

# Free and Open Source Software ( FOSS )

## General Knowledge

### What is FOSS?

Free and Open Source Software are computer programs that people are free to run, copy, share, study, change and improve on. Anyone can take these programs, understand how they work, use them and redistribute copies without asking for permission.



**“Free as in freedom. Think free speech, not free teh tarik.”**

*anonymous*

### Freedom:

Free and Open Source Software gives people the freedom to control their software, not the other way around.

Free software is a matter of freedom: people should be free to use software in all the ways that are socially useful. Software differs from material objects, such as chairs, sandwiches, and gasoline, in that it can be copied and changed much more easily. These possibilities make software as useful as it should be; we believe software users should be able to make full use of them. <sup>1</sup>

### The Four Freedoms:

With FOSS, people have the freedom to:

1. run the program, for any purpose
2. study how the program works, and adapt it to your needs.
3. redistribute copies so you can help your neighbor.
4. improve the program, and release your improvements to the public, so that the whole community benefits.

With these four freedoms people have the ability to empower themselves and their community.

### Low Cost:

Software is expensive! Nowadays software costs more than the hardware itself. This leads to either piracy, or paying high costs for original software. Generally Free and Open Source Software is given away freely, so you can save both your money, and excuses.

### Localisation:

Wonder why your software isn't in Malay, Chinese, or Tamil? Many FOSS projects or countries have translation teams.

The Malaysian Translation Teams Kedidi Emas and Projek Gabai, Projek Munsyi have been working on providing FOSS installed computers with localized software in the Malay Language. Helping people, who don't know English, to use a computer.



**The most fundamental mission of schools is to teach people to be good citizens and good neighbors--to cooperate with others who need their help. In the area of computers, this means teaching them to share software. Elementary schools, above all, should tell their pupils,**

**"If you bring software to school, you must share it with the other children." Of course, the school must practice what it preaches: all the software installed by the school should be available for students to copy, take home, and redistribute further. Teaching the students to use free software, and to participate in the free software community, is a hands-on civics lesson. It also teaches students the role model of public service rather than that of tycoons. All levels of school should use free software."**

*Richard Stallman*

### Economy:

Free and Open Source Software is good for the local economy. Instead of sending money to corporations in "developed" countries, FOSS allows us to support local professionals, who can provide personalized products and services at lower cost.

### Bridging the Digital Divide:

With software provided at a low cost, and locally translated, more people can benefit from its use. People can use FOSS as a stepping stone to bridge the digital divide, in the country and

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/philosophy.htm>  
[I#AboutFreeSoftware](#)



between nations.

## Security:

Tired of viruses, adware, spyware, security problems, etc? Well FOSS has been known to be more secure than closed source software. Get rid of your security problems today!

Take back control of your software!

## Popular Usage of FOSS:

- Google and Yahoo! rely on FOSS for their services.
- Sun Microsystems, a leader in Internet technology, has chosen to release their Operating System (as OpenSolaris) and programming language (Java) as FOSS.
- Over 60% of the Internet runs on FOSS
- The exponential growth of the Internet can be linked to increasing usage of FOSS
- The popular Firefox Internet browser is a Free and Open Source Software

## Not just for computer enthusiasts!

Linux and other Open Source Software is easier to install and use than ever before. It's easy to get and install, documentation and community support are free. Country, state, and local governments, as well as businesses of every size have saved millions of ringgit by adopting FOSS.

## Run FOSS on your computer now

Here are some popular FOSS programs that run on Windows:

- OpenOffice.org - Office Suite (<http://www.openoffice.org>)
- Firefox and Thunderbird - Web surfing and email (<http://www.mozilla.com>)
- The GIMP - Image Editor (<http://www.gimp.org>)
- Azureus - File sharing (BitTorrent) client (<http://azureus.sourceforge.net/>)

For more software check out <https://wiki.ubuntu.com/LoopList>

## Community Resources

The community is engaged in many activities from which people can benefit from.

### MyOSS Meetup

The community holds a Meetup every month to get excited FOSS users together to discuss. Two presentations are held, and the informal, yet popular mamak session.

**Next MyOSS Meetup:**

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2006

<http://meetup.foss.org.my/>

### Planet MyOSS

There are many FOSS enthusiasts in Malaysia, but we don't get to meet each other as often as we would like. Planet MyOSS provides an easy way to keep track of any FOSS activities in Malaysia.

<http://planet.foss.org.my/>

### IRC: #myoss on irc.freenode.net

If you prefer chatting over the Internet, drop by the our IRC channel.

### Mailing Lists

Perhaps you don't have the time to follow either the planet or the IRC channel, then the mailing lists are for you! Read them at your own pleasure and contribute back to the discussion.

MyOSS:

<http://lists.foss.org.my/mailman/listinfo/myoss>

MyPenguin99 (Malay):

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/myperquin99/>

### Where can I get FOSS?

Interested in using FOSS but don't know where to get it? KedaiCD ( <http://www.kedaicd.com/> ) has a wide selection of FOSS Distributions for sale. Famous distributions such as Fedora Core, Ubuntu, Debian, Mandriva, and FreeBSD are available. You can also attend the MyOSS Monthly Meetup and we can help you out.

### Contacts and Resources:

Malaysia Free and Open Source Group:

<http://foss.org.my/>

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