



*Getting Started Guide*

# ***Chapter 1***

## ***What is OpenOffice.org?***

*OpenOffice.org*

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## Authors

Thomas Astleitner  
Richard Barnes  
Agnes Belzunce  
Daniel Carrera  
Alan Madden  
Iain Roberts  
Gary Schnabl  
Janet M. Swisher  
Jean Hollis Weber

## Feedback

Please direct any comments or suggestions about this document to:  
[authors@user-faq.openoffice.org](mailto:authors@user-faq.openoffice.org)

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You can download an editable version of this document from  
<http://oooauthors.org/en/authors/userguide2/published/>

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## What is OpenOffice.org?

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OpenOffice.org is a freely available, full-featured office suite. This chapter describes:

- The components of OpenOffice.org
- Some of the enhancements and new features in version 2
- How OpenOffice.org compares with other office suites
- How to get help
- How OpenOffice.org is licensed
- Answers to some common questions

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**Note** Because someone else owns the trademark *OpenOffice*, the correct name for both the open-source project and its software is *OpenOffice.org*.

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OpenOffice.org (OOo) is both a *software product* and a *community of volunteers* that produces and supports the software.

Everyone is free to redistribute OOo, thanks to its open source license (see “How is OpenOffice.org licensed?” on page 11).

If you are new to OOo, its open source development, and the community that produces and supports it, you should read this chapter.

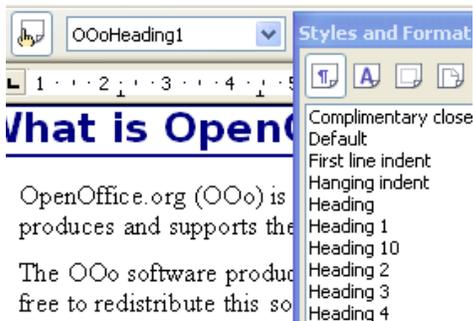
OOo 2.0 was a major upgrade of an already feature-rich office suite. If you have used previous versions of OOo, please look over the section “New features in version 2” on page 6.

## What does OpenOffice.org include?

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The OpenOffice.org 2.x office suite includes the following components.

### Writer (word processor)



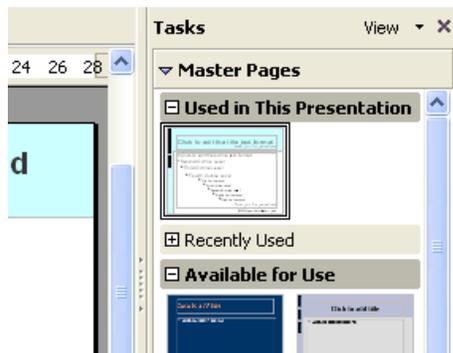
Writer is a feature-rich tool for creating letters, books, reports, newsletters, brochures, and other documents. You can insert graphics and objects from other components into Writer documents. Writer can export files to HTML, XHTML, XML, Adobe’s Portable Document Format (PDF), and several versions of Microsoft Word files. It also connects to your email client.

## Calc (spreadsheet)

E	F	G
<b>Percentiles</b>		
<b>Users</b>	<b>Non Users</b>	<b>All Users</b>
54.5%	64.9%	61.0%
22.7%	24.3%	23.7%

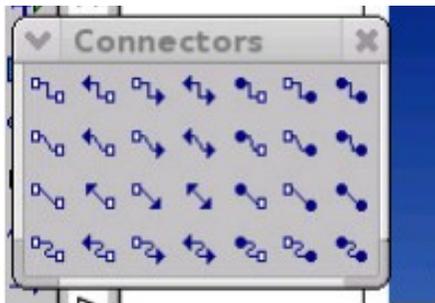
Calc has all of the advanced analysis, charting and decision-making features expected from a high-end spreadsheet. It includes over 300 functions for financial, statistical, and mathematical operations, among others. The Scenario Manager provides “what if” analyses. Calc generates 2-D and 3-D charts, which can be integrated into other OOO documents. You can also open and work with Microsoft Excel workbooks and save them in Excel format. Calc can export spreadsheets to Adobe’s PDF and to HTML.

## Impress (presentations)



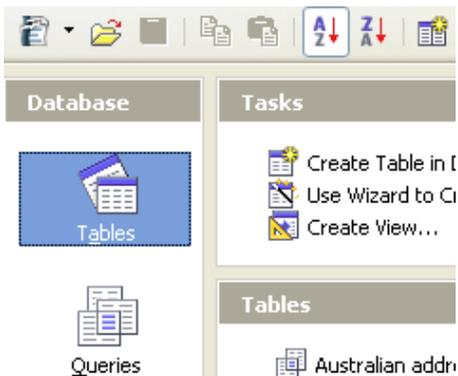
Impress provides all the common multimedia presentation tools, such as special effects, animation, and drawing tools. It is integrated with the advanced graphics capabilities of OOO’s Draw and Math components. Slideshows can be further enhanced with Fontwork’s special effects text, as well as sound and video clips. Impress is compatible with Microsoft’s PowerPoint file format and can also save your work in numerous graphics formats, including Macromedia Flash (SWF).

## Draw (vector graphics)



Draw is a vector drawing tool that can produce everything from simple diagrams or flowcharts to 3-D artwork. Its Smart Connectors feature allows you to define your own connection points. You can use Draw to create drawings for use in any of OOO’s other components, and you can create your own clipart and add it to the Gallery. Draw can import graphics from many common formats and save them in over 20 formats including PNG, HTML, PDF, and Flash.

## Base (database)



Base provides tools for day-to-day database work within a simple interface. It can create and edit forms, reports, queries, tables, views, and relations, so that managing a connected database is much the same as in other popular database applications. Base provides many new features, such as the ability to analyze and edit relationships from a diagram view. Base incorporates HSQLDB as its default relational database engine. It can also use dBASE, Microsoft Access, MySQL, or Oracle, or any ODBC- or JDBC-compliant database. Base also provides support for a subset of ANSI-92 SQL.

## Math (formula editor)

$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2}$$

$$\mu\{f > \alpha\} \leq \frac{1}{\alpha} \int f d\mu$$

Math is OOo's formula or equation editor. You can use it to create complex equations that include symbols or characters not available in standard font sets. While it is most commonly used to create formulas in other documents, such as Writer and Impress files, Math can also work as a stand-alone tool. You can save formulas in the standard Mathematical Markup Language (MathML) format for inclusion in webpages and other documents not created by OOo.

## The advantages of OpenOffice.org

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Here are some of the advantages of OpenOffice.org over other office suites:

- **No licensing fees.** OOo is free for anyone to use and distribute at no cost. Many features that are available as extra cost add-ins in other office suites (like PDF export) are free with OOo. There are no hidden charges now or in the future.
- **Open source.** You can distribute, copy, and modify the software as much as you wish, in accordance with either of OOo's Open Source licenses.
- **Cross-platform.** OOo 2.x runs on several hardware architectures and under multiple operating systems, such as Microsoft Windows, Mac OS X, Linux, and Sun Solaris.
- **Extensive language support.** OOo's user interface is available in over 40 languages, and the OOo project provides spelling, hyphenation, and thesaurus dictionaries in over 70 languages and dialects. OOo also provides support for both Complex Text Layout (CTL) and Right to Left (RTL) layout languages (such as Hindi, Hebrew, and Arabic).
- **Consistent user interface.** All the components have a similar "look and feel," making them easy to use and master.
- **Integration.** The components of OpenOffice.org are well integrated with one another.
  - All the components share a common spelling checker and other tools, which are used consistently across the suite. For example, the drawing tools available in Writer are also found in Calc, with similar but enhanced versions in Impress and Draw.
  - You do not need to know which application was used to create a particular file (for example, you can open a Draw file from Writer).
- **Granularity.** Usually, if you change an option, it affects all components. However, OOo options can be set at a component level or even document level.
- **File compatibility.** OOo includes PDF and Flash export capabilities, as well as support for opening and saving files in many common formats including Microsoft Office, HTML, XML, WordPerfect, and Lotus 123 formats.
- **No vendor lock-in.** OOo 2.x uses OpenDocument, an XML (eXtensible Markup Language) file format developed as an industry standard by OASIS (Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards). These files can easily be

unzipped and read by any text editor, and their framework is open and published.

- **You have a voice.** Enhancements, software fixes, and release dates are community-driven. You can join the community and affect the course of the product you use.

You can read more about OpenOffice.org, its mission, history, licensing, and other organizational information here: <http://www.openoffice.org/about.html>

## How does OpenOffice.org compare?

OpenOffice.org can match and exceed the feature set of competing office suites. The following table lists the main components of OOo and compares them with their equivalents in two leading office suites, *Microsoft Office 2003* (MSO) and *WordPerfect Office X3* (WP).

Function	OOo	MSO	WP
Word processor	Writer	Word®	WordPerfect® X3
Spreadsheet	Calc	Excel®	Quattro Pro® X3
Vector graphics	Draw	no	no
Presentation graphics	Impress	PowerPoint®	Presentations™ X3
Database	Base	Access® <sup>1</sup>	Paradox® <sup>2</sup>
Math or formula editor	Math	yes	no

<sup>1</sup> Professional version only.

<sup>2</sup> Professional and Student and Teacher editions only.

## Features

The following tables list some important features of OpenOffice.org and compare them with two leading office suites, *Microsoft Office 2003* (MSO) and *WordPerfect X3* (WP).

### Styles and formatting

Feature	OOo	MSO	WP
Navigator	yes	limited <sup>1</sup>	no
Styles and Formatting window	yes	yes	no
Keyboard support for paragraph styles	yes	yes	no
Support for page, frame, and list styles	yes	no	no
Word completion	yes	Excel only	no
Spelling and language proofing modules	70+	50+ <sup>2</sup>	25
Formula or equation tools	yes	yes	no

<sup>1</sup> "Outline View" in Word offers a subset of the features of OOo's *Navigator*.

<sup>2</sup> Requires an additional license for the the *Multilingual User Interface Pack*.

## Interoperability

<b>Feature</b>	<b>OOo</b>	<b>MSO</b>	<b>WP</b>
PDF export capability	yes	yes <sup>1</sup>	yes
Flash export capability	yes	no	yes
XML export capability	yes	yes	yes
OpenDocument XML format	yes	no	no
Import/Export Microsoft Office files	yes	yes	yes
Import WordPerfect files	yes	yes	yes
Import Lotus 123 files	yes	yes	yes
Connect to external databases (MySQL, Oracle, Access, etc.)	yes	yes	yes
Languages available (localizations)	40+	35+	30
Supported operating systems	Windows, Mac OS X, Linux, Solaris	Windows only <sup>2</sup>	Windows only
Unicode language support	yes	yes	no

<sup>1</sup> Requires additional third-party software, such as *PDF Writer* or *PDF Converter*.

<sup>2</sup> *Microsoft Office: Mac* is not feature compatible with *Microsoft Office 2003*.

## Programmability

Macros are programs that automate tasks and can be embedded in a document. The following table lists the languages available for macro development in each office suite.

<b>Language</b>	<b>OOo</b>	<b>MSO</b>	<b>WP</b>
Basic-derived language	OpenBasic	VBA	VBA
Beanshell	yes	no	no
Java	yes	no	no
JavaScript	yes	no	no
Python	yes	no	no

Beyond simple macros, some office suites can be extended to include new features. This capability usually takes the form of plug-ins. In the case of OpenOffice.org, it can also be done through changes to the source code.

<b>Feature</b>	<b>OOo</b>	<b>MSO</b>	<b>WP</b>
C and C++	yes	yes	yes
Java	yes	no	no
Python	yes	no	no
<b>Source code available!</b>	yes	no	no

## Security

Feature	OOo	MSO	WP
Digital signatures	yes	yes	yes
Strong encryption	yes	yes	yes
Secure paths for macro execution	yes	yes	no

## New features in version 2

OpenOffice.org 2.x delivers hundreds of improvements and new features. Here are some of the major enhancements.

- **Simplified installation.** Installations are now performed by platform-native installers with no need to use command-line switches (or flags) for multi-user installations. You can also specify which version of Java (if any) is to be used by OOo from the installation interface.
- **New database component.** In the new stand-alone database component, you can create forms, reports, queries, tables, views, and relations. OOo now includes HSQLDB, a small, fast, relational database engine that supports a subset of ANSI-92 SQL, along with an easy-to-use interface. Additionally, it is now easier than ever to use other databases (dBASE, MySQL, Oracle, among others).
- **New file format.** OOo 2.x uses the new OpenDocument XML file format (standardized by OASIS, <http://www.oasis-open.org/home/index.php>) as its default file format. This new file format is also used in StarOffice, IBM Workspace, and KOffice, and will be used by other products in the future. OOo 2.x can still read and save files in formats previously supported by OOo 1.x, including Microsoft Office formats.
- **Native system theme integration.** To further integrate OpenOffice.org with the underlying operating system, all user interface elements (such as buttons and scrollbars) have the same look as those used in other native applications for each platform.
- **Digital signatures.** Digital signatures provide authentication of the true author or editor of a document. This feature also provides security with running macros.
- **Enhanced encryption.** Implementation of the new XML (eXtensible Markup Language) encryption algorithm offers additional document security.
- **Usability improvements.** Redesigned toolbars are more usable and display only selected default tools and related options. The usability of the **Menus** tab of the **Tools > Customize** dialog has been improved. Several features have been renamed to conform with common office suite terminology (for example, the “AutoPilot” is now a “Wizard”).
- **Thumbnails.** The new plug-in for the the native file explorer provides a thumbnail preview of an OOo file. Some of the more common file system explorers that can use this new feature are Nautilus (Gnome), Konqueror (KDE), and Microsoft Windows Explorer.

- **Import and export filters**
  - Improved PDF export filter now includes PDF bookmarks, PDF notes, security, and more.
  - Enhanced export to HTML produces valid XHTML 1.0 Strict documents. XHTML export has been enabled for Calc, Draw, and Impress.
  - You can now open Microsoft Office password-protected documents.
  - New import filters for WordPerfect and Lotus 123.
  - New export filters for BibTeX, LaTeX, and MediaWiki.
- **Send document as e-mail.** OOo 2.x makes it easier to use your email client to send the active document as an attachment.
- **Enhanced mail merge feature.** Enhancements include better management of databases and saving into one single file.
- **Drag and drop selections to create styles.** Drag and drop a text selection into the Styles and Formatting window to create a new paragraph style or character style.
- **Form controls.** Form controls can be embedded in all OOo documents that support a form layer.
- **New keyboard shortcuts.** You can now use the keyboard to perform the actions found under **Edit > Paste Special**. Multiple selected sheets in a spreadsheet can be deselected using the keyboard. Paragraph and other styles can be assigned to key combinations.
- **Auto recovery of files and the workspace environment.** The OOo Error Reporting tool and the document recovery features have been combined. Now if OOo crashes, the active documents are saved. You can recover the documents and send an error report.
- **Enhanced features in Calc.** These enhancements include improved number recognition, an improved Hyperlink function, conditional arrays, a greater selection of predefined headers and footers, more options for defining how to print sheets, new options for the DataPilot feature, and support for right-to-left languages.
- **Calc row limit increased.** The number of spreadsheet rows has been increased to 65536, the same number of rows as Microsoft Excel.
- **Enhanced multimedia.** The multimedia presentation model uses the W3C's Synchronized Multimedia Integration Language (SMIL) standard. Now Impress can render nearly all of the Microsoft PowerPoint animation effects. Two new task panels provide access to shape and slide transition effects.
- **Programmatic control of menu and toolbar items.** Third-party developers can write plug-ins to manipulate menu bar and toolbar layouts to their needs. Developers can now insert, remove, and modify menu items, context menus, and toolbar items at runtime.
- **Scripting framework.** The scripting framework allows you to write macros in a number of languages other than OOo Basic. You can assign these macros to menu items, keyboard combinations, application and document events, form controls within

documents, and various objects within documents.

## Minimum requirements

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OpenOffice.org 2.x requires one of the following operating systems:

- **Microsoft Windows** 98, Windows ME, Windows 2000 (Service Pack 2 or higher), Windows XP, Windows 2003, or Windows Vista
- **GNU/Linux Kernel version 2.2.13** and glibc 2.2.0 or newer
- **Mac OS X** 10.3.x (10.3.5 recommended), Mac OS X 10.4.x, X11 required
- **Solaris** version 8 or higher

More operating systems will be supported in the future.

Some OpenOffice.org features (wizards and the HSQLDB database engine) require that the Java Runtime Environment (JRE) be installed on your computer. Although OOO will work fine without Java support, some features will not be available. You can download the latest version from <http://www.java.com>.

For a more detailed (and up-to-date) listing of requirements, see:  
[http://www.openoffice.org/dev\\_docs/source/sys\\_reqs\\_20.html](http://www.openoffice.org/dev_docs/source/sys_reqs_20.html).

## Getting the software

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You can get the OpenOffice.org installation package in any of these ways:

- Download a copy from the project's home page: <http://www.openoffice.org>.
- Download a copy using the Peer to Peer client, **BitTorrent**. The instructions are here: <http://distribution.openoffice.org/p2p/>.
- Purchase a copy on a CD-ROM or other digital form from a third-party distributor. The project maintains a listing of distributors; however, these distributors are not connected with, nor endorsed by OpenOffice.org: <http://distribution.openoffice.org/cdrom/sellers.html>.

## Installing the software

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Information on installing and setting up OpenOffice.org on the various supported operating systems is given here: <http://download.openoffice.org/common/instructions.html>

You can also download the more detailed *Setup Guide* (in several languages) from [http://documentation.openoffice.org/setup\\_guide2/index.html](http://documentation.openoffice.org/setup_guide2/index.html)

# How to get help

## Help system

OOo comes with an extensive Help system. This is your first line of support for using OOo.

To display the full Help system, press *F1* or select **OpenOffice.org Help** from the Help menu. In addition, you can choose whether to activate tooltips, extended tips, and the Help Agent (using **Tools > Options > General**).

If tooltips are enabled, place the mouse pointer over any of the icons to see a small box (“tooltip”) with a brief explanation of the icon’s function. For a more detailed explanation, select **Help > What’s This?** and hold the pointer over the icon.

## Free online support

The OpenOffice.org community not only develops software, but provides free, volunteer-based support. Users of OOo can get comprehensive online support from community venues such as *newsgroups*, *forums*, or *mailing lists*. There are also numerous websites run by users that offer free tips and tutorials.

<b>Free OpenOffice.org support</b>	
Users Mailing List	Free community support provided by a network of hundreds of experienced users. You must be subscribed to post messages. To subscribe, send a blank email to <a href="mailto:users-subscribe@openoffice.org">users-subscribe@openoffice.org</a> List archives are here: <a href="http://www.openoffice.org/servlets/SummarizeList?listName=users">http://www.openoffice.org/servlets/SummarizeList?listName=users</a>
Documentation Project	Templates, user guides, how-tos, and other documentation. <a href="http://documentation.openoffice.org/">http://documentation.openoffice.org/</a> See also the Documentation wiki, <a href="http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Documentation">http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Documentation</a>
Native Language Project	Information, resources, and mail lists in your language. <a href="http://projects.openoffice.org/native-lang.html">http://projects.openoffice.org/native-lang.html</a>
Mac Support	Support for installing and using the Mac OS X (X11 based) port. <a href="http://porting.openoffice.org/mac/support.html">http://porting.openoffice.org/mac/support.html</a>
OpenOffice.org Community Forum	Extensive discussion forum for OpenOffice.org issues from setup to advanced programming features. <a href="http://user.services.openoffice.org/en/forum/">http://user.services.openoffice.org/en/forum/</a>
The OpenOffice.org Forum	Another discussion forum for OpenOffice.org. <a href="http://www.ooforum.org/">http://www.ooforum.org/</a>
OOo KnowledgeBase	A collection of questions and answers that users can query. <a href="http://mindmeld.cybersite.com.au/">http://mindmeld.cybersite.com.au/</a>

Read more about the support options for OpenOffice.org at:  
<http://support.openoffice.org/index.html>

## Paid support and training

Alternatively, you can pay for support services. Service contracts can be purchased from a vendor or consulting firm specializing in OpenOffice.org.

OOo is supported by Sun Microsystems, Inc. under the Sun Software Support program, which includes two levels of support that cover extended business hours or around-the-clock service for mission-critical deployments.

<http://www.sun.com/service/support/software/openoffice/index.html>

A list of independent consultants and the services they offer, listed alphabetically by region and then by country, is provided on the OpenOffice.org website. <http://bizdev.openoffice.org/consultants.html>

## Other resources and addons

Several websites provide additional free resources and addons to enhance OpenOffice.org. The following table lists a few of these websites.

<b>Free OOo templates, artwork, addons, and other resources</b>	
OpenOffice.org Extensions	The official despository for extensions to OOo. <a href="http://extensions.services.openoffice.org/">http://extensions.services.openoffice.org/</a>
OOExtras	Provides templates, samples, and macros in several languages. <a href="http://ooextras.sourceforge.net/">http://ooextras.sourceforge.net/</a>
OOoMacros	A repository for OOo macros and addons and documentation about writing macros or extending OOo. <a href="http://www.oomacros.org/">http://www.oomacros.org/</a>
Open Clip Art Library	An archive of clip art that can be used for free for any use. <a href="http://www.openclipart.org/">http://www.openclipart.org/</a>
OpenOffice.org Macro Information	Andrew Pitonyak, the author of <i>OpenOffice.org Macros Explained</i> , maintains this site which provides extensive documentation on OOo's macro capability. Many good referral links are also provided: <a href="http://www.pitonyak.org/oo.php">http://www.pitonyak.org/oo.php</a>

## A short history of OpenOffice.org

The OpenOffice.org project began when Sun Microsystems released the source code (“blueprints”) for its StarOffice® software to the open source community in 2000. This allowed Sun to use the technical expertise and rapid development times of an open-source project in the development of its own software products. All recent versions of Sun’s StarOffice use source code developed by the OpenOffice.org community. However, the products do not provide exactly the same features due to the copyrights of third parties that are not compatible with open-source licensing.

Read more about OpenOffice.org’s history and organization at: <http://about.openoffice.org/>

Information about StarOffice can be found at: <http://www.sun.com/software/star/staroffice/>

## How is OpenOffice.org licensed?

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OpenOffice.org is distributed under the Open Source Initiative (OSI) approved Lesser General Public License (LGPL).

The LGPL can be viewed on the OOo website at:  
[http://www.openoffice.org/licenses/lgpl\\_license.html](http://www.openoffice.org/licenses/lgpl_license.html)

For more general information on OOo's licensing, please refer to:  
<http://www.openoffice.org/license.html>

## What is “open source”?

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The ideals of open-source software can be explained by the four essential rights, which are embodied within the *Free Software Foundation's General Public License (GPL)*:

- The right to use the software for any purpose.
- Freedom to redistribute the software for free or for a fee.
- Access to the complete source code of the program (that is, the “blueprints”).
- The right to modify any part of the source, or use portions of it in other programs.

Another view of this philosophy comes from the *Open Source Definition*:

“The basic idea behind open source is very simple: When programmers can read, redistribute, and modify the source code for a piece of software, the software evolves. People improve it, people adapt it, people fix bugs. And this can happen at a speed that, if one is used to the slow pace of conventional software development, seems astonishing.”

For more information on Free and Open Source software, visit these websites:

*Open Source Initiative (OSI)*: <http://www.opensource.org>

*Free Software Foundation (FSF)*: <http://www.gnu.org>

## Frequently asked questions

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Is this software a “demo” version?	No, this is a fully functioning software suite.
May I distribute OOo to anyone?	Yes.
How many computers may I install it on?	As many as you like.
May I sell it?	Yes.
May I use OpenOffice.org in a business?	Yes.
Is OpenOffice available in my language?	OpenOffice.org has been translated (localized) into over 40 languages, so your language probably is supported. Additionally, there are over 70 <i>spelling</i> ,

*hyphenation*, and *thesaurus* dictionaries available for languages, and dialects that do not have a localized program interface. The dictionaries are available from the OpenOffice.org website at:

[http://lingucomponent.openoffice.org/download\\_dictionary.html](http://lingucomponent.openoffice.org/download_dictionary.html)

How can you make it for free?	A large share of the development, and much of the support for the project, is currently supplied or sponsored by Sun Microsystems. There are also many other people who work on OOo as volunteers.
What if I need technical support?	Read the section titled “How to get help”.
Who owns the software?	The copyright is shared by Sun Microsystems and all the volunteers who have contributed.
Does that mean that they can take away the software?	No. The licenses under which OOo is developed and distributed can never be revoked, so it cannot be taken away.
I am writing a software application. May I use programming code from OpenOffice.org in my program?	You may, within the parameters set in the LGPL. Read the license: <a href="http://www.openoffice.org/license.html">http://www.openoffice.org/license.html</a>
Why is my favorite feature from StarOffice not available in OpenOffice.org?	That feature is probably a third-party add-on that Sun cannot distribute with OpenOffice.org.
Why do I need Java to run OpenOffice.org? Is it written in Java?	OpenOffice.org is not written in Java; it is written in the C++ language. Java is one of several languages that can be used to extend OOo. The <b>Java JDK/JRE</b> is only required for some features. The most notable one is the HSQLDB relational database engine. <b>Note:</b> Java is available at no cost. If you don't want to use Java, you can still use nearly all of the features of OOo.
How can I contribute to OpenOffice.org?	You can help with the development of OOo in many ways, and you do not need to be a programmer. To start, check out this webpage: <a href="http://www.openoffice.org/contributing.html">http://www.openoffice.org/contributing.html</a>
What's the catch?	There really is none; read the licenses: <a href="http://www.openoffice.org/license.html">http://www.openoffice.org/license.html</a>