

What is an Operating System?



Hi! I'm Sarah, and I'm here to tell you about a computer's operating system and guide you through navigating a computer.

We'll follow along with Jane. Jane wants to use the computer to create a letter with pictures to send to family and friends.

She sits down at the computer and turns it on.

Let's take a look.



When Jane first turns on the computer, software starts running behind the scenes that manages all the different computer programs and processes.

That software is called the operating system.

Just like your brain works to manage your body to make sure you are breathing and your heart is pumping, the operating system manages the functions of the computer to make sure everything is working together.



There are different operating systems.

If you own a Macintosh computer, your operating system is called “OS ten” and written as OS X.

Most personal computers, or PCs, come with a version of the Windows operating system.

Some people also run an operating system called Linux.