Chapter 1 Computer Basics This chapter lays a foundation for one of the most influential forces available in modern times, the computer. A computer is an electronic device, operating under the control of instructions, which tells the machine what to do. It is capable of accepting data (input), processing data arithmetically and logically, producing output from the processing, and storing the results for future use. 1.1 Introduction In the beginning of the civilization, people used fingers and pebbles for computing purposes.