Top Free and Open-Source Operating Systems

1. Linux

Linux is the most popular open-source operating system family. It comes in many versions (called "distributions" or "distros").

◇ *Popular Linux Distributions:*

- **Ubuntu** – User-friendly and great for beginners.
- **Linux Mint** – Lightweight and easy to use, similar to Windows.
- **Debian** – Very stable; great for developers and servers.
- **Fedora** – Cutting-edge features, backed by Red Hat.
- **Arch Linux** – Highly customizable but more advanced.
- **Zorin OS** – Designed for users switching from Windows.

Features:

- Completely free to use
- Open-source (you can see and modify the code)
- Supports thousands of applications
- Secure and lightweight

---

2. FreeBSD

- A powerful, Unix-like OS based on the Berkeley Software Distribution.
- Known for performance and security, often used in servers and networking.
- Not technically Linux, but similar in functionality.

---

3. ReactOS

- Open-source operating system designed to be **compatible with Windows applications and drivers**.
- Still in alpha stage (not fully stable), but an interesting project.

---

4. Haiku OS

- Inspired by the old **BeOS**, focused on simplicity and speed.
- Best for experimenting or older hardware.

---

5. Kali Linux

- A Debian-based distro used for **penetration testing** and cybersecurity.
- Includes tools for ethical hacking and digital forensics.

---

6. Tails

- A privacy-focused Linux OS that runs from a USB stick or DVD.
- Leaves no trace after shutdown.
- Great for anonymity and secure communication.

---

7. Tiny Core Linux

- Extremely lightweight (as small as 11 MB).
- Good for older or low-spec computers.

🛠️ Why Use Open Source OS?

- **Free of cost** – No license fees.
- **Customizable** – Modify it to your needs (if you know how).
- **Community support** – Forums and documentation available.
- **Secure** – Frequent updates and fewer viruses.