



Understanding Apps

- The word "app" is an abbreviation for "application." It's a piece of software that can run on your computer and smart device and through a web browser. Apps may or may not use a connection to the internet.
- An app is a modern term for a computer program or software application. It is most often used in reference to programs that run on a mobile or smart device or software that runs on a website. It's typically used to describe anything that isn't a full-fledged application, but even that line has become blurred.

Types of Apps

- There are three main types of apps: desktop, mobile, and web.
 1. **Desktop apps** are used on a laptop or tower computer and have all the features of the program.
 2. **Mobile apps** can be a simpler and easier-to-use version of a desktop app or be exclusively designed for mobile users. This makes sense when you consider that most desktop and web apps are built to be used with a mouse and keyboard along with a large display, but mobile apps are intended to be used with a finger or stylus on a small screen.
 3. **Web apps** might be full of features too, but they are dependent on the internet connection and web browser program. Some are heavy duty and can perform well like mobile or desktop programs but most web apps are lightweight for a reason.

Examples of Apps

- Some apps exist in all three forms and are available as not only mobile apps but also desktop and web apps.
- An example is Microsoft Word. It is available for computers in its most advanced form but also on the web, by subscription, and via a mobile app.
- Microsoft Word is an example of an app that exists in all three app forms, but that isn't always the case. For example, you can get to your Gmail messages through the official Gmail.com website and Gmail mobile app, but there isn't a desktop program from Google that lets you access your mail. In this case, Gmail is both a mobile and web app but not a desktop app.
- Others (often games) are similar in that there are both mobile and web versions of the same game but maybe not a desktop app, or there might be a desktop version of the game, but it's not available on the web or as a mobile app.

Where to Get Apps

- For mobile apps, the Google Play store and Amazon's Amazon Appstore are two places where Android users can download mobile apps. iPhones, iPod Touch devices, and iPads can get apps through the App Store straight from their devices.
- Desktop apps are more widely available either from the maker of the app or through official app repositories like the Mac App Store for macOS apps and the Windows Store for Windows apps.