

Glossary of Terms

account

a user id and password to gain access to a computer or terminal server. There are 5 major types of accounts:

- 1) PCMail / PCNews account, account to send and receive electronic mail and news respectively on a PC;
- 2) Unix account, account on one of our Unix machines. This will give you an area where you can read electronic mail and news, create files and directories, execute commands, and access Internet resources;
- 3) mainframe account, provides access to administrative applications;
- 4) Dialin account, provides authentication to use modem lines;
- 5) ARA account, provides authentication to use ARA (Apple Remote Access) software

ARA

Apple Remote Access, a program to allow full access to the UVA network including IP and AppleTalk services (Novell file Servers) over a phone line from a Macintosh computer

AppleTalk

an Apple network protocol that provides a way to share printers, file servers, and groupware services

archie

archie is a program that helps you find publicly accessible Internet files that you can transfer to your microcomputer. This searches other systems on the Internet for files matching the criteria you specify (file name and/or file type) and returns you a list of the locations of those files. The results are usually used with FTP (File Transfer Protocol).

ascii character

(ascii = American Standard Code for Information Interchange), a character set used by most of the computers in the United States

ascii file

A file that contains only ascii characters usually equivalent to plain text or DOS text. For comparison, see binary file

baud

a measure of the rate of transmission of a modem, see bps

BinHex

an encoding algorithm used on Macintosh computers for binary files

binary file

a file that is encoded in a computer natural format. For comparison, see ascii file

bit

binary digit; a computational quantity that can take on one of two values, 0 or 1

bootp

a protocol that assigns an IP address

bps

bits per second, see baud

byte

an amount of memory smaller than a word to represent one character; usually 8 bits

CD-ROM

Compact Disc Read Only Memory, a drive attached to a computer that holds large amounts of data on one disk (+/- 550MB)

client

a computer system or process that requests a service of another computer system or process (e.g., a computer requesting the contents of a file from a file server)

client-server

A programming/hardware model that divides tasks between computers

Cisco

company that makes modem hardware currently used by ITC's modem pool

compiler

a program that takes instructions written in a high level language (e.g., C, Fortran), and converts it into something the computer can understand

computer

machine that processes information

computer architecture

usually refers to the type of computer or the kind of software that will run on it (Macintosh , IBM , NeXT , RS/6000 , SGI , Sun , etc.)

consultant

a person who will try to help you solve your computer-related problems

CPU

Central Processing Unit, the main processing component of the computer

databox

a wall unit that usually has connections for telephone, cable TV, and computer data

default

the value supplied by the system when the user omits it from a parameter list on a command or control statement

Departmental Outreach

a project of ITC to provide ITC services to individual departments

Dialin Authentication

password protection for modem lines

directory

a named collection of files or subdirectories

editor

a program designed for entering and manipulating text via a keyboard

electronic mail

A form of communication characterized by the use of a computer to compose textual or non-textual messages, and the use of an electronic network to transmit the information. (This can also be referred to as email or e-mail.)

Electronic Text Center

combines an on-line archive of thousands of SGML encoded electronic texts with a library-based Center housing hardware and software suitable for the creation and analysis of text. The center is located in Alderman Library.

Ethernet Address

sequence of numbers that is coded into the hardware of the Ethernet device, as opposed to the IP address which is assigned by the bootp server or other methods

ethernet cable

a cable capable of transmitting ethernet signals most frequently 10baseT (looks like telephone wiring) and 10base2 (also called Thin Coax and looks like TV cable wiring)

ethernet card

a piece of computer hardware that allows computers to exchange information by sending electrical signals through ethernet cable

file

a contiguous collection of information that is accessed by name

file server

a computer which is mainly used to store and distribute files or programs

finger

A program that will check to see if someone is currently logged on to a system. It can display information (for example, someone's mail address) about users on a computer system on the Internet.

floppy disk

common name for 3.5" or 5.25" 'disk' of magnetic media used to store files and directories

floppy drive

a piece of computer hardware used to store and retrieve information from floppy disks. Comes in three varieties, 8" (obsolete), 5.25" (becoming obsolete), 3.5" (showing signs of aging)

folder

1. refers to a collection of files or other folders on Macintosh computers; the same as a directory on another operating system (q.v)
2. collection of electronic mail messages; also referred to as 'mail folder'

FTP (File Transfer Protocol)

a protocol and command designed for sending files between computers

FQDN

Fully Qualified Domain Name, usually refers to the full Internet name of a computer, e.g. darwin.clas.virginia.edu

gopher

A client-server document delivery service that is arranged as a hierarchical collection documents. GWIS is the UVa gopher server.

GWIS

Grounds wide information system: contains text based documents on the University of Virginia and provides access to many Internet resources around the world

hard drive

a piece of computer hardware used to store files or information, sometimes used incorrectly to refer to a 3.5" floppy disk, but differs from a floppy in that it can store more information, and is generally not removable. (You can take a floppy disk out of the floppy drive).

hardware

the physical devices associated with a computer such as the monitor, CPU, keyboard, printer, etc.

Help Desk

see ITC Help Desk

hostname

usually refers to the unique name given to a TCP/IP networked computer, usually only the first part of a FQDN

Host Presenter

an implementation of telnet for LAN Workplace (LWP)

HTML

HyperText Markup Language: a subset of SGML that is used to format documents for displaying on the World Wide Web.

HTTP

HyperText Transfer Protocol: the protocol used to transfer World Wide Web pages throughout the Internet.

Hypercard

a hypertext Multimedia package popular on Macintosh computers in the late 80's

implementation

the realization of a technical specification

IATH

Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, an institute established in 1992 with a major grant from IBM and a multi-year commitment of support from the University to provide national leadership in the application of information technology to the arts, humanities and social sciences

IBM (International Business Machines)

a large company that makes computer hardware and software

interface

a means by which the two systems interact (see user interface)

interpreter

a program that interactively reads and processes commands

Internet

A world-wide collection of smaller computer networks which use either the TCP/IP or OSI protocol suite (gateways exist to translate between the two protocols)

IP

Internet Protocol; protocol designed by DARPA, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, to connect heterogenous networks

IP Address

A code used by computers to locate or reference other computers

IRC (Internet Relay Chat)

A program allowing users throughout the Internet to communicate live by typing messages to each other.

ITC

Information Technology and Communication, the University's general purpose computing center. The mission of ITC is to provide and promote the information technology and communication bridge between the University community and its goals. See MCC .

ITC Help Desk

serves as the single point of contact for computing users to obtain help with ITC-supported computing and communications question or problems. There is a separate Help Desk for MCC .

ITC Micro Menu

Menu installed on the PC's in the labs for easy access to various applications

ITC Short Course

free, non-credit courses open to the University Community that are quick introductions to use of computers and applications

LAN

Local Area Network

Lan WorkPlace (LWP)

This is a Novell-produced product which allows PC-compatibles to run both the IP protocol (used by Unix and other computers) at the same time as IPX (used by Novell servers). It also includes several TCP/IP DOS programs, such as telnet and ftp, MS Windows programs like Host Presenter and Rapid Filer, and low-level utilities like PING and RSH.

LEO

Library Express On-grounds. This is a UVa document delivery / interlibrary loan service

Local Area Network (LAN)

a network consisting of geographically close computers

local printer

usually refers to a printer that is directly connected to a computer, as opposed to one connected via a network

login (verb)

a procedure used to establish communication to a computer in interactive mode

login (noun)

same as userid

login id

same as userid, your user name, or your login (noun)

Mac

a short name for the Macintosh computer

machine name

the name of a computer has been given (some have more than one name) see FQDN and hostname

Macintosh

type of microcomputer made by the Apple computer company

mail address

an address to where electronic mail is routed. The address is usually made up of the person's userid and FQDN of machine where their account resides, e.g.; mst3k@darwin.clas.virginia.edu

mailer

a program used to read and write electronic mail

Mail Folder

a file organized in a standard format where one or more e-mail messages are stored

main menu

usually refers to the first menu you encounter in a software program

mainframe

A type of computer suited for processing vast quantities of information

MCC

Medical Center Computing, people who handle critical medical computing operations. Not affiliated with ITC (Information Technology and Communication)

memory

computer hardware used to store information, not to be confused with hard drive

menu

a list of items that you may select that may do a variety of functions: provide information, start an application, show another set of choices.

microcomputer

at UVA, usually refers to either a PC or Macintosh (q.v.)

MS/DOS

Microsoft's Disk Operating System, the operating system used by most of the personal computers, PC , supported by ITC

Microsoft Windows

a graphical interface that runs on top of the MS/DOS operating system

MS Windows

same as Microsoft Windows

modem

a piece of computer hardware that allows computers to exchange information over a telephone line

Multimedia

usually refers to the combination of sound and video on a computer or software package

MVS

Multiple Virtual Systems, the operating system used by the mainframe

NeXT

multiuser Unix Workstation manufactured by NeXT corporation that runs the NeXTSTEP operating system (NeXT Turbo)

Netware

the operating system used by Novell fileservers

network

an interconnection of electrical and/or optical cable that is used for sending digital information from point to point

networked printer

a printer that is attached to a network and (generally) accessible by other machines on that network

newsgroup

Collection of related articles in the USENET news system. This is a way for users with common interests to share information.

NFS

network Filesystem, protocol originated by Sun Microsystems to facilitate file sharing between computers, over a network

NNTP

Net News Transfer Protocol, protocol used to facilitate the dissemination of USENET news

Norton Utilities

a set of utility programs for PCs and Macs that allows the user to restore crashed files and repair other problems with disks and hard drives.

Novell Menu

menu system used in some of the DOS-based computers on Grounds

Novell Fileserver

Provides central source for software and file storage capability for microcomputer users

on-line documentation

locally written and commercial documentation that is available by direct access on the computer

operating system

software that allows a computer to communicate with programs and hardware

parity

an extra bit added to a byte or word to reveal errors in a transmission

password

a sequence of alphanumeric characters when coupled with a userid provides access to a computer account

PC

Personal Computer, usually refers to an IBM-compatible microcomputer

PCMail

a program written by ITC to allow PC users to send and receive electronic mail

PCNews

a program written by ITC to allow PC users to send and receive USENET news

PIF

program Information File, used by Microsoft Windows programs to store information for a MS/DOS program that is run in Windows.

postscript

a file format which is a programming language with powerful graphics primitives for describing printed pages

PowerPC

RISC microprocessor developed by a consortium of IBM, Apple and Motorola (sometimes refers to the Power Macintosh, the first commercially available micro computer using this chip)

PPP

point to point protocol, IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force) Internet protocol used to connect machines over a serial (e.g. modem) line

print queue

a method of managing requests to print from a variety of computers to one printer

program

a set of instructions or steps that tells the computer how to perform a task.

programming language

a notation providing a means of writing computer source programs, which has syntax (the rules for forming grammatically correct statements in the language) and semantics (the rules for determining the meanings of the statements) e.g., Basic, C, Cobol, Fortran, Pascal

protocol

a set of standard conventions for transmitting information

PUBLIC

University of Virginia administrative information system on the mainframe which is in the process of being migrated to GWIS

Rapid Filer

a MS Windows program that allows file transfer between the microcomputer and a remote computer

remote computer

a computer that you are connecting to in different location from your local computer

Rolm

a phone electronics company, currently used at the University to provide phone service

RS/6000

a multiuser Unix Workstation manufactured by IBM that runs the AIX operating system. The majority of Unix accounts are on this class of machines.

SAS

statistical software package

search engine

a program that provides information based on a request entered on a WWW search form

server

a program or computer that provides some service to other programs or computers, see client

SGML

Standard, Generalized Markup Language

SLIP

Serial Line Internet Protocol, a way to have internet access through your modem and an authenticated dialin account

server

software or hardware that provides some service to a client (either a program or a comuter)

SGI

multiuser Unix Workstation manufactured by Silicon Graphics that runs the IRIX operating system (SGI Indigo, SGI Indy, SGI Crimson)

ITC short courses

computer classes offered to the University Community free of charge (non academic credit).

software

computer programs used to perform specific tasks. The routines can be written in either assembly language or a high-level language. User software is those routines w ritten by a user which are sometimes stored in a library. system software refers to the operating system.

Stacks

the PUBLIC microcomputer facility in Thorton A232, so named because it was the former site of the Science and Engineering Library

sub menu

a menu that is accessed under a main menu

Sun

multiuser Unix Workstation manufactured by Sun that runs the SunOS operating system (Sparc 20, Sun IPC, Sun 3/60)

SYSM

mainfram mailer for MVS (in transition)

system

a collection of parts that act in conjunction to produce a result

talk

A program that provides for real time chatting on the Internet by allowing you to type a message to another user who is also actively typing a message to you from his/her computer.

Tape archive

data stored on magnetic tape.

TCP/IP

transmission Control protocol / Internet Protocol, the Department of Defense's internetworking protocol suite, used by a number of other programs to facilitate communications between machines

Technical Information Bulletin (TIB)

ITC locally written documents on selected software and hardware supported by ITC.

telnet

This usually refers to a program that uses the telnet terminal emulation protocol to connect to different computer host machines over a network. It basically allows your computer keyboard and monitor to be used in accessing the other computer.

TERN

Teacher Education Resource Network

text file

A file that can be read by a human and one that can be transmitted between different programs and systems containing no graphics or formatting information, see ascii character

3090

mainframe (IBM 3090)

time sharing

an old system where people get chunks of time on a computer

transmission

flow of data from one entity to another

twisted pair cable

ethernet cable that looks like a normal RJ11 telephone wire

UBLAN

Ungerman Bass Local Area Network, a type of network that used to be widely used to connect UVa computers

Umenu

A menu driven User Interface on the RS/6000 computers written by ITC

Unix

an operating system; many manufacturers have their own version of Unix (e.g. SunOS, Solaris, AIX, HP/UX, IRIX, MACH, Linux)

Unix mail

mail delivered to a Unix machine, can be read by a variety of mail reading programs

UPS

Uninterruptable Power Supply, usually refers to a device that sits between the power supply (wall outlet) and a computer to prevent outages, surges, etc. to adversely affect performance.

URL (Uniform Resource Locator)

This is an address of a resource (document) on the Internet, specifying how the resource should be accessed. For example, WWW pages are resources identified with unique URLs:
<http://www.virginia.edu/home.html> is the URL for the UVA home page.

USENET

a distributed bulletin board shared among many computer systems in the computer science community

userid

unique 5-8 alphanumeric character combination that is assigned to a user's account. Typically the user will have the same userid for all accounts at UVA. Also known as a login id

User Interface

the environment that allows a human to interact with a computer (Windows, DOS prompt, Unix prompt, X Window system, Machintosh environment, etc.)

users

those who use computers

User Support

the division of ITC whose mission it is to be the primary point of contact for users needing assistance with their computing needs

uudecode

a program that converts an uuencoded file back into a binary file

uuencode

a program that converts a binary file into a form suitable for sending over a network

UVAnet

The University of Virginia's computer network

VA-PEN

Virginia PUBLIC Education Network

VCAT

the University's Electronic card catalog

Veronica

searching mechanism for gopher (q.v)

VIRGO

a collection of on-line University Library databases, including VCAT, WILS, and others

virus

a program that is unintentionally installed on one's microcomputer that when run can do annoying or perhaps damaging things to the system

vt100

a terminal emulation understood by most applications and computer architectures (IBM, Mac, Unix)

WILS

Wilson Periodic Indexes

Workstation

usually refers to a computer that is well-suited to running science or engineering applications. Some characteristics: large (15" or larger) monitor, floating point processor

word

fundamental unit of storage in a computer, usually the size used to represent an integer.

word processor

a program that facilitates the generation of written reports

WWW

World Wide Web, a distributed information network accross computers connected to the Internet that is accessible by using "browser" programs such as Lynx, Mosaic, or Netscape

<http://www.apexsoftware.com/>