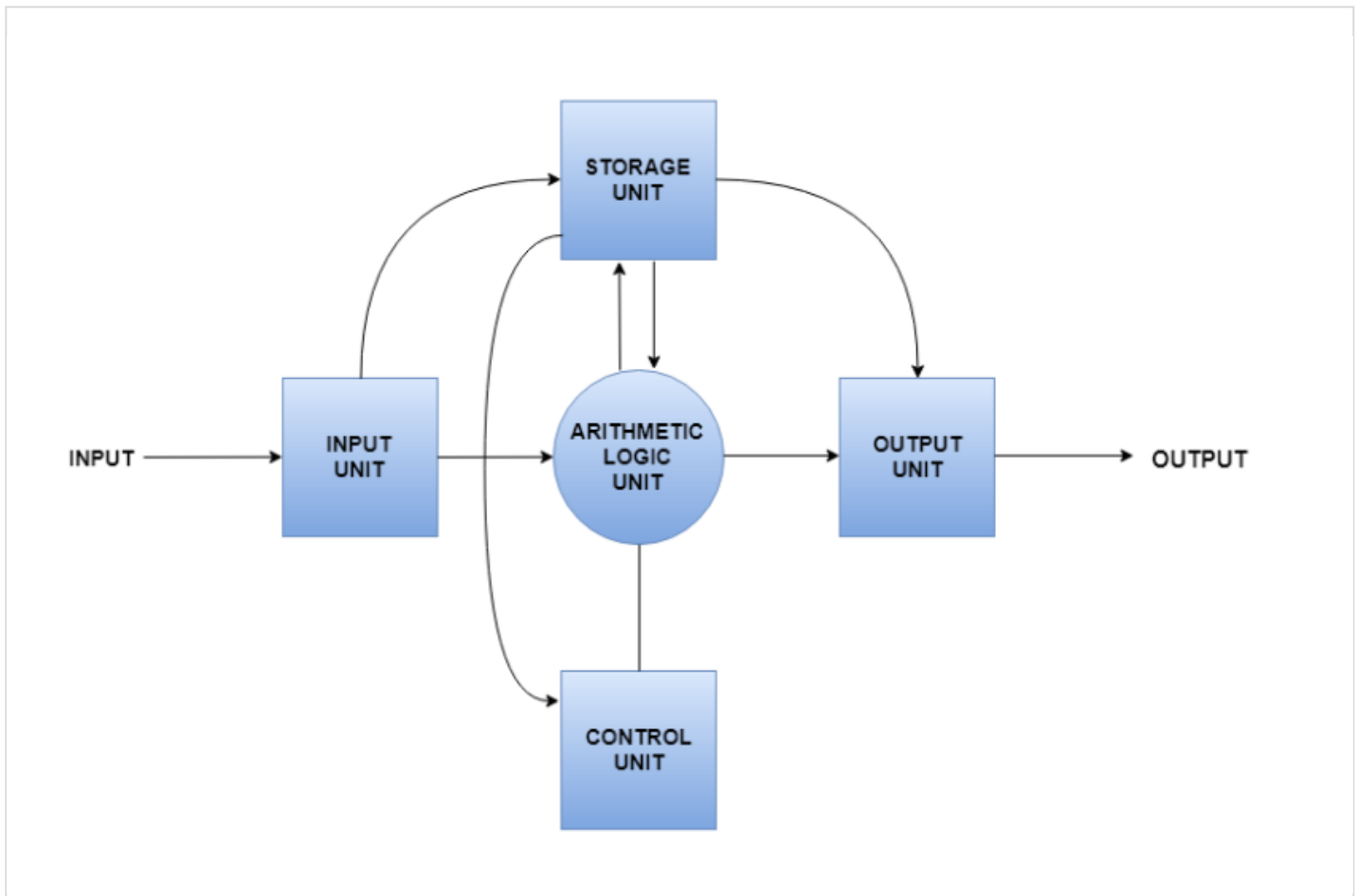


Computer System Architecture

A computer system is basically a machine that simplifies complicated tasks. It should maximize performance and reduce costs as well as power consumption. The different components in the Computer System Architecture are Input Unit, Output Unit, Storage Unit, Arithmetic Logic Unit, Control Unit etc.

A diagram that shows the flow of data between these units is as follows –



The input data travels from input unit to ALU. Similarly, the computed data travels from ALU to output unit. The data constantly moves from storage unit to ALU and back again. This is because stored data is computed on before being stored again. The control unit controls all the other units as well as their data.

Details about all the computer units are –

- **Input Unit**

The input unit provides data to the computer system from the outside. So, basically it links the external environment with the computer. It takes data from the input devices, converts it into machine language and then loads it into the computer system. Keyboard, mouse etc. are the most commonly used input devices.

- **Output Unit**

The output unit provides the results of computer process to the users i.e it links the computer with the external environment. Most of the output data is the form of audio or video. The different output devices are monitors, printers, speakers, headphones etc.

- **Storage Unit**

Storage unit contains many computer components that are used to store data. It is traditionally divided into primary storage and secondary storage. Primary storage is also known as the main memory and is the memory directly accessible by the CPU. Secondary or external storage is not directly accessible by the CPU. The data from secondary storage needs to be brought into the primary storage before the CPU can use it. Secondary storage contains a large amount of data permanently.

- **Arithmetic Logic Unit**

All the calculations related to the computer system are performed by the arithmetic logic unit. It can perform operations like addition, subtraction, multiplication, division etc. The control unit transfers data from storage unit to arithmetic logic unit when calculations need to be performed. The arithmetic logic unit and the control unit together form the central processing unit.

- **Control Unit**

This unit controls all the other units of the computer system and so is known as its central nervous system. It transfers data throughout the computer as required including from storage unit to central processing unit and vice versa. The control unit also dictates how the memory, input output devices, arithmetic logic unit etc. should behave.

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