



# How does a computer work?

Patricia Ndlovu

Pexels; Pixabay





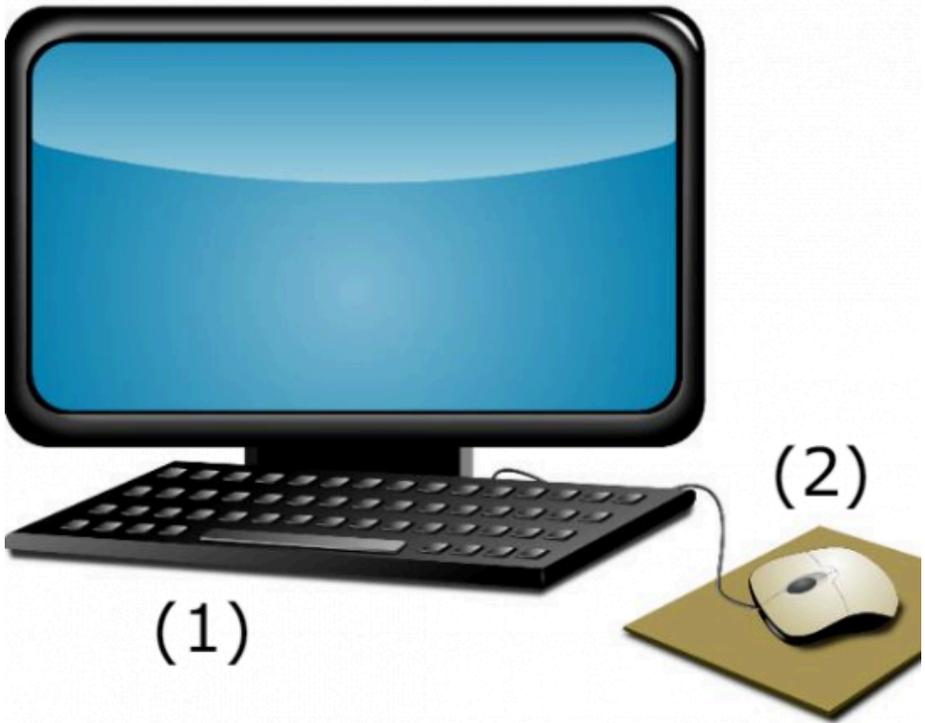
Computers work with information called data.

Data can be in the form of letters, numbers, pictures, and sounds.



When you put information into a computer, you input data.

Typing on a computer keyboard is one way to input data.



We use these tools to input data to a computer:

keyboard (1)

mouse (2)



We use these tools to input data in the form of sound and pictures:

microphone (3)

camera (4)



We also get data from a computer.

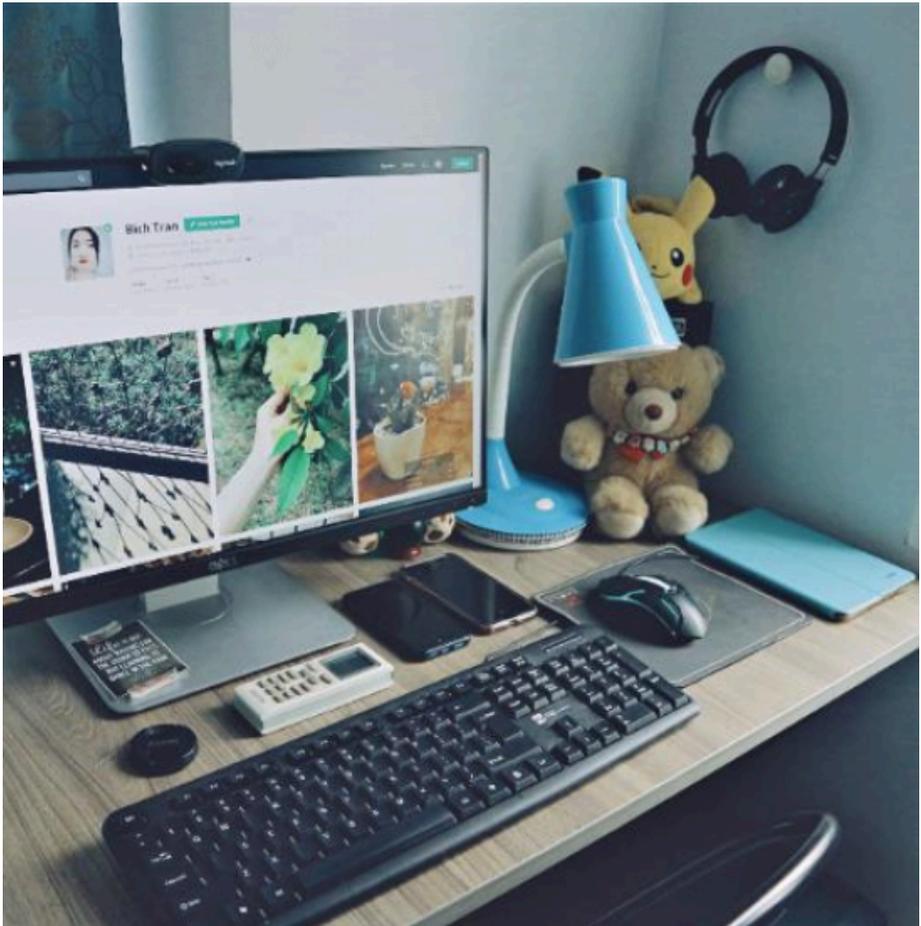
The data we get from a computer is called output.

A loudspeaker (5) and a screen (6) give us output.



A screen (6) gives output in pictures, letters, and numbers.

Loudspeakers and earphones (7) give output as sounds.



Hardware are the physical parts of the computer; the parts you can touch.

The screen, keyboard, speakers, mouse, microphone, and headphones are all hardware.



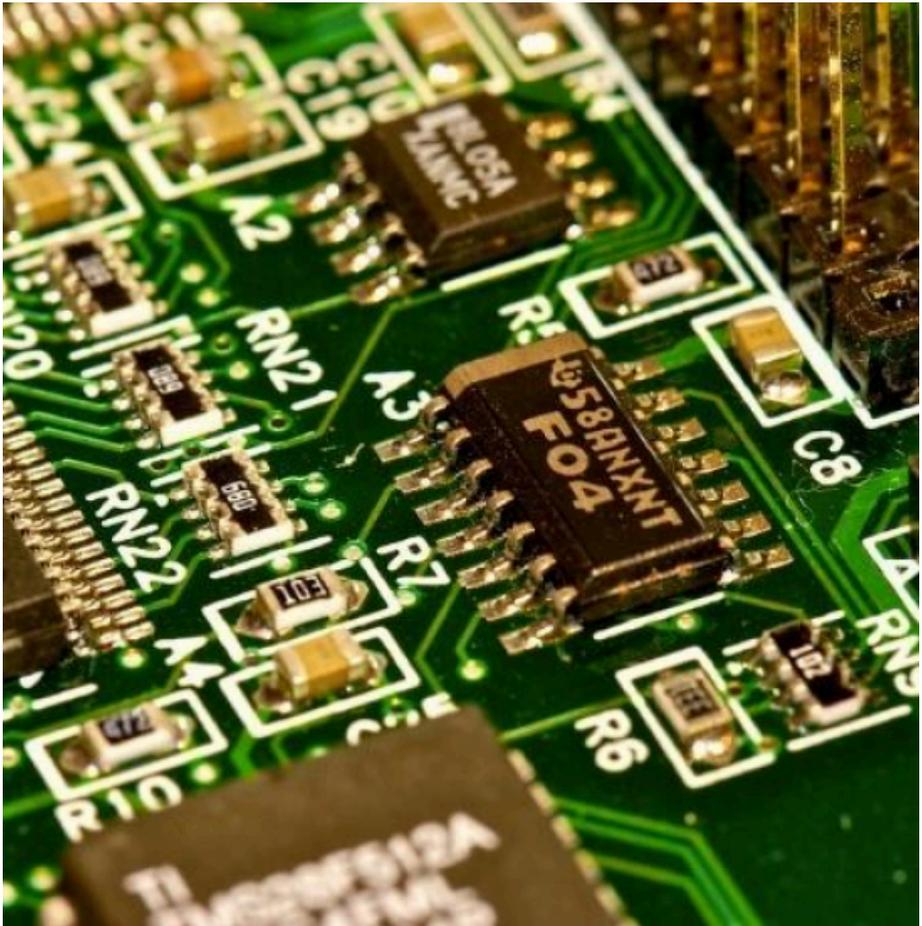
A computer needs software for us to be able to use it.

Software gives instructions to the computer about how to work with different data.



Programs and applications are forms of software.

For example, you need a camera application on a smartphone to take photographs and videos.



If you look inside a computer, you will see many small parts called computer chips.

Computer chips process information to make the computer work.

## —Questions

1. What do you call the information in a computer?
2. A keyboard and a mouse are tools are examples of ....
3. What do we call data we get from a computer?
4. Give two examples of hardware.
5. What is software?

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This book is the second one in a series of four books introducing topics in computer technology.

The storybook was created for the Zenex Ulwazi Lwethu reading materials project in 2021.



Ulwazi Lwethu is a Zenex Foundation funded and initiated project to develop a series of graded and leisure African language readers and teacher support materials. This project is targeted at teaching and supporting learners in the Foundation Phase to improve their home language reading and understanding. The readers have been originated in nine African languages in collaboration with Molteno Institute for Language and Literacies, Nelson Mandela Institute for Education and Rural Development, Room to Read South Africa, and Saide. All resources are developed as Open Education Resources (OER).



Your attribution should include the following:

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