

Quick Tips

for

Understanding Your Computer

Getting Started

This Quick Tip will define and explain some computer terminology and processes. Although you will not be learning a new *skill* from this Quick Tip, you will learn some very important, fundamental concepts that will help you better understand your computer.

Computer Parts and their Functions

Your computer is made of several parts that work together to accomplish certain tasks. To better understand the computer, we will break the concepts down into different tasks. There are 4 things your computer does:

- **Receives Input:** Three common ways your computer receives information is by typing into the keyboard, clicking on the mouse, and scanning images with the scanner.
- **Processes Data:** Computers have the ability to do a variety of things with the information you put into it, from calculations to word searches.
- **Stores Data:** Your network drive, hard drive, floppy disks, and cache are all locations where data that you put into your computer are stored.
- **Presents Output:** The monitor, the printer, and speakers are all parts of the computer that allow you to see the results of what you put into it.

Memory and Speed

At Lake Forest College, the "average" makeups of computers utilized on campus have the following requirements:

Lake Forest College PC Computer Standards	
PIII and IV 933MHz-3.2 Gigs	Processor Speed
128-512 Megabytes RAM	RAM – Main Memory
2 to 160 Gig	Storage Capacity
Windows XP & OSX	Operating System
Microsoft Office Suite 2003	Software Package
45 megabit	Network Communication

Conclusion

The computers on campus at Lake Forest College are networked. This means that each of the computers is connected to one or more main servers on campus. It is because of the network that we log in, have access to an U:/ and V:/, can access Moodle on campus, etc. The next step is to fine out where those things are located. Understanding the network can help you to better manage your files and troubleshoot some computer problems.

- *Quick Tips for Understanding the Network*
- *Quick Tips for Using Windows Explorer*