

Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library

Computer Classes Glossary

- Active Tab** - The tab that is actively being used. Clicking on another tab button can make that the active tab instead. The active tab can be identified by the close button, which in Internet Explorer 8, only appears on the active tab.
- Active window** - The window that is actively being used. If two windows are open, commands from the user (such as typing) will affect only the active window. Clicking on another window or on that window's button on the task bar can make that the active window instead. The active window can be identified because the title bar is more vibrant in color, its task bar button is darker and its close button is red.
- Address bar** – A specialized bar in Internet Explorer used for entering the web address of a webpage or displaying the address of the current one.
- Attachment** – A file that is sent along with an e-mail. Open an attachment only if you know and trust the source of the e-mail, and preferably if you know exactly what the attachment is about. Many viruses come disguised as attachments.
- Back** – A web browser button used for returning to the previous webpage.
- Bulk** – An additional folder some e-mail services use that attempt to separate good mail from junk mail. Some e-mail services label this folder Spam.
- Click** – The act of pressing and releasing a mouse-button. Unless otherwise specified, such as in a double-click or a right-click, this term refers strictly to pressing the left mouse button once. *See Double-click, Right-click.*
- Close** – To end work in a program or file. There is a close button in the upper-right corner marked with an X, so this action is sometimes referred to as “X-ing out.”
- Compose** – *See New mail.*
- Computer** – A tool for viewing all files and their storage locations on a given computer.
- Contextual Tab** - a tab which appears only when certain objects are selected. Contextual Tabs expose functionality specific only to the object with focus.
- Copy and Paste** – The act of selecting a section of text and copying it to another location. Copy refers to the copying of information into the computer's memory, and paste to the actual placement of the copied material.
- Cursor** – Also called pointer. The small picture on the screen that moves as the mouse moves to indicate where the computer's attention is.
- Data** – Computer information.
- Delete** – To permanently erase something.
- Desktop** – The basic screen that shows in Windows when you first start the computer or when no other programs are “open”; it usually has icons on it for easy access to starting a program.
- Domain name** – The portion of a web address immediately after the “www.” or the portion of an e-mail address immediately after the @ symbol. The domain name refers to the computer that is being contacted. (*Ex: yahoo.com*)
- Double-click** – The act of quickly pressing the left mouse button twice. This action is most frequently used for opening programs and files represented by icons.
- Download** – To take a file from the Internet and save it onto your own computer. Sending a file from your computer to the Internet is called *uploading*.
- Drag** – Also called click-and-drag. Holding in the mouse button and then moving the mouse. Dragging is often done so that an object will move along with the mouse.
- Drag (window)** – Physically moving a window on the screen by dragging the title bar.
- Drop-down** – A menu or selection box that is accessed by clicking on it; a set of options will appear, or “drop down,” immediately below it.
- E-mail (or Email)** – Short for electronic mail. An electronic form of communication similar to sending letters through the post office in that it requires an address. E-mail can also sometimes refer to the individual letters that are sent through the e-mail process.

Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library

Computer Classes Glossary

- E-mail Address** – A destination for e-mail, similar to a mailbox. E-mail addresses consist of a username, an “at” sign, and a domain name. (*Ex: Johndoe@somewhere.com*)
- (Microsoft) Excel** – A program used to manage budgets and analyze equations. Excel and similar programs are called Spreadsheets.
- Extension** – A three or four-letter suffix at the end of a file such as .docx that indicates to the computer what type of file it is, which program created it, and thus how to read it. File extensions are separated from the file name by just a period and do not normally need to be typed by the user.
- Favorite** – Also called bookmark. A memory in the computer for storing particular web addresses for effective, easy access, like speed dial for the Internet.
- Folder** – A storage container for files to help organize them.
- File** – A collection of related data, such as the different words contained in a letter.
- File Structure** – The organization that the computer uses for locating files. The computer uses a system of containers and sub-containers, so that a folder is a section of a floppy disk, which is in turn a section of “Computer”. Double-clicking on the icon for one of these containers will provide a view of its contents instead. Files and folders can be navigated using the navigation pane in Computer
- Fwd:** - Similar to Re: for reply mail, Fwd is a prefix indicating that the e-mail is being forwarded from a source other than the sender.
- Highlighting** – Also called selecting. The act of selecting a section of the screen for the computer to focus on, in order to issue a command to the computer related to that section, such as copy. Highlighting is usually performed by dragging the cursor from one end of the selection to the other.
- Home** – Web browser button that returns the viewer to the browser’s home page.
- Home page** – (1) The initial webpage that appears when the browser is first opened. (2) The opening portion or “main page” of a particular website.
- Hyperlink** – A section of the screen, usually blue underlined words, that, when clicked on, will make the computer display another screen or webpage. When pointed to, hyperlinks will always change the shape of the mouse cursor to a hand.
- Icon** – A small picture that represents a program or file. These are typically double-clicked to activate.
- In-box** – The initial destination for new received e-mail.
- Internet** – A collection of computers around the world that are all connected together.
- Internet Explorer** – A web browser developed by Microsoft. *See web browser.*
- Link** – *See Hyperlink.*
- Live Preview** – A new feature of Microsoft Office 2007 which temporarily applies formatting on the focused text or object when any formatting button is moused-over. This allows users to have a preview of how the option would affect the appearance of the object, without actually applying it.
- Maximize** – To enlarge a window to full screen. This action is the opposite of Restore Down, and the two commands use the same button on the title bar.
- Menu bar** – The second bar from the top of the window which lists words that, when clicked on, open drop-down menus.
- Microsoft** – The company responsible for designing the operating system Windows and many programs that are frequently used such as Word, Excel, and Internet Explorer. Microsoft is only a brand name.
- Minimize** – Removing an open window from view without closing it, accomplished by clicking the minimize button on the toolbar. A minimized window can be restored by clicking on its listing on the task bar.
- Mini Toolbar** - A new feature of Microsoft Office 2007. The new "Mini Toolbar" is a type of context menu that is automatically shown (by default) when text is selected.
- Monitor** – The display screen.
- Move (file)** – To reposition a file to a different folder or storage area, typically done by dragging the file onto the folder you want to place it in.
- Move (window)** – *See Drag (window).*

Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library

Computer Classes Glossary

Multi-tasking – Performing two or more tasks simultaneously.

New mail – Also called compose. The command used for creating a new e-mail.

Office Button - The Office 2007 button, located on the top-left of the window, replaces the File menu in Microsoft Office Programs and provides access to functionality common across all Office applications, including opening, saving, printing, and sharing a file. It can also close the application.

Open – To begin using a program or re-accessing a saved file.

Operating system – The program responsible for managing all of the computer's memory and controlling the way the user interacts with the other programs. A majority of computers, including those in this lab, use Microsoft Windows.

Program – Also called application. A series of instructions a computer follows, normally with input from the user, to accomplish some specific type of task. *See software.*

Quick Access Toolbar –a small toolbar which sits in the title bar and gives you access to commands that you frequently use. By default, save, undo and redo appear on every Quick Access toolbar. The Quick Access toolbar is customizable.

Re: - Short-hand for “regarding.” Re: appears in subject lines of e-mail replies.

Refresh – A command to the computer to reload a webpage, wiping out any changes that have been made to it and also retrieving a newer version if it has recently changed.

Reply – Command for a direct response to an e-mail. Reply automatically fills out the To and Subject fields, and keeps the previous e-mail in the body.

Resize – Changing the shape of a window by dragging one of the edges. Note that this can only be done to a non-maximized window, and that the mouse cursor must take the shape of a double-headed arrow before you can begin resizing.

Restore down – To reduce a window's size from the whole screen to part of it, by clicking the central of the three buttons in the upper-right corner.

Ribbon – this is the area under the title bar in Microsoft Office 2007 programs. The Ribbon contains Tabs with related command groups.

Right-click – Performing a click with the right mouse button rather than the left. This action typically generates a menu related to what the mouse cursor is pointed at.

Root – The base level of a file storage area, as opposed to being within a folder.

Save – Generally, to store work. If this work is already stored, Save will update any changes made. Changes since saving are not automatically recorded.

Save As... - A command more powerful than the basic Save command, because it allows the user to assign a name or a destination for the file. When resaving a file that already exists, Save As can create a second, separate version of the file that changes can be made to.

Screen tip – Also called Tooltip. Information that can be viewed by holding a mouse over an item in the user interface, such as an icon or a button.

Scroll – A process that displays a different part of the screen than is currently showing. Typically, scrolling is needed in order to view the later sections of a document when the document is too long to fit on the screen.

Scroll bar – The section at the right or bottom edge of the screen that allows the user to look at sections of the window that do not currently fit on the screen. A scroll bar will consist of two arrows and a gray box between them with a box indicating which part of the viewing area is currently being displayed.

Search Engine – A website designed for finding other websites. Common search engines include Google, Yahoo, Excite, and Bing.

Software – The set of programs a computer has available. Any program being run on the computer is considered software.

Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library

Computer Classes Glossary

- Spam** – Junk mail. Spam comes from many sources, and is difficult to prevent. Spam typically comes from an unknown source and with a vague subject line. Spam can sometimes contain viruses, so it is best not to open junk e-mail.
- Start menu** – The button labeled “Start” on the left end of the Task Bar opens the start menu which in turn allows the user to open any program that the computer has available.
- Status bar** – The bottom-most section of a window (but above the task bar), it shows some general information about the status of your work.
- Stop** – A web browser command that stops the computer from trying to open a webpage.
- Subject** – A word or phrase summary of what an e-mail is about so that the person receiving the e-mail can decide if it is important to look at immediately.
- Task bar** – The bottom-most strip across the screen, it lists all the open windows.
- Title bar** – The top-most strip of the screen, often colored blue, that shows the name of the program, and contains the minimize, restore down and close buttons.
- Toolbar** – A bar that contains small picture-based buttons that perform common tasks. The individual buttons can be identified using screen tips. There can be more than one toolbar in a window.
- Upload** – To place a file onto the Internet from your computer. *See Download.*
- Virus** – A program designed specifically to harm computers. Viruses can work in many different ways and do many different things, but they all have a negative effect on one’s ability to use the computer. Viruses are most frequently acquired from visiting illicit websites or by opening e-mail attachments containing viruses.
- Web address** – Also called the URL. The location given to the computer to find a particular other computer on the World Wide Web. (*Ex: www.yahoo.com/mail*)
- Web browser** – A program used for contacting other computers on the World Wide Web and for viewing the files, usually webpages, located on them.
- Window** – The rectangular area in which a program can be viewed. The program can be *maximized* to take up the entire screen, or it might use only part of the screen so that multiple windows can be seen at once. All open windows are listed on the task bar.
- (Microsoft) Windows** – The most common operating system for most computers (and in this lab.) There are different versions of Windows, including 98, 2000, XP, and Vista.
- (Microsoft) Word** – A program used for typing letters, resumes, and other documents. Word and programs like it are called word processors.
- World Wide Web (WWW)** – The portion of the internet that consists of webpages that would be viewed on a program like Internet Explorer, and is often (incorrectly) referred to as simply “The Internet.”
- Zip** - A popular data compression format. Files that have been compressed with the zip format are called zip files and usually end with a.zip extension.