

3. Sometimes computer breakdowns are easy to solve; a computer that suddenly shuts off can simply have a failing power supply, so checking that the computer is properly plugged in is enough. What technical advice would you give to solve the problems described in Exercises 1 and 2? Work in small groups.
4. Read the text about the components of a desktop computer and complete the missing headings with the titles in the box:

Additional ports Computer monitor Expansion cards Random Access Memory Hard-disc drive

Computer case or system box

It contains the CPU (Central Processing Unit). It can also house RAM (Random Access Memory).

Input devices

The primary input devices are the keyboard and mouse.

1

It is a television-like device that can display text, images and video. Most computers have flat screen Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) or LED monitors.

Motherboard

The majority of parts making up a functional computer connect, directly or indirectly, to an electronic circuit board: the motherboard.

Central processing unit

All computers process data. The hardware handling the majority of this workload is the Central Processing Unit, or CPU. It consists of one or more processing chips.

2

As a computer operates, it needs a place to store and retrieve data. A computer's fast memory is in storage chips known as RAM. Data stored there is lost when the computer is shut down or restarted.

3

The primary hardware used to store data for long-term access is the hard-disc drive.

CD/DVD drive

A method of storing data for the long-term is a compact disc (CD) or DVD (digital video disc). A CD or DVD drive is used to read, and sometimes write, these discs.

Floppy drive

An older type of disc drive is the floppy drive. The discs it reads and writes are flimsy and flexible.

Power supply (PSU)

A computer's power supply unit regulates the electricity needed by the other components to operate. Most computers use between 300 and 500 watts. This can be provided by a battery or a power outlet.

4

Most motherboards provide one or more expansion slots for different types of card, including for example, for graphic cards, network cards and sound cards.

5

Small receptors through which additional (or peripheral) external devices can be connected to the computer: serial, parallel and Universal Serial Bus (or USB) ports.

Cooling devices

Fans are the most common device used to cool a PC. The CPU is also covered by a metallic block called a heat sink, which draws heat away from the CPU.

Cables

All the components are connected by a combination of cables designed to carry data, power or both.

Any piece of hardware that isn't inside a PC's casing is called a peripheral. This includes monitors, keyboards and mice. But also printers, speakers, headphones, microphones, webcams and USB flash drives. Anything you can plug in to a port on the PC is one of its peripherals.

