**Text 1. What is Hardware?**

Hardware is the devices composing a computer system. Computer hardware can be divided into 4 categories:

1. Input hardware
2. Processing hardware
3. Storage hardware
4. Output hardware

***Input hardware***

Input hardware collects data and converts them into a form suitable for computer processing. The most common input device is a *keyboard.* It looks like a typewriter. The mouse is a hand-held device connected to the computer by a small cable. As the mouse is rolled across the desktop, the cursor moves across the screen. When the cursor reaches the needed location, the user usually presses the button on the mouse once or twice to give a command to a computer.

Another type of input hardware is optic-electronic scanner. Microphone and videocamera can be also used to input data into the computer.

***Processing hardware***

Processing hardware directs the execution of software instructions in the computer. The most common components of processing hardware are the *central processing unit* and main memory.

The central processing unit (CPU) is the brain of the computer. It reads and interprets software instructions and coordinates the processing.

Memory is the component of the computer in which information is stored. There two types of computer memory: *random access memory* (RAM) and *read only memory* (ROM).

Random access memory is the memory, used for creating, loading and running programs.

Read only memory is computer memory used to hold programmed instructions to the system.

The more memory you have in your computer, the more operations you can perform.

***Storage hardware.***

The purpose of storage hardware is to store computer instructions and data and retrieve when needed for processing. Storage hardware stores data as electromagnetic signals. The most common ways of storing data are hard disk, floppy disk and CD - ROM. *Hard disk* is a rigid disk coated with magnetic material, for storing programs and a large amount of data.

*Floppy disk (diskette) -* a thin, usually flexible plastic disk coated with magnetic material, for storing temporary computer data and programs. There are two formats of floppy disks; 5.25' and 3.5’. 3.5' disks are formatted 1.4 megabytes and are widely used.

*CD - ROM* (compact disk read only memory) is a compact disk on which a large amount of digitized data can be stored. CD - ROMs are very popular now because of the growing speed which *CD- ROM drives* can provide nowadays.

***Output hardware.***

The purpose of output hardware is to provide the user with the means to view information produced by the computer system. Information is in either hardcopy or softcopy forms. Hardcopy output can be held in your hand, such as paper with text (words or numbers) or graphics printed on it. Softcopy output is displayed on a monitor.

*Monitor* is a display screen for viewing computer data, television programs, etc. *Printer* is a computer output device that produces a paper copy of data or graphics.

*Modem* is an example of communication hardware - an electronic device that makes possible the transmission of data to or from computer via telephone or other communication lines.

Hardware comes in many configurations, depending on what you are going to do on your computer.

**Exercise 1. Answer the questions.**

1. What is hardware?
2. What groups of hardware do you know?
3. What is input hardware?
4. What are the examples of input hardware?
5. What is the mouse designed for?
6. What is processing hardware?
7. What are the basic types of memory used in a personal computer?
8. What is a storage hardware?
9. What is the CD-ROM used for?
10. What kind of hardware can contain more information: CD-ROM, ROM or RAM?
11. What is a modem used for?
12. Can a PC user communicate with other people without a modem?

**Exercise 2. True or false? Give your arguments.**

1. The purpose of the input hardware is to collect data and to convert them into a form suitable for computer processing.
2. Scanner is used to input graphics only.
3. CPU reads and interprets software and prints the results on the paper.
4. A user can't change the contents of ROM.
5. A printer is a processing hardware because it shows the information.
6. Modem is an electronic device that makes possible the transmission of data from one computer to another via telephone or other communication lines.
7. The purpose of storage hardware is to store computer instructions and data.
8. Floppy disk is used for storing a large amounts of data.
9. A monitor is an output device that produces a paper data or graphics.
10. A keyboard is a computer software for to input information.

**Exercise 3. Give the definitions, using the text.**

1. CPU
2. ROM
3. Floppy-disk
4. CD-ROM
5. Printer
6. Modem
7. Hard disk
8. Keyboard

**Exercise 4. Insert proper words or phrases.**

1. Software tells the ... how to perform a task.
2. The most common input device is ...
3. The ... is a hand-held device connected with the computer by a small cable.
4. The ... is the brain of the computer.
5. The purpose of... hardware is to store computer instructions and data.
6. ... is a rigid disk coated with magnetic materials.
7. Floppy disk is for storing ... and ....