

Unit 4 — Software Applications

Reading: The Software Development Cycle



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Without software applications, it would be very hard to actually perform any meaningful task on a computer unless one was a very talented, fast, and patient programmer. Applications are meant to make users more productive and get work done faster. Their goal should be flexibility, efficiency, and user-friendliness.

Today there are thousands of applications for almost every purpose, from writing letters to playing games. Producing software is no longer the lonely profession it once was, with a few random geeks hacking away in the middle of the night. Software is a big business and the development cycle goes through certain stages and versions before it is released.

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Discussion Questions

What applications do you use every day? Which ones do you like and which ones do you not like? Why?

If you have the financial resources to develop any application you wanted to, what would you develop? Explain how your application would improve the lives of its users.

Do some research and write a short summary of the differences between a 'beta version', an 'alpha version', and a 'release candidate' of an application.