



A Short History of Operating Systems

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The major eras

- Mainframe/midrange-server era
- The personal computing era
- GUI desktop era
- Open source “era”
- Mobile era

Mainframe/midrange-server era

- ~**1960-1975**
- multiuser, multitasking
- UNIX (late 1960's)
 - many versions
 - commercial but given away to academic institutions
 - still widely used in research and academia

The personal computing era

- ~**1975-1985**
- a.k.a. **microcomputer** era
- single user, single tasking
- CLI and menu UI
- CP/M (1974)
- Apple II (1977)
- DOS (1981)
- Commodore 64 (1982), Amiga (1985) ...

GUI desktop era

- ~**1985-2010**

- Apple Macintosh (1984)

GUI desktop era

- Windows
 - 1.0 (1985), 3.1 (1992): DOS-based
 - Windows NT (1993): UNIX competitor
 - Windows 95 (1995): preemptive multitasking
 - Windows 98 (1998): networking support
 - Windows 2000 (2000): NT evolved
 - Windows XP (2001): true multiuser; Pro, Home versions
 - Windows Vista (2006): gazillions of versions
 - Windows 7 (2009): many versions
 - Windows 8 (2012): one-OS-for-all-platforms, touch-centric
 - Server-centric
 - Windows Server 2008
 - Windows Home Server

GUI desktop era

- Apple OS X (2001)
 - Unix-based (Darwin BSD)

Open-source alternatives

- **~1991-present**
- Linux (1991)
- BSD UNIX (open versions since ~1991)
- Can be configured for desktop or midrange server (or larger!)
- Linux powers most Web servers

Mobile era

- **~2010 - present**
- Embedded Linux (1991)
- Windows CE/Embedded (1996)
- Palm (1996)
- Symbian (1997)
- BlackBerry OS (1999)
- Windows Mobile (2000)

Mobile era

- iOS (2007)
- Android (2008)
- webOS (2010)
- bada (2010)
- Aliyun (2011)
- Tizen (2012)
- Sailfish OS (2012)
- Firefox OS (c. 2013)
- Ubuntu Mobile (c. 2013)
- Many small Linux projects

Not covered

- Custom OS for supercomputers, etc.

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