

Computer ABCs Glossary:

Equipment:

PC (aka Personal computer, desktop computer) – a computer designed for the single user, consisting of different components (see below)

Computer Hardware - the physical parts or components of a computer

- **Computer System Unit (aka CPU – Central Processing Unit, Computer Tower)** - the enclosure for the main interior parts of a computer
- **Monitor (aka computer screen or display)**- visual display for the computer
- **Keyboard** - set of typewriter-like keys that enable you to enter data into the computer
- **Mouse** - input device that allows you to interact with the computer

Computer Software - the programs and instructions used to direct the operation of a computer (aka the brain of the computer!)

Laptop – a computer that is portable

A useful term to know is “**reboot**” – this simply means to restart your computer by turning it off and on again.

Mouse:

Mouse buttons are used to **choose** or **select** items.

Click – the action of pressing and releasing a mouse button, one or more times

Single-Click (*Pressing and releasing the mouse button*) - clicking a mouse button once, defaulted to mean clicking the left mouse button once. A single-click performs an action

Double-click (*Pressing the mouse button two times very quickly*) - opens a file or program

Right-click (*Pressing the right button*) - performs a special action, such as opening up a menu of additional options

Hold (to press a mouse button and keep it pressed)

Drag, aka click and hold (*Pressing the left button, holding it down and moving the mouse*) - is used to highlight or select text or move an object

Hover – Place the mouse pointer on any symbol /icon and wait for a few seconds (do not click the mouse). The name of what you are pointing at will appear

The mouse pointer will change shapes as you move it around the screen, each shape means something different. These are some of the more common pointer shapes:



Default mouse pointer, the arrow is used for selecting and opening icons, text, pictures, programs etc



Wait symbol, this means the computer is “thinking” or “working” (loading information or a program). Wait until it disappears before your next action



Hand symbol, used mainly on the internet, to show you links, to another web page or text. Open the links by clicking the mouse where you see the hand.



I-beam, used to select text or move text around

Desktop:

The desktop is the working area of a computer screen, and the first thing you see when you turn on your computer.

Just like the surface of an actual desk, the computer desktop holds things we need to find and use frequently.

Icon – a small graphical representation of a file or program that when clicked on will be run or opened

Shortcut – an icon with an arrow on it, on the desktop, that allows the user to see and select a program easily

Start button – the icon that opens up the **Start Menu**

Start Menu - the primary location to find programs, files or folders on your computer

Task Bar – the long horizontal bar at the bottom of the screen. It has three components; the **Start Button** on the left, the **System Notification Area (aka the System Tray)** on the right, and the middle part is contains icons of open programs or frequently used programs