

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Sometimes, it seems that conversations about electronics and computers contain more acronyms than real words. This appendix lists some of the acronyms I've come across or invented, many of which appear in the rest of this book.

The current practice seems to use all caps for acronyms with four or fewer letters, as in CRT. Longer acronyms, particularly well-established ones that *everyone* knows, have just an initial cap or all lowercase letters: Radar or radar. In this book, I've used all caps for nearly every acronym because they seem to be more familiar that way: EEPROM rather than Eeprom.

aka	Also Known As (sometimes, a.k.a.)	IBF	Input Buffer Full
ALU	Arithmetic-Logic Unit (the guts of your PC's CPU chip, often the smallest part)	IDT	Interrupt Descriptor Table
ANSI	American National Standards Institute	IDTR	Interrupt Descriptor Table Register
ASM	ASeMbler (refers to either source code file or the program that processes ASM files)	IF	Interrupt Flag
BIOS	Basic Input-Output System	INK	<i>Circuit Cellar INK</i> magazine
C	Carry Flag (sometimes CF)	INT	INTerrupt (usually: INT signal or INT pin)
CCFT	Cold Cathode Fluorescent Tube (a high-performance LCD backlight)	Int	Interrupt instruction (followed by the interrupt number in hex or decimal)
CCBBS	Circuit Cellar Bulletin Board System	INTA	INTerrupt Acknowledge (CPU output pin)
CMOS	Complementary Metal Oxide Semiconductor	INTR	INTerrupt Request (CPU input pin)
COM	COMmand file (executable binary program)	IOPL	I/O Privilege Level
CPL	Current Privilege Level	IRET	Interrupt Return (CPU instruction)
CPU	Central Processing Unit (the guts of your PC)	IRED	Infra Red LED (also IRLED)
CRC	Cyclic Redundancy Check (or Code)	IRQ	Interrupt ReQuest (signal on ISA bus)
CRT	Cathode Ray Tube (your PC's monitor)	ISA	Industry Standard Architecture (bus)
DBR	Disk(ette) Boot Record	ISR	In-Service Register (8259 controller only)
DOS	Disk Operating System	ISR	Interrupt Service Routine
DPL	Descriptor Privilege Level	k	1000 decimal, as in 1 kΩ
EEPROM	Electrically Erasable PROM	Kb	kilobit = 1024 bits
EISA	Enhanced ISA (bus)	KB	kilobyte = 1024 bytes
EOI	End Of Interrupt (command)	kludge	Not an acronym, a truly ugly solution that barely works.
EPROM	Electrically Programmable ROM	LCD	Liquid Crystal Display (thus, the familiar term "LCD Display" is redundant)
EXE	EXEcutable program file	LDT	Local Descriptor Table
FDB	Firmware Development Board	LDTR	LDT Register
FFTS	Firmware Furnace Task Switcher	LED	Light Emitting Diode
G bit	Granularity bit (in a PM descriptor)	LPT	Line PrinTer (usually suffixed with a digit specifying which one: LPT1)
GDT	Global Descriptor Table	LSB	Least Significant Bit or Byte
GDTR	GDT Register	LSI	Large Scale Integration
GPF	General Protection Fault	MASM	(Microsoft) Macro Assembler
		MB	megabyte = 1048576 bytes
		MCA	Micro Channel Architecture

The Embedded PC's ISA Bus

MDA	Monochrome Display Adapter
MIPS	Million Instructions Per Second (sometimes written as MIP with the S understood)
MSB	Most Significant Bit (or Byte)
NAND	Not-AND boolean function
NOR	Not-OR boolean function
NT	Nested Task
NVRAM	Nonvolatile RAM
OBF	Output Buffer Full
OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturer
P bit	Present bit (in a PM descriptor)
PCI	Peripheral Component Interconnect bus
PM	Protected Mode
POST	Power-On Self Test (typically used for the BIOS POST)
ppm	parts per million
PROM	Programmable Read Only Memory
RAM	Random Access Memory
RF	Resume Flag
RISC	Reduced Instruction Set Computer
ROM	Read Only Memory
RPL	Requestor Privilege Level
RTC	Real-Time Clock
RTFM	Read The <i>Fine</i> Manual
SSI	Small Scale Integration (old chips!)
SVGA	Super VGA (nearly anything above 640×480 dots)
TASM	(Borland) Turbo ASseMbler
TF	Trap Flag
TR	Task Register
TSS	Task State Segment
TTY	TeleTYpe
UART	Universal Asynchronous Receiver Transmitter (serial I/O chip)
V86	Virtual-86 protected mode
VESA	VGA Extensions Standards Association
VGA	Video Graphics Array
VLB	Video (or VESA) Local Bus
VM	Virtual Machine (in EFLAGS)
WIBNI	Wouldn't It Be Nice If...
XOR	eXclusive-OR boolean function