

DICTIONARY
OF
SCIENCE
AND
TECHNOLOGY

Simon Collin

BLOOMSBURY

A BLOOMSBURY REFERENCE BOOK

First edition published 2003

Bloomsbury Publishing Plc
38 Soho Square
London W1D 3HB

© Bloomsbury Publishing 2003

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced
in any form or by any means without the permission of the publishers

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

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

ISBN 0-7475-6620-8

Text computer typeset by Bloomsbury Publishing

Printed in Italy by Legoprint

digestive tract *noun* ANAT same as **alimentary canal**

digit *noun* MATHS a symbol or character which represents an integer that is smaller than the radix of the number base used ○ *a phone number with eight digits or an eight-digit phone number* ○ *the decimal digit 8* ○ *The decimal number system uses the digits 0123456789.*

digital *adjective* MATHS, COMPUT representing data or physical quantities in numerical form, especially using a binary system in computer-related devices

digital audio tape *noun* COMPUT a compact cassette, smaller than an audio cassette, that provides a system of recording sound as digital information onto magnetic tape with very high-quality reproduction. Abbreviation **DAT** (NOTE: It is also used as a high-capacity tape backup system that can store 1.33 Gb of data.)

digital circuit *noun* COMPUT an electronic circuit that operates on digital information providing logical functions or switching

digital computer *noun* COMPUT a computer which processes data in digital form

digital data *noun* COMPUT data represented in numerical form, usually binary

digital display *noun* COMPUT a video display that can only show a fixed number of colours or shades of grey

digital logic *noun* COMPUT the application of Boolean algebra to hardware circuits

digital read-out *noun* COMPUT data displayed in numerical form, e.g. a display of numbers on an LCD in a calculator

digital resolution *noun* COMPUT the smallest number that can be represented with one digit, the value assigned to the least significant bit of a word or number

digital signal *noun* ELEC an electric signal that has only a number of possible states, as opposed to an analog signal which is continuously variable

digital signalling *noun* ELEC ENG control and dialling codes sent down a telephone line in digital form

digital signal processing *noun* ELEC ENG a special integrated circuit used to manipulate digital signals. Abbreviation **DSP**

digital signature *noun* COMPUT a unique identification code sent by a terminal or device in digital form

digital subscriber line *noun* TELECOM a system of transmitting data at high speed over standard telephone wire. Abbreviation **DSL** (NOTE: One of the most popular DSLs is the asymmetric digital subscriber line scheme that provides a permanent, high-speed connection to the Internet over standard telephone lines.)

digital switching *noun* ELEC ENG the operation of communications connections and switches by digital signals

digital to analog converter *noun* ELEC ENG a circuit that outputs an analog signal that is proportional to the input digital number, and so converts a digital input to an analog form. Abbreviation **DAC**

digital versatile disc, digital videodisc *noun* COMPUT full form of **DVD**

digital video interactive *noun* COMPUT a system that defines how video and audio signals should be compressed and displayed on a computer. Abbreviation **DV-I**

digitise, digitize *verb* ELEC ENG to change analog movement or signals into a digital form which can be processed, e.g. by computers ○ *We can digitise your signature to allow it to be printed with any laser printer.*

digitiser, digitizer *noun* ELEC ENG an analog to digital device which converts an analog signal to a digital one which can be understood by a computer

digit place, digit position *noun* MATHS the position of a digit within a number

dihybrid *noun* GENETICS an organism that is heterozygous for two genes, each gene being represented by two variant forms (**alleles**)

dihydrate *noun* CHEM a chemical that contains two molecules of water of crystallisation

DIL *noun* ELEC a standard layout for integrated circuit packages using two parallel rows of connecting pins along each side. Full form **dual-in-line package**

dilatation *noun* MED same as **dilation**

dilate *verb* to increase in volume

dilation *noun* 1. an increase in volume
2. MED the process of widening, enlarg-