FROM ZERO TO POWERED ON

Build Your Gaming PC

(without the mistakes I actually made)

I didn't learn this in any course or career — I learned it by building my own, making mistakes, overspending, and then helping others buy theirs until I ended up selling pre-built PCs.

By Carlos Córdova — I was the same lost consumer looking for his first build before becoming the person who builds and sells them.

01 How to read any CPU and GPU naming scheme (AMD, Intel, NVIDIA, Radeon, Arc)

02 The complete build, step by step, with 9 diagrams and safety protips

03 Installing Windows and Linux, even without internet

04 A checklist so you don't fall for scams or overspend when buying

05 3 complete, current builds ready to copy based on your budget

Edition: September 2026 · Updated and relaunched monthly so prices and recommendations always stay current.

What you'll find here

01 **Introduction**
Why building a PC is closer to stacking big blocks than performing surgery.

02 **How to think about your dream PC**
Splitting the budget by what and how you play — the decision that sets all the others.

03 **The parts, explained one by one**
Reading any AMD, Intel, NVIDIA, Radeon or Arc naming scheme without confusion. With 5 diagrams.

04 **How to build your PC step by step**
All 11 steps in order, with 4 diagrams of the parts where people get stuck most.

05 **Installing the operating system**
Windows and Linux, even if you have no internet at that moment.

06 **Initial setup: what nobody tells you**
Starting with the step almost everyone skips, which costs up to 30% performance.

07 **Protips and safety during the build**
Static, thermal paste, cables, and the rules that prevent an expensive accident.

08 **Common beginner mistakes**
The seven I see most, and how to skip past them.

09 **Frequently asked questions**
The ones that reach me every week, answered without hedging.

10 **Smart shopping checklist**
How to avoid scams, hidden parts and inflated prices.

11 **Sample builds by budget**
Three complete, current combinations, ready to copy.

12 **Peripherals: monitor, keyboard, mouse, headset**
What actually changes, with my reviews of what I use myself.

13 **Final checklist before powering on**
Seven questions before you press the button for the first time.

14 **If you would rather I help you directly**
A parts plan for your budget, or I build the PC myself (Mexico).

— **Quick glossary**
Every technical term in the guide, all in one place.

Example: Ryzen 7 9800X3D

- **Ryzen 3 / 5 / 7 / 9:** this is the performance "family." 3 is basic, 5 is balanced (the sweet spot for most people), 7 is high performance, 9 is top of the line. The higher the number, the higher up the power ladder it sits.
- **First digits** (e.g. 9800 → "9"): indicate the generation. The higher the number, the newer and better the architecture — today the 9000 series (Zen 5) is the current generation.
- **Following digits** (e.g. "800"): the performance tier within that generation — the higher, the more powerful.
- **X suffix:** ships with a higher factory clock speed, built for more performance without needing manual overclocking.
- **G suffix:** includes decent integrated graphics — useful if you're not buying a dedicated GPU right away.
- **3D suffix** (3D V-Cache): extra cache memory stacked onto the chip. It's a big leap specifically for gaming, because many games benefit more from cache than from raw clock speed.

WHAT DOES "OVERCLOCK" MEAN?

Making a part (CPU or GPU) run above its factory speed, to gain more performance than it comes with "out of the box." Not all parts allow it, and doing it badly can cause instability or more heat — it isn't necessary to enjoy a powerful PC, it's optional for anyone who wants to squeeze out every last bit of performance.

PROTIP

If your priority is pure gaming, an "X3D" tends to perform better than a model with more cores but without that technology. If you do heavy editing or rendering, prioritize cores over 3D V-Cache.

Intel Core — how to read the name

Intel currently sells **two coexisting lines** — check which one you're buying before matching it to a motherboard, because they use different sockets and are not interchangeable.

New line — Core Ultra (since Arrow Lake / Core Ultra 200S)

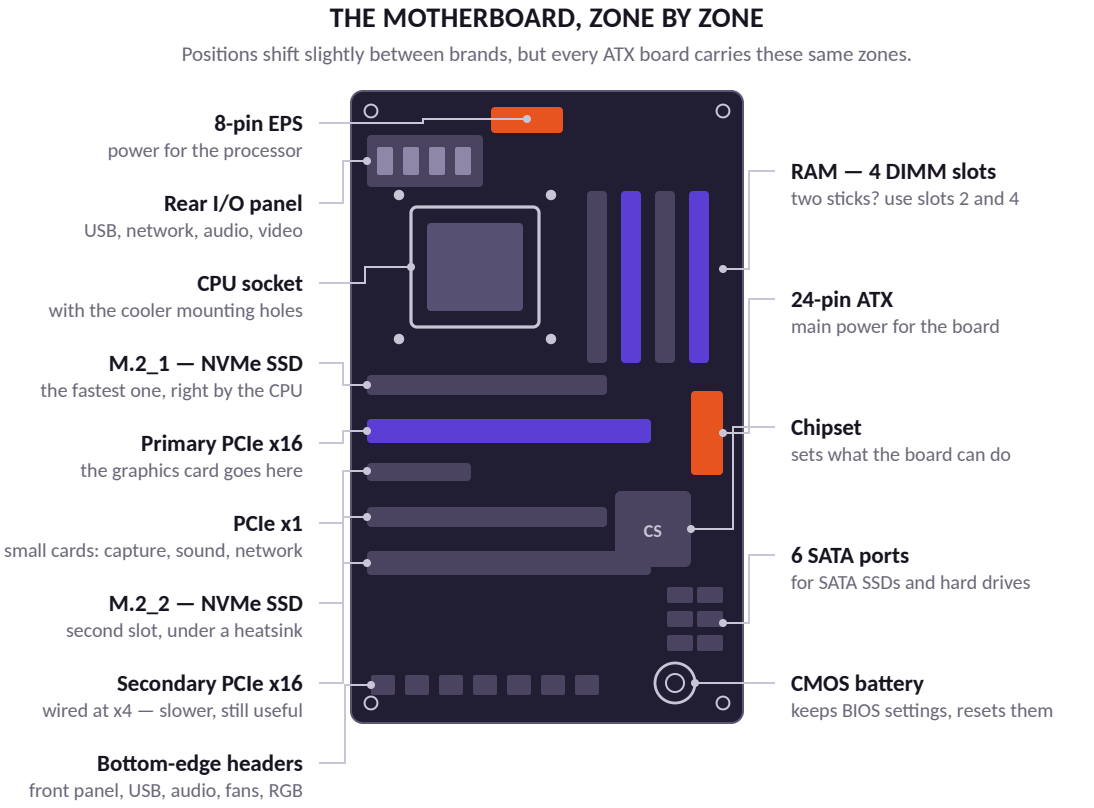


DIAGRAM 1 — Motherboard connector map

3.4 RAM memory

RAM temporarily stores whatever your PC is using at the moment — the more you have (and the faster it is), the smoother everything runs, especially with several things open at once.

- **Capacity:** 16GB is the reasonable minimum today for gaming. 32GB is recommended if you also edit video, stream, or use many applications at once.
- **Speed (MHz):** the higher the number (e.g. DDR5-6000 vs DDR5-5200), the faster data transfers. The real-world impact on games is moderate but noticeable.
- **DDR4 vs DDR5:** physically different and not interchangeable — your motherboard supports one or the other, never both. DDR5 is newer and faster, but also more expensive.

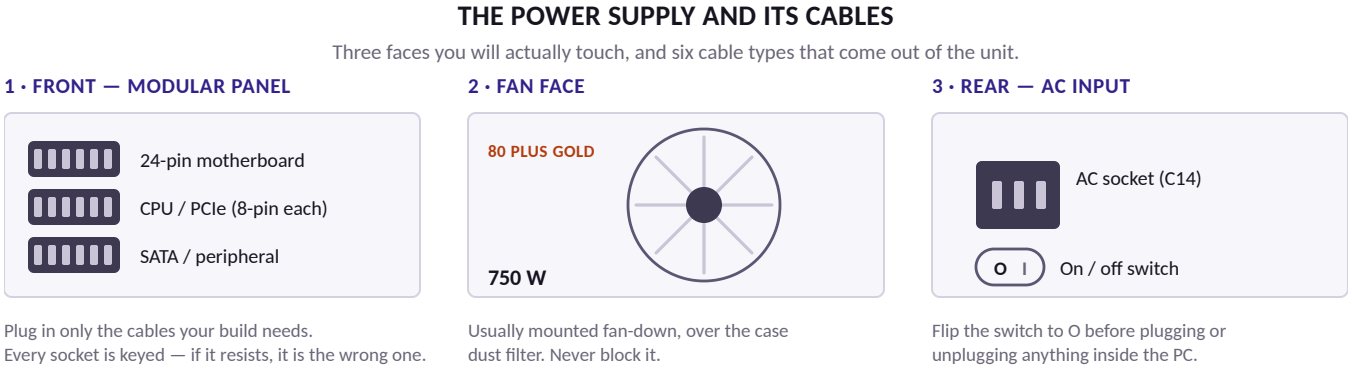


DIAGRAM 2 — The power supply and every cable it carries

3.7 Case

The case doesn't directly affect performance, but it does affect temperature and how easy the build is.

- **Size:** must match your motherboard's form factor (ATX, Micro-ATX, Mini-ITX) and have room for your GPU (some cards are very long).
- **Airflow:** a case with good air intake and exhaust (front mesh, room for fans) keeps everything cooler than a “pretty” but sealed one.

END OF THE SAMPLE

That was just the start.

You just saw 5 of 43 pages. The full guide takes you from the shopping list to a PC that is on and set up.

IN THE FULL GUIDE

- Every part explained, so you know what you buy and why
- The build, step by step, with diagrams for every connection
- Installing Windows, drivers and BIOS settings
- Tests to confirm everything works the way it should
- The most common beginner mistakes, and how to avoid them
- Complete builds by budget, with reference prices
- Monitor, keyboard, mouse and headset: what actually matters

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Rather have me pick your parts? With the custom plan ($25 USD) you get the exact list within 24 hours.

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