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System Software: Why All Apple Products Don't Use Same Version

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Various Apple products, even though they leave the factory at the same
time, may contain different versions of system software. Here are some
reasons why:

- The product may be shipped with the version of system software under
  which the product was tested. With many Apple products, there is a long
  test cycle, and it is difficult to re-test the product and change the
  system software version just before the product's release.

- When new system software is released, it takes time, due to build
  schedules, for the new software version to be incorporated into the
  product's packaging.

- Sometimes, a specific modification to the system software is required
  for a new product. For example, the LaserWriter IISC, which required
  modifications to the System file and was shipped with System 4.3, which
  was not a general release.
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