

Android

www.android.com

Free, open source mobile platform

what is it?

Mobile phones, like computers, run an operating system. Android is Google's attempt to provide a powerful, low-cost mobile phone operating system that can compete with devices such as the Blackberry or the iPhone. Unlike some of its competitors, the Android operating system is open source which allows mobile phone companies to modify the system to their liking. This means that there are many different versions of the Android OS. Having an open source platform means that Android-powered devices such as the Droid, The My Touch and the Nexus One are available on a variety of carriers at a competitive price.

educational use?

For the most part, an operating system is an operating system. Educators should not have to worry about the platform they use to run their applications. In the case of Android, Google makes it clear that the future does not belong to the iPhone, the Blackberry or any other system. The educational use of Android or mobile computing in general has yet to be realized. However, futurists predict that mobile computing—whether with phones or tablets—is one of the next big trends in education.

pros & cons?

Every phone platform has its proponents and detractors. As a Google phone system, Android comes with built-in integration with Google tools—such as Gmail, Google Maps and Google Docs. However, multiple versions of Android means that many phones aren't running the latest OS.

what's it cost?

New Android-based phones typically run from \$150 and up, depending on the mobile carrier and phone contracts

alternatives?

iOS

Windows Phone 7

resources?

<http://www.android.com>