

Original meanings of technology words (Used to practice)

What were the original meanings of these computer terms? Choose some ones you think you know or can make up and see if the class believe you.

attach
browse
bug
chat
click
clipboard
column
compatible
cookies
desktop
drag
floppy
lap(top)
mac
mouse
notebook
piracy
port
rip
row
scan
scroll
shopping cart
signature
smiley
spam
stream
surf
tablet
twitter/ tweet
virus
web
wireless
yahoo!

Useful language

“This used to just mean..., but now it also means...”

“This didn’t use to mean... but just meant...”

*Check your answers with the next page. Can you guess which is the original meaning?
(It’s pretty easy!)*

Check your answers as a class.

attach – join things together/ add a document to an email
browse – explore the internet/ walk around a shop looking without any plans to buy
bug – problems with computer code/ insect or other small creature
chat – small talk/ simultaneous keyboard communication
click – choose an icon/ a small sound such as a key makes when it locks or unlocks
clipboard – all the documents you have copied/ a thick piece of stiff cardboard with a clip at the top which means you can write on paper while you are standing up or on a chair with no table
column – the vertical part of a table/ the vertical supports of buildings, e.g. Greek temples
compatible – goes well together, e.g. a couple with personalities that don't crash/ software that can be used with a particular computer
cookies – biscuits/ a programme that remembers your details after you leave a webpage
desktop – the top of your desk/ the first screen you see on your computer
drag – pull something (usually heavy) along the floor without lifting it
floppy – an adjective that is the opposite of stiff, like an old cabbage leaf/ opposite of a hard disk
lap(top) – the top of your thighs when you are sitting down/ a portable computer
mac – an Apple product/ short for macintosh, meaning a long but thin raincoat
mouse – a small creature similar to a rat, e.g. Mickey/ the thing used to control a computer with one hand
notebook – a pad of blank or lined paper in the form of a book/ a small laptop
piracy – making illegal copies to sell/ boarding people's ships to steal from them, take them as slaves etc
port – somewhere where ships can load and unload/ places where you can connect things to a computer
rip – tear/ copy something onto a CD
row – the horizontal part of a table/ a sideways line of seats, e.g. seats in a plane that have the same number but different letters
scan – change a hard copy into an electronic one/ look at something from top to bottom or side to side
scroll – move down a website or document to see something further down/ a rolled up piece of paper etc, e.g. used before books existed
shopping cart – the things you have chosen so far on a website/ the trolley for customers in a supermarket
signature – your name, address etc at the bottom of your emails/ the official form of your name on documents such as a cheque
smiley – cheerful / :)
spam – the most famous processed meat brand/ junk mail
stream – a verb meaning live broadcast by the internet/ a small river
surf – stand on a surfboard in the sea/ explore the internet
tablet – a 3D rectangular shape such as a pill/ a computer like an iPad
twitter/ tweet – the sounds of small birds/ the most famous microblogging service
virus – a computer program that is designed to spread and damage computers or steal data/ a pathogen that makes you ill, often confused with bacteria
web – the internet/ what a spider lives in and catches its food in
wireless – internet access without a cable/ a radio
yahoo! – a happy shout/ a popular internet portal