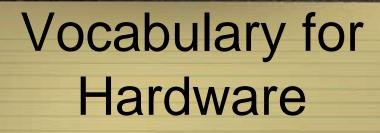




This section talks actually about all input devices, but, the two most common are the keyboard and mouse. An input device .... This is a tricky one :) ... will allow you to input data or images into your computer! Scanners, web cams, optical pens, and several new neat gadgets would all fall into this category.

Going back to our home, think of the input devices as the way we can get our house to do things ... the garage door opener, the doors, the a/c thermostat, even the buttons on our clock radios. All of these are input devices ... each one does something different and unique, and each one has a place.

With our computers, we should look for input devices that make our lives easier! If you're having trouble with your hands, maybe a speech recognition device is the trick (no more typing!) ... Or, if you're teaching a computer class, maybe turning your iPhone into a remote mouse is the ticket!



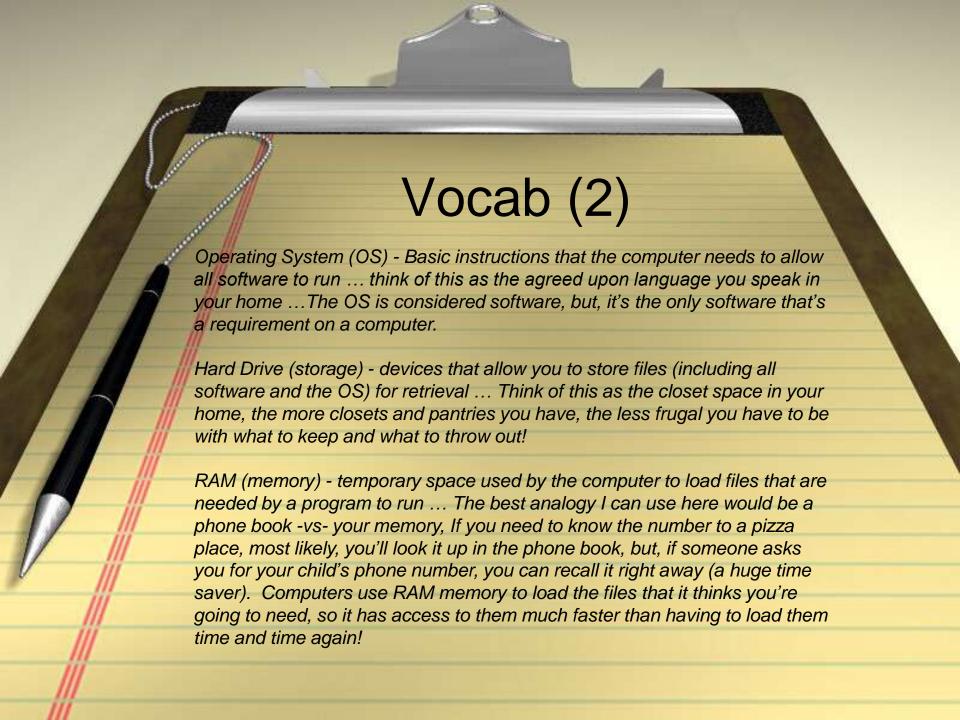
As stated in the forward, we're not out to make anyone a computer science major from this class, but, knowing a few key terms will help anyone that wants has to use a computer! By knowing some of these terms, you can make better decisions about your computer or future computer!

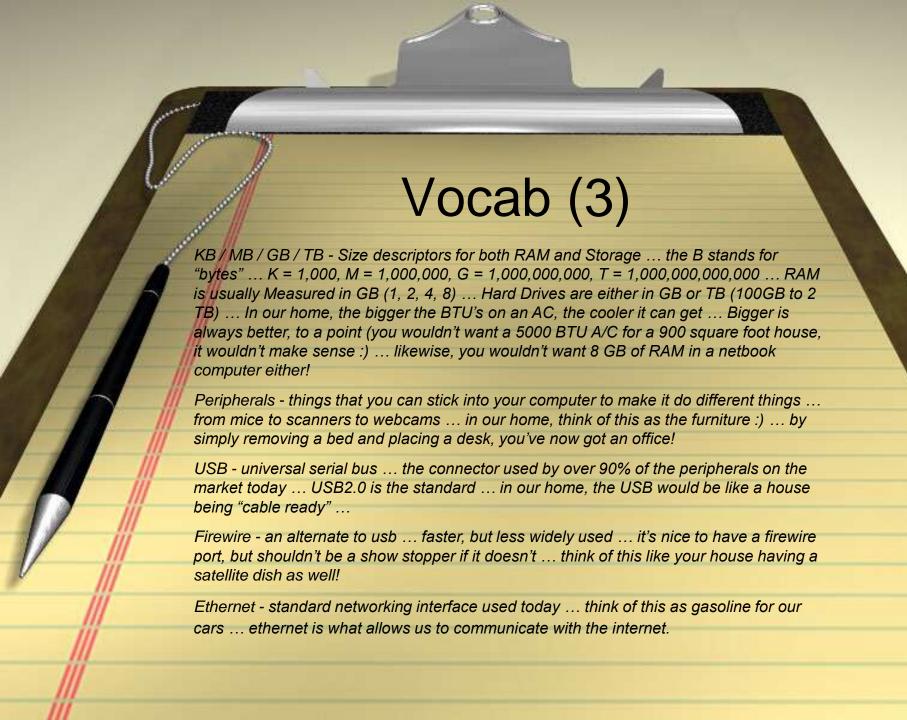
Computer - The thing on your desk that tends to drive you crazy and only behaves as it should when there's an expert working on it.

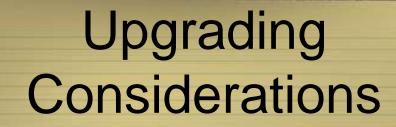
Ok ok ok ... so, that's not a real vocabulary term, but it's true :) ... Now on to the vocabulary ....

Hardware - The parts of the computer that you can touch (both inside and out!) ... In our home analogy, think of the hardware as your home and all of it's furnishings ...

Software - The programs that the hardware runs that allows a computer to do more than just sit there ... in our homes, the toasters can't make toast, the tv's can't show programs, and the oven can't make cakes without someone using one or more different furnishings in the home to make it happen. Same with the computer, all of the fancy hardware doesn't do anything ... it's the software that's installed that allows it to work!







In real estate (until recently!) you could rely on the value of your home going up and up ... In the computer industry, you can rely on the value of your computer going to next to nothing the moment you buy it! This is not because the computers used fannie may to finance their businesses, but, because of the rule of 18 ... every 18 months the speed of processors will double ... so, your shiny new computer that you bought 2 years ago is already 1/2 as fast as the cheapest computers selling on the market today.

With external storage so cheap, and the "migration assistance" you can get, upgrading a computer should only be done if you do NOT want to learn new software, and even then you should tread lightly on the upgrade path.

Adding RAM and Hard Drive space are the only two upgrades I regularly recommend ... All other upgrades must be considered a "last resort" ...

Think of an upgrade as being just as "painful" and expensive as it is to renovate your home (major renovations) ... In many cases, the cost of the renovation is greater than the cost would have been to simply sell the home and buy a new home with everything the way you like it! On the other hand, if there's OTHER reasons for keeping your home, then, they may outweigh the hassle of the renovation!





The operating system is the "house rules" of your computer. It determines what type of programs your computer can run as well as what peripherals your computer can recognize.

Think of the OS as the agreed upon language in your home. Just because you speak both English and Spanish, if everyone agrees to speak English in your home, then an hola to a family member that doesn't speak Spanish wouldn't be very well received ... Likewise, if your computer is running Windows, a .dmg install file from Macintosh wouldn't be very well received!

Currently, the major OS's on the market are: Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7, Macintosh OSX, and Ubunto 10.10 ... There are others, but, the ones above make up the majority of the ones found in personal computers.





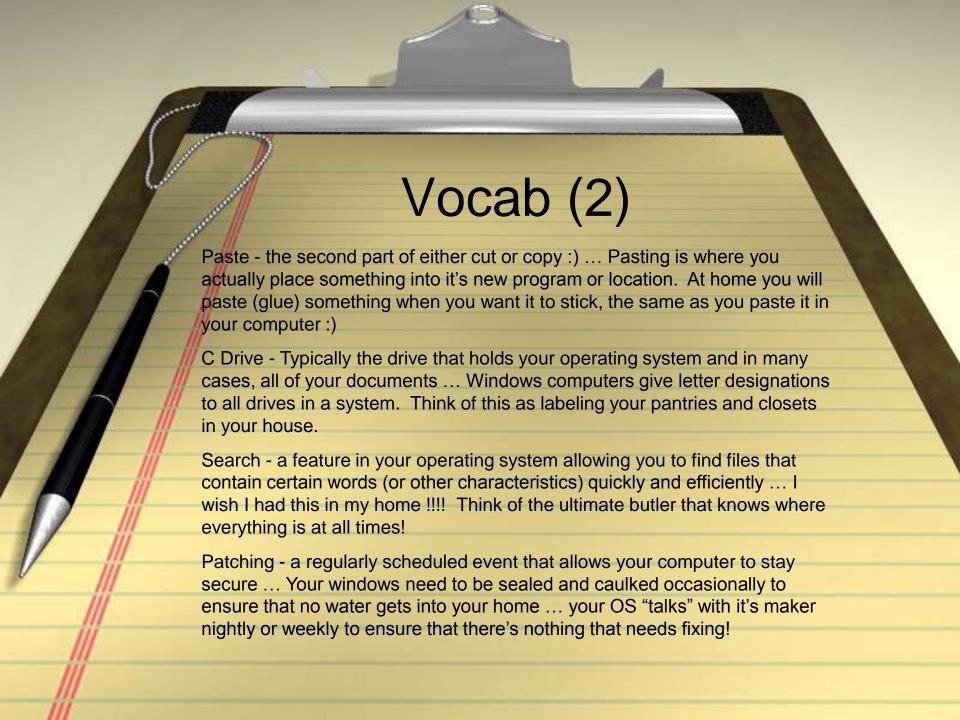
Desktop - The "main" view of your computer when you first turn it on. Think of this as that great counter top you have in your kitchen where you throw your keys and know that if you put something there, it'll get looked at quickly!

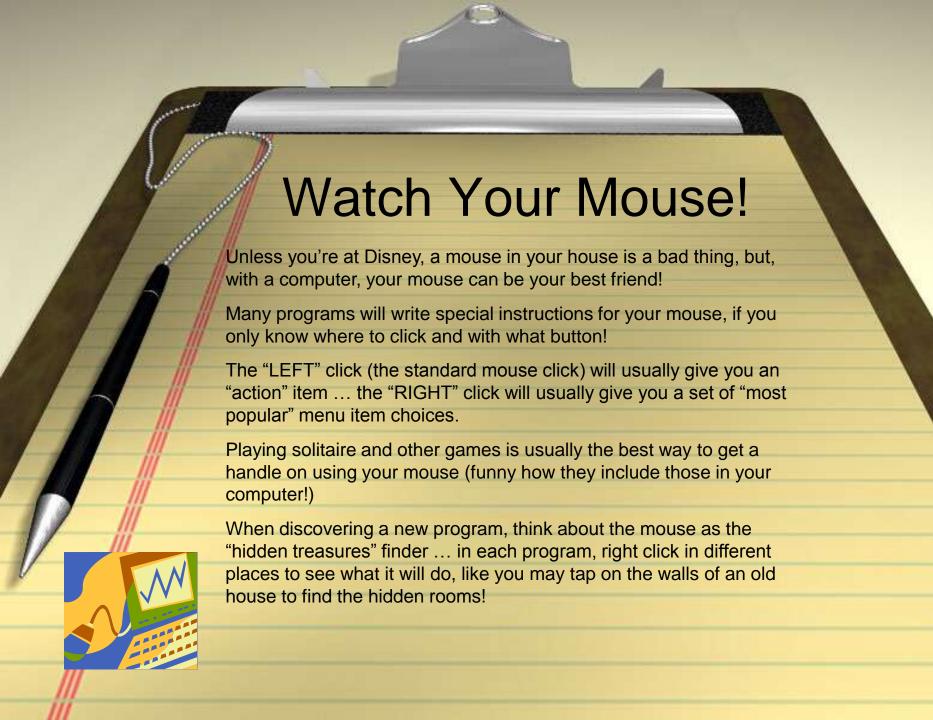
My Computer - Where you can find all of the files you have stored, along with how much space you have left to install programs or store more stuff! ... in your home, this would be the front door ... from here, can go anywhere in your house.

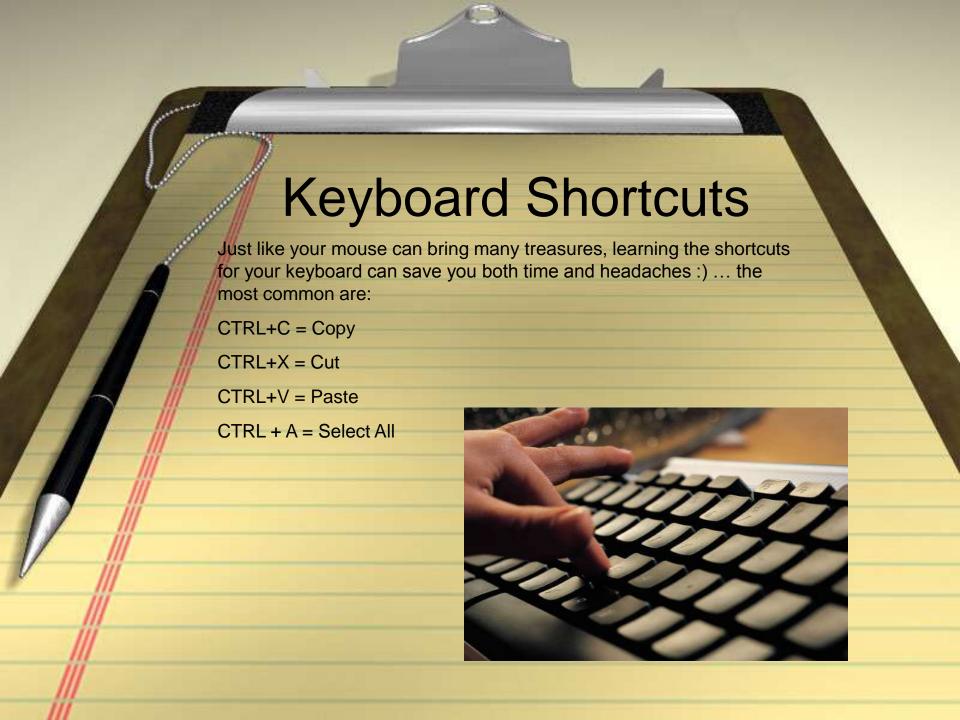
Clipboard - Where your computer will temporarily store something (a picture, text, file, or even a whole folder) to be placed in another program or location ... This is just like a clipboard you use in your house. It can hold 1 thing and will hold on to it until you remove it or add something new.

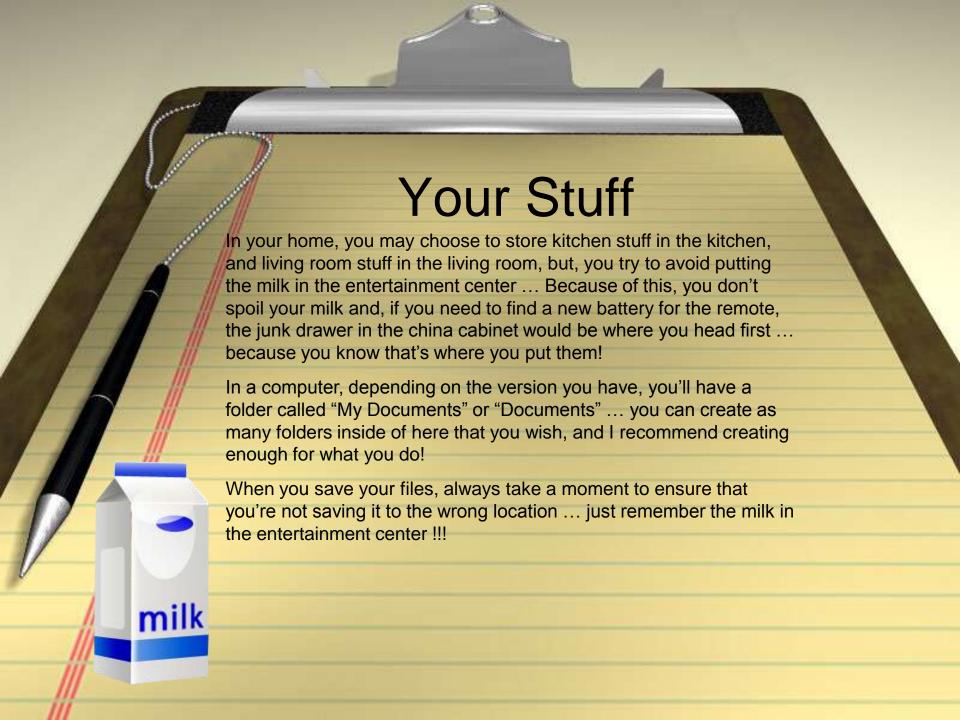
Cut - moving something from program or location to another using the clipboard ... at home, you would cut with your scissors or a knife ... once you've cut the coupon out, you can then move it to your coupon book.

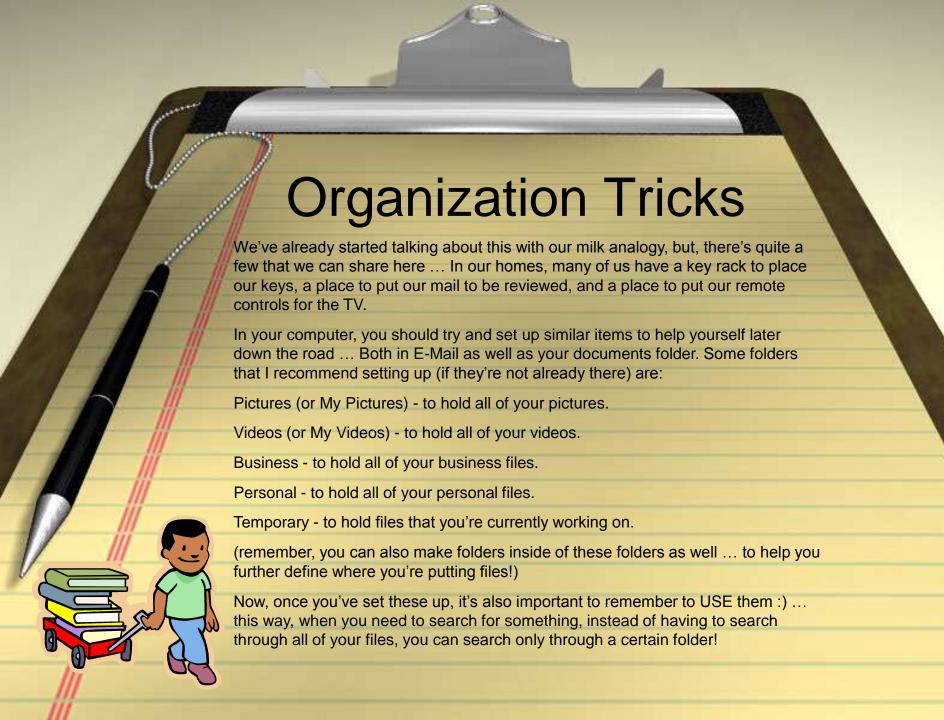
Copy - copying something from one program or location to another program or location ... your birth certificate may stay in the safe at home, but, if you need to supply proof of birth for a passport, you would copy it and send it in, to ensure that you still have a copy at home too!

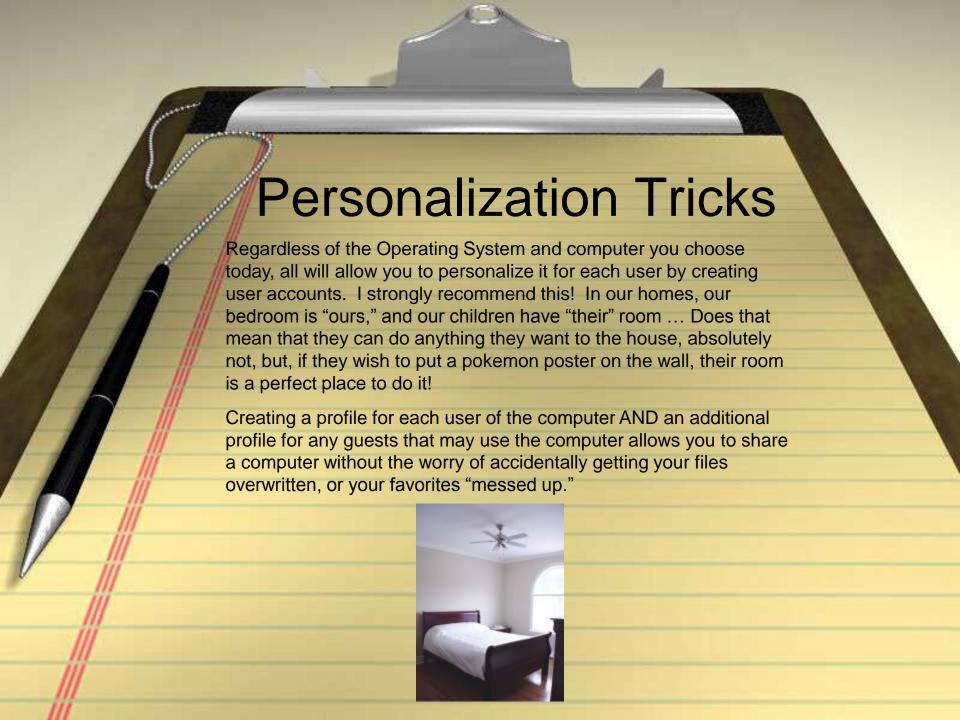


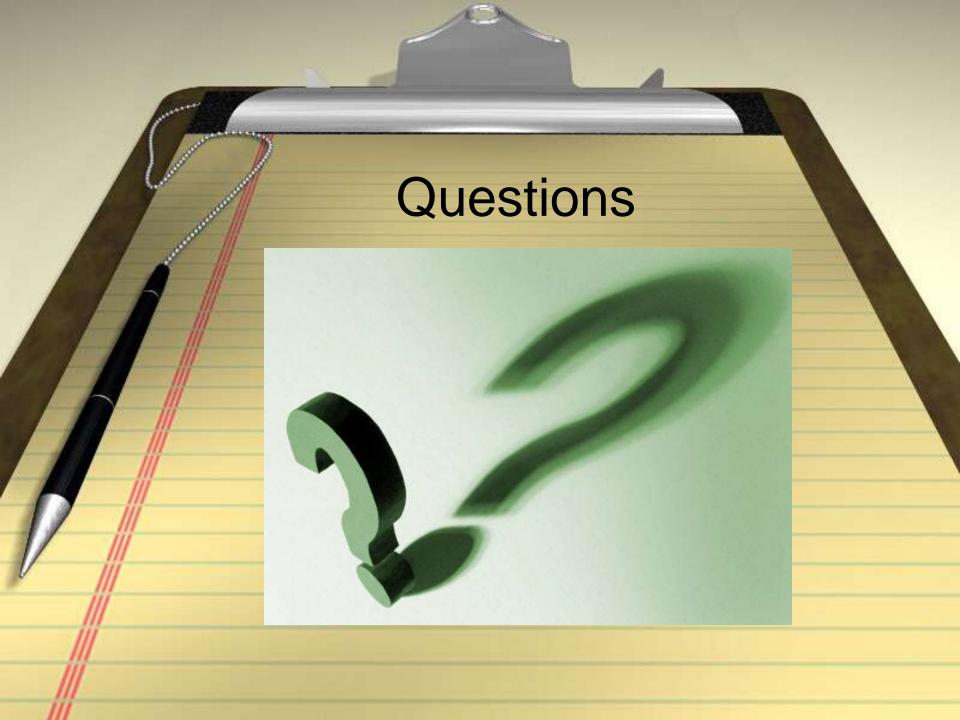


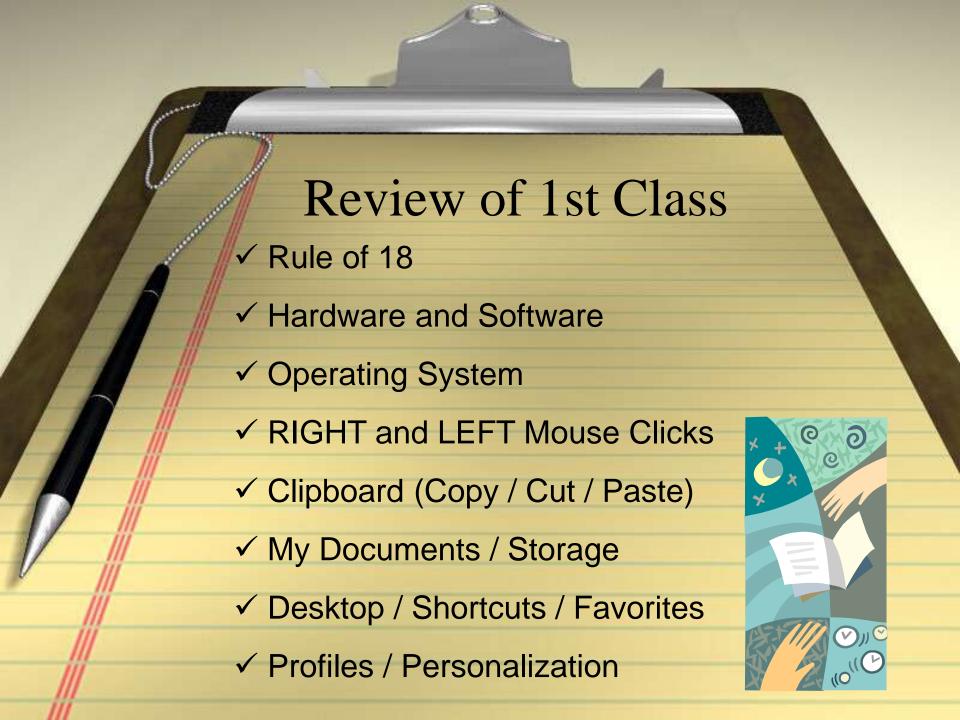














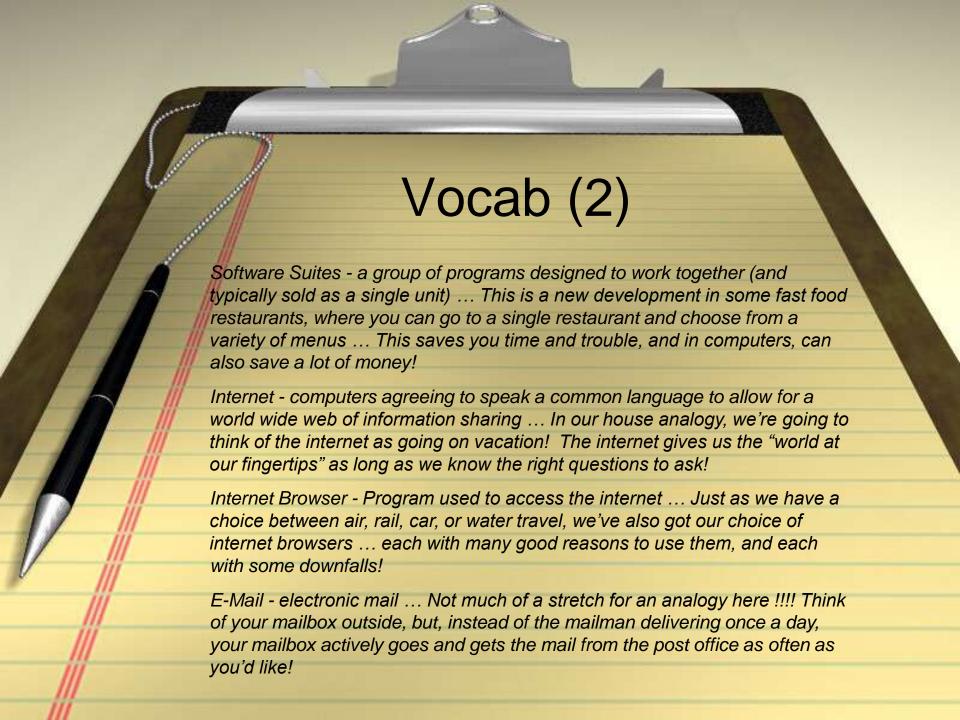
Now that we've tackled the hardware, software has some terminology that we'll need to learn about:) ... Since we've used our home to describe the parts of the computer, let's go for a bite to eat, shall we (software!) ... Once we're done with the restaurant, we'll then take a vacation (internet.) ... Making sure to secure our homes before we go!

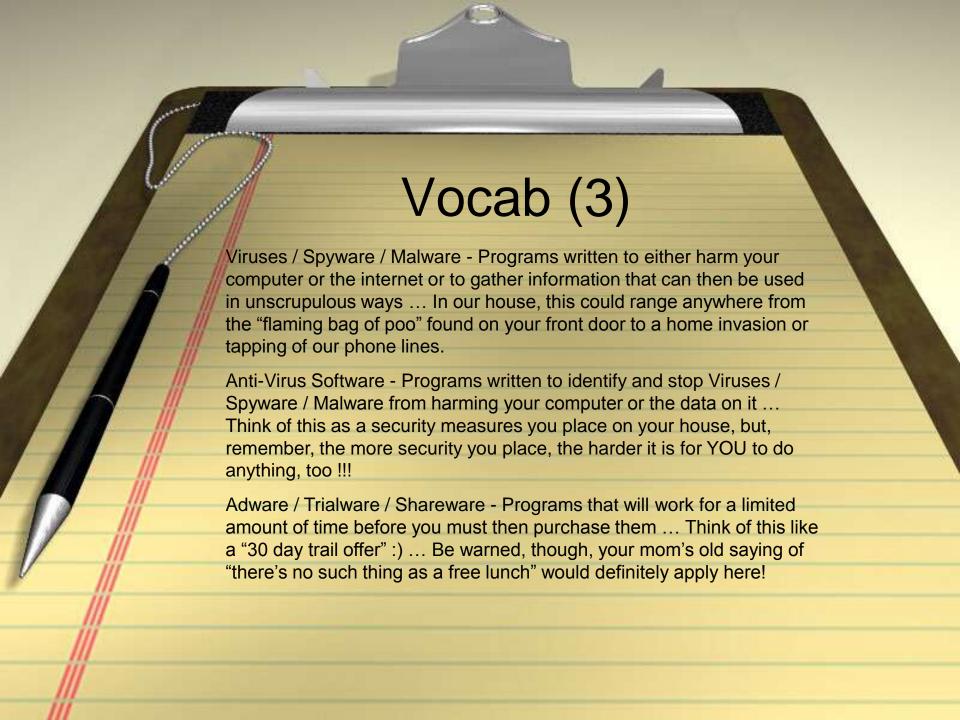
Program - A piece of software meant to do a particular task or set of tasks ... Think of a program as a restaurant! Different restaurants have different offerings, and, depending on what you're in the mood for, one will work out better than the others! Computer programs are exactly the same :) ... You can find different programs to satisfy your taste for different tasks.

Menu Bar - A list of features and components found on almost all programs on the market today ... If you go to a restaurant and want to know what they offer, you will ask for the menu ... In the menu there are different sections ... You'll find the same thing at the top of almost every program you buy ... making it a piece of cake to find out what a program can do!

Program Options - Where you can set "program defaults" such as your name, address, where you'd like to save your files (and how!) ... Thinking of our restaurant, this would be like having a saved seat at the restaurant and the cook knowing about your likes and dislikes without you having to bring it up again and again.









20 years ago, when someone came looking for a computer, it was ALWAYS for productivity ... Writing documents, storing information, presenting reports, etc etc ... Software that does this is called Productivity Software, and it's still pretty important on a computer, but, may not be the number one reason folks purchase a computer today !!!

When looking for productivity software, think of choosing a restaurant ... If you're looking for a "quick bite," would you go to Emerils ??? On the other hand, if you want Baked Alaska, would you head down to your local Micky D's ???

Many feel as though they have to buy the premium software packages to get what they need, when, in actuality, a less expensive (or FREE!) package may do the same thing for them!

If you're looking for a Premium Productivity Software Suite, Microsoft Office is the best of the best ... Corel Office provides many of the same features for less money, and, a free option that is really growing in popularity is Open Office (www.openoffice.org) ... It's a legally free downloadable program that will allow for many of the basic office tasks to be accomplished!



