## Classification of Software

Software can be applied in countless fields such as business, education, social sector, and other fields. It is designed to suit some specific goals such as data processing, information sharing, communication, and so on. It is classified according to the range of potential of applications. These classifications are listed below.

**• System software:**

This class of software manages and controls the internal operations of a computer system. It is a group of programs, which is responsible for using computer resources efficiently and effectively. For example, an operating system is a system software, which controls the hardware, manages memory and multitasking functions, and acts as an interface between application programs and the computer.

**• Real-time software:**

This class of software observes, analyses, and controls real world events as they occur. Generally, a real-time system guarantees a response to an external event within a specified period of time. An example of real-time software is the software used for weather forecasting that collects and processes parameters like temperature and humidity from the external environment to forecast the weather. Most of the defence organizations all over the world use real-time software to control their military hardware.

**• Business software:**

This class of software is widely used in areas where management and control of financial activities is of utmost importance. The fundamental component of a business system comprises payroll, inventory, and accounting software that permit the user to access relevant data from the database. These activities are usually performed with the help of specialized business software that facilitates efficient framework in business operations and in management decisions.

**• Engineering and scientific software:**

This class of software has emerged as a powerful tool in the research and development of next generation technology. Applications such as the study of celestial bodies, under-surface activities, and programming of an orbital path for space shuttles are heavily dependent on engineering and scientific software. This software is designed to perform precise calculations on complex numerical data that are obtained during real time environment.

**• Artificial intelligence (AI) software:**

This class of software is used where the problem-solving technique is non-algorithmic in nature. The solutions of such problems are generally non-agreeable to computation or straightforward analysis. Instead, these problems require specific problem-solving strategies that include expert system, pattern recognition, and game-playing techniques. In addition, they involve different kinds of search techniques which include the use of heuristics. The role of artificial intelligence software is to add certain degrees of intelligence to the mechanical hardware in order to get the desired work done in an agile manner.

**• Web-based software:**

This class of software acts as an interface between the user and the Internet. Data on the Internet is in the form of text, audio, or video format, linked with hyperlinks. Web browser is a software that retrieves web pages from the Internet. The software incorporates executable instructions written in special scripting languages such as CGI or ASP. Apart from providing navigation on the Web, this software also supports additional features that are useful while surfing the Internet.

**• Personal computer (PC ) software:**

This class of software is used for both official and personal use. The personal computer software market has grown over in the last two decades from normal text editor to word processor and from simple paintbrush to advanced image-editing software. This software is used predominantly in almost every field, whether it is database management system, financial accounting package, or multimedia-based software. It has emerged as a versatile tool for routine applications.