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Macintosh II: Description (Discontinued)

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TOPIC -----

This article describes the Macintosh II computer.

DISCUSSION -----

As a member of the Apple Macintosh family of computers, the Macintosh II runs the same software and has the same icon/mouse interface as previous versions of the Apple Macintosh.

The Macintosh II uses a Motorola 16 MHz 68020 microprocessor, which has a 32-bit data bus. These factors have the potential to speed up Macintosh Plus software (which runs on an 8 MHz 68000) by a factor of 4. Other properties of the 68020 add to that speed advantage, and with the standard 68881 floating-point coprocessor, certain Macintosh software may run as much as 200 times faster on the Macintosh II than on a Macintosh Plus.

ROM in the Macintosh II has been completely rewritten, and includes Color QuickDraw, which supports the definition of over 16 million colors. With the Macintosh II Video Card and its Expansion Kit the Macintosh II can display 256 colors (or shades of gray) on the screen at once. Since the Macintosh II has flexible video options, you may choose a video device that best suits your needs.

Six NuBus slots provide a flexible means of expanding the architecture. NuBus, Texas Instruments' synchronous bus definition, allows any device to become master of the system. Therefore, 80286 cards, EtherNet cards, and other intelligent interfaces may, at times, gain control of the CPU. With this architecture, the Macintosh II may conceivably run MS-DOS software, act as a smart terminal, or drive a variety of output devices.

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The Macintosh II supports 4-voice hardware sound. The firmware now contains synthesizers for MIDI, note, wave table, and sampled sound production; and it supports the addition of other sound hardware through the NuBus slots or through the external sound jack.

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