

## Types of Application Software

Application software is written by programmers and made available to users in order to accomplish a specific purpose or task. There are multiple different ways software can be categorized. The most important distinction is whether the software is:

- Proprietary (sometimes called Closed Source) – distributed freely or after payment
- Open Source – distributed freely
- Public Domain – distributed freely

Application software can also be categorized by the manner in which is distributed and the controls or limitations on its use.

<b>Proprietary Software</b> (source code is kept secret, not allowing derivative works <sup>1</sup> )		
Distribution or Usage Type	Definition	Examples
<b>Commercial</b>	Copyrighted and offered for sale. Generally upon payment to the software publisher or vendor, a unique license key is provided and must be used to activate the installation.	MS Office Intuit QuickBooks Adobe Photoshop
<b>Subscription Service</b>	Copyrighted software. Users pay a leasing fee typically a monthly or yearly amount. The subscription fee provides full access to the software for the specified period of time.	Microsoft Office 365 Salesforce.com Google Apps for Business
<b>Limited-Use</b>	Copyrighted software. Parts of the software are offered free depending on its use (personal vs. business) or depending on using a limited set of features. Full-featured product or product for use in a commercial setting require a licensing fee. Often distributed using a Shareware model.	AVG Anti-Virus MalwareBytes NCH Software
<b>Shareware</b>	Copyrighted software usually distributed for free for trial or short-term use, after which the user is obligated to pay for its continued use. This category overlaps with Limited-Use (above). Shareware is a distribution methodology, for paid software, not a source of free software.	WinZip NCH Software
<b>Freeware</b>	Copyrighted software distributed freely.	Microsoft Edge, Skype

<b>Open Source Software</b> (source code is distributed with the software allowing derivative works)		
Licensing Categories	Definition	Examples
<b>Copyleft (GPL &amp; similar, includes Creative Commons Share Alike)</b>	Copyrighted software that gives users right to make changes to software and redistribute the newly created software if that new software is also copylefted (i.e. includes source code, allows derivative works, etc.).	MariaDB GIMP Moodle Koha Free Library System
<b>Weak Copyleft (Mozilla)</b>	Copyrighted software that gives license to users that falls between Copyleft and Permissive	LibreOffice Mozilla Firefox
<b>Permissive (BSD, Apache)</b>	Copyrighted software that gives users right to make changes to software and redistribute the newly created software without restriction.	Fedora (a Linux distro) Apache OpenOffice
<b>Note:</b> Donations are sought and accepted by many Open Source Software projects but are not required.		

<b>Public Domain Software</b> (not copyrighted, virtually no restrictions on use)	
Definition	Examples
No copyright, thus derivative works not restricted in any way	SQLite

<sup>1</sup> "Derivative works" are new, original products that include aspects of other earlier work. Applied to software it means modifying existing software (for example improving it) and then creating a new software product.