UNIT 1:

Introduction to Operating System

An **Operating System** (OS) is an interface between a computer user and computer hardware. An operating system is a software which performs all the basic tasks like file management, memory management, process management, handling input and output, and controlling peripheral devices such as disk drives and printers.

An operating system is software that enables applications to interact with a computer's hardware. The software that contains the core components of the operating system is called the **kernel**.

The primary purposes of an **Operating System** are to enable applications (spftwares) to interact with a computer's hardware and to manage a system's hardware and software resources.

Some popular Operating Systems include Linux Operating System, Windows Operating System, VMS, OS/400, AIX, z/OS, etc. Today, Operating systems is found almost in every device like mobile phones, personal computers, mainframe computers, automobiles, TV, Toys etc.

Definitions

We can have a number of definitions of an Operating System. Let's go through few of them:

An Operting System is the low-level software that supports a computer's basic functions, such as scheduling tasks and controlling peripherals.

We can refine this definition as follows:

An operating system is a program that acts as an interface between the user and the computer hardware and controls the execution of all kinds of programs.

Following is another definition taken from Wikipedia:

An operating system (OS) is system software that manages computer hardware, software resources, and provides common services for computer programs.

Architecture

We can draw a generic architecture diagram of an Operating System which is as follows:
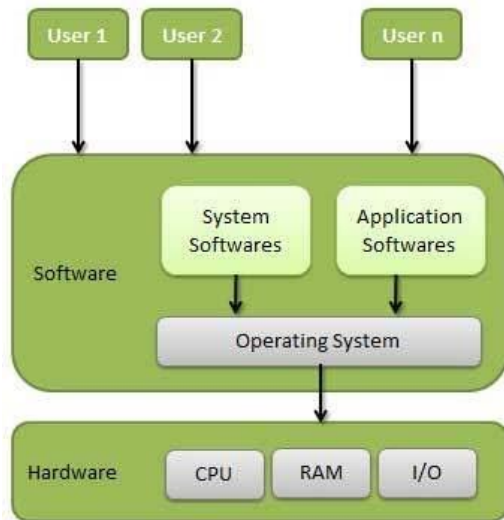
Following are some of important functions of an operating System.

- Memory Management
- Processor Management
- Device Management
- File Management
- Network Management
- Security
- Control over system performance
- Job accounting
- Error detecting aids
- Coordination between other software and users

Memory Management

Memory management refers to management of Primary Memory or Main Memory. Main memory is a large array of words or bytes where each word or byte has its own address.

Main memory provides a fast storage that can be accessed directly by the CPU. For a program to be executed, it must in the main memory. An Operating System does the following activities for memory management –

- Keeps tracks of primary memory, i.e., what part of it are in use by whom, what part are not in use.
- In multiprogramming, the OS decides which process will get memory when and how much.
- Allocates the memory when a process requests it to do so.
- De-allocates the memory when a process no longer needs it or has been terminated.

Processor Management

In multiprogramming environment, the OS decides which process gets the processor when and for how much time. This function is called **process scheduling**. An Operating System does the following activities for processor management –

- Keeps tracks of processor and status of process. The program responsible for this task is known as **traffic controller**.
- Allocates the processor (CPU) to a process.
- De-allocates processor when a process is no longer required.

Device Management

An Operating System manages device communication via their respective drivers. It does the following activities for device management –

- Keeps tracks of all devices. Program responsible for this task is known as the **I/O controller**.
- Decides which process gets the device when and for how much time.
- Allocates the device in the efficient way.
- De-allocates devices.

File Management

A file system is normally organized into directories for easy navigation and usage. These directories may contain files and other directions.

An Operating System does the following activities for file management –

- Keeps track of information, location, uses, status etc. The collective facilities are often known as **file system**.
- Decides who gets the resources.
- Allocates the resources.
- De-allocates the resources.

Other Important Activities

Following are some of the important activities that an Operating System performs –

- **Security** – By means of password and similar other techniques, it prevents unauthorized access to programs and data.
- **Control over system performance** – Recording delays between request for a service and response from the system.
- **Job accounting** – Keeping track of time and resources used by various jobs and users.
- **Error detecting aids** – Production of dumps, traces, error messages, and other debugging and error detecting aids.
- **Coordination between other softwares and users** – Coordination and assignment of compilers, interpreters, assemblers and other software to the various users of the computer systems.

Need for Operating System

OS as a platform for Application programs: The operating system provides a platform, on top of which, other programs, called application programs can run. These application programs help users to perform a specific task easily. It acts as an interface between the computer and the user. It is designed in such a manner that it operates, controls, and executes various applications on the computer.

Managing Input-Output unit: The operating system also allows the computer to manage its own resources such as memory, monitor, keyboard, printer, etc. Management of these resources is required for effective utilization. The operating system controls the various system input-output resources and allocates them to the users or programs as per their requirements.

Multitasking: The operating system manages memory and allows multiple programs to run in their own space and even communicate with each other through shared memory. Multitasking gives users a good experience as they can perform several tasks on a computer at a time.

A platform for other software applications: Different application programs are needed by users to carry out particular system tasks. These applications are managed and controlled by the OS to ensure their effectiveness. It serves as an interface between the user and the applications, in other words.

Controls memory: It helps in controlling the computer's main memory. Additionally, it allows and deallocates memory to all tasks and applications.

Looks after system files: It helps with system file management. As far as we are aware, all of the data on the system exists as files. It facilitates simple file interaction.

Provides Security: It helps to maintain the system and applications safe through the authorization process. Thus, the OS provides security to the system.

Services of Operating System

1. Program Execution
2. Input Output Operations
3. File Management
4. Error Handling
5. Resource Management
6. Communication between Processes
7. Networking

8. System Utilities
9. User Interface

Program Execution

It is the Operating System that manages how a program is going to be executed. It loads the program into the memory after which it is executed. The order in which they are executed depends on the CPU Scheduling Algorithms. A few are FCFS, SJF, etc. When the program is in execution, the Operating System also handles deadlock i.e. no two processes come for execution at the same time. The Operating System is responsible for the smooth execution of both user and system programs. The Operating System utilizes various resources available for the efficient running of all types of functionalities.

Input Output Operations

Operating System manages the input-output operations and establishes communication between the user and device drivers. Device drivers are software that is associated with hardware that is being managed by the OS so that the sync between the devices works properly. It also provides access to input-output devices to a program when needed.

File Management

The operating system helps in managing files also. If a program needs access to a file, it is the operating system that grants access. These permissions include read-only, read-write, etc. It also provides a platform for the user to create, and delete files. The Operating System is responsible for making decisions regarding the storage of all types of data or files, i.e, floppy disk/hard disk/pen drive, etc. The Operating System decides how the data should be manipulated and stored.

Error Handling

The Operating System also handles the error occurring in the CPU, in Input-Output devices, etc. It also ensures that an error does not occur frequently and fixes the errors. It also prevents the process from coming to a deadlock. It also looks for any type of error or bugs that can occur while any task. The well-secured OS sometimes also acts as a countermeasure for preventing any sort of breach of the Computer System from any external source and probably handling them.

Resource Management

System resources are shared between various processes. It is the Operating system that manages resource sharing. It also manages the CPU time among processes using CPU Scheduling Algorithms. It also helps in the memory management of the system. It also controls input-output devices. The OS also ensures the proper use of all the resources available by deciding which resource to be used by whom.

Communication between Processes

The Operating system manages the communication between processes. Communication between processes includes data transfer among them. If the processes are not on the same computer but connected through a computer network, then also their communication is managed by the Operating System itself.

Security

In an operating system, protection is a mechanism that controls the access of the process, programs, or users over any resources of the computer system. The operating system ensures that all access to system resources must be monitored and controlled. It also ensures that the external resources or peripherals must be protected from invalid access. It provides authentication by using usernames and passwords.

These were some of the services that an operating system provides.

Networking

This service enables communication between devices on a network, such as connecting to the internet, sending and receiving data packets, and managing network connections.

System Utilities

These are a set of tools and applications that provide additional functionality to the OS, such as backup and recovery, system optimization, and diagnostic tools.

User Interface

User interface is essential and all operating systems provide it. Users either interface with the operating system through the command-line interface or graphical user interface or GUI. The command interpreter executes the next user-specified command.

A GUI offers the user a mouse-based window and menu system as an interface.

Error Management

Errors can happen anywhere at any time. A problem could be with the CPU, the I/O, or the memory hardware. The main activities of an operating system with regard to error handling are as follows:

1. The OS continuously scans for potential errors.
2. The OS takes the proper action to guarantee accurate and reliable computing.

Resource Administration

When working in a multi-user or multi-tasking environment, each user or task should be given its own share of resources like main memory, CPU time, and file storage. The main resource management activities of an operating system are as follows:

1. Schedulers are used by the OS to manage various types of resources.
2. Algorithms for CPU scheduling are employed for increased CPU efficiency.

Protection

Multiple processes must be shielded from one another's actions in a computer system with multiple users and concurrent process execution.Protection describes a method or a way to manage how users, processes, or programs can access the resources designated by a computer system. The main protection-related activities of an operating system are as follows:

1. The OS makes sure that all system resources have controlled access.
2. The OS makes sure external I/O devices are secured against unauthorized access attempts.
3. The operating system offers password-based authentication features for each user.
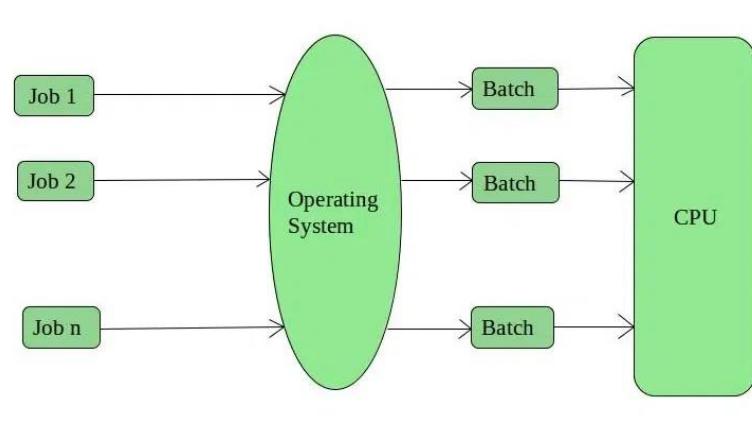
Types of Operating Systems

There are several types of Operating Systems which are mentioned below.

- [Batch Operating System](#)
- [Multi-Programming System](#)
- Multi-Processing System
- Multi-Tasking Operating System
- [Time-Sharing Operating System](#)
- Distributed Operating System
- [Network Operating System](#)
- [Real-Time Operating System](#)

1. Batch Operating System

This type of operating system does not interact with the computer directly. There is an operator which takes similar jobs having the same requirement and groups them into batches. It is the responsibility of the operator to sort jobs with similar needs.

Batch Operating System

Advantages of Batch Operating System

- It is very difficult to guess or know the time required for any job to complete. Processors of the batch systems know how long the job would be when it is in the queue.
- Multiple users can share the batch systems.
- The idle time for the batch system is very less.
- It is easy to manage large work repeatedly in batch systems.

Disadvantages of Batch Operating System

- The computer operators should be well known with batch systems.
- Batch systems are hard to debug.
- It is sometimes costly.

- The other jobs will have to wait for an unknown time if any job fails.

Examples of Batch Operating Systems: Payroll Systems, Bank Statements, etc.

2. Multi-Programming Operating System

Multiprogramming Operating Systems can be simply illustrated as more than one program is present in the main memory and any one of them can be kept in execution. This is basically used for better execution of resources.

Multiprogramming
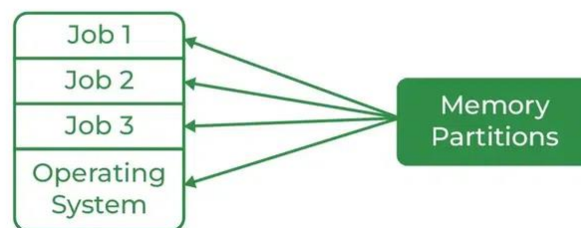
MultiProgramming

Advantages of Multi-Programming Operating System
- Multi Programming increases the Throughput of the System.
- It helps in reducing the response time.

Disadvantages of Multi-Programming Operating System
- There is not any facility for user interaction of system resources with the system.

3. Multi-Processing Operating System

Multi-Processing Operating System is a type of Operating System in which more than one CPU is used for the execution of resources. It betters the throughput of the System.

Multiprocessing
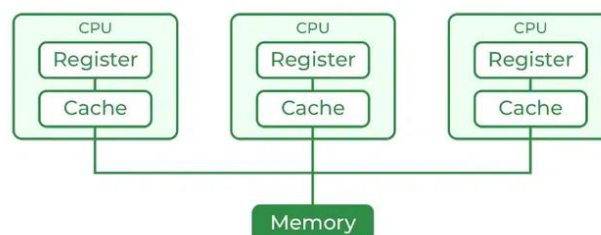
Multiprocessing

Advantages of Multi-Processing Operating System

- It increases the throughput of the system.
- As it has several processors, so, if one processor fails, we can proceed with another processor.

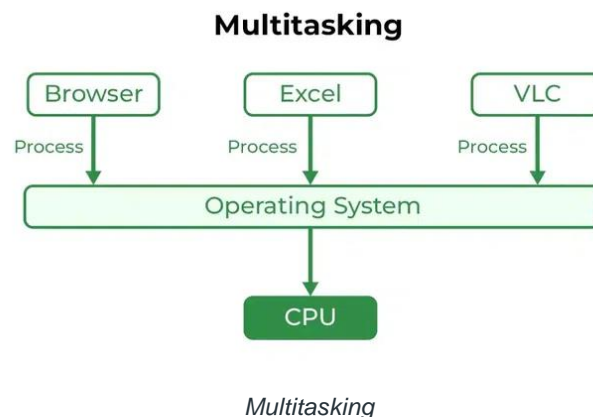**Disadvantages of Multi-Processing Operating System**

- Due to the multiple CPU, it can be more complex and somehow difficult to understand.

4. Multi-Tasking Operating System

Multitasking Operating System is simply a multiprogramming Operating System with having facility of a Round-Robin Scheduling Algorithm. It can run multiple programs simultaneously.

There are two types of Multi-Tasking Systems which are listed below.

- [Preemptive Multi-Tasking](#)
- [Cooperative Multi-Tasking](#)

Multitasking

Advantages of Multi-Tasking Operating System

- Multiple Programs can be executed simultaneously in Multi-Tasking Operating System.
- It comes with proper memory management.

Disadvantages of Multi-Tasking Operating System

- The system gets heated in case of heavy programs multiple times.

5. Time-Sharing Operating Systems

Each task is given some time to execute so that all the tasks work smoothly. Each user gets the time of the CPU as they use a single system. These systems are also known as Multitasking Systems. The task can be from a single user or different users also. The time that each task gets to execute is called quantum. After this time interval is over OS switches over to the next task.
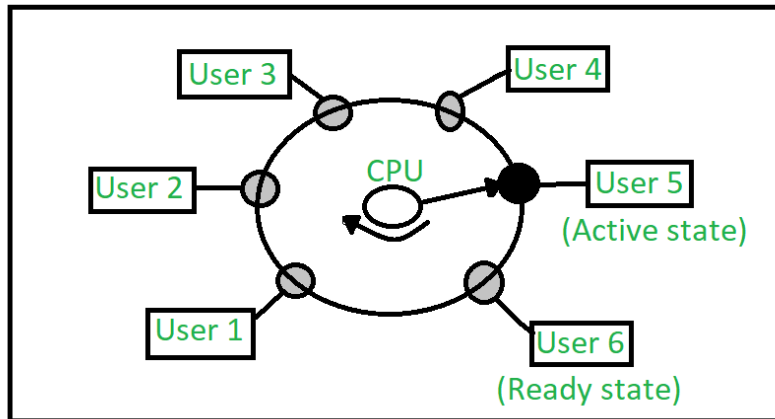
Time-Sharing OS

Advantages of Time-Sharing OS
- Each task gets an equal opportunity.
- Fewer chances of duplication of software.
- CPU idle time can be reduced.
- Resource Sharing: Time-sharing systems allow multiple users to share hardware resources such as the CPU, memory, and peripherals, reducing the cost of hardware and increasing efficiency.
- Improved Productivity: Time-sharing allows users to work concurrently, thereby reducing the waiting time for their turn to use the computer. This increased productivity translates to more work getting done in less time.
- Improved User Experience: Time-sharing provides an interactive environment that allows users to communicate with the computer in real time, providing a better user experience than batch processing.

Disadvantages of Time-Sharing OS
- Reliability problem.
- One must have to take care of the security and integrity of user programs and data.
- Data communication problem.
- High Overhead: Time-sharing systems have a higher overhead than other operating systems due to the need for scheduling, context switching, and other overheads that come with supporting multiple users.
- Complexity: Time-sharing systems are complex and require advanced software to manage multiple users simultaneously. This complexity increases the chance of bugs and errors.
- Security Risks: With multiple users sharing resources, the risk of security breaches increases. Time-sharing systems require careful management of user access, authentication, and authorization to ensure the security of data and software.

Examples of Time-Sharing OS with explanation

- **IBM VM/CMS**: IBM VM/CMS is a time-sharing operating system that was first introduced in 1972. It is still in use today, providing a virtual machine environment that allows multiple users to run their own instances of operating systems and applications.
- **TSO (Time Sharing Option)**: TSO is a time-sharing operating system that was first introduced in the 1960s by IBM for the IBM System/360 mainframe computer. It allowed multiple users to access the same computer simultaneously, running their own applications.
- **Windows Terminal Services**: Windows Terminal Services is a time-sharing operating system that allows multiple users to access a Windows server remotely. Users can run their own applications and access shared resources, such as printers and network storage, in real-time.

6. Distributed Operating System

These types of operating system is a recent advancement in the world of computer technology and are being widely accepted all over the world and, that too, at a great pace. Various autonomous interconnected computers communicate with each other using a shared communication network. Independent systems possess their own memory unit and CPU. These are referred to as loosely coupled systems or distributed systems. These systems' processors differ in size and function. The major benefit of working with these types of the operating system is that it is always possible that one user can access the files or software which are not actually present on his system but some other system connected within this network i.e., remote access is enabled within the devices connected in that network.

Architecture of Distributed OS
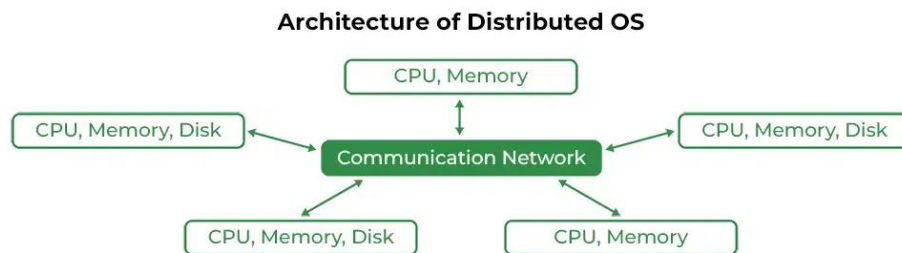
Distributed OS

Advantages of Distributed Operating System
- Failure of one will not affect the other network communication, as all systems are independent of each other.
- Electronic mail increases the data exchange speed.
- Since resources are being shared, computation is highly fast and durable.
- Load on host computer reduces.
- These systems are easily scalable as many systems can be easily added to the network.

- Delay in data processing reduces.

Disadvantages of Distributed Operating System

- Failure of the main network will stop the entire communication.
- To establish distributed systems the language is used not well-defined yet.
- These types of systems are not readily available as they are very expensive. Not only that the underlying software is highly complex and not understood well yet.

Examples of Distributed Operating Systems are LOCUS, etc.

7. Network Operating System

These systems run on a server and provide the capability to manage data, users, groups, security, applications, and other networking functions. These types of operating systems allow shared access to files, printers, security, applications, and other networking functions over a small private network. One more important aspect of Network Operating Systems is that all the users are well aware of the underlying configuration, of all other users within the network, their individual connections, etc. and that's why these computers are popularly known as tightly coupled systems.
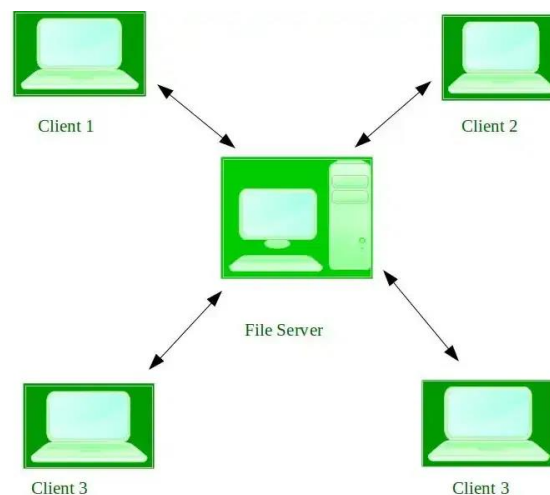
Network Operating System

Advantages of Network Operating System

- Highly stable centralized servers.
- Security concerns are handled through servers.
- New technologies and hardware up-gradation are easily integrated into the system.
- Server access is possible remotely from different locations and types of systems.

Disadvantages of Network Operating System

- Servers are costly.
- User has to depend on a central location for most operations.
- Maintenance and updates are required regularly.

Examples of Network Operating Systems are Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Microsoft Windows Server 2008, UNIX, Linux, Mac OS X, Novell NetWare, BSD, etc.

8. Real-Time Operating System

These types of OSs serve real-time systems. The time interval required to process and respond to inputs is very small. This time interval is called **response time**.

Real-time systems are used when there are time requirements that are very strict like missile systems, air traffic control systems, robots, etc.
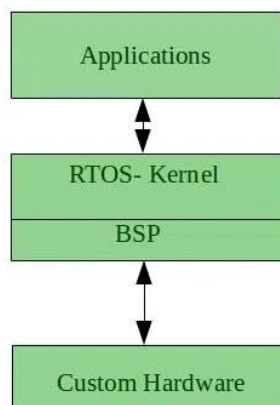
Types of Real-Time Operating Systems

- **Hard Real-Time Systems:**
  Hard Real-Time OSs are meant for applications where time constraints are very strict and even the shortest possible delay is not acceptable. These systems are built for saving life like automatic parachutes or airbags which are required to be readily available in case of an accident. Virtual memory is rarely found in these systems.

- **Soft Real-Time Systems:**
  These OSs are for applications where time-constraint is less strict.

For more, refer to the [Difference Between Hard Real-Time OS and Soft Real-Time OS](#).

Real-Time Operating System

Advantages of RTOS

- **Maximum Consumption:** Maximum utilization of devices and systems, thus more output from all the resources.
- **Task Shifting:** The time assigned for shifting tasks in these systems is very less. For example, in older systems, it takes about 10 microseconds in shifting from one task to another, and in the latest systems, it takes 3 microseconds.

- **Focus on Application:** Focus on running applications and less importance on applications that are in the queue.
- Real-time **operating system in** the **embedded system:** Since the size of programs is small, RTOS can also be used in embedded systems like in transport and others.
- **Error Free:** These types of systems are error-free.
- **Memory Allocation:** Memory allocation is best managed in these types of systems.

Disadvantages of RTOS
- **Limited Tasks:** Very few tasks run at the same time and their concentration is very less on a few applications to avoid errors.
- **Use heavy system resources:** Sometimes the system resources are not so good and they are expensive as well.
- **Complex Algorithms:** The algorithms are very complex and difficult for the designer to write on.
- **Device driver and interrupt signals:** It needs specific device drivers and interrupts signal to respond earliest to interrupts.
- **Thread Priority:** It is not good to set thread priority as these systems are very less prone to switching tasks.

Examples of Real-Time Operating Systems are Scientific experiments, medical imaging systems, industrial control systems, weapon systems, robots, air traffic control systems, etc.