

Rajmani Kumar,
Lecturer, Dept. of BCA
S.U.College, Hilsa (Nalanda)
Patliputra University, Patna

BCA-1st Year

Paper-I

History of Computer:

The computer as we know it today had its beginning with a 19th century English mathematics professor name Charles Babbage. He designed the Analytical Engine and it was this design that the basic framework of the computers of today are based on.

Generally speaking, computers can be classified into different generations. Each generation lasted for a certain period of time, and each gave us either a new and improved computer or an improvement to the existing computer.

1801: In France, Joseph Marie Jacquard invents a loom that uses punched wooden cards to automatically weave fabric designs. Early computers would use similar punch cards.

1822: English mathematician Charles Babbage conceives of a steam-driven calculating machine that would be able to compute tables of numbers. The project, funded by the English government, is a failure. More than a century later, however, the world's first computer was actually built.

1890: Herman Hollerith designs a punch card system to calculate the 1880 census, accomplishing the task in just three years and saving the government \$5 million. He establishes a company that would ultimately become IBM.

1936: Alan Turing presents the notion of a universal machine, later called the Turing machine, capable of computing anything that is computable. The central concept of the modern computer was based on his ideas.

1937: J.V. Atanasoff, a professor of physics and mathematics at Iowa State University, attempts to build the first computer without gears, cams, belts or shafts.

1939: Hewlett-Packard is founded by David Packard and Bill Hewlett in a Palo Alto, California, garage, according to the Computer History Museum.

1941: Atanasoff and his graduate student, Clifford Berry, design a computer that can solve 29 equations simultaneously. This marks the first time a computer is able to store information on its main memory.

1943-1944: Two University of Pennsylvania professors, John Mauchly and J. Presper Eckert, build the Electronic Numerical Integrator and Calculator (ENIAC).

Considered the grandfather of digital computers, it fills a 20-foot by 40-foot room and has 18,000 vacuum tubes.

1946: Mauchly and Presper leave the University of Pennsylvania and receive funding from the Census Bureau to build the UNIVAC, the first commercial computer for business and government applications.

1947: William Shockley, John Bardeen and Walter Brattain of Bell Laboratories invent the transistor. They discovered how to make an electric switch with solid materials and no need for a vacuum.

1953: Grace Hopper develops the first computer language, which eventually becomes known as COBOL. Thomas Johnson Watson Jr., son of IBM CEO Thomas Johnson Watson Sr., conceives the IBM 701 EDPM to help the United Nations keep tabs on Korea during the war.

1954: The FORTRAN programming language, an acronym for FORMula TRANslation, is developed by a team of programmers at IBM led by John Backus, according to the University of Michigan.

1958: Jack Kilby and Robert Noyce unveil the integrated circuit, known as the computer chip. Kilby was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2000 for his work.

1964: Douglas Engelbart shows a prototype of the modern computer, with a mouse and a graphical user interface (GUI). This marks the evolution of the computer from a specialized machine for scientists and mathematicians to technology that is more accessible to the general public.

1969: A group of developers at Bell Labs produce UNIX, an operating system that addressed compatibility issues. Written in the C programming language, UNIX was portable across multiple platforms and became the operating system of choice among mainframes at large companies and government entities. Due to the slow nature of the system, it never quite gained traction among home PC users.

1970: The newly formed Intel unveils the Intel 1103, the first Dynamic Access Memory (DRAM) chip.

1971: Alan Shugart leads a team of IBM engineers who invent the "floppy disk," allowing data to be shared among computers.

1973: Robert Metcalfe, a member of the research staff for Xerox, develops Ethernet for connecting multiple computers and other hardware.

Initial Development of Computers

The development of digital computers is rooted in the abacus and early mechanical calculating devices, **Charles Babbage** is credited with the design of the first modern computer, the analytical engine, during the 1830s. **Vannevar Bush** built a mechanically operated device, called a differential analyzer, in 1930; it was the first general-purpose analog computer. **John Atanasoff** constructed the first electronic digital computing device in 1939; a full-scale version of the prototype was completed in 1942 at Iowa State College (now Iowa State Univ.). In 1943 **Conrad Zuse** built the Z3, a fully operational electromechanical computer.

During World War II, the Colossus was developed for British code breakers; it was the first programmable electronic digital computer. The Mark I, or Automatic Sequence Controlled Calculator, completed in 1944 at Harvard by **Howard Aiken**, was the first machine to execute long calculations automatically.

Generation of computer:

Generation in computer terminology is a change in technology a computer was being used. Initially, the generation term was used to distinguish between varying hardware technologies. Nowadays, generation includes both hardware and software, which together make up an entire computer system.

There are five computer generations known till date. Each generation has been discussed in detail along with their time period and characteristics. In the following table, approximate dates against each generation has been mentioned, which are normally accepted.

Following are the main five generations of computers:-

Sr.No.	Generation & Description
1.	<u>First Generation</u> The period of first generation: 1946-1959. Vacuum tube based.
2.	<u>Second Generation</u> The period of second generation: 1959-1965. Transistor based.
3.	<u>Third Generation</u> The period of third generation: 1965-1971. Integrated Circuit based.
4.	<u>Fourth Generation</u> The period of fourth generation: 1971-1980. VLSI microprocessor based.
5.	<u>Fifth Generation</u> The period of fifth generation: 1980-onwards. ULSI microprocessor based.

First Generation

The period of first generation was from 1946-1959. The computers of first generation used vacuum tubes as the basic components for memory and circuitry for CPU (Central Processing Unit). These tubes, like electric bulbs, produced a lot of heat and the installations used to fuse frequently. Therefore, they were very expensive and only large organizations were able to afford it.

In this generation, mainly batch processing operating system was used. Punch cards, paper tape, and magnetic tape was used as input and output devices. The computers in this generation used machine code as the programming language.

The main features of the first generation are:

- Vacuum tube technology
- Unreliable
- Supported machine language only
- Very costly
- Generated a lot of heat
- Slow input and output devices
- Huge size
- Need of AC
- Non-portable
- Consumed a lot of electricity

Some computers of this generation were:

- ENIAC
- EDVAC
- UNIVAC
- IBM-701
- IBM-650

Advantages:

1. It made use of vacuum tubes which are the only electronic component available during those days.
2. These computers could calculate in milliseconds.

Disadvantages:

1. These were very big in size, weight was about 30 tones.
2. These computers were based on vacuum tubes.
3. These computers were very costly.
4. It could store only a small amount of information due to the presence of magnetic drums.
5. As the invention of first generation computers involves vacuum tubes, so another disadvantage of these computers was, vacuum tubes require a large cooling system.
6. Very less work efficiency.
7. Limited programming capabilities and punch cards were used to take inputs.
8. Large amount of energy consumption.
9. Not reliable and constant maintenance is required.

Second Generation

The period of second generation was from 1959-1965. In this generation, transistors were used that were cheaper, consumed less power, more compact in size, more reliable and faster than the first generation machines made of vacuum tubes. In this generation, magnetic cores were used as the primary memory and magnetic tape and magnetic disks as secondary storage devices.

In this generation, assembly language and high-level programming languages like FORTRAN, COBOL were used. The computers used batch processing and multiprogramming operating system.

The main features of second generation are:

- Use of transistors
- Reliable in comparison to first generation computers
- Smaller size as compared to first generation computers
- Generated less heat as compared to first generation computers
- Consumed less electricity as compared to first generation computers
- Faster than first generation computers
- Still very costly
- AC required
- Supported machine and assembly languages

Some computers of this generation were:

- IBM 1620
- IBM 7094
- CDC 1604
- CDC 3600
- UNIVAC 1108

Advantages:

1. Due to the presence of transistors instead of vacuum tubes, the size of electron component decreased. This resulted in reducing the size of a computer as compared to first generation computers.
2. Less energy and not produce as much heat as the first generation.
3. Assembly language and punch cards were used for input.
4. Low cost than first generation computers.
5. Better speed, calculate data in microseconds.
6. Better portability as compared to first generation

Disadvantages:

1. A cooling system was required.
2. Constant maintenance was required.
3. Only used for specific purposes.

Third Generation

The period of third generation was from 1965-1971. The computers of third generation used Integrated Circuits (ICs) in place of transistors. A single IC has many transistors, resistors, and capacitors along with the associated circuitry.

The IC was invented by Jack Kilby. This development made computers smaller in size, reliable, and efficient. In this generation remote processing, time-sharing, multiprogramming operating system were used. High-level languages (FORTRAN-II TO IV, COBOL, PASCAL PL/1, BASIC, ALGOL-68 etc.) were used during this generation.

The main features of third generation are:

- IC used
- More reliable in comparison to previous two generations
- Smaller size
- Generated less heat
- Faster
- Lesser maintenance
- Costly
- AC required
- Consumed lesser electricity
- Supported high-level language

Some computers of this generation were:

- IBM-360 series
- Honeywell-6000 series
- PDP (Personal Data Processor)
- IBM-370/168
- TDC-316

Advantages:

1. These computers were cheaper as compared to second-generation computers.
2. They were fast and reliable.

3. Use of IC in the computer provides the small size of the computer.
4. IC not only reduce the size of the computer but it also improves the performance of the computer as compared to previous computers.
5. This generation of computers has big storage capacity.
6. Instead of punch cards, mouse and keyboard are used for input.
7. They used an operating system for better resource management and used the concept of time-sharing and multiple programming.
8. These computers reduce the computational time from microseconds to nanoseconds.

Disadvantages:

1. IC chips are difficult to maintain.
2. The highly sophisticated technology required for the manufacturing of IC chips.
3. Air conditioning is required.

Fourth Generation

The period of fourth generation was from 1971-1980. Computers of fourth generation used Very Large Scale Integrated (VLSI) circuits. VLSI circuits having about 5000 transistors and other circuit elements with their associated circuits on a single chip made it possible to have microcomputers of fourth generation.

Fourth generation computers became more powerful, compact, reliable, and affordable. As a result, it gave rise to Personal Computer (PC) revolution. In this generation, time sharing, real time networks, distributed operating system were used. All the high-level languages like C, C++, DBASE etc., were used in this generation.

The main features of fourth generation are:

- VLSI technology used
- Very cheap
- Portable and reliable
- Use of PCs
- Very small size
- Pipeline processing
- No AC required
- Concept of internet was introduced
- Great developments in the fields of networks
- Computers became easily available

Some computers of this generation were:

- DEC 10
- STAR 1000
- PDP 11
- CRAY-1(Super Computer)
- CRAY-X-MP(Super Computer)

Advantages:

1. Fastest in computation and size get reduced as compared to the previous generation of computer.
2. Heat generated is negligible.
3. Small in size as compared to previous generation computers.
4. Less maintenance is required.
5. All types of high-level language can be used in this type of computers.

Disadvantages:

1. The Microprocessor design and fabrication are very complex.
2. Air conditioning is required in many cases due to the presence of ICs.
3. Advance technology is required to make the ICs.

Fifth Generation

The period of fifth generation is 1980-till date. In the fifth generation, VLSI technology became ULSI (Ultra Large Scale Integration) technology, resulting in the production of microprocessor chips having ten million electronic components.

This generation is based on parallel processing hardware and AI (Artificial Intelligence) software. AI is an emerging branch in computer science, which interprets the means and method of making computers think like human beings. All the high-level languages like C and C++, Java, .Net etc., are used in this generation.

AI includes:

- Robotics
- Neural Networks
- Game Playing
- Development of expert systems to make decisions in real-life situations
- Natural language understanding and generation

The main features of fifth generation are:

- ULSI technology
- Development of true artificial intelligence
- Development of Natural language processing

- Advancement in Parallel Processing
- Advancement in Superconductor technology
- More user-friendly interfaces with multimedia features
- Availability of very powerful and compact computers at cheaper rates

Some computer types of this generation are:

- Desktop
- Laptop
- NoteBook
- UltraBook
- ChromeBook

Advantages:

1. It is more reliable and works faster.
2. It is available in different sizes and unique features.
3. It provides computers with more user-friendly interfaces with multimedia features.

Disadvantages:

1. They need very low-level languages.
2. They may make the human brains dull and doomed.

Evolution of Personal Computer

Evolution of the personal computer as a mass-market consumer electronic device began with the microcomputer revolution of the 1970s. A [personal computer](#) is one intended for interactive individual use, as opposed to a [mainframe computer](#) where the end user's requests are filtered through operating staff, or a [time-sharing](#) system in which one large processor is shared by many individuals. After the development of the [microprocessor](#), individual personal computers were low enough in cost that they eventually became affordable consumer goods. Early personal computers – generally called [microcomputers](#) – were sold often in [electronic kit](#) form and in limited numbers, and were of interest mostly to hobbyists and technicians.