

Scanner

A scanner is an input device that scans documents such as photographs and pages of text. When a document is scanned, it is converted into a digital format. This creates an electronic version of the document that can be viewed and edited on a computer.



Scanner captures images from the source which are then converted into the digital form that can be stored on the disc. These images can be edited before they are printed.

Most scanners are flatbed devices, which mean they have a flat scanning surface. Most flatbed scanners have a cover that lifts up so that books and other bulky objects can also be scanned. Another type of scanner is a sheet-fed scanner, which can only accept paper documents. While sheet-fed scanners cannot scan books, some models include an automatic document feeder, or ADF, which allows multiple pages to be scanned in sequence.

Scanners work in conjunction with computer software programs, which import data from the scanner. Most scanners include basic scanning software that allows the user to configure, initiate, and import scans. Scanning plug-ins can also be installed, which allow various software programs to import scanned images directly. For example, if a scanner plug-in is installed for Adobe Photoshop, a user can create new images in Photoshop directly from the connected scanner.

While Photoshop can edit scanned images, some programs like Acrobat and OmniPage can actually recognize scanned text. This technology is called optical character recognition, or OCR. Scanning software that includes OCR can turn a scanned text document into a digital text file that can be opened and edited by a word processor. Some OCR programs even capture page and text formatting, making it possible to create electronic copies of physical documents.