

Free Office and other Applications

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There is a wealth of freeware on the net; some good, some great and some just awful. The software and online tools listed here are recommended by us and we believe are all great alternatives to some very expensive applications.

Office Tools

OpenOffice This suite of software (developed by SUN systems, one of the biggest names in software and internet development) is a complete and free alternative to Microsoft's own Office suite. It includes a word processor, spreadsheet package and a presentation package (like Microsoft PowerPoint). These applications look very familiar to anyone who is familiar to MS Office and is fully compatible with any documents made with MS Office applications.

Web Browsers

Firefox This is better than Internet Explorer (IE); especially if you have Vista. This browser has better built-in security, is simpler to add bookmarks on and has countless add-ons available to enhance your web experience.

Safari Apple's alternative to IE is now available for PC users. If you want a stylish browser this has to be your 1st choice. It claims to be the fastest browser available but speed is usually dependant on your internet connection. I personally prefer Firefox but Safari is improving rapidly.

Email and Communication

Thunderbird A great alternative to Outlook, Thunderbird is great for getting all your email onto one application. Calendars can be added to this product simply to organise your time.

GMail Not an application but an online service providing free email and once you have signed up, there are a multitude of other services available from Google. Free sign up includes 6Gb of space. You can easily set up your Gmail service on Outlook, Outlook Express or Thunderbird, alternatively just access it online wherever you are.

With **Skype** you can make free calls over the internet to other people on Skype for as long as you like, to wherever you like. It is free to download.

Imaging

Picasa This graphics package whilst being basic covers all the basics from red-eye reduction to resizing images for the web. It is an excellent starting point to image editing and also a great way to organise your images.

Flickr Free online photo hosting that has a great community feel. If you want to share your images with the world or just your friends this is a great service.