

PEAK Class 101: The History of the Universal Serial Bus



The USB connection is widely accepted as the standard for external PC connectivity. Ever since 1996 when the first USB device was introduced to general public, USB has evolved into a universal technology. With Plug and Play and lightning-fast transfer speeds, USB has made significant contributions to the desktop and peripherals alike.

In 1995, Intel introduced the first USB specification, supported by Microsoft, Philips and US Robotics. It was not until one year later that the first USB device was introduced to the general public. During its initial launch, people were cautious about this new technology, but as more hardware/software manufacturers started to incorporate USB technology, USB finally started to gain momentum. By the year 2000, USB was recognized as the “universal” bus technology and PCs appeared with multiple USB ports on both the front and rear of the case.



USB 1.0 was the first standard established by USB-IF. The maximum transfer rate is 1.5 Mbit/s (Low-speed) and 12 Mbit/s (Full-speed). You can have as many as 127 devices for one host controller with hotplug capability.

USB1.1 was introduced in 1998, fixing a number of technical issues but providing the same speeds as USB 1.0.



USB 2.0 standard was established in year 2000. Transfer rate was increased by a factor of over 300 from 1.5 Mbit/s to 480 Mbit/s (Hi-Speed). Due to the speed improvement, USB 2.0 became accepted as the mainstream bus technology. USB 2.0 is also backward-compatible with older USB standards. You can plug your old USB 1.0 or 1.1 devices into USB 2.0 host controllers, although the transfer rate will be reduced to 1.0 standard.

USB 3.0 will make its first appearance in 2008. Transfer speed will increase by a factor of 10 from 480 Mbit/s to 4.8 Gbit/s, achieved via a parallel optical cable. Power consumption will be dramatically reduced to increase stability. With this new “Super-Speed” connection, it will take only 70 seconds to transfer a 27GB HD movie.

USB Standards				
	Release Date	Speed	Connection Type	Backward Compatibility
USB 1.0	January, 1996	1.5 Mbit/s (Low-Speed) 12 Mbit/s (Full-Speed)	Serial	Yes
USB 2.0	April, 2000	480 Mbit/s (Hi-Speed)	Serial	Yes
USB 3.0	Q2, 2008	4.8 Gbit/s (Super-Speed)	Parallel	Yes

Here at PEAK, we are proud to bring the very latest technology to our customers. We will be among the first to make the new USB 3.0 standard available at an exceptional price. For the latest product information, please visit our website at www.peakhardware.com

Reference:

http://www.news.com/8301-10784_3-9780794-7.html



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