

EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SYSTEM SOFTWARE AND APPLICATION PROGRAMS

To effectively establish the difference between system software and application programs, we should define the two.

System software

System software refers to a set of instructions/codes/programs/applications designed to control hardware resources of a computer, performance, communications and manufacturer's settings. They also act as an interface between the user of application software and hardware resources. *Examples include:* - firmware, utility software, networking software and operating systems.

Application software

These are sets of programs that help the computer user to accomplish a task with a computer. A task can be a word processing task, manipulating numeric data, record storage, image editing etc.

Differences between system software and application software

We can therefore conclude that:

1. System software manages the hardware resources of a computer whilst application software handles the end user needs.
2. Application software is dependent on system software and not vice versa.
3. System software run throughout but application software run according to the user requirements. For instance, when the user is not using the application, it is inactive.
4. System software are general purpose software i.e. they can be used in a number of ways, however application software are special/specific purpose. I.e. can only be used to address a specific problem.