

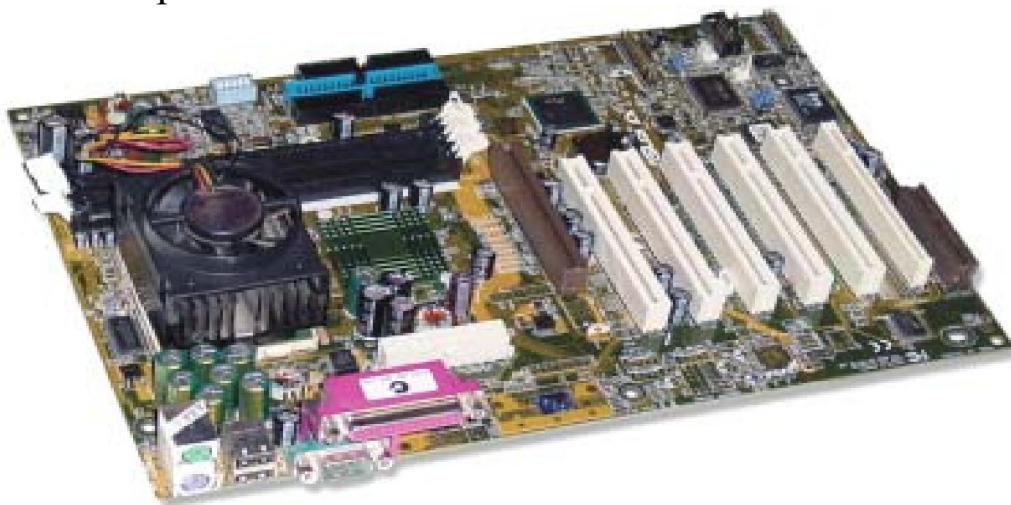
There are four elements that make up a personal computer system. The user, software, hardware and electricity all work together to form the whole system. Each element is as crucial as the others are.

1-1 The system unit or box

The System Unit or Box is a important part of the computer system. It comes as either a Desktop box or a Tower box. They both provide the same function . Whether you choose a tower or a desktop model depends on your desk space. Some system units give you the ability to change the unit to be either style to customize for your work environment. But when turning a Desktop unit into a Tower this may affect the component's function , e.g., the CD drive will not read CDs completely, the system may hang more often, etc. Inside the box, there are many separate devices that perform specialized functions for the computer. If one of these devices fails, it is usually a matter of replacing the defective part.

1-2 Motherboard

The largest electronic circuit board in the computer is called the motherboard. It is the foundation of the computer and consists of the CPU, RAM, and ROM BIOS. The motherboard lies on the bottom of the box or the side of a tower, and smaller circuit boards are plugged into prefabricated expansion slots.



Expansion Slots These slots are designed so you can expand your computer by adding items such as a graphics card, memory, etc.

PCI Slots Peripheral Component Interconnect; these slots allow you to add new components or cards in the computer, such as a modem or sound card. PCI can also be used on newer Macintosh computers.