1. In networks, a device that filters and forwards packets between LAN segments. Switches operate at the data link layer (layer 2) of the OSI Reference Model and therefore support any packet protocol. LANs that use switches to join segments are called switched LANs or, in the case of Ethernet networks, switched Ethernet LANs. Sometimes the switch is housed in a hub. See contact. 2. A small lever or button. The switches on the back of printers and on expansion boards are called DIP switches. A switch that has just two positions is called a toggle switch. 3. Another word for option or parameter, a symbol that you add to a command to modify the command's behavior. See toggle. 4. A word used to mean the CPU of an intelligent phone system. 5. An electrical device having two states, on (the closed state) or off (the open state). Ideally, a switch device has zero impedance when closed and infinite impedance when open.

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Last update: **2016/06/07 13:18**