

[Home](#) > > [Unit 2](#) > [Tech Talk Activity 2.3](#)

[Computer Education Home](#)

[Product Info](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Contact Us](#)



## STUDENT CENTER

- Online Student Edition
- TechSIM™
- Technology Handbook
- Reading Handbook
- Math Handbook
- New Features in Office 2007
- Microsoft Office Using Windows XP

### Textbook Resources

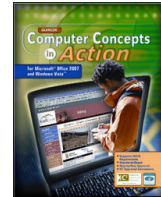
- Student Data Files
- e-Quizzes–Pre-Quizzes
- e-Quizzes–Tech Talk Quizzes
- e-Review Quizzes
- Tech Talk Activities
- Enrichment Activities
- Rubrics
- Worksheets
- WebQuests
- Student Web Links

### Unit Resources

#### Unit 2

- Student Data Files
- e-Quizzes–Pre-Quizzes
- e-Quizzes–Tech Talk Quizzes
- e-Review Quizzes
- Tech Talk Activity 2.1
- Tech Talk Activity 2.2
- **Tech Talk Activity 2.3**
- Tech Talk Activity 2.4
- Tech Talk Activity 2.5
- Enrichment Activity 2.1
- Rubrics
- Worksheets
- Student Web Links

▲ CLOSE ▲



## Computer Concepts in Action ©2009

### Unit 2: Computer Hardware and Software

#### Software

##### Introduction:

Discover more about different types of software.

##### Directions:

Read the information below and apply what you learn to answer the questions. Check your work carefully, and click **Submit**.

##### Software

You have learned that software is a set of instructions that makes it possible for your computer to perform tasks. But how does software work? Specifically, software applies rules (called *algorithms*) to data in a way that allows a computer to process information and perform those tasks. For example, Excel applies the universal algorithms of mathematics (e.g., addition) when performing functions (e.g., SUM) in a spreadsheet.

##### Types of Software

There is software for just about anything a user could want to accomplish on a computer system, from word processing and spreadsheets to graphics and multimedia to computer maintenance.

Software Types	Software Examples
Personal Information Management	Outlook Lotus Notes
Financial / Accounting	Quicken Microsoft Money
Electronic Mail	Entourage Outlook Express
Web Browsing	Internet Explorer Safari
Web Page Authoring	Go Live DreamWeaver
Integrated Packages	Adobe Creative Suite Microsoft Office

Graphic and multimedia programs are used to promote creativity for children and adults, create professionally designed materials, and produce media such as audio and video.

Common graphics programs, such as drawing and painting software (Adobe Illustrator, Microsoft Paint), use many of the same tools, such line tools, curve tools, shape tools, and fill tools to create and alter sophisticated shapes and apply textures, filters, and color. Desktop publishing software (Adobe InDesign, Adobe PageMaker, Quark) incorporates images *and* text. Multimedia software (Macromedia DreamWeaver, Macromedia Flash, Apple Final Cut, Digidesign ProTools) use a combination of text, graphics, audio, or video.

Utility software (Norton, MacAfee, Panda) performs specific tasks that make operation of a PC or network more convenient and efficient, such as easily organizing files, diagnosing computer problems, disk and file-compression to create more disk space, virus detection and prevention, and disk maintenance and defragmentation that maintain general computer health and stability

Specialized software is custom designed to be used for specific purposes, such as sales-force automation, manufacturing-plant automation or airline-reservation systems.

##### Stages of Software

###### Development

Software is created through a specific process which consists of writing code (*programming*), product testing, and review. It then goes through a quality control

process that consists of finding errors (*debugging*), having the product reviewed by outside reviewers such as customers (*beta review*), and putting the program through a series of tests.

#### Upgrading

Developing software is only half the battle. Once on the market, software must be constantly updated. *Upgrading* is a process to update software. Upgraded software adds new features and fixes problems like bugs; upgraded software also adds compatibility with new hardware, operating systems, or other types of software. Sometimes an upgraded software package is free; sometimes the new version is available at a reduced price for users of the old version.

Benefits of upgrading usually include more features, and better compatibility with newer hardware and software. Drawbacks could include incompatibility with older hardware and software, conflicts with existing programs, and the time it takes to learn new software. You can install or upgrade software from a floppy disk, CD-ROM, or Internet download. Personal computers often run programs to scan for software updates and will let the user know when an upgrade is available. You can also stay informed by reading industry news or frequently visiting a manufacturer's Web site.

#### Installation

Manufacturers have made it easy for consumers to install software, yet problems still occur. For example, an installation program might fail to start or work, stop before completion, not appear on the computer, or cause other programs to fail. You might also encounter defective or lost installation instructions or files that cannot be read by the new application. Finally, you may be prevented from installing or uninstalling applications by the system or network administrator.

Once you encounter a problem, there are several help options available. The first line of defense is the instruction manual that came with the software. Follow the "troubleshooting" section that helps identify and correct problems. If this fails, visit the manufacturer's Web site for any updates or consult those around you who might be able to help, such as a school administrator, corporate IT professional, or friend or family member with experience using the software.

#### Assessment Questions

1 Name two examples of financial and accounting software.

2 Name one drawback to upgrading software.

3 Software applies rules, called \_\_\_\_\_, to data in a way that allows a computer to process information.

4 Identify the part of the following filename that indicates the type of data it contains: 010106\_MyResearchPaper.doc

Submit Answers



The McGraw-Hill Companies

Please read our [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#) before you explore our Web site. To report a technical problem with this Web site, please contact the [Web Producer](#).