



The Ultimate Computer Reference



*The Comprehensive Standard for
Business, School, Library, and Home*



Microsoft Press[®] **Computer Dictionary** Third Edition

- *Over 300 illustrations and diagrams*
- *Extensive Internet coverage*
- *Featured in Microsoft[®] Bookshelf[®]*
- *Covers software, hardware, concepts, and more!*

Microsoft Press

Microsoft Press

Computer Dictionary

Third Edition

Microsoft Press

PUBLISHED BY

Microsoft Press
A Division of Microsoft Corporation
One Microsoft Way
Redmond, Washington 98052-6399

Copyright © 1997 by Microsoft Corporation

All rights reserved. No part of the contents of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without the written permission of the publisher.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Microsoft Press Computer Dictionary. -- 3rd ed.

p. cm.

ISBN 1-57231-446-X

1. Computers--Dictionaries. 2. Microcomputers--Dictionaries.

I. Microsoft Press.

QA76.15.M54 1997

004'.03--dc21

97-15489

CIP

Printed and bound in the United States of America.

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 QMQM 2 1 0 9 8 7

Distributed to the book trade in Canada by Macmillan of Canada, a division of Canada Publishing Corporation.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Microsoft Press books are available through booksellers and distributors worldwide. For further information about international editions, contact your local Microsoft Corporation office. Or contact Microsoft Press International directly at fax (425) 936-7329.

Macintosh, Power Macintosh, QuickTime, and TrueType are registered trademarks of Apple Computer, Inc. Intel is a registered trademark of Intel Corporation. DirectInput, DirectX, Microsoft, Microsoft Press, MS-DOS, Visual Basic, Visual C++, Win32, Win32s, Windows, Windows NT, and XENIX are registered trademarks and ActiveMovie, ActiveX, and Visual J++ are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. Java is a trademark of Sun Microsystems, Inc. Other product and company names mentioned herein may be the trademarks of their respective owners.

Acquisitions Editor: Kim Fryer

Project Editor: Maureen Williams Zimmerman, Anne Taussig

Technical Editors: Dail Magee Jr., Gary Nelson, Jean Ross, Jim Fuchs, John Conrow, Kurt Meyer,
Robert Lyon, Roslyn Lutsch

density disks increased that capacity to 360 KB. Double-density disks use modified frequency modulation encoding for storing data. *See also* floppy disk, microfloppy disk, modified frequency modulation encoding. *Compare* high-density disk.

double-dereference \dəˈbl-dē-refˈər-əns, -dē-refˈrəns\ *vb.* To dereference a pointer that is pointed to by another pointer; in other words, to access the information pointed to by a handle. *See also* dereference, handle (definition 1), pointer (definition 1).

double-precision \dəˈbl-prə-sizhˈən\ *adj.* Of, pertaining to, or characteristic of a number stored in twice the amount (two words—typically 8 bytes) of computer memory that is required for storing a less precise (single-precision) number. Double-precision numbers are commonly handled by a computer in floating-point form. *See also* floating-point number. *Compare* single-precision.

double-sided disk \dəˈbl-sī-dəd disk\ *n.* A floppy disk that can hold data on both its top and bottom surfaces.

double-strike \dəˈbl-strīk\ *n.* On an impact printer, such as a daisy-wheel printer, the process of printing twice over a word, producing text that appears darker and heavier, or bolder, than it normally appears. On dot-matrix printers, double striking with a slight offset can be used to fill in the space between the dots, producing smoother and darker characters.

double word \dəˈbl wərd\ *n.* A unit of data consisting of two contiguous words (connected bytes, not text) that are handled together by a computer's microprocessor.

doubly linked list \dəˈblē lēnkɪd list\ *n.* A series of nodes (items representing discrete segments of information) in which each node refers to both the next node and the preceding node. Because of these two-way references, a doubly linked list can be traversed both forward and backward, rather than in a forward direction only, as with a singly linked list.

down \daʊn\ *adj.* Not functioning, in reference to computers, printers, communications lines on networks, and other such hardware.

download \daʊnˈlōd\ *n.* The transmission of data from a communications satellite to an earth station.

download \daʊnˈlōd\ *vb.* **1.** In communications, to transfer a copy of a file from a remote computer to the requesting computer by means of a modem or network. **2.** To send a block of data, such as a PostScript file, to a dependent device, such as a PostScript printer. *Compare* upload.

downloadable font \daʊnˈlō-də-bl font\ *n.* A set of characters stored on disk and sent (downloaded) to a printer's memory when needed for printing a document. Downloadable fonts are most commonly used with laser printers and other page printers, although many dot-matrix printers can accept some of them. *Also called* soft font.

downsizing \daʊnˈsīzɪŋ\ *n.* In computing, the practice of moving from larger computer systems, such as mainframes and minicomputers, to smaller systems in an organization, generally to save costs and to update to newer software. The smaller systems are usually client/server systems composed of a combination of PCs, workstations, and some legacy system such as a mainframe, connected in one or more local area networks or wide area networks. *See also* client/server architecture, legacy system.

downstream \daʊn-strēm\ *n.* The direction in which a news feed for a newsgroup is passed from one news server to the next. *See also* news feed, news server, newsgroup.

downtime \daʊnˈtīm\ *n.* The amount or percentage of time a computer system or associated hardware remains nonfunctional. Although downtime can occur because hardware fails unexpectedly, it can also be a scheduled event, as when a network is shut down to allow time for maintenance.

downward compatibility \daʊnˈwərd kəm-patˈə-bilˈə-tē\ *n.* The capability of source code or programs developed on a more advanced system or compiler version to be executed or compiled by a less advanced (older) version. *Compare* upward-compatible.

DP \D-P\ *n.* *See* data processing.

dpi \DˈP-I\ *n.* *See* dots per inch.

DPMA \DˈP-M-A\ *n.* Acronym for **Data Processing Management Association**. A trade organization of information systems (IS) professionals. DPMA was founded in 1951 as the National Machine Accountants Association.

DPMI \DˈP-M-I\ *n.* Acronym for **DOS Protected Mode Interface**. A software interface, originally



Pentium \pen'tē-um\ *n.* A microprocessor introduced by Intel Corporation in March 1993 as the successor to the i486. The Pentium is a superscalar, CISC-based microprocessor containing 3.3 million transistors. The Pentium has a 32-bit address bus, a 64-bit data bus, a built-in floating-point unit and memory management unit, two built-in 8-KB L1 caches, and a System Management Mode (SMM), which provides the microprocessor with the ability to slow or halt some system components when the system is idle or performing non-CPU-intensive tasks, thereby lessening power consumption. The Pentium also employs *branch prediction*, resulting in faster system performance. In addition, the Pentium has some built-in features to ensure data integrity, and it supports functional redundancy checking (FRC). *See also* branch prediction, CISC, functional redundancy checking, i486DX, L1 cache, microprocessor, P5, superscalar. *Compare* Pentium Pro (definition 1).

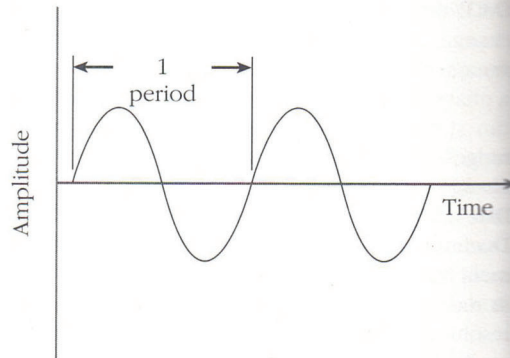
Pentium Pro \pen'tē-um prō'\ *n.* **1.** Intel's 150–200 MHz family of 32-bit processors, released in November 1995. The Pentium Pro is considered the next generation of processors in the 8086 family, following the Pentium, and is designed for running 32-bit operating systems and applications. *See also* 32-bit application, 32-bit operating system, 8086, microprocessor, Pentium. **2.** A PC that has a Pentium Pro processor.

Pentium upgradable \pen'tē-um up-grā'də-bl\ *n.* **1.** An i486 motherboard capable of being adapted to run a Pentium-class processor. *See also* i486DX, microprocessor, motherboard, Pentium. **2.** A 486 PC that can be upgraded to Pentium class by adding a Pentium processor. *See also* i486DX.

perfboard \pərf'bōrd\ *n.* Short for **perforated fiber board**. *See* breadboard.

performance monitor \pərf'fōrməns mon'ə-tər\ *n.* A process or program that appraises and records status information about various system devices and other processes.

period \pēr'ē-əd\ *n.* The length of time required for an oscillation to complete one full cycle. For an oscillating electrical signal, the period is the time between waveform repetitions. If f is the frequency of oscillation in hertz, and t is the period in seconds, then $t = 1/f$. *See* the illustration.



Period. The period of an oscillating signal.

peripheral \pə-rif'ər-əl\ *n.* In computing, a device, such as a disk drive, printer, modem, or joystick, that is connected to a computer and is controlled by the computer's microprocessor. *Also called* peripheral device. *See also* console.

Peripheral Component Interconnect \pə-rif'ər-əl kəm-pō'nənt in'tər-kə-nekt'\ *n.* *See* PCI local bus.

peripheral device \pə-rif'ər-əl dē-vīs'\ *n.* *See* peripheral.

peripheral power supply \pə-rif'ər-əl pou'ər su-plī'\ *n.* An auxiliary source of electricity used by a computer or a device as a backup in case of a power failure. *Acronym:* PPS (P'P-S').

Perl \pərl\ *n.* Acronym for **Practical Extraction and Report Language**. An interpreted language, based on C and several UNIX utilities. Perl has powerful string-handling features for extracting information from text files. Perl can assemble a string and send it to the shell as a command; hence, it is often used for system administration tasks. A program in Perl is known as a script. Perl was devised by Larry Wall at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

permanent storage \pə'r-mə-nənt stōr'əj\ *n.* A recording medium that retains the data recorded on it for long periods of time without power. Ink on paper is by far the most widely used permanent storage, but data can be transferred from paper to a computer only with difficulty. Typically, some form of magnetic medium, such as floppy disk or tape, is preferable. Magnetic media are generally accepted as permanent, even though the magnetic fields that encode data in the media tend to fade

Explore Litigation Insights

Docket Alarm provides insights to develop a more informed litigation strategy and the peace of mind of knowing you're on top of things.

Real-Time Litigation Alerts



Keep your litigation team up-to-date with **real-time alerts** and advanced team management tools built for the enterprise, all while greatly reducing PACER spend.

Our comprehensive service means we can handle Federal, State, and Administrative courts across the country.

Advanced Docket Research



With over 230 million records, Docket Alarm's cloud-native docket research platform finds what other services can't. Coverage includes Federal, State, plus PTAB, TTAB, ITC and NLRB decisions, all in one place.

Identify arguments that have been successful in the past with full text, pinpoint searching. Link to case law cited within any court document via Fastcase.

Analytics At Your Fingertips



Learn what happened the last time a particular judge, opposing counsel or company faced cases similar to yours.

Advanced out-of-the-box PTAB and TTAB analytics are always at your fingertips.

API

Docket Alarm offers a powerful API (application programming interface) to developers that want to integrate case filings into their apps.

LAW FIRMS

Build custom dashboards for your attorneys and clients with live data direct from the court.

Automate many repetitive legal tasks like conflict checks, document management, and marketing.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Litigation and bankruptcy checks for companies and debtors.

E-DISCOVERY AND LEGAL VENDORS

Sync your system to PACER to automate legal marketing.