**What is software piracy?**

Software piracy is the act of illegally using, copying, modifying, distributing, sharing, or selling computer software protected by copyright laws.

Why software piracy is considered a crime?

Copyright laws have been created to make sure software developers (engineers, programmers, graphic designers, writers) receive appropriate credit and compensation for their work. Software piracy is illegal and considered a crime because whenever software is used, copied, or sold illegally, these copyright holders are robbed of their payment and recognition.

**Types of software piracy**

**Softlifting, or end-user piracy**

Softlifting, also known as end-user piracy, is the most common type of software piracy. It happens when you purchase a piece of software and share it with people who are not authorized to use it.

**Counterfeiting**

Software counterfeiting is the illegal copying, distribution, and/or selling of licensed computer software.

**Hard-disk loading**

Hard disk loading is a form of commercial software piracy in which a PC reseller buys a legal piece of computer software, copies it, installs it on a computer’s hard disk, and sells the computer.

**Client-server overuse**

Client-server overuse occurs when a company allows the number of users of a particular software to exceed the number of licenses the company has for the software.

**Online piracy**

Online piracy, also known as internet piracy, is the illegal sharing, selling, and acquiring of software on the internet.

**Examples of software piracy**

* Purchasing a single user license for a piece of software and downloading it on your own computer as well as on someone else’s computer. The same example applies to companies that opt for softlifting to save costs.
* Downloading copyrighted films, music, games, or e-books from shady websites for free.
* Streaming content without authorization from its legal owner.
* Buying a used PC or a hard drive with potentially unlicensed software installed on it.