Types of Computer Software

Computer software is a set of instructions or programs that tell the hardware what to do. It enables users to perform specific tasks using a computer. Software can be broadly classified into two main types: **system software** and **application software**. Some also include **utility software** and **programming software** as additional categories.

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1. System Software

System software manages the hardware and basic system operations. It acts as a bridge between the user and the hardware.

- **Operating System (OS):** The most important system software. Examples include Windows, macOS, Linux, and Android. It controls hardware, runs applications, and manages files.
- **Device Drivers:** Help the operating system communicate with hardware devices like printers, keyboards, and scanners.
- **Firmware:** A type of software stored in hardware devices, helping them function properly.

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2. Application Software

Application software helps users perform specific tasks.

- **Productivity Software:** Examples include Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint for writing, calculating, and presenting.
- **Web Browsers:** Like Google Chrome, Firefox, or Safari, used to access the internet.
- **Media Players:** For watching videos and listening to music, such as VLC or Windows Media Player.
- **Games and Entertainment:** Software designed for gaming or multimedia use.

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3. Utility Software

Utility programs help maintain and protect the computer.

- Examples include antivirus software, disk cleanup tools, and backup programs.

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4. Programming Software

Used by developers to write, test, and debug code.

- Examples include compilers, text editors, and Integrated Development Environments (IDEs) like Visual Studio or Code::Blocks.