

I have gathered 10 different definitions of software testing from various internet sources. Three of these sources (Geeks for Geeks, Ministry of Testing and Tech Target) are tech education websites, two are websites for professional organizations (IEEE's computer.org and the ASTQB) Three are for corporations (IBM, AWS and Browser Stack) one is an encyclopedia (Wikipedia) and one is an academic journal (Science Direct). Here are some of the similarities and differences between the definitions:

- All of the definitions focus on defects/bugs and the underlying quality of the software
- Some of the definitions focus on the functionality of the software while others have a broader focus including non-functional testing
- Some of the definitions are about software testing as a standalone subject while other focus on testing as a part of the software development lifecycle or as part of a CI/CD pipeline
- The three corporate sources (IBM and AWS) reference tools and software that can be used in testing. Either their own proprietary software or in general
- All but the ASTQB definition distinguish between automated and manual testing
- All of the definitions either reference risk mitigation/reduction or more broadly the need to identify defects early on to avoid problems in later phases

Analyzing these definitions, we can compose both a narrow definition of functional testing and a definition of software testing more broadly. Functional testing is a method of assuring quality by identifying bugs and defects, whether manually or automatically, in the functionality of software early in the development of software. Software testing is a method of assuring quality, whether manually or using automated tools, in software by finding bugs and defects, ensuring that it meets both functional and non-functional requirements, typically as part of the software development lifecycle or a software development approach such as DevOps.