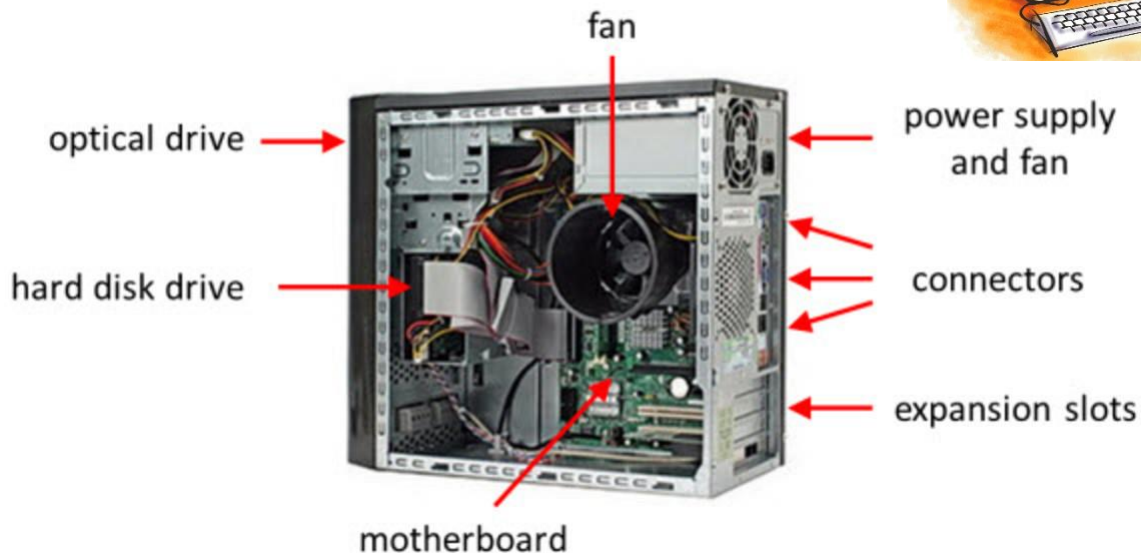


Computer Club



The Computer System Unit

The system unit is the box-like case that contains the electronic components of a computer. Many people erroneously refer to this as the CPU. Here you will find devices like the power supply, different drives, the fan, the connectors, and the motherboard. Note that in most cases, the monitor, keyboard, and mouse will not be found inside the system unit layout.

Other names for the system unit include the computer chassis, cabinet, box, tower, enclosure, housing, or simply case.

Parts of the Unit

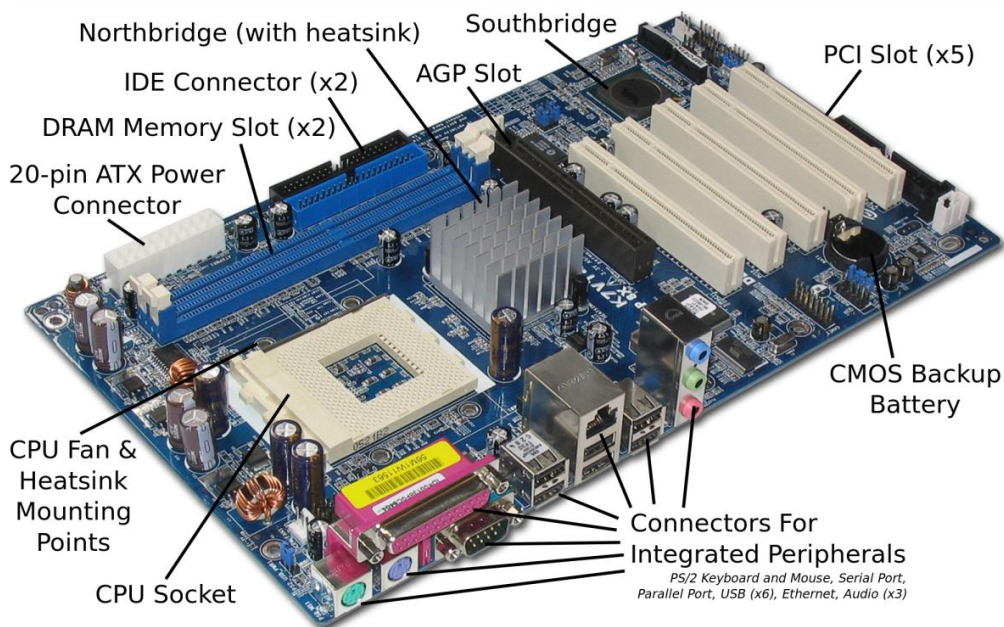
These are some of the major components you are going to find inside your system unit. If you are thinking of checking some of these parts out, make sure your computer is powered off and disconnected from a power source. Be careful not to mess with your components if you are not very familiar with them. Before touching anything, be aware of damaging components because of static electricity. You should wear an earth strap.

The Motherboard

The motherboard is sometimes called the system board or main board. It is the main circuit board of a microcomputer. This component contains the connectors for attaching additional boards. All other parts connect in one way or another to the motherboard.

This part typically contains the CPU, BIOS, memory, mass storage interfaces, serial and parallel ports, expansion slots, and all the controllers required to control standard peripheral devices, such as the display screen, keyboard, mouse, and disk drive.

When you are reading about motherboards, you won't fail to come across the term motherboard form factors, which describes the general shape, the type of case, and the power supply it can use. It also describes the physical organization of the motherboard.



A Labeled Motherboard

Hard Disk Drive

A hard disk drive is a high capacity, non-volatile, magnetic data storage device with a volume (disk) that is usually non-removable.

Data is magnetically read and written on the platter by read/write heads that float on a cushion of air above the platters.

Hard Disk Drive



The Processor

The Processor is the heart of the computer – the brains. It is the logic circuitry that responds to and processes the instructions that drive a computer. There are millions of transistors and integrated circuits inside the processor. The 'form factor' – its shape changes with each new generation of processor, so it is important to match it with the socket on the Motherboard.



Floppy Disk Drive

This is a disk drive that can read and write floppy disks, although they are obsolete nowadays.

These drives have been replaced by the USB flash disk drives in modern machines.

Diskette Drive



Power Supply Unit

The power supply unit (PSU) is used to convert AC currents from the main supply to the different DC voltages required by various computer components.

Power supplies are quoted as having a certain power output specified in watts. A standard power supply would typically be able to deliver around 350 watts.

You will need more power from the power supply if your PC has more operating components.



CD-ROM Drive

This is a high capacity optical data storage device with a removable disk. It writes data onto or reads data from a storage medium.

A CD-ROM drive may be connected to the computer via an IDE (ATA), SCSI, S-ATA, Firewire, or USB interface or a proprietary interface.



Computer Memory

Computer memory is the electronic holding place for the instructions and data a computer needs to reach quickly. Some types of memory are 'volatile' meaning that they lose their contents when power is removed from the computer

