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How exactly does a computer work?

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Charged objects are familiar -- use a nylon comb on a dry day

• A charged field can control whether a semiconductor conducts or not

A transistor has 3 wires

The charge of the control wire (gate) is key

Channel

- Neutral gate, channel doesn't conduct
- Charged gate, channel conducts

Gate









Deterministically execute instructions to process information

"Deterministically" means that when a computer chooses the next instruction to perform it is required by its construction to execute a specific instruction based only on the program and input it is given

Computers have no free will and they are not cruel







. . .



The Fetch/Execute cycle is hardwired into the computer's control, i.e., it is the actual "engine"

10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
6						12				18]

Put in memory location 20 the contents of memory location 10 + contents of memory location 16





The Arithmetic/Logic Unit does the actual computation

Most computers have only about 100-150 hard-wired instructions

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Input units bring data to memory from outside world; output units send data to outside world from memory

- Most peripheral devices are "dumb" meaning that the processor assists in their operation
- Disks are *memory* devices because they can output information and input it back again



The program counter (PC) tells where the next instruction comes from

- Instructions are a word long
 - Recall that 4 bytes is a word
- Add 4 to the PC to find the next instruction





Clock rate is not a good indicator of speed



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Semiconductors made Info Revolution

- Semiconductor properties ...
 - Fields control when semiconductor conducts
 - On/off of conductors allows us to compute

Fetch/execute cycle runs instructions

- 5 steps to interpret machine instructions
- Programs must be in the memory
- Data is moved in and out of memory



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