

2 Getting started

Welcome to the Acorn Electron microcomputer!

Chapters 2 and 3 explain how to connect your Electron to the mains and to a television or monitor. Please read them carefully before continuing.

Checklist of items

Apart from this User Guide, you should have the following items in the box you've just opened:

- An Electron Microcomputer
- A mains adapter
- Guarantee registration card
- An aerial lead about two meters long for connecting the computer to your television set
- The Introductory Cassette
- A book called *Start Programming with the Electron*

If any of these items are missing, please contact your supplier.

Additional items

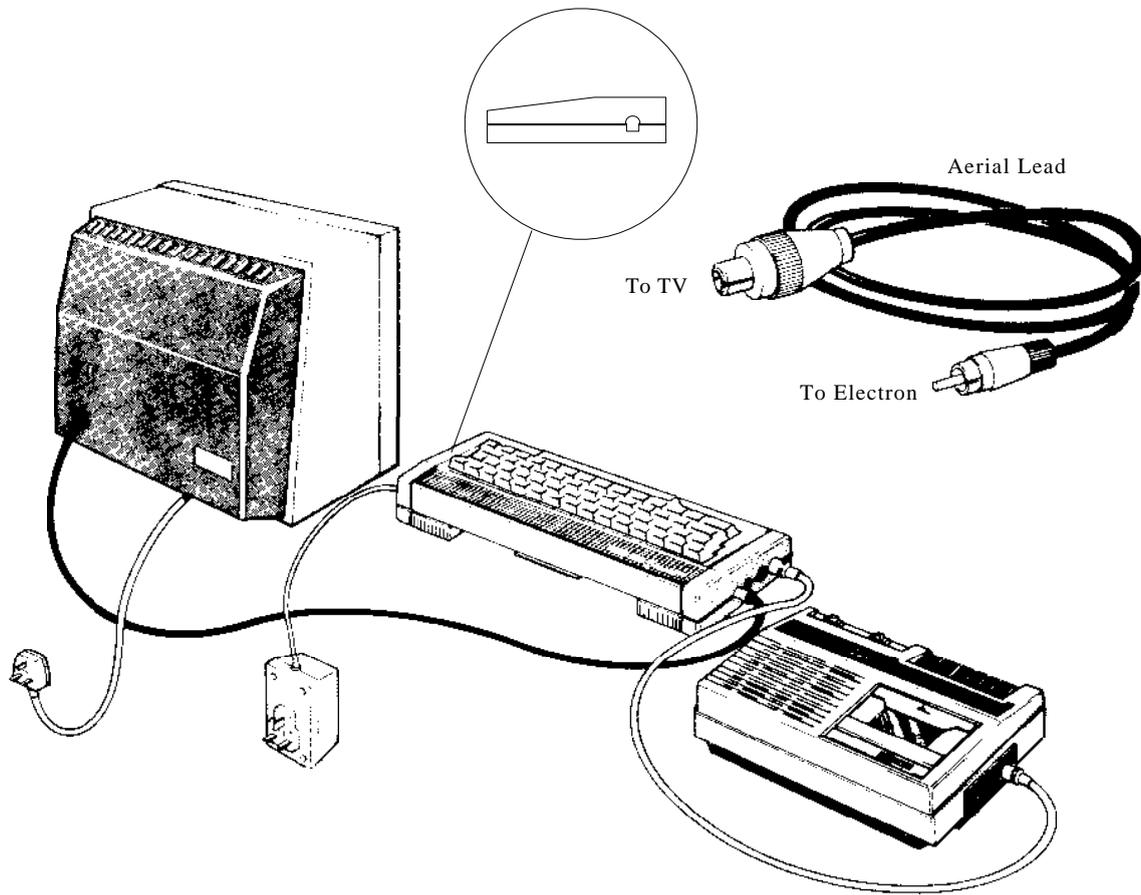
You will also need the following:

- A television set, or a good quality monochrome or colour monitor
- A mono (or stereo) cassette recorder, preferably with these facilities:
 - An external motor control facility
 - Record/playback socket(s) where the playback volume is controlled by the volume control

If you are going to buy a cassette recorder specifically to use with your Electron, your supplier will be able to recommend a suitable machine. However, most domestic machines can be used with good results, and chapter 3 gives details on how to connect a cassette machine to the Electron.

Connecting the Electron to your television set

Please refer to the diagram.



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If you are using a monitor rather than a television, then ignore this section, and read the section opposite, 'Connecting the Electron to a monitor'; otherwise read on.

You need to use the long TV lead provided to connect the Electron to your television set, and one end of this should be plugged into the aerial socket on the back of your television set, having first removed any aerial lead already connected. If your television uses its own aerial mounted on the set, you will need to find the aerial socket marked AERIAL, or ANT, or UHF etc.

The other end of the lead should be plugged into the socket marked 'UHF TV' on the left hand side of the Electron case. If you look at the case, you will see four sockets side by side. If you then look at the bottom of the case underneath the sockets, you will see that the name of each socket is engraved there. (The 'UHF TV' socket is the one on the extreme left.)

Now switch on the television.

Connecting the Electron to the mains

The mains adapter which comes with the Electron has one lead which should be plugged into the socket on the right hand side of the Electron case. This socket is engraved '19V AC POWER IN'. The mains adapter itself can be plugged into a domestic 13A socket.

Having connected the mains adapter to the Electron and to the mains, the computer is now on. As soon as the Electron switches on, you will hear a 'bleep', and the yellow light on the left hand side of the keyboard comes on. If this does not happen, first check that your 13A socket is working and is switched on (if it has a switch), and, if it still does not work, contact your local dealer.

Tuning the TV to the Electron

The Electron should now be connected to the mains adapter and switched on, and the TV lead should be connected to your television and to the Electron. The next thing to do is to tune your television.

First of all, turn the TV volume control to minimum – the Electron provides its own sound.

Most TVs have either a number of push-buttons or a single tuning knob for selecting TV stations.

Push-button tuning

Choose and select a push-button you don't normally use, and turn its tuning knob as far as you can in one direction, then turn it slowly the other way until the following message (or something very similar) appears on your television screen:

Acorn Electron ●

BASIC

>

Single tuning knob

Turn the tuning knob as far as you can in one direction, then turn it slowly in the other direction until something like the message above appears on your television screens.

Connecting the Electron to a monitor

This section only applies if you are using a monitor rather than a TV.

Monochrome monitor

You will need to acquire a special lead which should be available from the supplier of the monitor. The end of the lead which plugs into the Electron should be inserted into the socket marked 'VIDEO' on the left hand side of the Electron case. If you look at the bottom of the case, you will see that the name of each socket is engraved there.

Colour (RGB) monitor

A special lead should be supplied with the RGB monitor to plug into the Electron. The end of the lead which plugs into the Electron should be inserted into the socket marked 'RGB' on the left hand side of the Electron case. If you look at the bottom of the case, you will see that the name of the socket is engraved there.

Now try something

Take a look at the TV screen. If you have already pressed any keys on the Electron's keyboard you will probably see something unintelligible displayed on the screen. To remove this, press the key on the keyboard

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marked **BREAK**. Then press any keys you like on the keyboard – as many as you like – you cannot damage the computer whatever you press! The little flashing line on the screen is called the cursor and is to show you where the next character you type will appear.

If you press the **RETURN** key at any stage, a new line is started and the computer will probably display a message on the screen immediately underneath what you've typed, such as

Mistake

or

Syntax error

or something else. Don't take any notice of this; the Electron's command of the English language isn't quite as good as yours! Later on we will show you how to tell the Electron to do things for you by using its own language called BASIC.

If you press a key and hold your finger on it, you will notice that after a short time, the character displayed on the screen repeats itself over and over until you take your finger off the key again.

If the yellow light to the left of the **CAPSLK** is still on, then letters of the alphabet will appear on the screen as capital ('upper case') letters.

To type small letters, press the **SHIFT** key and hold it down while you press the **CAPSLK** key. The yellow light goes out, and you can now type 'lower case' letters on the screen.

To get back to capitals, press **SHIFT** and **CAPSLK** again – the keyboard is now locked into producing 'upper case' letters again.

Spend some time playing with the keyboard if you aren't very familiar with the layout, and if anything strange happens, just press the **BREAK** key. This will clear the screen and you can continue. When you get to chapter 5 the keyboard operation is explained in detail.

The different typefaces used in the book represent the following:

- Ordinary text appears like *this*, or like this for emphasis.
- Text typed into the computer or displayed on the screen appears **like this** or **like this**.
- Words like **RETURN** mean that you press the key marked RETURN rather than actually type in the letters R E T U R N .