

# Computer Tips

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**Michael's Computer Services**

## Understanding Your PC—Part 2

Last edition we talked about your computer's case and its functions. In this edition we will begin our look at the components inside the case.

### The Power Supply

Your computer is a sensitive electronic machine, and to run efficiently, all its components must have a good supply of clean electricity. To provide this is the job of your computer's power supply.

The power supply is the large rectangular gray or silver box inside your computer's case. It is usually at the rear top of tower cases and on the back right side of desktop cases. The power supply has two primary functions. The first is to step down the 240 volt mains power to 12 volt DC, and distribute this to the different components in your PC. This step down process produces a lot of heat, and so your power supply is fitted with at least one fan to keep it cool.

The second primary function of the power supply is to not only step down the voltage, but to filter the incoming voltage as well. As many of you are already aware, the mains power supply to your house or business is not a steady voltage, but is subject to fluctuation. This 'up and down' in voltage supply is usually handled without problem by most of your other household appliances; but this is not so with your computer. The power supply is designed to filter out minor fluctuations in voltage, thus supplying a steady, clean source of power to all the computer components.

However, while your PC's power supply can filter out fluctuations in voltage, it is somewhat limited in how much fluctuation it can handle. In a lightning storm, or when work is being done on the lines in your area, any major fluctuations in power will short out your PC's power supply. Therefore it is a very good idea to have a surge protector installed on the same power outlet that your computer is using.

An even better protection idea is to purchase an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS). This device not only protects against major power surges, but will top up any voltage drops from its internal battery. This way your PC will always have a clean steady source of power. Another advantage of having a UPS is that when the power mains supply does fail, the computer can still run for up to 20 minutes afterwards, so you can save your work and close the PC down.

As always, dust is a major enemy of your PC's power supply. The static electricity around the power supply attracts dust, which interrupts the flow of air through the power supply. The heat generated by the power supply builds up, weakening the circuitry, and thus shortening the life of the power supply. It is a good idea, when getting your PC serviced, to get the dust removed, and thus extend the life of your power supply.

For more information on your computer, or to have your PC serviced, please contact us on 4171 0981, or email us at [info@mcsyarraman.com.au](mailto:info@mcsyarraman.com.au). We are happy to provide to you a complete, professional, and friendly computer service.

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