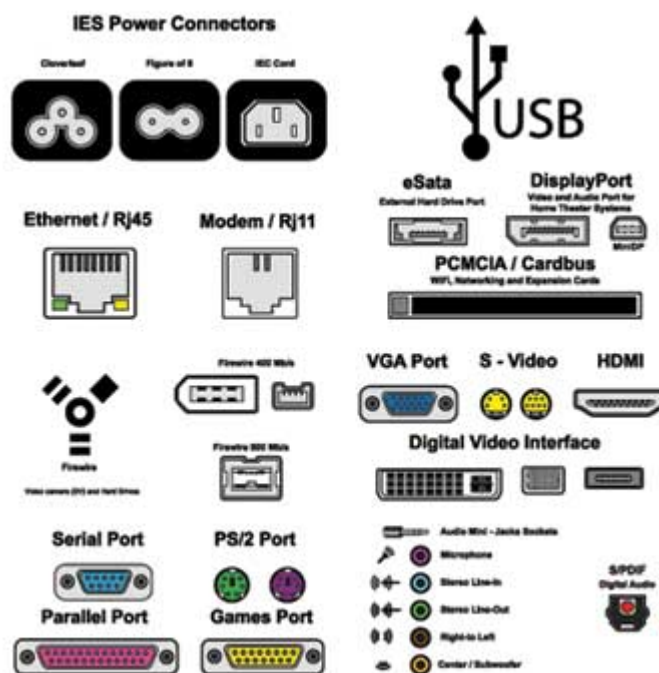# COMPUTER - PORTS

What is a Port?

A port:

- is a physical docking point using which an external device can be connected to the computer.

- can also be programmatic docking point through which information flows from a program to computer or over the internet.

Characteristics

A port has the following characteristics:

- External devices are connected to a computer using cables and ports.

- Ports are slots on the motherboard into which a cable of external device is plugged in.

- Examples of external devices attached via ports are mouse, keyboard, monitor, microphone, speakers etc.

Following are few important types of ports:

Serial Port

- Used for external modems and older computer mouse

- Two versions : 9 pin, 25 pin model

- Data travels at 115 kilobits per second

Parallel Port

- Used for scanners and printers

- Also called printer port

- 25 pin model

- Also known as IEEE 1284-compliant Centronics port

PS/2 Port

- Used for old computer keyboard and mouse

- Also called mouse port

- Most of the old computers provide two PS/2 port, each for mouse and keyboard

- Also known as IEEE 1284-compliant Centronics port

Universal Serial Bus *orUSB* Port

- It can connect all kinds of external USB devices such as external hard disk, printer, scanner, mouse, keyboard etc.

- It was introduced in 1997.

- Most of the computers provide two USB ports as minimum.

- Data travels at 12 megabits per seconds

- USB compliant devices can get power from a USB port

VGA Port

- Connects monitor to a computer's video card.

- Has 15 holes.

- Similar to serial port connector but serial port connector has pins, it has holes.

Power Connector

- Three-pronged plug

- Connects to the computer's power cable that plugs into a power bar or wall socket

Firewire Port

- Transfers large amount of data at very fast speed.

- Connects camcorders and video equipments to the computer

- Data travels at 400 to 800 megabits per seconds

- Invented by Apple

- Three variants : 4-Pin FireWire 400 connector, 6-Pin FireWire 400 connector and 9-Pin FireWire 800 connector

Modem Port

- Connects a PC's modem to the telephone network

Ethernet Port

- Connects to a network and high speed Internet.

- Connect network cable to a computer.

- This port resides on an Ethernet Card.

- Data travels at 10 megabits to 1000 megabits per seconds depending upon the network

bandwidth.

Game Port

- Connect a joystick to a PC
- Now replaced by USB.

Digital Video Interface, DVI port

- Connects Flat panel LCD monitor to the computer's high end video graphic cards.
- Very popular among video card manufacturers.

Sockets

- Connect microphone, speakers to sound card of the computer