

IEEE Standard Glossary of Computer Hardware Terminology

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Abstract: Terms pertaining to computer hardware are defined. Terms falling under the categories of computer architecture, computer storage, general hardware concepts, peripherals, and processors and components are included.

Keywords: computer, hardware, definition, glossary, terminology

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cation network at which data can leave the system. *Contrast with:* input terminal.

3.1555 output unit. *See:* output device.

3.1556 over-sized packet. *See:* long packet.

3.1557 overlapped execution. A mode of operation in which the execution of one instruction overlaps the fetch and decode of the next to be executed. *See also:* pipelining.

3.1558 overlapping register set. A set of registers, only part of which is available to an application at any given time. *Note:* A subset of the available registers is shared with the calling routine and a subset may be shared with any routines called by the current routine.

3.1559 overload. A condition existing in an analog computer, within or at the output of a computing element, that causes a substantial computing error because of the voltage or current saturation of one or more of the parts of the computing element. *Note:* This condition is similar to an overflow of an accumulator in a digital computer.

3.1560 overpunch. To punch holes into a column of a punch card that already contains one or more holes. *Note:* Often used to represent special characters.

3.1561 p-channel metal-oxide semiconductor (PMOS). A type of semiconductor technology which employs metal oxide field effect transistors, using holes to conduct current in the semiconductor channel. *Note:* The channel has a predominantly positive charge. *Contrast with:* n-channel metal-oxide semiconductor. *See also:* complementary metal-oxide semiconductor.

3.1562 P register. A special-purpose instruction address register that holds the address of the next instruction to be fetched or executed.

3.1563 pack. *See:* disk pack.

3.1564 package. An external container, substrate, or platform used to hold a semiconductor or circuit. *Note:* it may be made of plastic or ceramic with many interfacing pins.

3.1565 packaging. The process of containing, connecting, protecting, and sealing circuits and components into enclosures such as devices, modules, or housings.

3.1566 packet. A unit of data of some finite-size that is transmitted as a unit. *Note:* Usually consists of a header containing control information such as a sequence number, the network address of the station that originated the packet, and the network address of the packet's destination. *See also:* long packet, short packet. [IEEE Std 610.7-1995]

3.1567 packing density. *See:* recording density.

3.1568 paddle. A cursor control device consisting of a rotatable knob and potentiometer used to control the position of a cursor on a display device.

3.1569 page. (1) In virtual storage, a fixed length block of instructions or data that has a virtual address and that is transferred as a unit between real storage and auxiliary storage. *See also:* segment. (2) To transfer data between real and auxiliary storage as in (1).

3.1570 page fault. In demand paging, a condition that causes a program interrupt when a page must be read in from disk into main storage.

3.1571 page frame. (1) In real storage, a storage location that has the size of a page. [ANSI X3.138-1988] (2) An area of main storage used to hold a page. [ANSI X3.138-1988]

3.1572 page orientation. The direction of print on a display device or page of paper; that is, left-to-right or top-to-bottom. *See also:* landscape orientation; portrait orientation.

3.1573 page printer. A printer that prints one complete page of output at a time. For example, a computer-output microfilm printer or a laser printer. *Contrast with:* character-at-a-time printer; line printer.

3.1574 page reader. A character reader whose input data are in the form of printed text. *See also:* optical character reader.

3.1575 page swapping. The process of exchanging pages between main storage and auxiliary storage.

3.1576 page turning. *See:* paging.

3.1577 paging. (1) A storage allocation technique in which programs or data are divided into fixed-length blocks called pages, main storage is divided into blocks of the same length called page frames, and pages are stored in page frames, not necessarily contiguously or in logical order. *See also:* segment. [IEEE Std 610.12-