably never see it! It is referred to as the C: drive.



Disk Drives – In addition to the hard drive, most computers also have a CD ROM drive and a floppy drive. These are accessible on the front of the computer. Push the small button below the CD ROM drive to open it.

A floppy disk is inserted into the floppy drive (usually located below the CD ROM drive) until it clicks. Push the button beside the drive to eject the disk. The floppy drive is called drive A:.

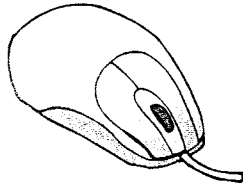




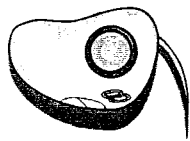
Monitor – The part of your computer system that looks like a TV. It is also called the screen or desktop.



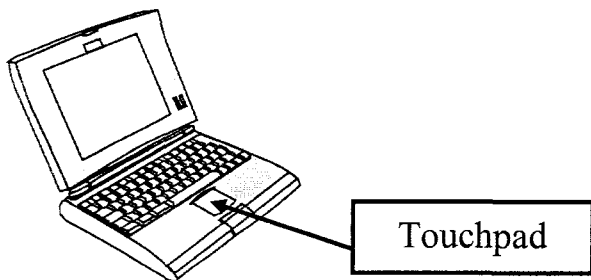
Keyboard – Similar to a typewriter, it contains the keys for typing text, and additional keys that give the computer various commands.



Mouse – A small device attached to the computer by a cord, which lets you give commands to the computer. The mouse controls an arrow on the computer screen and allows you to point and click to make selections.

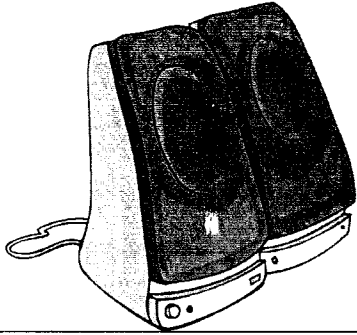


Track Ball – A special type of computer mouse where the ball is on the top or side so you can move it with your fingers rather than moving the mouse around on the surface of the desk.

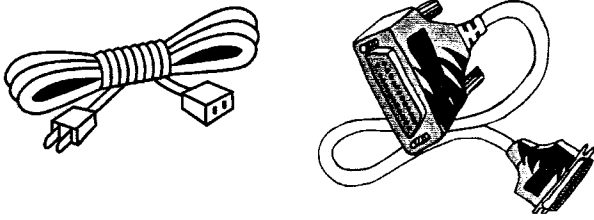


Touchpad – A flat surface on the keyboard that is sensitive to pressure and motion. It takes the place of a mouse. When you move your fingertip across the pad, the pointer (arrow) on the screen moves in the same direction. You can also use a mouse if you aren't comfortable using the touchpad.

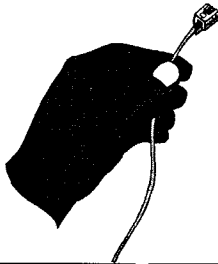




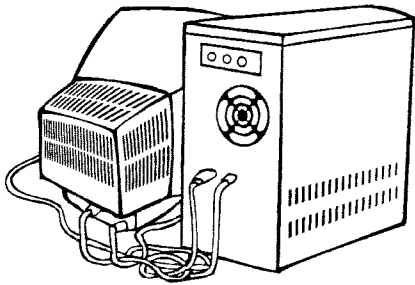
Speakers – Computers come with a pair of speakers that allow you to listen to music from CDs, sound from the computer, or sound from websites. Speakers on a laptop computer are built into the case.



Cables – Each part of your computer (mouse, keyboard, monitor, speakers) has its own cable or power cord. Each one is different and can only be plugged into one specific place on the back of the computer.



Telephone Connection – If you plan to use the Internet, you will need a telephone line from the phone jack in the wall to a special phone jack on the back of your computer.



Location of Connectors – All of the parts of the computer (mouse, monitor, keyboard, and speakers) plug into connectors on the back of the computer. There are many more connectors than shown in the diagram on the left, and each connector is unique. Look for the connector that matches the plug and make the connection.

There are also jacks on the back of your computer where you can connect microphones and headphones. Headphones are especially nice if you want to listen to a music CD without disturbing others. These must be purchased separately and are usually not very expensive.

