Jargon Buster

A

Address Book

An address book is where you can store details of your friends' email addresses in your email program so you don't have to remember them. When you want to send one of your friends an email, just add their email address from your address book.

Always on

Broadband internet connections are often described as 'always on'. This means you don't have to 'dial up' to your internet connection every time you want to use it, and you only pay a flat monthly fee for your connection.

Anti-virus

Anti-virus software helps protect your computer from viruses, which can infect your computer and affect how it works. BT Total Broadband comes with anti-virus software included.

Application

This is another word for a computer program. Internet Explorer, Microsoft Word and others are all computer programs, or applications.

Attachment

An attachment is a file which is 'attached' and sent in an email. It's easy to send and receive emails with attachments. It's an easy way to send photos and other files to your friends and family.

B

Backup

This is the technical term for copying files to an online storage place, such as BT Digital Vault, for safe keeping, so you can always get a copy.

Blog

A blog, or 'weblog' is an online personal diary with thoughts and opinions on life, as well as links to other websites the writer likes.

Bookmark/Favourite

Any website you like and want to remember can be made a 'bookmark' or a 'favourite' in your internet browser. When you want to return to that page, you can go there in one click instead of trying to remember the address of the website.

bps

bps stands for 'bits per second'. This is the measurement of how fast data can be transmitted over a phone line – for example, BT offers broadband speeds up to 40Mb, or 40 megabits per second.

Broadband

Broadband is a permanent high-speed internet connection. It works over your home phone line to send and receive digital information and is 'always-on'.

Browser

A browser, or 'web browser' is a program you use to view websites on the internet. If you want to view pages on the internet, you'll need a web browser. All modern computers come with at least one web browser installed.

C

CD-Rom

CD-Roms are discs that look like a music CD but can hold software, data, text, pictures, sound and video files. They can be useful if you want to create a safe, permanent copy of any of your photos and files.

Chat

Online chat is a real time conversation with another person over the internet. Most chat programs let you type in a window on a website's chat room, some even provide video capability. A useful example is by using a special chat program, **like Sign Video**, BSL users can communicate in sign language with a BT advisor.

Cookie

Cookies are small files that websites place on your computer so they can recognise you the next time you visit. For example, if you changed the way this website looked (by using the 'My Preferences' bar at the top of every page), a cookie would remember which settings you chose the next time you visited this website.

Crash

A crash is when your computer temporarily stops working. It may pause or freeze up, or tell you to restart or quit. Although this may seem alarming, it is quite a common occurrence. Just follow any instructions you are given on screen. If your computer does not respond at all, it's best to shut it down and restart it.

Cursor

A cursor is the small flashing vertical line that appears on your computer screen when you are typing something. It's used to show you where you are and where the next character you type will appear.

Cut and paste

When someone refers to 'cut and paste' it means selecting some text, images or files and moving them from one place and putting them in another.

D

Download

When you 'download' something, you are getting a file on to your computer from the internet. With broadband, it's quick and easy to download files, videos, pictures and more because it's a fast connection.

E

Email

Email stands for 'electronic mail'. Think of it as a letter that you write on the computer, which is then sent over the internet to another person using another computer. Emails (sometimes with attachments such as photos or files) can be sent to one or more email address at a time. There is no extra charge for either sending or receiving emails.

F

FAQ

Lots of websites will have a section called 'FAQs'. This stands for Frequently Asked Questions – and is a list of standard answers to common questions you may have about that website.

File

A file refers to a type of/piece of data stored on your computer, most commonly a 'data file' such as a letter or a photo.

Firewall

A firewall is a program that sits between your computer and the internet and watches for hacking, viruses or any unauthorised access to your computer.

Font

Fonts are the typefaces you see on-screen and in print in documents or on websites. Some of the most frequently used are Times New Roman, Arial and Courier.

G – H

Hardware

Hardware is the physical things to do with computers like monitors, keyboards, printers, modems, scanners, CD-Rom drives etc.

History

Every website you visit using your web browser is kept in your 'history', so you can find websites you visited several days ago. You can adjust the number of days that the history file will keep on your web browser.

Homepage

A homepage is normally the 'front page' of a website, where you're told what's on the website, how to get around it and how to search for things that'll interest you. You also have a homepage on your web browser – this is the page that loads automatically when you open your web browser.

I

Inbox

The inbox is the folder in your email program where you go to read emails that have been sent to you.

Installing

When you add a new program to your computer, you 'install' it. The most common ways to install programs is from a CD-Rom or by downloading the program from the internet.

Instant Messaging

Instant Messaging – also known as IM – is when you chat with friends or colleagues when you are both on the internet. To chat with other people, you'll need a special program – such as Windows Messenger or Yahoo! Messenger that let you chat to people in real time. Both of these computer programs are free to install and use.

Internet

The internet is a network of millions of computers (and the data stored on them) around the world connected by telephone lines, cables or satellites.

Internet Explorer

Internet Explorer – or IE – is one of the most popular web browsers, designed by Microsoft.

ISP

An ISP is a company that provides access to the internet to individuals or companies. ISPs provide access from your personal computer to their computer network and their network connects you to the internet.

J

Junk mail

Junk mail refers to unwanted emails that are sent to you by businesses. They are usually adverts for a product or service. Your email program will usually have a 'junk mail' folder. It will detect what it thinks is junk mail and place it in there so you don't have to read it.

K – L

Laptop

A laptop, notebook or netbook is a small, portable computer which can be battery operated as well as run from the mains electricity.

Link

A link is a word or a picture on a website that can be clicked on. When you click on a link, you'll be taken to another place on the internet. If you want to return to the page where you clicked the link, just press the 'back' button on your web browser.

Links in text on a website are usually in bold text, or are underlined. You can check if something is a link by moving the mouse arrow over what you think is a link. If the arrow turns into a picture of a hand, then it is a link, and you can click on it.

Logging in

Some websites will ask you to log in – this means they want you to enter a username and password so they can recognise you. If you haven't visited the website before, they may ask you to register, which means you fill in a short form giving some of your details.

M

Monitor

The monitor is the screen for your computer where everything is displayed. If you are using a laptop, the monitor is the inside of the lid where everything is displayed.

N

Notebook

A notebook, or netbook, is another name for a laptop. It's a small, portable computer which can be battery operated as well as run from the mains.

O

Offline

When you are not connected to the internet you are offline.

Online

When you are connected to the internet you are online.

P

Password

A password is a series of letters and numbers you enter to get into your computer, internet connection, email or any websites that you are registered with. It's sometimes useful to make a note of your passwords in case you forget them. For your safety your password should consist of letters, numbers and a symbol ie. £

PC

PC is short for personal computer.

PDF

A PDF is a type of file you can download from the internet. It's an easy way of reading a brochure, or other type of information. For example, you can get your BT bill as a PDF, so you download it to your computer and choose whether you want to print it or not. PDF files will print exactly as they appear on your computer screen. You need the free Acrobat Reader program to open a PDF file. **You can download Acrobat Reader free here**.

Q – R

Register

Some websites ask you to give your name, email address and other personal information in order to view internet pages. This is called registering.

Router

A router is a small piece of equipment that connects you to the internet. The BT Home Hub (which comes with BT Broadband) is a router.

S

Search engine

A search engine is a website that lets you search the internet for information. The most common search engines are Google.com, Bing.com and Ask.com. When you visit a search engine, just enter what you're looking for – for example 'vegetarian recipes'. The search engine will then return a set of results about vegetarian recipes.

Software

Software refers to any program on your computer, such as word processors, email programs or web browsers.

Spam

Spam is another word for junk emails that are sent to many people at once, usually involving advertising or offering services.

T

Toolbar

The toolbar is the selection of buttons displayed vertically or horizontally on computer programs, letting you print, save, copy etc. The buttons on a toolbar commonly have symbols on, to let you know what they are. For example, the symbol for 'open' shows a folder opening; the symbol for 'cut' shows a pair of scissors.

U

Username

A username is a series of letters and / or numbers you type into your computer, internet account or on a website to tell it who you are. Usernames are usually used with a password to identify you.

V

Virus

Viruses are pieces of code that are designed to damage your computer or data. Before going on the internet for the first time, it's important you have anti-virus protection. BT Broadband comes with anti-virus to keep you protected on the internet.

W – Z

Web

Web is a shorthand name for the internet. The terms 'internet' and 'web' are usually interchangeable.

Webcam

A webcam is an inexpensive, simple video camera that can sit on top of, or near, your computer monitor and can send live video over the internet to one or more people