



1.2.2 Open Source & Closed Source

Open-source and closed-source software are distributed under licences that define how the software can be used, modified and distributed. The key difference is whether the source code is available to users and what the licence permits them to do with it.

Open Source

The source code is made available to users, usually allowing them to inspect, modify and redistribute the software according to the licence.

Open-source projects may be developed collaboratively, with contributions from developers who follow the project's contribution rules.

Because the source code is available, developers can inspect the code and identify and fix bugs.

Updates tend to be unscheduled and sporadic.

Examples

- Linux operating system
- Mozilla Firefox
- OpenOffice

Closed Source

The source code is not made available to users. The developer retains control of the software and its copyright.

Users are restricted by the software licence and generally cannot modify or redistribute the source code.

Code is professionally developed by the manufacturer, and they provide updates and support.

The developer tests the software before release and is responsible for fixing bugs and providing updates.

Updates tend to be scheduled and more regular.

Examples

- Windows operating system
- Google Chrome
- Microsoft Office

