

software freedom day

What is "Free Software"?

The term "Free Software" really doesn't have anything to do with how much money you paid for the software... it's actually about the rights or "freedom" the authors of that software grant to you in the software licence.

Conventional "shrink-wrapped" software usually involves a licence that restricts your

rights — for example:

- You must not copy this software
- You don't have the right to see how this software was written

Conversely, a Free Open Source Software (FOSS) licence explicitly grants both of these rights to everyone!

The fact that most FOSS is available at no-cost is just a bonus!

Why is Free Software important?

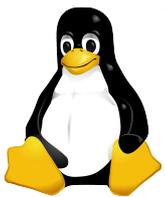
Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) has a property that no other kind of software can provide: transparency.

Because the code for FOSS is publicly available, it allows it to be scrutinised by anyone to see exactly what it will do when it is run. It avoids nasty surprises, such as spyware, result rigging and all kinds of issues that we can't be absolutely sure to avoid in closed software, where the source code is not publicly available.

You can be sure that when you're using FOSS, you are in control of your computer. Your private data stays private. You can be sure that the software is not reporting your what you do on your computer to someone else via the internet.

Transparency also makes FOSS software better - from finding and fixing bugs, to adding new features, to improving the software's documentation, or even creating artwork to be used in the software - anyone who wants to contribute to improving the software can do so

LINUX - The Free Operating System



The LINUX operating system is entirely open - from the lowest level software that communicates with your PC to the applications that you use.

Ubuntu is a LINUX distribution containing all the FOSS applications you need to get your PC up and running - software for web browsing, reading email, instant messaging, playing music and videos, and a full office suite.

No need to install anything - just pop the CD into your PC and reboot to give it a try!

Free Software For Everyone



If you can't move across to LINUX, there are still many FOSS applications for Windows and MacOS.

"The Open Disc" is full of FOSS applications, ready to install onto your Windows PC. It includes applications such as Firefox, OpenOffice.org, Inkscape and the GNU Image Manipulation Program.

These are the same applications that you can also use on a LINUX system!



www.ubuntu.com



ubuntu

www.newcastlelug.org

www.theopendisc.com

OpenDisc
high quality open source software