



Reading 1

► You are probably familiar with most of the information included in the text below, so, before you read it, based on your background knowledge, decide whether the following statements are True or False. Then read the text to check your answers. You can work in pairs.

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| 1) The software a computer uses to perform tasks is also known as <i>programs</i> and <i>applications</i> . | |
| 2) Examples of computer operating systems are Windows, Mac OS, and Linux. | |
| 3) Software does not always have to be compatible with an operating system. | |
| 4) Even if it does not have software installed onto it, a computer is still usable. | |
| 5) Unlike hardware, software cannot be physically observed by the user. | |
| 6) Contrary to widespread belief, firmware is a type of hardware. | |
| 7) Software programs can be found online totally free of charge. | |
| 8) Integrated circuits, chips, and dual core CPUs are software equipment. | |
| 9) The term <i>software</i> dates back to the 1950s. | |

Software facts... for kids

Computer software, also called *software*, is a set of instructions and documentation that tells a computer what to do or how to perform a task. Software includes all different programs on a computer, such as applications and the operating system. Applications are programs that are designed to perform a specific operation, such as a game or a word processor. The operating system (e.g., Mac OS, Microsoft Windows, Android and various Linux distributions) is a type of software that is used as a platform for running the applications, and controls all user interface tools including display and the keyboard.



See also
Unit 12.

The word *software* was first used in the late 1960s to emphasize its difference from computer hardware, which can be physically observed by the user. Software is a set of instructions that the computer follows. Before compact discs (CDs) or the development of the Internet age, software was used on various computer data storage media tools like paper punch cards, magnetic discs or magnetic tapes.

The word *firmware* is sometimes used to describe a style of software that is made specifically for a particular type of computer or an electronic device and is usually stored on a Flash memory or ROM chip in the computer. Firmware usually refers to a piece of software that directly controls a piece of hardware. The firmware for a CD drive or the firmware for a modem are examples of firmware implementation.

Today, software has become an important part of our lives. Software is used everywhere. Software engineers are responsible for producing fault-free software which has literally¹ become an essential part of our daily lives. Changeability and conformity are two of the main properties of software design. There are also different processing models for designing software including Build and Fix, Waterfall and Agile software processing design methods.

1. literally: used to emphasize that what sb is saying is true, even if it seems exaggerated or surprising