

# A Brief Overview of Free Software

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- I will use “gratis” to refer to things without monetary cost.

# What is Free Software?

Free software is promoted by the Free Software Foundation, founded by Richard M. Stallman.

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- **Freedom 2** is the freedom to redistribute exact copies of the software, so that you can help your neighbour.
- **Freedom 3** is the freedom to distribute copies of your modified versions to others. Access to the source code is a precondition to this.

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- There can be no collaborative community; users are divided and powerless. Any changes they want in the software must be included by the “owner”.
- Because of this, proprietary software does not respect the freedom or community of the users.

# Example Practices

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- Restricting the user from access to the source code;
- Giving the user access to the source code, but restricting them from modifying it or using parts of it in their program; and
- Disallowing the copying and distribution of the software.



# Free Software and Open Source Software

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- Free software is about the users’ **freedom**.
- Open source is about the developers’ **practical benefit**.
- Proponents of open source software may encourage similar practices to proponents of free software without making the freedoms clear.

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- The BSD 3-clause is a free software license, but it is not copyleft. This means that parts of the program can be used in proprietary products.

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- Sell contracts for corporate tech support!



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# Questions?