

Are smartphones and tablets computers?

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Yes, smartphones and tablets are indeed considered computers. A computer is really any device that accepts input from a user, performs calculations on that input, and provides an output to the user. Usually, with a smartphone and tablet input is provided using a touch screen interface and the output is seen on a screen.

Smartphones and tablets have many similarities to traditional desktop PCs. They have many of the same capabilities. They have some key differences, however, which are outlined in the following sections.

Similarities

Desktop computers, laptops, smartphones, and tablets have a lot in common. They all contain a CPU (central processing unit), memory, display functionality and use an operating system that runs programs (apps) to perform different functions.

ASUS Nexus 7 Android Tablet



Differences

Input device

One of the biggest differences between smartphones, tablets, and computers is their input device. Most traditional computers use a keyboard and a mouse, whereas smartphones and tablets use a touch screen interface.

Tip: Some tablets and smartphones accept peripherals, allowing a mouse and keyboard.

Software

Another big difference is software compatibility. Although many software applications work on all platforms, desktop and laptop computers usually run Microsoft Windows, macOS, or Linux operating systems. These systems are not compatible with tablets and smartphones, so your favorite computer programs may not be available on a tablet or smartphone.

Hardware and peripherals

Also, hardware devices, like printers, digital cameras, MP3 players, and external hard drives, are not compatible, which means without a computer, these devices cannot work.

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