# Dictionary of Computer and Internet Terms

Fifth Edition

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```
PRMCHK: PROCEDURE OPTIONS (MAIN);
  /* Reads a list of numbers and
     identifies which ones are prime */

        DECLARE (N, I) FLOAT;
        ON ENDFILE GO TO STOP;

 START: GET LIST(N);

  LOOP: DO I = 2 TO (TRUNC(SQRT(N))+1);
          IF N/I = TRUNC(N/I) THEN
             GO TO NPRIME;
        END LOOP;
        PUT SKIP(2) LIST (N, 'IS PRIME');
        GO TO START;

NPRIME: PUT SKIP(2) LIST(N,'IS NOT PRIME');
        PUT SKIP LIST ('IT IS DIVISIBLE BY',I);
        GO TO START;

  STOP: END PRMCHK;
```

FIGURE 168. PL/1 PROGRAM TO TEST WHETHER A NUMBER IS PRIME

early 1960s to accompany its System/360 computer. The name stands for Programming Language One.

PL/1 can be described as a combination of ALGOL 60 block structure, FORTRAN arithmetic, and COBOL data structuring. PL/1 is the language of choice for writing complex programs on IBM mainframe computers, but it has received little use on other types of machines.

Fig. 168 shows an example of a PL/1 program. Note that the main program is declared as a procedure with the option `MAIN`. This program is written in a FORTRAN-like style with `GO TO` statements, but a pure structured PL/1 style (like Pascal, without `GO TO`) is equally practical.

**PLANE**

**1.** in geometry, all the points on a flat surface. Thus a plane is a two-dimensional space on which things have length and width but no thickness.

**2.** in computer graphics, one of several images that are superimposed to produce the final image. For example, many video cards have separate planes (internal bitmaps) for red, green, and blue. The complete image is a combination of the images stored on the three planes. *See* CHANNEL.

**PLASMA** glowing ionized gas. *See* GAS PLASMA DISPLAY.

**PLATEN** the roller in a typewriter or printer that holds the paper as the keys or pins strike it.



**PLATFORM** a piece of equipment or software used as a base on which to build something else. For example, a mainframe computer can serve as a platform for a large accounting system.

**PLOTTER** a device that draws pictures on paper by moving pens according to directions from a computer. *See* GRAPHICS.

**PLUG AND PLAY** a standard way of configuring PC-compatible computer hardware automatically, developed by Microsoft and a number of other companies in the mid-1990s. Plug and Play hardware is compatible with conventional hardware (ISA, PCI, PCMCIA, Micro Channel, etc.) but has additional capabilities. Each card or accessory inserted into a computer contains identifying information that can be read by the BIOS and the operating system. Thus, the computer can see all the installed accessories and can configure itself to use them appropriately.

**PLUG-IN** an accessory program that provides additional functions for a main application program. Plug-ins have to be loaded at the same time as the main program; they then show up as an option in an appropriate menu.

**PNP**

**1.** (written PNP) one of the two types of bipolar TRANSISTORS (*contrast* NPN).

**2.** (written PnP) abbreviation for PLUG AND PLAY.

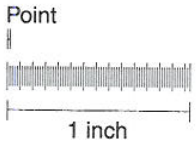


FIGURE 169. POINT

**POINT** a unit of typographical measurement equal to $\frac{1}{72}$ inch. The height of type is usually expressed in points. However, this is not a measurement of the size of the letters, but rather of the wooden blocks on which the metal type was mounted for printing presses. This usually included some space at the top of the tallest capital letters and below the descenders. Therefore, different typefaces of the same point size may actually differ in size. To this day, even digitized typefaces show some of the same idiosyncrasies. A desire to be faithful to the original designs has prevented the type's apparent size from being regularized.