

FOSS

A term that I'm going to consistently use throughout this course is **FOSS**, ***Show Floss*** not FLOSS, **FOSS**, which stands for *Free and open-source software*. Rather than me explaining it every time I use the acronym, let's cover the term right now.

Promotional Spot

FOSS isn't just a category of software--it's a movement. *FOSS is any software that can be freely licensed to use, copy, study, and change in any way you want, while leaving the source code openly shared so people can voluntarily improve the software.* This is contrary to the idea of proprietary software, where the software is under restrictive copyright and the source code is hidden from users. Microsoft, Apple, and most companies use proprietary software on their desktop operating systems, and most other pieces of software they release.

So what are the benefits to FOSS, well there are plenty:

FOSS is fantastic for privacy and security, which is obviously going to be great for you taking this course. Manufacturers of proprietary, closed-source software are sometimes *pressured into building backdoors (which gives them or anyone else access to private data)* or other undesired features into their software. Instead of having to trust software vendors, people that use FOSS can inspect and verify the source code themselves and can put trust in a community of volunteers and users.

Now you might be asking, if it's public, won't it be easier for hackers to exploit it? This is far from the truth, *since the code is public, more and more people are able to collaborate to fix any possible exploits to make the software as secure as possible.* *This has proved to be very accurate when looking at statistics between FOSS and proprietary software.*

FOSS also gives you greater personal control, customizability, and freedom. If someone wants to change the functionality of a particular software they can bring about changes to the code and, if they wish, distribute the modified version of the software on their own. You gain much more control over your usage and data as well, since software vendors like Apple, Google, and Microsoft want to

lock you into their ecosystem, which works only the way they intend it to work. Meaning, *you can't disable those pesky automatic update notifications on your iPhone, you can't easily remove Google services on an Android device, and Microsoft bugs you all day to sign in to your Microsoft account on Windows 10.* These are just a few of the thousands of things companies force you to deal with everyday. The last benefit is the most obvious one, it's all free and accessible, you never have to pay a **show dime** dime, since it's voluntarily run by the community, and typically relies on donations from users.

Because of all these benefits, I'm going to be recommending FOSS as much as I can throughout the course. We need to have trust in our software to improve our privacy and security, and I will typically recommend the software that has thousands of public eyes looking over it, over the software that is controlled by a company with 20 eyes looking for their next paycheck. If you want more information on FOSS, *I made a more in-depth video discussing it on my YouTube channel.*

Queue Outro Promos

I hope this explained what FOSS is, and why it's important for this course. If you want to get a head start, you can start looking for FOSS alternatives to the software you use everyday by going to *alternativeto.net, searching for your software that you want to change from, and filtering by open source.* Thank you for watching, and I'll see you in the next lesson covering metadata.