

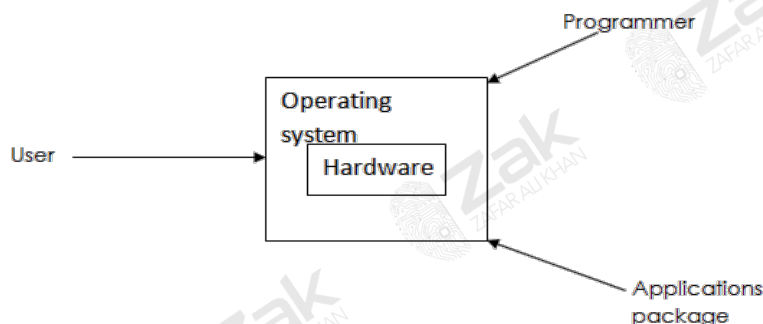


Topic: 1.5.1 Operating system

An operating system is simply a set of programs designed to run in the background on a computer system, giving an environment in which application software can be executed. It is a set of software designed to run in the background on a computer system, giving an environment in which application software can be executed.

Most operating systems consist of a large set of programs, only some of which are stored in the processor memory all of the time. Many of the subroutines available in the O.S. are stored on the hard drive so that they can be accessed when needed. This not only saves space in the processor memory but also means that the O.S. can be easily replaced when needed.

When you are using an applications package you are not communicating with the computer hardware, you are communicating with the operating system. Without an operating system, no matter how many programs you have, the computer is useless. The operating system sits between the hardware and the application program or user.



The operating system is likely to be stored on a backing store (Hard-Drive) rather than in the memory of the computer (RAM) because:

1. The OS requires a large amount of storage space.
2. It allows for easy upgrading or changing from one system to another one.

Summary:

1. Operating system is a software program which controls the operations of the computer system.
2. It provides a user interface (Human-computer interaction (HCI)).
3. It controls how the computer responds to user's requests
4. It controls how the hardware communicate with each other
5. It provides an environment in which application software can be executed





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Function of operating system:

1. Manage user accounts and security using one or more usernames and password.
2. Provide an interface for the user that allows the user to:
 - a. Run application programs.
 - b. Manage files in backing storage.
 - c. Read and respond to error messages.
3. Manage the processors time
4. Manage the allocation of internal memory.
5. Control peripheral devices-input devices such as keyboards, output devices such as printers and backing storage such as hard disk drive.
6. Provide spooling (temporary storage of input or output data in a queue on hard disk)
7. Manage interrupt signals to the processor.
8. Perform 'housekeeping tasks', such as defragmenting a drive or file indexing.

