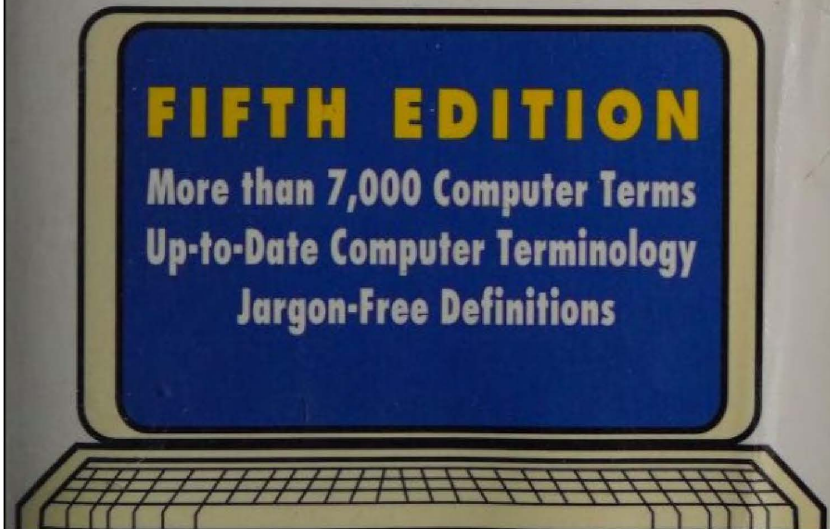


Webster's NewWorld Dictionary[®] *of* Computer Terms

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FIFTH EDITION

More than 7,000 Computer Terms
Up-to-Date Computer Terminology
Jargon-Free Definitions



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drift A change in the output of an electric circuit that occurs slowly over a period of time.

drill-and-practice program Teaching software that reinforces old lessons.

drive The physical components necessary for writing data to, and reading data from, a diskette or disk. Short name for DISK DRIVE.

drive bay A reserved space in a computer where extra drives may be installed.

drive designator A letter that informs the operating system which disk drive to use.

drive number The naming convention for disk drives. For example, the drives in a two-drive Apple Macintosh system are 0 and 1; in a two-drive IBM-compatible microcomputer system, the drives are A and B.

driver A series of instructions the computer follows to reformat data for transfer to and from a particular peripheral device. Electrical and mechanical requirements differ from one kind of device to another, and software drivers are used to standardize the format of data between them and the computer.

DRO Abbreviation for **destructive read out**. See DESTRUCTIVE READ.

drop (1) In a network, the remote terminal location. (2) The distance between the top and bottom of a sheet of computer stationery, measured in millimeters or inches.

drop cap An initial letter of a chapter or paragraph enlarged and positioned so that the top of the character is even with the top of the first line and the rest of the character descends into the second and subsequent lines.

drop dead halt A halt from which there is no recovery.

drop-down menu A type of menu that drops from the menu bar when requested and remains open without further action until the user closes it or chooses a menu item. Same as PULL-DOWN MENU.

publishing cycle In DESKTOP PUBLISHING, the movement of a document from creation to final printing.

Publish It! A full-featured desktop publishing program that allows for the designing, layout, production, and printing of professional-looking documents. Publish It! runs on IBM-compatible microcomputers.

puck A hand-held, manually controlled graphics input device used to pinpoint coordinates on a digitizing tablet. A transparent window containing cross hairs allows coordinate data to be digitized into the system from a drawing placed on the digitizing tablet surface.

pull See POP.

pull-down menu A second-level menu, or list of commands, that appears from the top of the screen when a command needs to be given and then disappears when the selection has been made. A pull-down menu is usually used as an extension to a menu bar. To select an option on a pull-down menu, users press and hold down the mouse button while dragging the mouse pointer down the menu until the desired option is highlighted.

pull instruction An instruction that pulls or retrieves data from the top of the program PUSH-DOWN STACK. Same as POP instruction.

pull-out quote In DESKTOP PUBLISHING, a quotation extracted from the copy of text and printed in larger type in the column.

pulse An abrupt change in voltage, either positive or negative, that conveys information to a circuit.

pulse modulation The use of a series of pulses that are modulated or characterized to convey information. Types of pulse modulation include amplitude (PAM), position (PPM), and duration (PDM) systems.

punched card A cardboard card used in data processing operations, in which tiny rectangular holes at (possibly) hundreds of individual locations denote numerical values and alphanumeric codes. Punched cards were used extensively in early computer systems, but have been replaced by interactive display terminals and floppy disks.