

Webster's NewWorld Dictionary[®] *of* Computer Terms

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Macmillan General Reference
A Prentice Hall Macmillan Company
15 Columbus Circle
New York, NY 10023

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A Webster's New World™ Book

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Dictionary Editorial Offices:
New World Dictionaries
850 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44114

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Spencer, Donald.

ISBN: 0-671-89993-7

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Fifth Edition

Daingean EX2006
AT&T et al v Daingean, IPR2024-00310

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parallel printer A printer that receives information from the computer one character (letter, number, etc.) at a time through eight wires. Additional wires are used to exchange control signals. A parallel printer is designed to be connected to the computer's parallel port.

parallel processing (1) The technique by which all levels of a process are carried out simultaneously. Contrast with SERIAL PROCESSING. (2) A method of processing that can run only on a type of computer containing two or more processors running simultaneously. (3) A procedure that consists of the breaking down of a problem into separate components so that the computer program and the computer can work on each component simultaneously.

parallel processor A computer that is capable of performing multiple operations at the same time.

parallel projection The process of projecting an image from the three-dimensional view volume onto the two-dimensional graphics display with parallel projectors. Objects at any distance from the eye point maintain their apparent size under parallel projection.

parallel run The process of running a new system or program parallel with the old system to ensure a smooth transition and error-free conversion. Same as parallel conversion.

parallel storage device An AUXILIARY STORAGE DEVICE on which an entire byte or word is encoded in one operation.

parallel transmission In DATA COMMUNICATIONS, a method of data transfer in which all bits of a character are set simultaneously. Contrast with SERIAL TRANSMISSION.

parameter (1) Any arbitrary constant, especially one characteristic or even definitive of a given system. (2) A variable in an algebraic expression that temporarily assumes the properties of a constant. For example, in $y = mx + b$, m and b are parameters if either is treated as a constant in a family of lines.

parameterized class In OBJECT-ORIENTED PROGRAMMING, a class that