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# Computer Dictionary

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## C

**Compressed SLIP** *n.* Short for **Compressed Serial Line Internet Protocol**. A version of SLIP using compressed Internet address information, thereby making the protocol faster than SLIP. *Acronym:* CSLIP. *See also* SLIP.

**compression** *n.* *See* data compression.

**compressor** *n.* A device that limits some aspect of a transmitted signal, such as volume, in order to increase efficiency.

**CompuServe** *n.* An online information service that is a subsidiary of America Online. CompuServe provides information and communications capabilities, including Internet access. It is primarily known for its technical support forums for commercial hardware and software products and for being one of the first large commercial online services. CompuServe also operates various private network services.

**computational intelligence** *n.* The study of the design of intelligent agents whose reasoning is based on computational methods. The central scientific goal of computational intelligence is to understand the principles that make intelligent behavior possible, in natural or artificial systems. An intelligent agent is flexible to changing environments and changing goals—it learns from experience, and it makes appropriate choices given perceptual limitations and finite computation. The central engineering goal of computational intelligence is to specify methods for the design of useful, intelligent artifacts. *See also* agents (definition 2), artificial intelligence, autonomous agent.

**computation-bound** *adj.* Of, pertaining to, or characteristic of a situation in which the performance of a computer is limited by the number of arithmetic operations the microprocessor must perform. When a system is computation-bound, the microprocessor is overloaded with calculations. *Also called:* CPU-bound.

**compute** *vb.* **1.** To perform calculations. **2.** To use a computer or cause it to do work.

**computer** *n.* Any device capable of processing information to produce a desired result. No matter how large or small they are, computers typically perform their work in three well-defined steps: (1) accepting input, (2) processing the input according to predefined rules (programs), and (3) producing output. There are several ways to categorize computers, including class (ranging from microcomputers to supercomputers), generation (first through fifth generation), and mode of processing (analog versus digital). *See the table.* *See also* analog, digital (definition

2), integrated circuit, large-scale integration, very-large-scale integration.

Table C.1 Ways to Categorize Computers

<b>Class</b>	Computers can be classified as supercomputers, mainframes, superminicomputers, minicomputers, workstations, microcomputers, or PDAs. All other things (for example, the age of the machine) being equal, such a categorization provides some indication of the computer's speed, size, cost, and abilities.
<b>Generation</b>	First-generation computers of historic significance, such as UNIVAC, introduced in the early 1950s, were based on vacuum tubes. Second-generation computers, appearing in the early 1960s, were those in which transistors replaced vacuum tubes. Third-generation computers, dating from the 1960s, were those in which integrated circuits replaced transistors. Fourth-generation computers, appearing in the mid-1970s, are those, such as microcomputers, in which large-scale integration (LSI) enabled thousands of circuits to be incorporated on one chip. Fifth-generation computers are expected to combine very-large-scale integration (VLSI) with sophisticated approaches to computing, including artificial intelligence and true distributed processing.
<b>Mode of processing</b>	Computers are either analog or digital. Analog computers, generally used in scientific pursuits, represent values by continuously variable signals that can have any of an infinite number of values within a limited range at any particular time. Digital computers, the type most people think of as computers, represent values by discrete signals—the bits representing the binary digits 0 and 1.

**computer-aided design** *n.* *See* CAD.

**computer-aided design and drafting** *n.* *See* CADD.

**computer-aided design / computer-aided manufacturing** *n.* *See* CAD/CAM.