

# **Introduction to Free Open Source Software**

Open source software is not just free as in price, but also free as in freedom. The freedoms enshrined in an open source software license are the rights to use the software, to copy and redistribute the software, to view and modify the source code, and to redistribute modifications to the software. Most free software licenses stipulate that changes made to the software must also be distributed under a free software license (usually the GNU General Public License).

Background information on the philosophy of the Free Software movement can be found at [www.gnu.org/philosophy/philosophy.html](http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/philosophy.html), and [www.opensource.org](http://www.opensource.org).

## **OpenOffice ([www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org))**

OpenOffice is a complete office suite that includes word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, and drawing programs.

## **Mozilla Firefox ([www.mozilla.com](http://www.mozilla.com))**

Firefox is a web browser that features enhanced security, tabbed browsing, popup blocking, live bookmarks (RSS feeds), and hundreds of extension modules.

## **Mozilla Thunderbird ([www.mozilla.com](http://www.mozilla.com))**

Thunderbird is a flexible, secure e-mail client with junk mail filtering, easy management of multiple identities and mail accounts, and many extension modules.

## **Gaim ([gaim.sourceforge.net](http://gaim.sourceforge.net))**

Gaim is a multi-protocol instant messenger client. It allows you to be simultaneously logged in to MSN, ICQ, Jabber, AIM, or any other IM account using just one program.

## **PDFCreator ([sourceforge.net/projects/pdfcreator](http://sourceforge.net/projects/pdfcreator))**

PDFCreator installs itself as a printer in Windows. When printing, simply choose PDFCreator as your printer, and it will create a PDF file.

## **Knoppix Linux Live CD ([knoppix.com](http://knoppix.com))**

Linux is a complete operating system that replaces Windows. The easiest way to try it is to try Knoppix. Knoppix Linux is a bootable CD which allows you to try Linux without affecting your current installation. All operations occur in memory and nothing is written to the hard drive. Put the CD in, restart, and try Linux. When you're finished, remove the CD and restart. The CD has about 2 GB of software on it you can play with.