**Android** is a [mobile operating system](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mobile_operating_system) developed by [Google](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google), based on a modified version of the [Linux kernel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linux_kernel) and other [open source](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_source) software and designed primarily for [touchscreen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Touchscreen) mobile devices such as [smartphones](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smartphone) and [tablets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tablet_computer). Android Inc. was founded in [Palo Alto, California](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palo_Alto,_California), in October 2003 by [Andy Rubin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andy_Rubin), [Rich Miner](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rich_Miner), Nick Sears, and Chris White. In addition, Google has further developed [Android TV](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Android_TV) for televisions, [Android Auto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Android_Auto) for cars, and [Wear OS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wear_OS) for wrist watches, each with a specialized user interface. Variants of Android are also used on [game consoles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_game_console), [digital cameras](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_camera), [PCs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_computer) and other electronics.

Initially developed by Android Inc., which Google bought in 2005, Android was unveiled in 2007, with the [first commercial Android device](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTC_Dream) launched in September 2008. The operating system has since gone through multiple major releases, with the current version being [9.0 "Pie"](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Android_Pie), released in August 2018. The core Android source code is known as Android Open Source Project (AOSP), and is primarily licensed under the [Apache License](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apache_License).

Android is also associated with a suite of [proprietary software](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proprietary_software) developed by Google, including core apps for services such as [Gmail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gmail) and [Google Search](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Search_(mobile_app)), as well as the [application store](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Application_store) and [digital distribution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_distribution) platform [Google Play](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Play), and associated [development platform](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Play_Services). These apps are licensed by manufacturers of Android devices certified under standards imposed by Google, but AOSP has been used as the basis of competing Android ecosystems, such as [Amazon.com](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazon.com" \o "Amazon.com)'s [Fire OS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fire_OS), which use their own equivalents to the [Google Mobile Services](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Mobile_Services).

Android has been the best-selling OS worldwide on smartphones since 2011 and on tablets since 2013. As of May 2017, it has over two billion monthly active users, the largest [installed base](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Installed_base) of any operating system, and as of June 2018, the [Google Play](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Play) store features over 3.3 million apps.[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Android_(operating_system)#cite_note-12)