

fifth edition

Dictionary of Computing

OVER 10,000 TERMS CLEARLY DEFINED

‘Enables you to cut through jargon’
Teacher Trainer

IDEAL FOR SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

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grown in well-managed forests. The manufacturing processes conform to the environmental
regulations of the country of origin.

control character /kən'trəʊl ˌkæriktə/ *noun* a special character that provides a control sequence

'...there are seven print control characters which can be placed in a document' [*Personal Computer World*]

control computer /kən'trəʊl kəm ˌpjʊtə/ *noun* a dedicated computer used to control a process or piece of equipment

control cycle /kən'trəʊl ˌsaɪk(ə)l/ *noun* the events required to retrieve, decode and execute an instruction stored in memory

control data /kən'trəʊl ˌdeɪtə/ *noun* data that controls the actions of a device

control-driven /kən'trəʊl ˌdri:v(ə)n/ *adjective* referring to computer architecture where instructions are executed once a control sequence has been received

control field /kən'trəʊl fi:ld/ *noun* a storage area for control instructions

control group /kən'trəʊl gru:p/ *noun* a small group which is used to check a sample group

control instruction /kən'trəʊl ɪn ˌstrʌktʃən/ *noun* a program instruction that controls the actions of a device ○ *The next control instruction will switch to italics.*

control key /kən'trəʊl ki:/ *noun* (on IBM-PC compatible systems) a special key, usually in the lower left corner of the keyboard, that provides a secondary function when pressed with another key ○ *To halt a program, press Ctrl-C – the control key and letter C – at the same time.* Abbr **Ctrl**

control language /kən'trəʊl ˌlæŋgwɪdʒ/ *noun* commands that identify and describe the resources required by a job that a computer has to perform

controlled vocabulary /kənˌtrəʊld vəʊˈkæbjʊləri/ *noun* a set of terms or words used in an indexing language

controller /kən'trəʊlə/ *noun* a hardware or software device that controls a peripheral such as a printer, or that monitors and directs the data transmission over a local area network

'...a printer's controller is the brains of the machine. It translates the signals coming from your computer into printing instructions that result in a hard copy of your electronic document' [*Publish*]

control memory /kən'trəʊl ˌmem(ə)ri/ *noun* memory which decodes control instructions into microinstructions that operate the computer or microcontroller

control menu /kən'trəʊl ˌmenju:/ *noun* (in Microsoft Windows) a menu that allows you to move, resize or close the current window, and that is accessed by pressing Alt-Space

control mode /kən'trəʊl məʊd/ *noun* the state of a device in which control signals can be received to select options or functions

control panel /kən'trəʊl ˌpæn(ə)l/ *noun* **1.** a panel with indicators and switches that allows an operator to monitor and control the actions of a computer or peripheral **2.** a utility that displays the user-definable options such as keyboard, country-code and type of mouse

control register /kən'trəʊl ˌredʒɪstə/ *noun* a storage location for control data

control ROM /kənˌtrəʊl ˈrɒm/ *noun* same as **control memory**

control sequence /kən'trəʊl ˌsi:kwəns/ *noun* a series of codes containing a control character and various arguments, used to carry out a process or change mode in a device

control signals /kən'trəʊl ˌsɪgn(ə)lz/ *plural noun* electrical signals transmitted to control the actions of a circuit

control statement /kən'trəʊl ˌsteɪtmənt/ *noun* **1.** a program instruction that directs a CPU to provide controlling actions or controls the operation of the CPU **2.** a program instruction which directs a program, e.g. to another branch

control structure /kən'trəʊl ˌstrʌktʃə/ *noun* a set of instructions that are run in a particular circumstance. An IF.THEN statement selects a particular control structure depending on the value of a variable.

control systems /kən'trəʊl ˌsɪstəmz/ *plural noun* systems used to check that a computer system is working correctly

control token /kən'trəʊl ˌtəʊkən/ *noun* a special sequence of bits transmitted over a LAN to provide control actions

control total /kən'trəʊl ˌtəʊt(ə)l/ *noun* the result of summing certain fields in a computer file to provide error detection

control transfer /kən'trəʊl ˌtrænsfə:/ *noun* the redirection of the CPU when a jump or call instruction is encountered

control unit /kən'trəʊl ˌju:nɪt/ *noun* the section of the CPU which selects and executes instructions

overscan /'əʊvəskæn/ *noun* **1.** a faulty or badly adjusted monitor in which the displayed image runs off the edge of the screen **2.** display equipment in which the picture beam scans past the screen boundaries to ensure that the image fills the screen

over-voltage protection /,əʊvə'vɒltɪdʒ prə'tekʃ(ə)n/ *noun* a safety de-

vice that prevents a power supply voltage exceeding certain specified limits

overwrite /,əʊvə'reɪt/ *verb* to write data to a location, e.g. memory or disk, and, in doing so, to destroy any data already contained in that location ○ *The latest data input has overwritten the old information.*

(NOTE: overwriting – overwrote – overwritten)

P

p *abbr* pico-

P *abbr* peta

pack /pæk/ *noun* a number of disks sold or kept together ■ *verb* to store a quantity of data in a reduced form, often by representing several characters of data with one stored character

package deal /'pækɪdʒ di:l/ *noun* an agreement in which several different items are agreed at the same time ○ *They agreed a package deal, which involves the development of software, customising hardware and training of staff.*

packaged software /,pækɪdʒd 'sɒftweɪ/ *noun* same as **software package**

packed decimal /pækt 'desɪm(ə)l/ *noun* a sequence of decimal digits stored in a small space, by using only four bits for each digit

packed format /pækt 'fɔ:mæt/ *noun* two binary coded decimal digits stored within one computer word or byte, usually achieved by removing the check or parity bit

packet /'pækɪt/ *noun* a group of data bits which can be transmitted as a group from one node to another over a network

packet assembler/disassembler /,pækɪt ə'semblə ,dɪsə'semblə/ *noun* a dedicated computer which converts serial data from asynchronous terminals to a form that can be transmitted along a pack-

et-switched, synchronous network. *Abbr PAD*

packet Internet groper /,pækɪt ,ɪntənət 'grəʊpə/ *noun* full form of **PING** (*see*)

packet scheduler /'pækɪt ,ʃedʒʊlə/ *noun* a part of a network router that determines when to transmit the packet of data to the final destination based on the route that has been selected

packet switching /'pækɪt swɪtʃɪŋ/ *noun* a method of sending data across a WAN in small packets, which are then re-assembled in the correct order at the receiving end

'The network is based on Northern Telecom DPN data switches over which it will offer X.25 packet switching, IBM SNA, and frame-relay transmission.' [*Computing*]

packet switching service /'pækɪt ,swɪtʃɪŋ ,sɜ:vɪs/ *noun* a commercial data transmission service that sends data over its WAN using packet switching. *Abbr PSS*

packing /'pækɪŋ/ *noun* the process of putting large amounts of data into a small area of storage

packing density /'pækɪŋ ,densɪti/ *noun* the number of bits that can be stored in a unit area

packing routine /'pækɪŋ ru:ti:n/ *noun* a program which packs data into a small storage area