



What are the CPU, RAM, and Hard Drive of a Computer

Your computer has three main "parts", the processor, the memory, and the hard drive.

CPU - Central Processing Unit



The processor is where all the work is done. All programs are fed into the processor and runs them instruction by instruction and makes everything happen. The faster the processor, the more instructions per second it can run. The speed of a processor is showing you how many times per second it cycles through its processes.

RAM - Random Access Memory



For the processor to run, something has to give it the instructions for the programs and the data one which to act. For example, if you are writing a paper, the CPU gets instructions from the word processor through the text on the paper. This is done by the memory (RAM). The program and paper load into the memory and then it feeds them to the processor as needed. The more memory, the more programs and documents the PC can handle at once.

Hard Drive



But no one ever has every program and every document running at once. Unused programs and documents are stored on the hard drive. When needed, the memory will fetch them from the hard drive and feed them to the processor. Reading from a hard drive, because it is mechanical, is one of the slowest processes on a computer.