

deferred execution: The execution of a BASIC program instruction that is part of a complete program. The program instruction is executed only when the complete program is run. You defer execution of the instruction by preceding it with a program line number. The complete program executes consecutive instructions in numerical order. Compare **immediate execution**.

Delete key: A key on the upper-right corner of the Apple IIe and IIc keyboards that erases the character immediately preceding (to the left of) the cursor. Similar to the Macintosh Backspace key.

delimiter: A character that is used for punctuation to mark the beginning or end of a sequence of characters, and which therefore is not considered part of the sequence itself. For example, AppleSoft BASIC uses the double quotation mark (") as a delimiter for string constants: the string "DOG" consists of the three characters *D*, *O*, and *G*, and does not include the quotation marks.

demodulate: To recover the information being transmitted by a modulated signal. For example, a conventional radio receiver demodulates an incoming broadcast signal to convert it into the sound emitted by the radio's speaker. Compare **modulate**.

device: Frequently used as a short form of **peripheral device**.

device driver: A program that manages the transfer of information between the computer and a peripheral device.

device handler: See **device driver**.

digit: (1) One of the characters 0 through 9, used to express numbers in decimal form. (2) One of the characters used to express numbers in some other form, such as 0 and 1 in binary or 0 through 9 and A through F in hexadecimal.

digital: Represented in a discrete (noncontinuous) form, such as numerical digits or integers. For example, contemporary digital clocks show the time as a digital display (such as 2:57) instead of using the positions of a pair of hands on a clock face. Compare **analog**.

digital data: Data that can be represented by digits—that is, data that are discrete rather than continuously variable. Compare **analog data**.

digital signal: A signal that is sent and received in discrete intervals. A signal that does not vary continuously over time. Compare **analog signal**.

digital-to-analog converter: A device that converts quantities from digital to analog form.

DIP: See **dual in-line package**.

DIP switches: A bank of tiny switches, each of which can be moved manually one way or the other to represent one of two values (usually on and off). See **dual in-line package**.

disassembler: A language translator that converts a machine-language program into an equivalent program in assembly language, which is easier for programmers to understand. The opposite of an **assembler**.

disk: An information-storage medium consisting of a flat, circular, magnetic surface on which information can be recorded in the form of small magnetized spots, in a manner similar to the way sounds are recorded on tape. See **floppy disk**, **hard disk**.

disk-based: See **disk-resident**.

disk controller card: A peripheral card that provides the connection between one or two disk drives and the computer. This connection, or interface, is built into both the Apple IIc and Macintosh-family computers.

disk drive: The device that holds a disk, retrieves information from it, and saves information to it.