What is a computer, you ask? It's just a box full of copper, sand, metal, foil, etc., etc.

Well, to put it simply, it's a "glorified calculator".....really.

Here's why I say that.....a computer can only read numbers.....two numbers to be exact. Those numbers are 1 and 0. And to expand on that, a computer cannot multiply, subtract, or divide. It can only add. Weird, huh?

Now how can that be? Okay, I'll tell you, in a nutshell. We really can't go too deep into it as it will get too complex for the realm of this explanation.

All computers, no matter what brand, are the same. What!?....I can't believe that. Well it's true. Here's the deal....a computer has 3 basic operating sections within it. They are the microprocessor, memory, and storage devices. These items together make up the system that allows the computer to perform its tasks.

The microprocessor (brain as we humans call it) does all of the calculating, or work if you wish. **TIPPER Says**....although the slang term "brain" is used to describe the microprocessor, it's not an accurate term. A computer has no brain to speak of, as a brain can think for itself, and computers cannot.

So, let's move onward and upward. The storage device is what holds all of the programs. When you want to start a program, the microprocessor contacts the storage device and tells it to send the information to it. This is done through the memory.

Okay, now that I've confused you, let me try to confuse you even more....not! Let's look at this flow of things....

- ⇒ You click an icon on your desktop.
- ⇒ The command is sent to the microprocessor.
- ⇒ The microprocessor sends a command to the storage device (hard drive in this example).
- ⇒ Then the hard drive sends the requested information back to the microprocessor.
- ⇒ Now, here's where the memory comes in. All this information that the microprocessor needs from the hard drive has to go through the memory section.

Thus, all of the information gets passed back and forth between the microprocessor and hard drive through the memory. That's how all computers do their job....and this is why they are all the same.

That's the basics of a computer. There is much more involved, of course, but we don't need to know all of that geeky stuff in this explanation.

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