Testing Computer Hardware
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"Multi-sense" inspection

- Look for swollen capacitors, blackened parts, excess dust, broken parts

- Listen for failing fans, noisy/clicking drives

- Smell for burnt/hot parts

- Touch power supplies, cases, cooling fins looking for hot parts

- If available, check logs for "disk0" errors ("disk0" is the designation for the main hard drive on which the operating system is installed)

Diagnostic software

- Built into PC as part of boot menu option (press F12 on Dells, F10 for HPs)

- Download .ISO
  - I have had good luck with Hiren's boot CD (http://www.hirensbootcd.org/download/)
  - Note the links on making bootable media (CD, USB)
  - Create bootable media
  - In Windows 7, right-click .ISO, left-click "burn disk image", follow prompts

- Boot from media
  - May need to change BIOS settings or hit boot option key (ESC, F9, F10, F12)

- Run "Memtest" to test RAM
  - Good (usually) once test 4 is reached
  - Other system info appears that is useful
  - Errors appear as white text with red background

- Run hard drive test
  - Boot Hiren, DOS programs, hard disk, IBM DFT, select drive, quick test