

The PCLinuxOS magazine

Volume 210

July, 2024



ICYMI: NSA Recommends Do This To Keep Mobile Devices Safe

*GIMP Tutorial:
Playing With G'MIC, Part 3*

Audio CD Rippers: A Roundup

*PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner:
Chicken Parmesan Meatball Skillet*

*Unoconv: A Handy Tool For
Converting Between
Competing Office
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*How To Use
The BigBoy FM Desktop*

*How Well Do You Know Your
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PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

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The **PCLinuxOS** magazine

The PCLinuxOS name, logo and colors are the trademark of Texstar. **The PCLinuxOS Magazine** is a monthly online publication containing PCLinuxOS-related materials. It is published primarily for members of the PCLinuxOS community. The magazine staff is comprised of volunteers from the PCLinuxOS community.

Visit us online at <https://pclosmag.com>.

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From The Chief Editor's Desk

It's hard to believe, but July is the 15th anniversary of me taking over the reins of The PCLinuxOS Magazine as its Chief Editor. That's 180 monthly issues, and 12 special editions of the magazine.

I can remember everything as if it were yesterday. My predecessor (who we'll leave unnamed) was knee-deep involved in a rift that rocked PCLinuxOS back at that time (2009). Those who were around at that time will know the name of my predecessor. I'm also not going to rehash all of that drama that gripped PCLinuxOS at that time.

But, through it all, my predecessor basically held the magazine hostage, and tried to declare it "dead." By that time, I had only written one or two articles for The PCLinuxOS Magazine. I and some other people said, "Whoa! Hold your horses!" to the idea that the magazine was "dead."

My predecessor professed that there "just wasn't enough to write about for a monthly magazine," and had decreased the magazine's publication schedule down to every other month. Even then, he wouldn't/couldn't meet his deadlines and his announced publication schedule.

My predecessor was "fired" from his position, and Archie began looking to assemble a new magazine team. Almost immediately, I threw my name into the hat to be the magazine's new

editor. As a former professional newspaper photographer, I have a background in journalism. In fact, a lot of my studies in college centered around journalism. I graduated from college with a Liberal Arts degree instead of a degree in journalism, because I ran out of money. The Liberal Arts degree cut off one to two semesters of school, compared to a journalism degree. But by then, I had taken most of the journalism-specific courses I was needing for a journalism degree.

By the time the July 2009 issue came out, I had written three articles for that issue. At the end of the month, Archie named me as the magazine's new Chief Editor. The rest, as they say, is history.

I was told that the new editor position would only be for a year or two. Talk about not seeing how things would turn out! Here we are 15 years later, with me still holding the reins to the magazine.

Over those ensuing 15 years, we've NEVER missed a monthly issue. So much for there not being enough to write about, huh?! In that time, we've dissected and covered many of the desktop environments, covered multiple releases of LibreOffice, came up with and implemented many ongoing article series, and even published a dozen special editions of the magazine for our readers to use as reference material. We've done a few design changes over the years, as well.



Feeding the lorikeets at the Kansas City Zoo

And sure, some months have their “fair share” of reprint articles from other resources in the open source community. We always try to select those reprint articles based on how we feel they’ll be perceived by the PCLinuxOS community, and how useful we think the PCLinuxOS community might find them. But, at the end of the day, we’re still able to put out a monthly issue. Every. Single. Month. It’s not all about being resourceful, either. It’s also about having a vision and a plan to achieve that vision. Sure, resourcefulness helps. But it has to fit with our vision and plan.

Over that 15 years, a LOT has happened with me, personally. During that time, both of my kids were born, I’ve worked at three different hospitals before retiring at the end of 2022, I’ve purchased two new pickup trucks and my wife’s new car, paid off the mortgage on my house, played nursemaid to a flock of backyard chickens, and many, many more things than I can think of at this moment.

So, I don’t have any plans to step away from the magazine any time soon in the foreseeable future. Just in case you were wondering. Now, with me being retired (I wasn’t when I took this endeavor on), I have more time than ever to work on the magazine.

Over the years, Meemaw has been a literal SAINT. I’m not sure I could have (or would have) persevered through these past 15 years without her by my side as my Assistant Editor. We have become a well oiled machine, and work well together. Thank you, Meemaw, for all you do!

Nope. I don’t have ANY plans to go anywhere. I plan on sitting in this seat for as long as I can.

This month’s cover pays homage to the annual Tour de France bicycle race. The image is by [Amore Seymour](#) from [Pixabay](#). This year’s Tour de France goes from June 29, 2024, through July 21, 2024, and incorporates 21 days of H-A-R-D riding through some of the toughest terrain, in the toughest bicycle race on the planet. You can find out more about this year’s Tour de France [here](#), and view a map of the entire route [here](#).

Until next month, I bid you peace, happiness, serenity, prosperity ... and continued good health!



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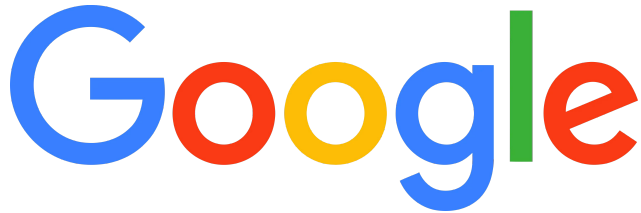
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ICYMI: NSA Recommends Do This To Keep Mobile Devices Safe

by Paul Arnote (parnote)



How exactly Google ranks websites has long been a mystery, pieced together by journalists, researchers, and people working in search engine optimization. **Now, an explosive leak that purports to show 2,500 pages of internal documents appears to offer an unprecedented look under the hood of how Search works — and suggests that Google hasn't been entirely truthful about it for years,** according to an [article](#) from The Verge. So far, Google hasn't responded to multiple requests for comment on the legitimacy of the documents.

Ticketmaster just had a massive data breach — if the hackers behind the attack are to be believed, says an [article](#) from Lifehacker. According to [HackRead](#), the ShinyHunters hacking group is claiming it hacked Ticketmaster, stealing **1.3TB of data from 560 million users.** The hacking group posted the data on Breach Forums (a site ShinyHunters owns), offering all of its loot for \$500,000 for a buyer willing to pay. The reported data set includes personal information such as first and last names, home addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, the last four digits of credit and

debit cards, card expiration dates, and customer fraud data. However, it also includes Ticketmaster account information as well, such as ticket sales, event information, and orders.

Security research group Zscaler [reported](#) they had **discovered over 90 malicious Android apps available on the Play Store,** according to an [article](#) from Lifehacker. The apps had been installed more than 5.5 million times collectively, and many were part of the ongoing Anatsa malware campaign, which has targeted more than 650 apps tied to financial institutions. All identified apps have been [removed](#) from the Play Store, and their developers have been banned. However, that won't delete these apps from your smartphone if you downloaded them. If you have any of these apps on your phone, uninstall them immediately.



Image by [OpenClipart-Vectors](#) from [Pixabay](#)

Although some people might worry about the National Security Agency itself spying on their phones, **the NSA has some sage advice for iPhone and android users concerned about zero-click exploits and the like: turn it off and on again once per week,** according to an [article](#) from Forbes. How often do you turn off your iPhone or android device? Completely turn it off and then reboot it, rather than just going into standby mode, that is. That the answer for many people is only when a security or operating system update requires it. That, according to the NSA, could be a big mistake. You can see the NSA's full list of "recommended best practices" for your mobile devices [here](#).

Microsoft unveiled "Recall" at its special event on May 20. This Copilot+ PC-exclusive feature promises to bring "photographic memory" to your computer, allowing going back to any app or file you worked with, according to an [article](#) from Neowin. To combat privacy concerns, Microsoft [published](#) a page with details on how Recall works. However, security researchers strongly disagree with the company's statements. Kevin Beaumont, a cybersecurity expert, published a detailed blog post on Medium where he dug deeper into how Recall works. The verdict is a rather harsh one: **stealing everything you viewed or typed on your computer is now very easy.**

Data on millions of PayPal users should boost its new advertising business run by Mark

Grether, who formerly led Uber's advertising group, according to an [article](#) from MediaPost. At least that's what the company hopes as targeting signals vanish. PayPal plans to build an ad-sales business on the data it has collected throughout the years. That means first-party data on purchases, spending behaviors and services, and will include data from its Venmo app. Venmo came with PayPal's acquisition of its parent company, Braintree, in 2013 as part of its \$800 million deal. Oh yay! Just what we need ... more ads littering the interwebs!



Image by [Gordon Johnson](#) from [Pixabay](#)

On May 29, the U.S. Justice Department announced the dismantling of the 911 S5 Botnet, allegedly one of the largest botnets worldwide, and the arrest of its administrator in a joint operation by the FBI and other law enforcement agencies in Singapore, Thailand and Germany, according to an [article](#) from The Lane Report. The botnet, consisting of malware-infected computers in 200 countries worldwide, was used to power a variety of criminal internet activities like fraud, harassment or child exploitation between 2014 and 2022. The true prevalence of

web traffic generated via bots far extends that of professional botnets like 911 S5. **According to data from the annual Imperva Bad Bot Report, almost HALF of all traffic is related to bot activity, with one third of the overall global traffic being connected to malicious programs.**

A misconfigured North Korean Internet cloud server has provided a fascinating glance into the world of North Korean animation outsourcing and how foreign companies might be inadvertently employing North Korean companies on information technology (IT) projects, according to an [article](#) from 38 North. The incident also underlines how difficult it is for foreign companies to verify their outsourced work is not potentially breaking sanctions and ending up on computers in Pyongyang.

Astronomer Frank Drake formulated his influential equation in 1961 to estimate the number of civilizations in the Milky Way capable of communicating with us, according to an [article](#) from Gizmodo. **Our understanding of planetary science has changed a lot since then, leading a team of scientists to propose a pair of important adjustments that produce an answer that could explain the Great Silence.** Despite its popularity and intuitiveness, the Drake Equation has faced [criticism](#) over the years for its broad assumptions and ambiguous parameters; it often results in an overly optimistic estimate for the value of N—the number of civilizations in our galaxy with which we might be able to communicate. This tends to feed a conundrum known as the [Fermi Paradox](#):

If intelligent life is common, why haven't we found any evidence of it? New [research](#) published in Scientific Reports offers a potential fix via the addition of two new factors. Planetary scientists Robert Stern from the University of Texas at Dallas and Taras Gerya from ETH-Zurich, the two co-authors on the study, suggest that the presence of both continents and oceans, along with long-term plate tectonics, is critical for the emergence of advanced civilizations. They consequently propose the addition of two factors into the equation: the fraction of habitable planets with significant continents and oceans and the fraction of those planets with plate tectonics operating for at least 500 million years. This adjustment, however, significantly reduces the value of N in the Drake Equation.



Google has accidentally collected childrens' voice data, leaked the trips and home addresses of car pool users, and made YouTube recommendations based on users' deleted watch history, among thousands of other employee-reported privacy incidents, according to a copy of an internal Google database which tracks six years worth of potential privacy and security issues obtained (and [reported](#) on) by 404 Media.

Starting on June 26, Meta will reportedly update its privacy policy to allow its AI to be trained on your data, according to an [article](#)

from Lifehacker. The news began circulating on social media after Meta sent out emails and notifications to users in the U.K. and E.U. to advise them of the change, as well as give them a chance to opt-out of the data collection. One UK-based user shared the notification publicly, giving everyone a heads up about the impending changes, which also appear to be slated to affect Instagram users, too.

Researchers have discovered a major driver of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) and several other immune disorders that affect the spine, liver and arteries, raising hopes for millions of people worldwide, according to an [article](#) from The Guardian. The breakthrough is particularly exciting because the newly found biological pathway can be targeted by drugs that are already used, with work under way to adapt them to patients with IBD and other conditions.

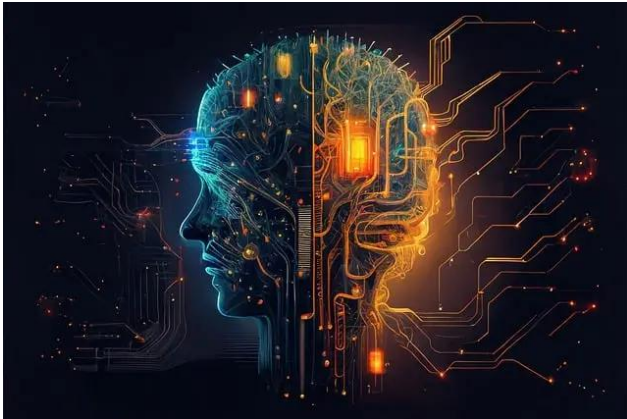


Image by [Kohji Asakawa](#) from [Pixabay](#)

A group of current and former employees at prominent artificial intelligence companies issued an open letter on Tuesday that warned of a lack of safety oversight within the

industry and called for increased protections for whistleblowers, according to an [article](#) from The Guardian. The letter, which calls for a “right to warn about artificial intelligence”, is one of the most public statements about the dangers of AI from employees within what is generally a secretive industry. Eleven current and former OpenAI workers signed the letter, along with two current or former Google DeepMind employees – one of whom previously worked at Anthropic.

It’s no secret that Google abandoned their motto of “Do No Evil” long, long, long ago. Just like with any company that grows as large as Google has, the continual drive for increasing profits has erased and supplanted their core beliefs. They’ve gone from “Do No Evil” to the embodiment of evil for many, many users. **If you’ve ever thought of “De-Googling” yourself**, you’ll like the [article](#) from Lifehacker. They literally walk you through the process of “quitting Google” and the use of their products.

Google has achieved its goal of avoiding a jury trial in one antitrust case after sending a \$2.3 million check to the US Department of Justice, according to an [article](#) from Ars Technica. Google will face a bench trial, a trial conducted by a judge without a jury, after a ruling today that the preemptive check is big enough to cover any damages that might have been awarded by a jury.



Since the long-overdue death of Flash, we haven’t heard much out of the folks at Adobe. They must not have been “feeling much love,” so they **created a few changes in their “Terms of Service,”** according to an [article](#) from Lifehacker. The change has caused an uproar among users of their products. If they didn’t agree to the new ToS, they were locked out of the use of their Adobe products, to the point that they also were prevented from uninstalling them. The damage control continues, so much so that Adobe had to post a [message](#) to their blog explaining the changes, in an attempt to put the fears generated by the change to rest.

YouTube is getting aggressive in its fight against ad blockers, according to an [article](#) from Lifehacker. According to the [developer](#) of SponsorBlock, an extension that automatically [skips ahead](#) of sponsored content in videos, YouTube is now experimenting with “server-side ad injection.” This is quite the escalation. In short, server-side ad injection means YouTube is adding advertisements to the video stream itself. Currently, the company delivers its ads to users as a separate video before the video you chose to watch. That allows ad blockers to identify the ad, stop it from playing, and load your video directly. If the ad is part of the video, however, the traditional ad blocker strategy breaks.

Apple could be the first tech giant to be formally charged by the European Commission for violating the Digital Markets Act, according to an [article](#) from TechRepublic. The Cupertino firm enforces rules on “steering,” which charge app developers for directing their users towards third-party purchase options, [according](#) to the Financial Times. Apple takes a 30% commission from the revenue of any in-app purchases, so when users make app-related payments on their phone browser, for example, it eats into profits.



Image by [beasternchen](#) from [Pixabay](#)

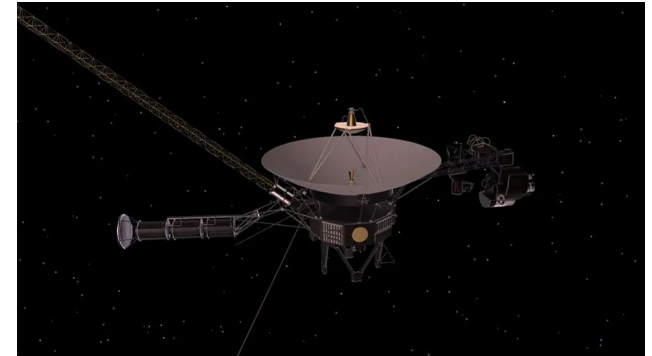
Anywhere Google's cameras have been, you can check out for yourself, without ever needing to leave your house. Of course, if you're uncomfortable with your house appearing on Street View, you don't need to sit back and let the other explorers of the internet spy on your home. Whether you're famous, or you just value your privacy, **Google lets you blur your house on Street View**, although it isn't obvious how to do so, according to an [article](#) from Lifehacker. A

word of warning before proceeding: Requesting Google to blur your house on Street View is **permanent**. The company will not reverse this censorship once it goes through, so make sure you really want to blur your house before going through with the request. In addition, please only ask Google to blur your house: If you do it to someone else's house, they won't be able to undo the blur either.

Concrete is perhaps the most commonly used building material in the world. With a bit of tweaking, it could help to power our homes too, according to an [article](#) from the BBC. On a laboratory bench in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a stack of polished cylinders of black-coloured concrete sit bathed in liquid and entwined in cables. To a casual observer, they aren't doing much. But then Damian Stefaniuk flicks a switch. The blocks of human-made rock are wired up to an LED – and the bulb flickers into life. Researchers at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) have found a way of creating an energy storage device known as a [supercapacitor](#) from three basic, cheap materials – water, cement and a soot-like substance called carbon black.

Scientists working in the emerging field of epigenetics have discovered the mechanism that allows lived experience and acquired knowledge to be passed on within one generation, by altering the shape of a particular gene, according to an [article](#) from The Guardian. This means that an individual's life experience doesn't die with them but endures in genetic form. The impact of the starvation your Dutch grandmother suffered

during the second world war, for example, or the trauma inflicted on your grandfather when he fled his home as a refugee, might go on to shape your parents' brains, their behaviors and eventually yours.



NASA

NASA's Voyager 1 spacecraft is fully operational once more, with all four science instruments returning usable data to Earth, according to an [article](#) from Space.com. The problems began in November 2023, when Voyager 1 lost its ability to "speak" with us. More specifically, it started sending to Earth unintelligible data instead of its normal 0s and 1s of binary code. Of course, Voyager 1 is 46 years old — ancient for a spacecraft — so it wasn't entirely a surprise that its health might be waning. And that's not to mention that it's in entirely uncharted interstellar territory, some 15 billion miles (24 billion kilometers) from Earth. Voyager 1's dogged team was determined to not only figure out what went wrong, but also to fix the problem. And they've succeeded!

A fundamental shift that concerns ad blockers will happen in the next twelve months, according to an [article](#) from Ghacks.com. You

may have heard about Google ending support for the old ruleset for extensions in favor of a new one. Google, citing security, privacy, and performance for the change, has been heavily criticized for it. The only browser that retains full content blocking capabilities for extensions is Firefox (and any Firefox fork also). All Chromium-based browsers, including Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Brave, Opera, or Vivaldi, won't support best in class ad blockers anymore. An extension like [uBlock Origin](#), which is the ad blocker that is regarded to be the cream of the crop, will be superior on Firefox going forward.

McDonald's is ditching its drive-through AI ordering system after too many customers wound up with hilarious, wonky orders from the artificial intelligence tech, according to an [article](#) from Fast Company. The fast food giant, which had been testing voice-automated ordering systems at about 100 restaurant drive-throughs since 2021, is now booting it from the menu. It seems to be because AI, at least when it comes to taking orders as people shout them from their car windows, turns out not to be a very good listener. The systems' miscalculations have led to some highly amusing viral videos with absurdly incorrect orders—like a handful of butter, hundreds of chicken nuggets, and ice cream loaded with bacon.



Lego

Scientists may have just found the "building bricks" for future moon bases in the toy store — and the public can soon see them there, too, according to an [article](#) from Space.com. European Space Agency (ESA) researchers discovered more than inspiration when they looked at Lego sets while working on possible designs for habitats, launch pads and other structures for astronauts to use on the moon as part of NASA's Artemis program. Using the iconic plastic pieces as a model, the ESA team used 3D printers to create similar bricks made in part from meteorite to show that the tubes at the bottom wedge together with the studs at top, just like the toy.

Microsoft aims to boost the PC market with artificial intelligence and Windows 11, but a collateral **consequence of those moves could be an early trip to a landfill for many computers**, according to an [article](#) from TechNewsWorld. "Windows 11 itself does not directly contribute to e-waste," said Kieren Jessop, an analyst with [Canalys](#), a global market research company. "However, due to its hardware requirements, it

can indirectly increase e-waste," he told TechNewsWorld. "A significant share of the global installed base is unable to upgrade to Win11 because of the TPM 2.0 chip, which contributes to Win11's security." He noted that Canalys estimates approximately 20% of the global Windows installed base can't upgrade its over 200 million devices. Ahhhh ... if you have a Win10 computer that can't support Win11, sell or give it to one of your LINUX friends! This could be a boon for Linux users!

Scientists have taken another step toward developing an early earthquake warning system, says an [article](#) from Extreme Tech. According to new research, satellites orbiting Earth are capable of spotting anomalies in the ground, atmosphere, and ionosphere that eventually give way to earthquakes. These anomalies, called earthquake precursors, have been detected by European and Chinese satellites up to 19 days ahead of disasters in the Mediterranean.



I've used Linux for 30 years. Here are five reasons why I'll never switch to Windows or MacOS, [reads](#) a headline on ZDNet, by Jack Wallen. There are several solid reasons for switching to the Linux operating system and, once you do, you probably won't look back. How does this compare to your experience(s)?

(Note: these reports happen every week about an asteroid passing close to Earth, and we don't usually mention them here ... but this one feels different). **Friday the 13th may be considered an unlucky day, but at 5:45 EDT (11:45 CEST) on Friday, April 13, 2029, it will prove the exact opposite when a massive asteroid passes safely past Earth**, according to an [article](#) from Forbes. Everyone will be watching. Asteroid Apophis is, at about 1,230 feet (375 meters) across, larger than 90% of space rocks. It will pass just 19,635 miles (31,600 kilometers) from Earth's surface, the closest approach of an asteroid of this size that humankind has ever experienced. It will pass between Earth's geostationary satellites and the Atlantic Ocean, just a tenth of the distance between Earth and the moon. Apophis will be visible to the naked eye. As it crosses the Atlantic, a few billion people in Europe, Africa and Asia can see it for a few hours in the night sky if skies are clear.

A federal jury in Las Vegas convicted five men this week for their roles in running one of the largest unauthorized streaming services in the United States, which generated millions of dollars in subscription revenue while causing substantial harm to television program copyright owners, according to an [announcement](#) from the U.S. Department of Justice. According to court documents and evidence presented at trial, beginning as early as 2007, Kristopher Dallmann, Douglas Courson, Felipe Garcia, Jared Jaurequi, and Peter Huber operated an online, subscription-based streaming service known as Jetflixs. The Jetflixs group used sophisticated computer scripts and software to

scour pirate websites for illegal copies of television episodes, which they then downloaded and hosted on Jetflixs servers. The group reproduced hundreds of thousands of copyrighted television episodes without authorization, amassing a catalog larger than the combined catalogs of Netflix, Hulu, Vudu, and Amazon Prime. Dallmann and his co-conspirators made millions of dollars streaming and distributing this catalog of stolen content to tens of thousands of paid subscribers.



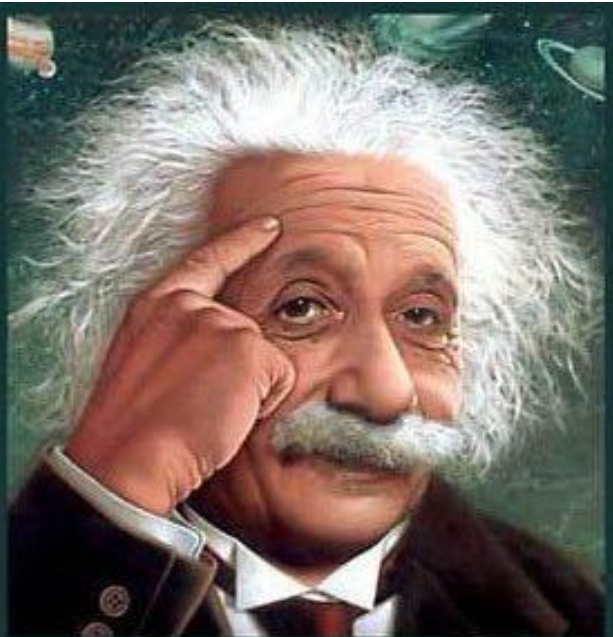
LVMPD

They're back! **The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department said members of its search and rescue team found a "mysterious monolith" on a trail outside the valley over the weekend**, according to an [article](#) from the Las Vegas Review Journal. According to police, the team found the item near the Gass Peak trail, which is located north of the Las Vegas Valley. In December 2020, a similar monolith was

found standing under the Fremont Street Experience canopy in downtown Las Vegas. Several nearly identical monoliths have been found in the Western United States in recent years, as well as one in Romania. They have been seen in Southern Utah; on top of Pine Mountain in Atascadero, California; Albuquerque, New Mexico; and the Romanian city of Piatra Nemat. They look like alien artifacts. In part, that's because they are heavily reminiscent of the monoliths of Stanley Kubrick's sci-fi classic "2001: A Space Odyssey," where vast black monoliths are deposited by aliens to guide human beings from one stage of evolution to the next, wrote Vox reporter Constance Grady.

Just in case anyone around here needed another reason to be thankful for PCLinuxOS being and remaining "systemd-free," here ya' go, [from](#) Phoronix. **For those running the command "systemd-tmpfiles --purge" and think that this command just deletes your temporary files, think again and watch out.** In reality it will delete all files and directories created by a tmpfiles.d entry ... including the /home that is created by systemd-tmpfiles' home.conf. With users being bitten in recent days by this behavior when they were just expecting tmp files to be removed, systemd 256.1 is now available and does have a change to avoid inadvertently deleting your all-important home directory.







*It's easier than $E=mc^2$
 It's elemental
 It's light years ahead
 It's a wise choice
 It's Radically Simple
 It's ...*



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Screenshot Showcase



Posted by The_CrankyZombie, on June 1, 2024, running KDE.



PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner



Chicken Parmesan Meatball Skillet

Serves: 5

INGREDIENTS:

1 lb ground chicken
1/2 cup Italian style bread crumbs
1/3 cup plus 2 tablespoons
grated Parmesan cheese
1/4 cup milk
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 egg
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 jar (24 oz) tomato-basil marinara sauce
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese (4 oz)
2 tablespoons sliced fresh basil leaves

DIRECTIONS:

In a large bowl, mix the chicken, bread crumbs, 1/3 cup of the Parmesan cheese, the milk, salt, pepper and egg. Shape the mixture into 20 meatballs.

In a 10-inch nonstick skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Place meatballs in skillet, and brown meatballs on all sides, about 3 minutes on each side; drain.

Add marinara sauce to the skillet. Reduce heat to simmer; cover and cook 5 to 8 minutes, or until meatballs are cooked through and no pink remains (at least 165°F). Remove from heat; top with mozzarella cheese, remaining 2 tablespoons Parmesan cheese and the basil.

To serve, spoon meatballs and sauce into serving bowls.



The
PCLinuxOS
Magazine

Created with
Scribus

TIPS:

Add a can of diced tomatoes with the marinara sauce for added flavor and texture.

NUTRITION:

Calories: 380 Carbs: 25g Fiber: 2g
Sodium: 1260mg Protein: 25g



Audio CD Rippers: A Roundup

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Last month, I told you about my best friend (“John”) and ripping his collection of CDs to audio files stored on a USB flash drive so he could listen to them in his new truck. As I promised in that [article](#), this month we’ll take a look at some of the programs in the PCLinuxOS repository for ripping audio files from your CDs.

I’ve purposefully restricted the programs featured here to ONLY include ripper programs where the ripping of audio files is its primary or only feature. That means I won’t be covering K3b, which is also capable of ripping audio files from CDs. For K3b, it not only rips audio files from CDs, but is also a burner program for all types of optical media. Those “extra” features and abilities disqualify it from being featured in this article. There are also other programs that can access/rip audio files from your audio CDs, like Dolphin and Konqueror, but those are also file managers, so their primary use as file managers disqualifies them from being included in this article, as well.

Even with that “restriction,” there are three GUI programs (that I found) in the PCLinuxOS repository whose sole purpose is to rip audio files from your audio CDs.

A Note About CDDB

Only one program (of the three) comes “out of the box” ready to retrieve data from the CD Database (CDDB) about the artist and tracks on an audio CD (I’ll reveal which one is properly configured as we go through the description of features of the three programs). So, if you use another program than the one that comes properly configured to retrieve that data, you will have to alter the CDDB server information in order to properly retrieve the information.

The only CDDB configuration I found that worked has **gnudb.gnudb.org** as the server, and `~cddb/cddb.cgi` listed as the CGI path. The two programs that didn’t have CDDB properly configured both used **freedb.org** as the default CDDB server. Unfortunately, that database was shut down in 2020, and all traffic rerouted to **gnudb.org**. You can read about it [here](#). Attempting to go to the **freedb.org** site redirects to **gnudb.org** in a web browser, but that redirection isn’t allowed with the programs that specify **freedb.org** as the CDDB. At least, that has been my experience. I didn’t spend a lot of time finding additional CDDB servers, since I already had one that worked. So, I merely replaced the non-working CDDB server address and CGI path in the other two programs with the one that I knew was working.

If you are aware of another working CDDB server and CGI path than what I list here, feel free to use it. But, to keep things simple (and for economy of time), you can just use the CDDB server and CGI path listed at the beginning of the last paragraph in the two programs that don’t have a proper configuration for the CDDB. Meanwhile, I’d appreciate you letting me know of any other functioning, free, open CDDB servers that may exist. I find it a little disconcerting to only have ONE functioning CDDB available. So what happens if that server goes down? I think you get my point.

[UPDATE] Out of curiosity, I did perform a short search, and I discovered another CDDB. I just wasn’t comfortable with only having ONE source for CDDB information. And, to be honest, it wasn’t a trivial task to extract the server address and relevant port information (the latter was discovered merely by trial and error). The “new” CDDB server address is **freedb.dbpoweramp.com/~cddb/cddb.cgi**, and the correct port is **80**.



Grip



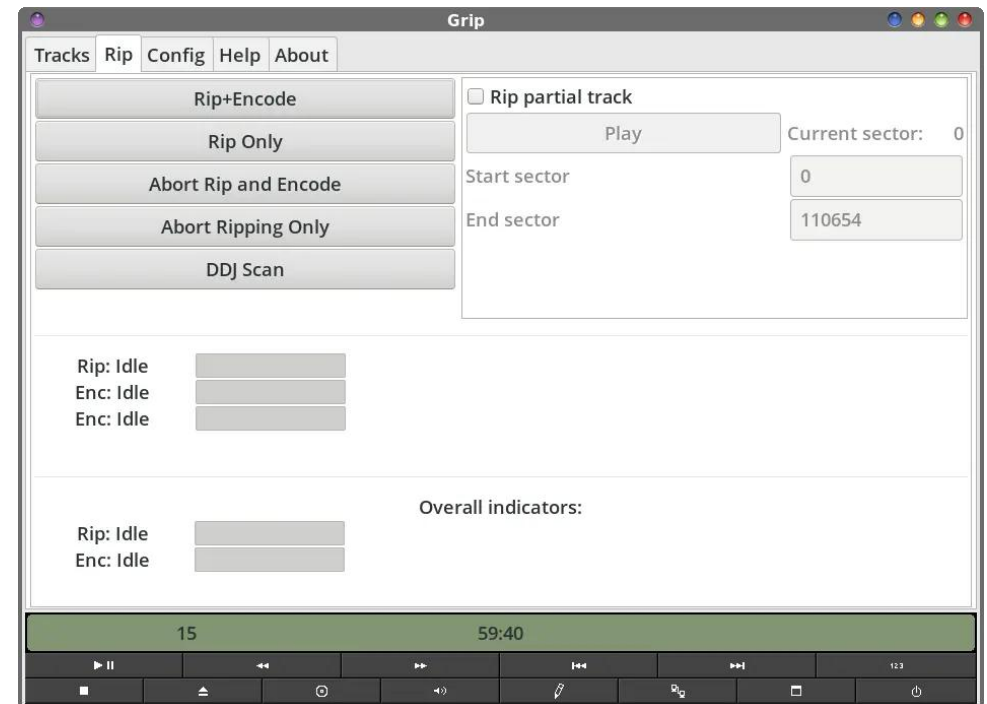
Grip uses a tabbed window interface. Some of the tabs have tabs of their own. And some of those tabs have tabs of their own. The first tab lists the tracks of the audio CD.

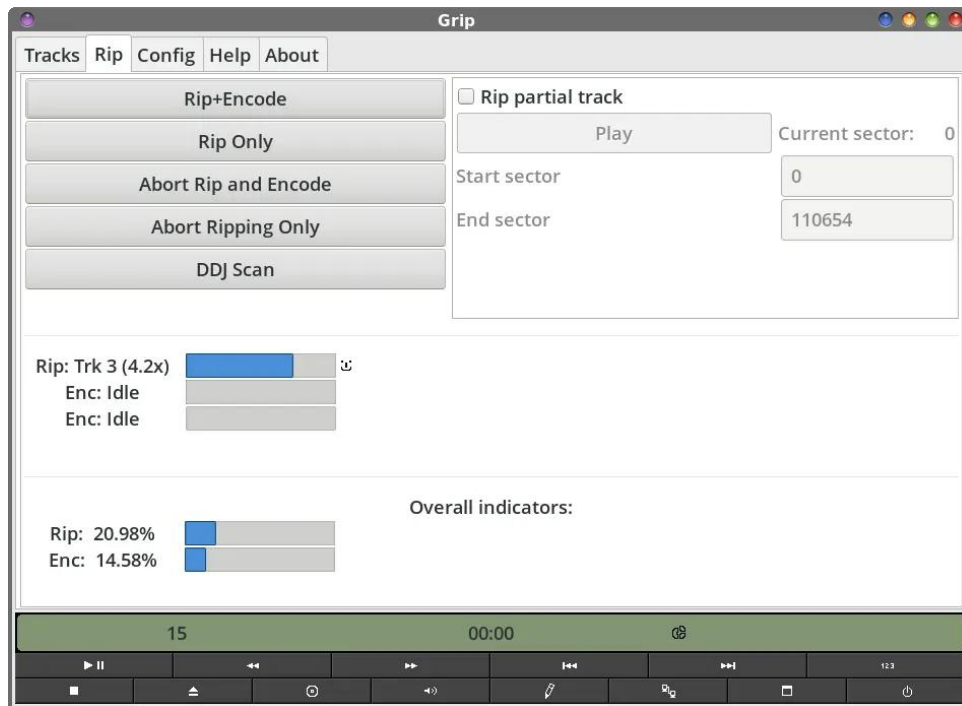
Before I dig too deep into Grip, let me start off by telling you that Grip was the **only** ripping program that has CDDb set up correctly, “out of the

box.” Because Grip was properly configured, it’s also the one we used to rip John’s CDs to his hard drive.

As you can see in the image above, the album name, the artist, the track numbers, and all of the titles of the tracks are properly displayed. I just opened up Grip, and then placed the audio CD into my external USB optical drive. In a manner of less than 10 seconds, all of that information was properly displayed in the default window of Grip.

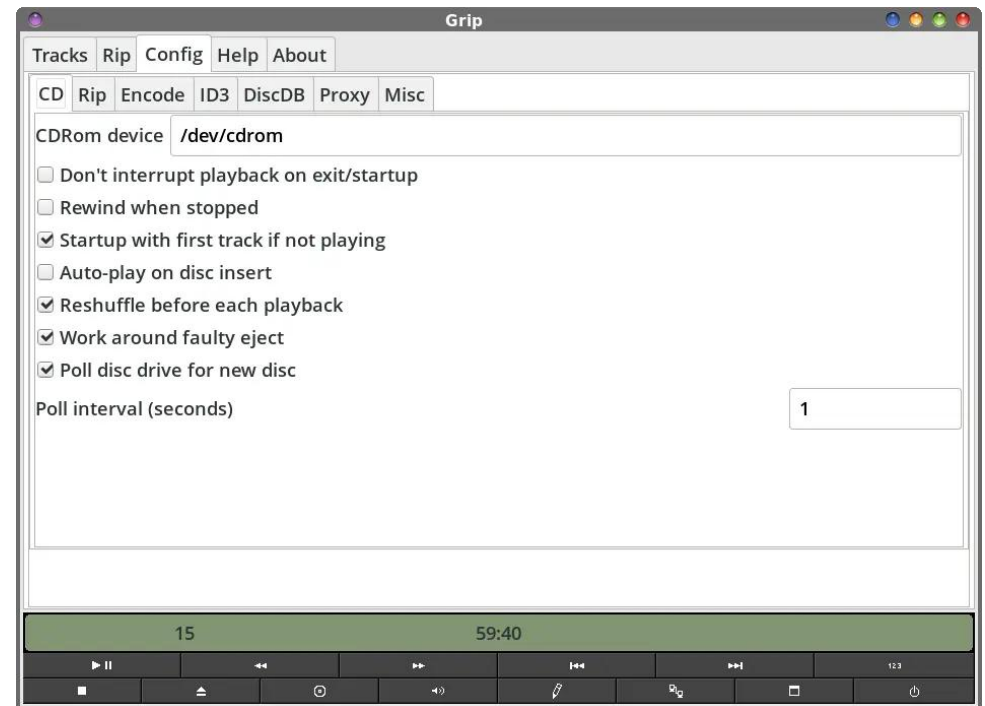
In the window above, you can individually select which tracks you want to rip by clicking on the checkbox at the far right of the window, under the “Rip” column. Or, if you prefer, just click on the word “Rip” in the column headers, and all of the tracks on the CD will be selected. (Note: any data tracks on the disc will be skipped, automatically).



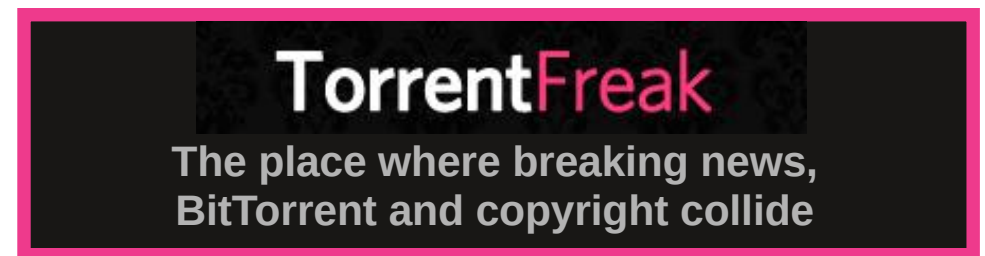


The second tab of the Grip window is where you will go to start ripping the audio tracks you selected. I'll caution you to NOT start that process at this point, until and unless you have already configured Grip to work the way you want. You can always come back to this tab after you've configured Grip. I only place it here as the second item to be discussed because it is the second tab in Grip's tabbed window layout.

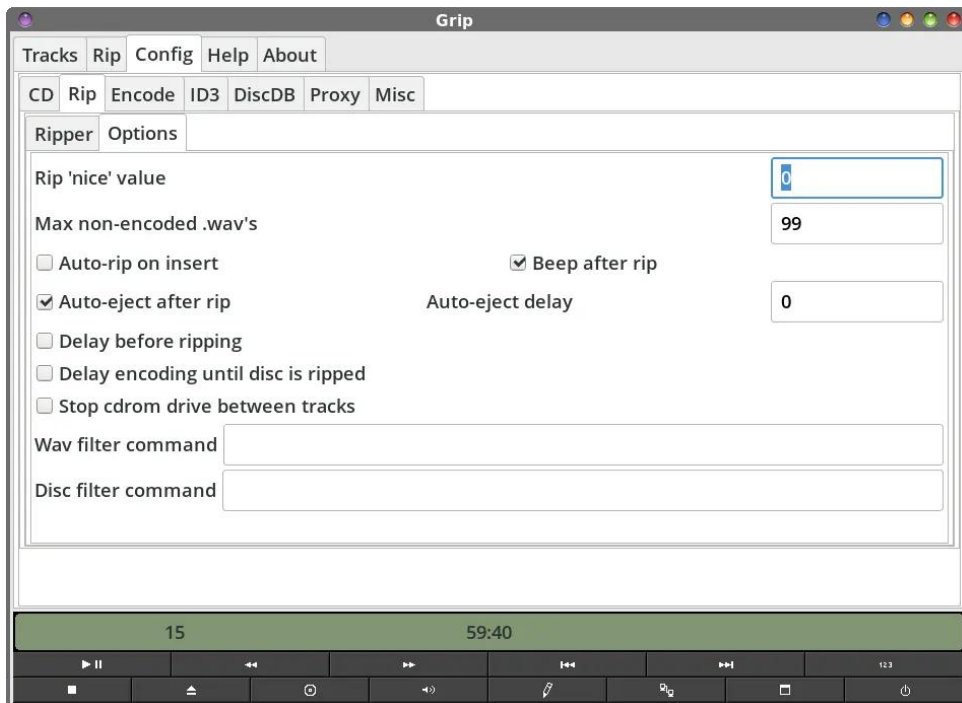
The top window (previous page) shows Grip before starting the ripping process, and the second window (above) shows Grip ripping (and encoding) of the selected audio tracks. Most of the time, you will want to select the "Rip+Encode" button. This will rip the selected audio tracks to a WAV file, and then encode them to your selected audio file format. If you want only to rip the audio tracks to WAV files, then you'll select the "Rip Only" button.



"Config" is the third tab in Grip's tabbed window, and is where you will make all of the settings that govern how your CD's files will be ripped, among other things. Grip *can* be used for playback of your audio CDs, if you want (but there are better programs for that). You will need to check these configuration settings the first time you run Grip, unless you just want/need to go into the configuration settings to make a change. Under the "CD" tab, you can set any of these features as defaults for the next time you launch Grip. Most of them should make sense on their own, without explanation. Some, though, leave me scratching my head, like "Rewind when stopped." As far as I've ever known, CDs don't require "rewinding." I mean, we're ripping files from a CD, not a cassette tape.



Audio CD Rippers: A Roundup



Under the “Config > Rip” tab, you set up the variables you want to use when ripping the audio files from your audio CD. The “Ripper” tab (first image) allows you to set up how your audio files are ripped to files. You can select which ripper Grip uses. I’ve always just kept things at their default value, which is “grip (cdparanoia)” and I’ve never had an issue.

Grip will default to creating your ripped files in a directory in your /home directory, named “ogg”. If you want your files stored elsewhere, this is where you will specify the path to use. This is where Grip will store the WAV file that is used to create your encoded audio file.

At this point, it’s a good time to introduce the variables (preceded by a % sign) that Grip uses. Here is a full list of those variables:

b — The bitrate that files are being encoded at.

c — The CDrom device being used.

C — The generic SCSI device being used (note that this will be substituted with the CDrom device if no generic SCSI device has been specified).

w — The filename of the wave file being ripped.

m — The filename of the file being encoded.

t — The track number, beginning at 1, and zero-filled (i.e.: '03' for the third track).

N — The number of tracks, zero-filled (i.e.: '07').

s — The start sector of the track.

e — The end sector of the track.

n — The name of the track.

a — The artist name for the track.

Audio CD Rippers: A Roundup

A — The artist name for the disc.

I — The artist's initial letter.

d — The name of the disc.

i — The disc database id (in hex) for the disc.

y — The year of the disc.

g — The ID3 genre id of the disc.

G — The ID3 genre string of the disc.

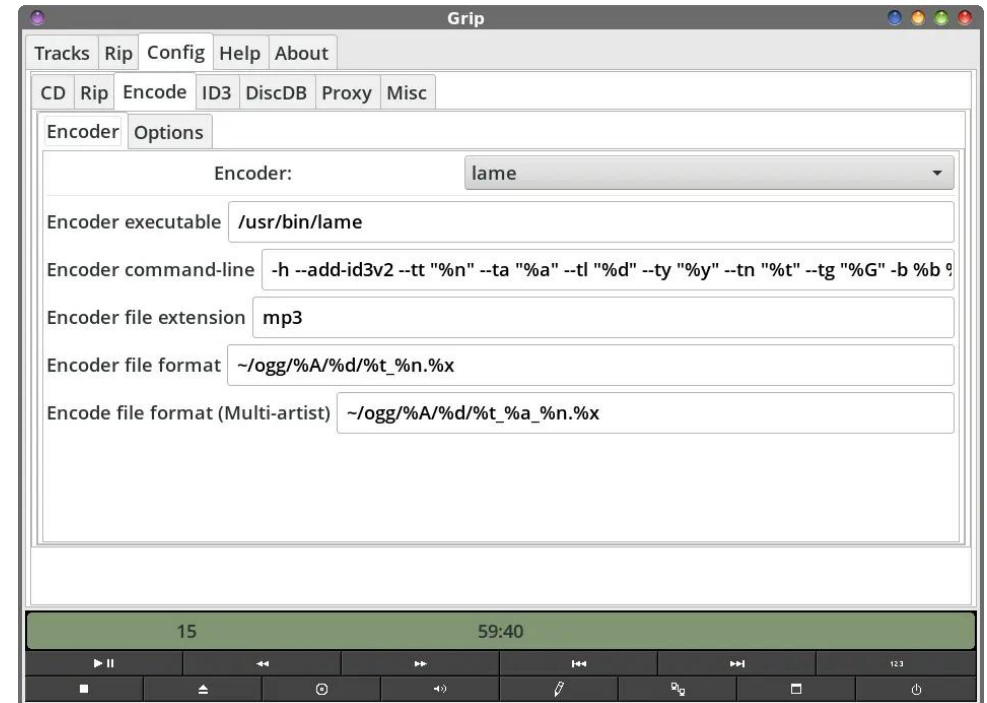
r — The recommended replay gain for the track (in dB). Note that this is only applicable if you have enabled gain calculation.

R — The recommended replay gain for the entire album (in dB). This value is only valid after an entire disc has been ripped (it is designed to be used with the disc filter command).

x — The encoded file extension (i.e., “mp3”).

These same variables will also be used when your files are encoded to your selected audio file format.

On the “Options” tab (second image), I’ve left everything at its default values.

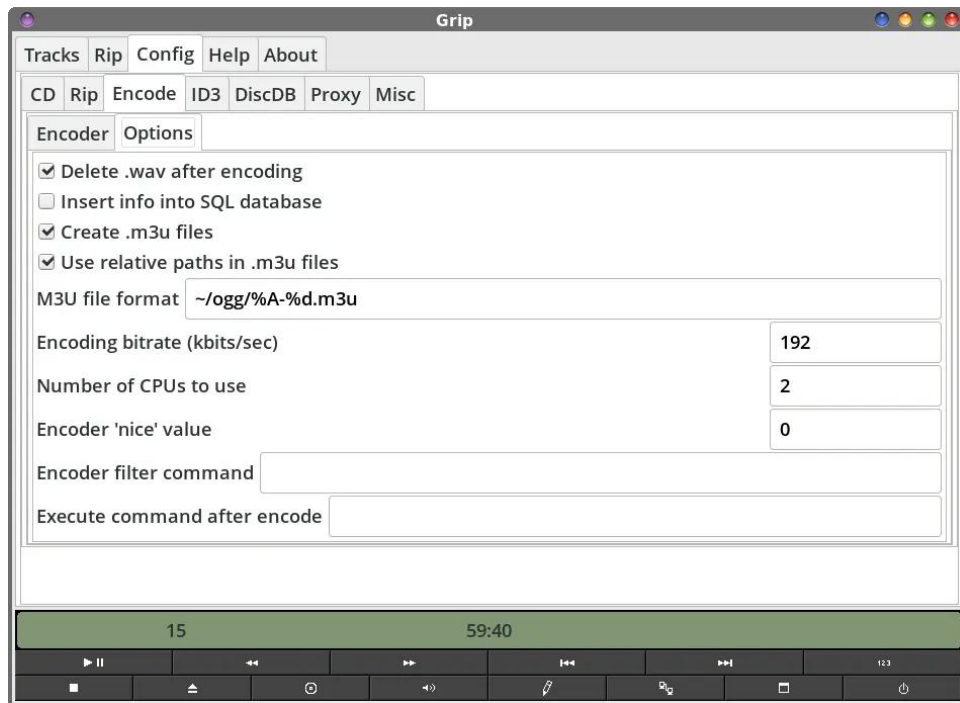


When you go to the Config > Encode tab, you will see two other sub-tabs. The first one is the “Encoder” tab. The very first option is to select your encoder. In my first image above, I’ve selected “lame” as my encoder. There are actually four different encoders you can choose from for MP3 files: lame, bladeenc, xingmp3enc, and mp3encode. I chose lame because I’m much more familiar with it (but I have used bladeenc and mp3encode in the past with good results). You can also choose to encode your audio

files in other formats, using oggenc, l3enc, gogo, flac, faac, opusenc, and “other.”

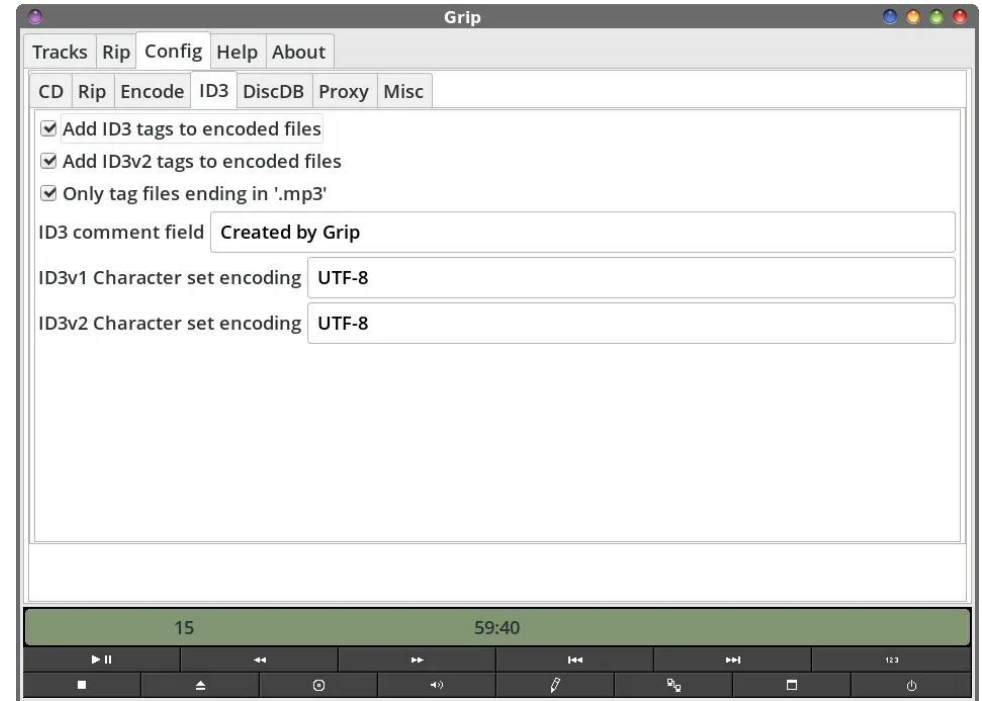
In the next text entry box, provide the path to the encoder library that you selected as your encoder. Most of them (if not all of them) are in the /usr/bin directory.

The next text entry box allows you to alter the command line switches for tailoring how you want to customize the filenames of the audio files you encode. Use the same variables as I showed earlier to customize your filenames. To be perfectly honest, I just accepted the defaults that Grip came preconfigured with, and I’ve been perfectly happy with those.



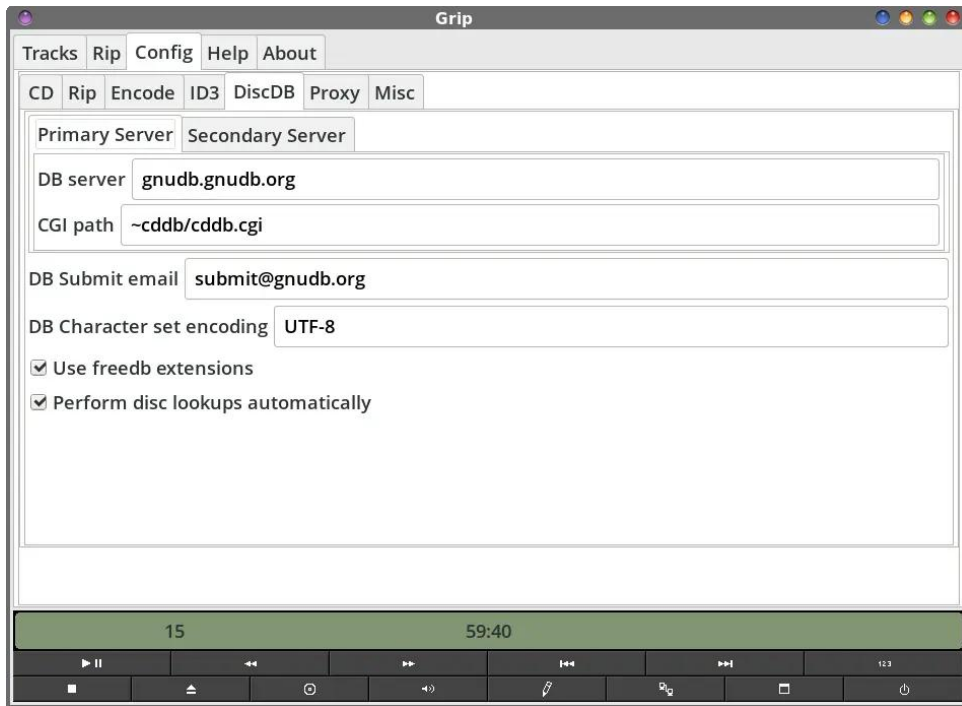
Under the “Options” sub-tab (second image above), set the bitrate to use to encode your files (halfway down from the top). Since I’m using MP3, I chose 192kbps. Remember that the lower the number, the lower the fidelity ... and vice versa. I find 192kbps to be a happy medium which gives you good sound quality, but still decent compression. For comparison, 128kbps equates (roughly) to the sound fidelity you get from an FM radio station.

The rest of the settings under the “Options” sub-tab should be relatively evident.

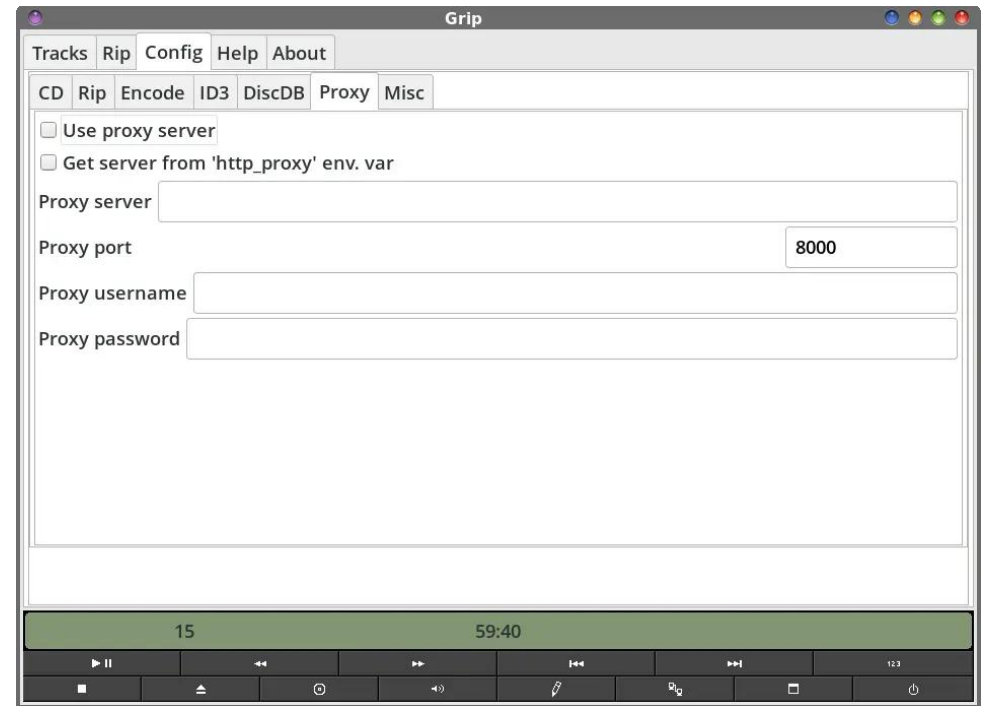


Under the Config > ID3 sub-tab, I enabled all of the options (which should be fairly self-explanatory). For your ID3 comment field, you can change this to whatever you want. So, if you wanted to put “From the music library of Joe Blow,” you’re definitely more than welcome to do so.

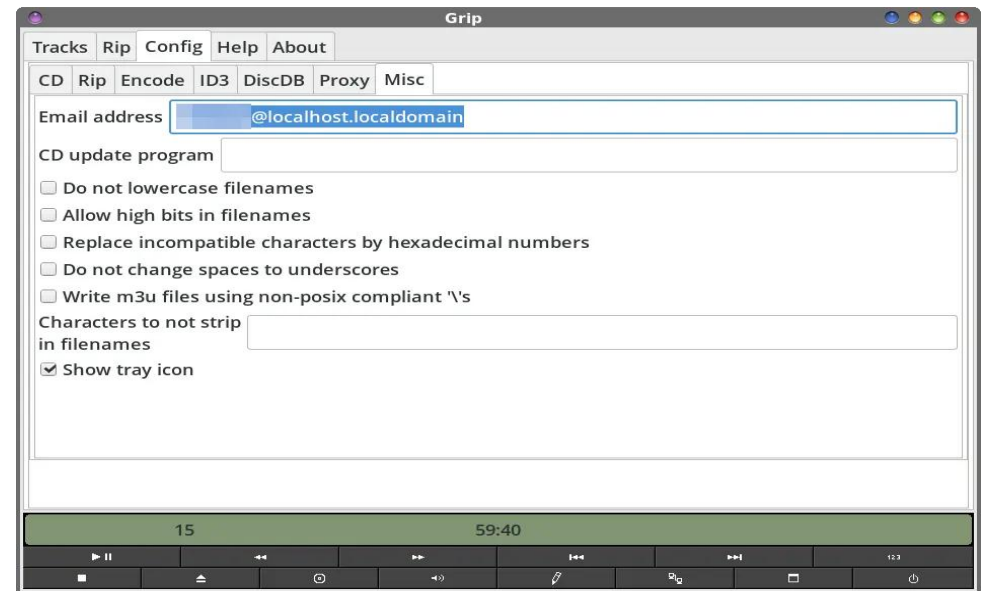




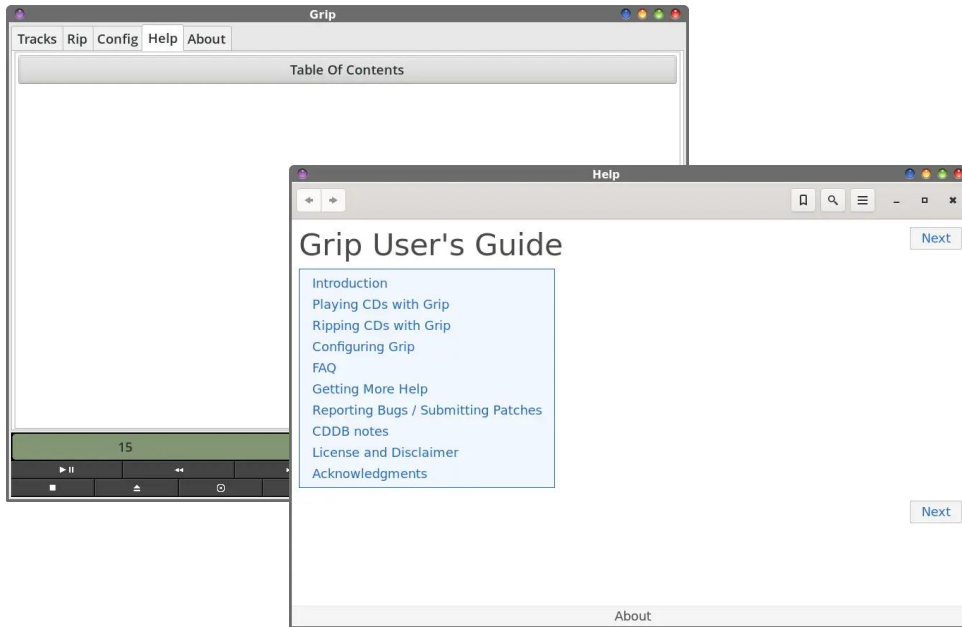
The Config > DiscDB tab has two sub-tabs: Primary Server and Secondary Server. They are identical in appearance. This is where you configure which CDDB server to use for retrieving the disc information. On my copy of Grip, the Secondary Server tab is not filled out with the DB server field, making the server indicated under the Primary Server tab the only one that Grip checks for disc information. Fill in the server under the Secondary Server tab if you feel you must, but not having a secondary server to retrieve disc data from has not hindered the ability of CDDB to provide the information I need. In other words, it works just fine without a server specified under the Secondary Server tab.



The image above is how Grip is set up by default, and since I don't use/proxy, I've made no changes to the defaults.



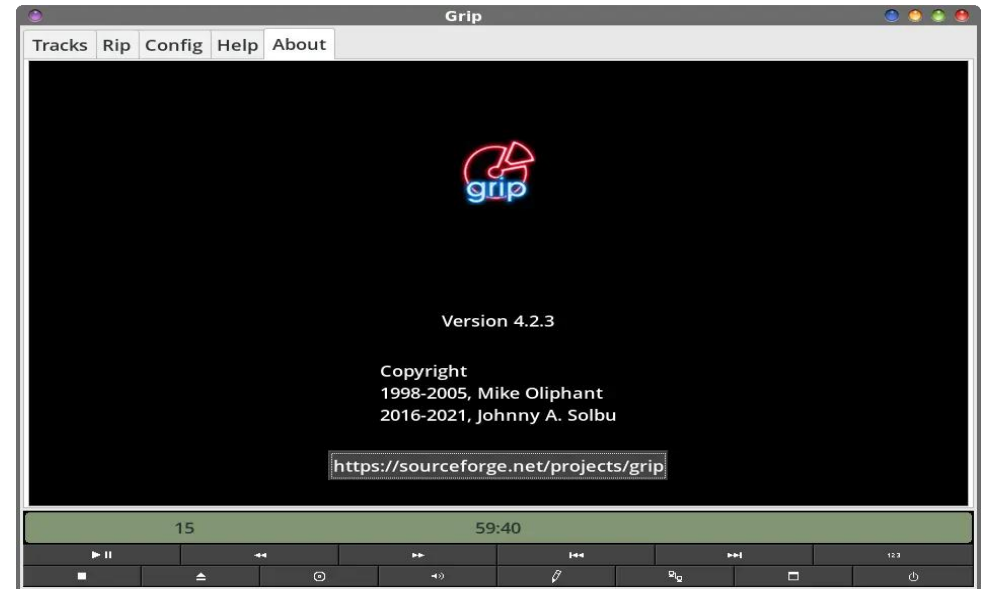
Under the Config > Misc tab, you can make several changes that don't really fit into any other category. The only thing I changed here was to enable the "Show tray icon" setting. That allows an icon for Grip to be placed in the notification tray of my panel. Right-clicking my mouse pointer over the tray icon gives me immediate access to several different functions of Grip, without having to physically open (or bring to the forefront) the Grip window.



The Grip help file, opened in Yelp

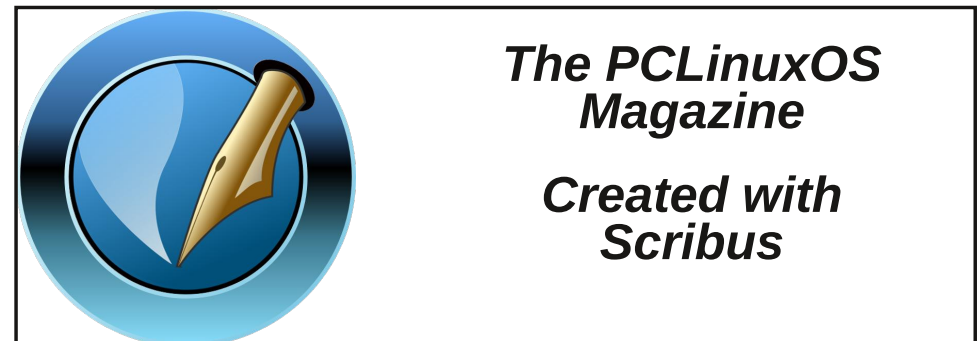
The "Help" tab gives you access to Grip's help file, which appears to be fairly well written. If you have Yelp (Gnome's help viewer) installed, Grip's help file will open in Yelp when you select the "Table Of Contents" button in the Help tab (second image).

And, to be perfectly honest, I have no idea what happens when you click on the "Table Of Contents" button in the Help tab and you don't have Yelp installed. Yelp is one of the programs I routinely install on my PCLinuxOS installations. That may sound odd to some, but it harkens back to my "roots" with Windows. I've always had a fascination with help files, and in my "Windows days," I authored some Windows Help tools that I sold as shareware. There ... now it doesn't seem so odd.

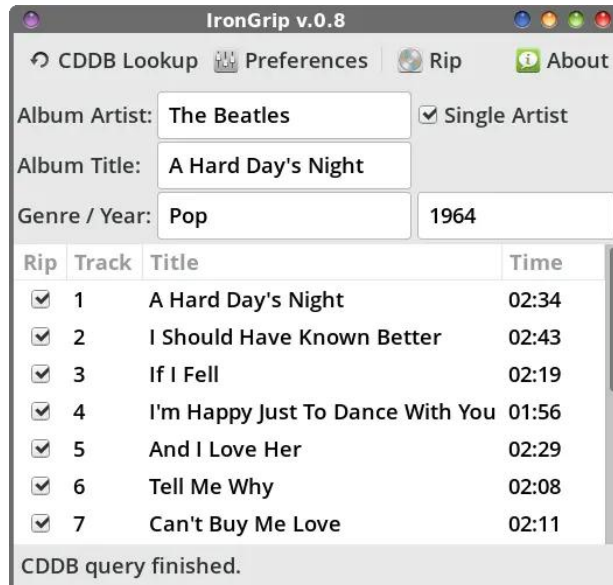


Of course, the "About" tab shows the obligatory "About" information, along with a live link to the Grip project page on sourceforge.net. Clicking on the link will open the project page in your default web browser.

Overall, Grip does a very nice job of ripping your audio CDs to encoded audio files. And, it's reasonably fast. This particular Beatles disc (Please Please Me) has about an hour of music on it. So, pay attention to the CD read speed. If you see it saying 4.0x, that means it's reading the data 4x faster than "normal" playback. Take that 60 minutes of music and divide by the CD read speed. That result will be *about* how long it will take to rip and encode the entire audio CD to your chosen audio file format. Thus, this album took all of about 15 minutes to rip and encode to MP3 files.



IronGrip

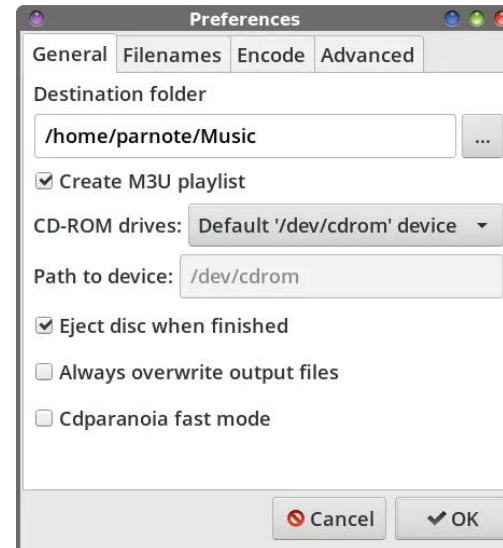


While Grip is primarily a CD ripper/encoder that also allows you to also play audio CDs, IronGrip is **ONLY** a CD ripper/encoder. If space is at a premium on your system, the program binary file for IronGrip is about 25 KB smaller than Grip.

The controls and options for IronGrip are fewer, but don't underestimate its abilities. IronGrip does as good of a job at ripping and encoding your audio CDs into audio files as any other program around. And, even though there have been no updates listed on its [GitHub site](#) in over 10 years, IronGrip works very, very well.

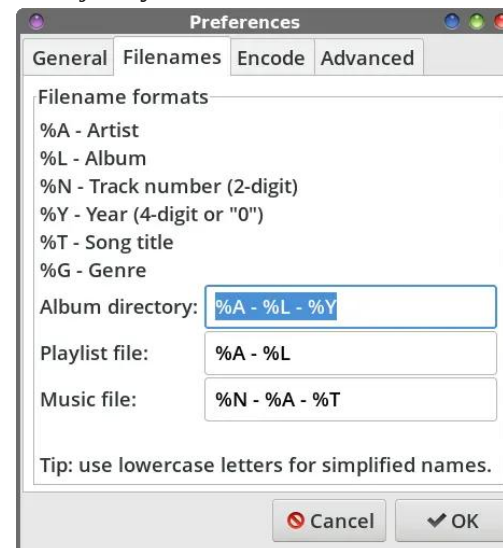
The first time you use IronGrip, you will need to select the "CDDB Lookup" button at the top left of the IronGrip main window. You can change this in the Preferences, if you like, so that it automatically queries the CDDB when you insert an audio CD (and I'll point that out, as we go through the configuration process).

If you choose to use IronGrip, you will need to open up the "Preferences" dialog anyway, if you wish to be able to avail yourself of a proper connection to the CDDB. IronGrip does **NOT** come with a working CDDB server preconfigured, out of the box. Again, I'll point that out as we go through the configuration process.



down labeled "CD-ROM drives."

With my external USB optical drive, the "Eject disc when finished" does not work, whether there's a checkmark in the checkbox or not. For me, however, that is not a "dealbreaker." The "Always overwrite output files" should be self-explanatory. I choose to not use the "Cdparanoia fast mode" setting, mostly out of fear of possibly getting ripped audio files besieged with jittery sound.



Under the "General" tab, you start off by specifying where you want IronGrip to save your encoded audio files, in the "Destination folder" field. Then, you tell IronGrip whether or not you want it to create a M3U playlist by checking or unchecking the checkbox next to "Create M3U playlist." Your optical disc player should already be detected, but if you're on a computer with multiple optical disc players, you can choose which one you want to use by specifying it in the drop-

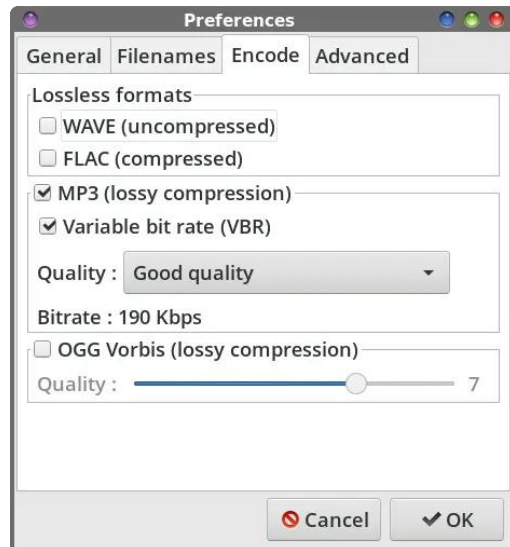
The "Filenames" tab allows you to specify the formatting of the CDDB data that is included in your filenames. I've accepted the defaults here, fully aware that there *will* be spaces in the generated filenames. Grip automatically replaces spaces with underscores, unless you specifically tell it to not do so. This is not so with IronGrip.

Anyone who has read much of what I've written over the past 15



years will know that I really, really hate spaces in filenames. However, I can easily take care of that issue with a special custom action I have defined in Thunar file manager on my Xfce installation. It will allow me to select files in bulk, and replace spaces with another character all at once. There really is no other way to circumvent the “spaces in a filename” issue, since the song titles, artist names, and album names will (most likely) include spaces.

The specifications for the formatting should be relatively self-explanatory, so feel free to tailor the filenames to meet your expectations or needs. If you really mess things up, you can always reference the image above to reset the parameters to their default values. For what it’s worth, I just use the default settings for the filename naming convention.

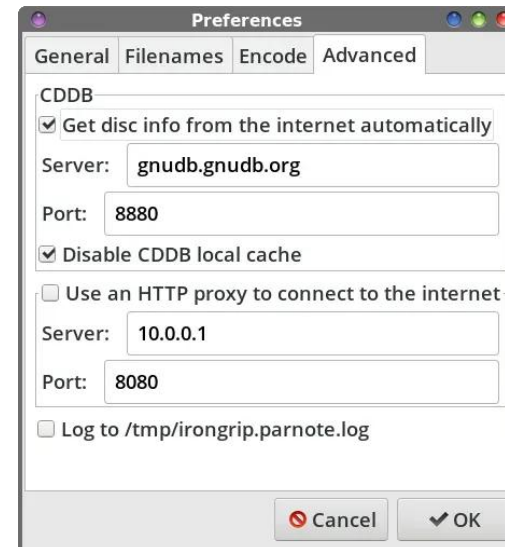


The “Encode” tab is where you will set your preferences for the audio files that are ripped and encoded from your audio CDs. You can choose WAV or FLAC, but be forewarned that those files will be quite large. WAV files aren’t compressed at all, and FLAC files, while known for their incredible sound quality, don’t offer up the compress-ability that MP3 or OGG files offer (albeit at a cost of sound fidelity).

Since I mostly rip audio files to MP3 files, this is the section where I made my selections. I chose MP3 as my file format, and also chose the “Variable bit rate (VBR)” checkbox. Without it checked, IronGrip will use CBR (constant bit rate). VBR can help make your MP3 files smaller without quality loss by varying the bitrate depending on the dynamics of the sound file. Quieter, less “deep” sound recordings may not require as high of a bitrate as louder, “deeper” portions of a sound recording, and it is adjusted accordingly, within certain boundaries.

Next, you choose the quality level you want your sound files saved in. As you change the setting between low, good, high and maximum quality, you will see the “Bitrate” setting change accordingly. I chose “Good” quality, since I’m quite happy with the sound quality from files encoded at 192kbps, and the 190kbps with a variable bit rate comes mighty close to that.

If you choose to encode your files in the OGG format, you can check the box next to “OGG Vorbis.” Just be sure to uncheck the box next to the other formats. Slide the slider control to achieve the quality level you desire. Remember, higher compression leads to smaller files, but also lower sound fidelity, while lower compression leads to larger files, but with greater sound fidelity.

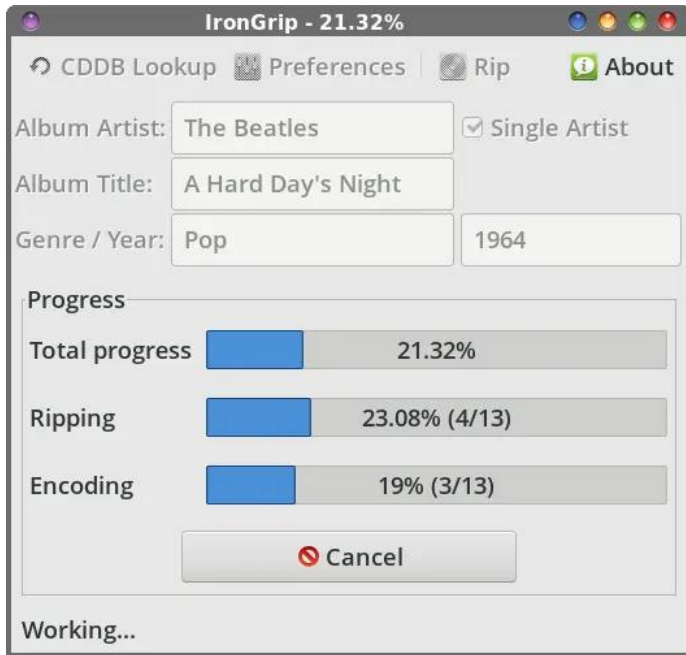


If you wish to avail yourself of using the CDDDB to retrieve the artist, album name, and track names, you must first correct the CDDDB server information that IronGrip comes pre-configured with. The main CDDDB server I use is the one listed in the image above. But, you can also use the alternate CDDDB server I provided to you at the beginning of the article.

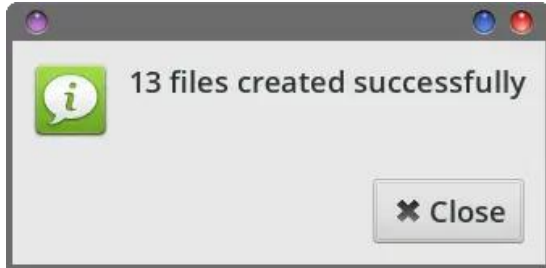
Unfortunately, the number of *working* CDDDB servers around are decreasing, as optical discs popularity is giving way to streaming services.

I’ve put a checkmark in the checkbox next to “Disable CDDDB local cache.” I don’t see/feel a need to keep a cache of CDDDB on my computer.

Since I don’t use an HTTP proxy, I’ve left this section alone. I also don’t need IronGrip keeping a log of my “transactions” on hand, so I’ve left the “Log to /tmp/irongrip.parnote.log” checkbox unchecked.



Clicking on the “Rip” button in IronGrip’s main window will cause the progress bars detailing the program’s progress in ripping my audio CDs to digital audio sound files on my computer. This should be obvious, but clicking on the “Cancel” button will stop the ripping and encoding of the audio CD tracks.



Once finished, IronGrip will display a simple information dialog box, like that shown above.

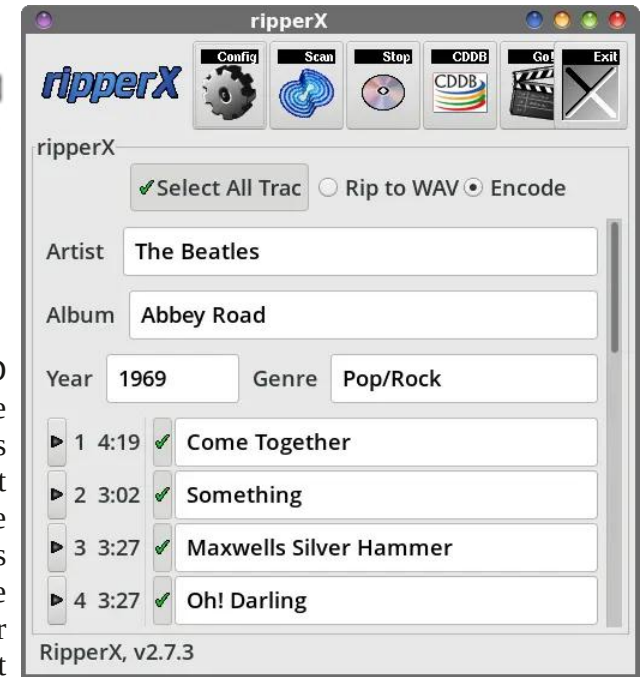


Clicking on the “About” button in IronGrip’s main window will display the “About” dialog box shown above. It also contains a link to IronGrip’s GitHub page.

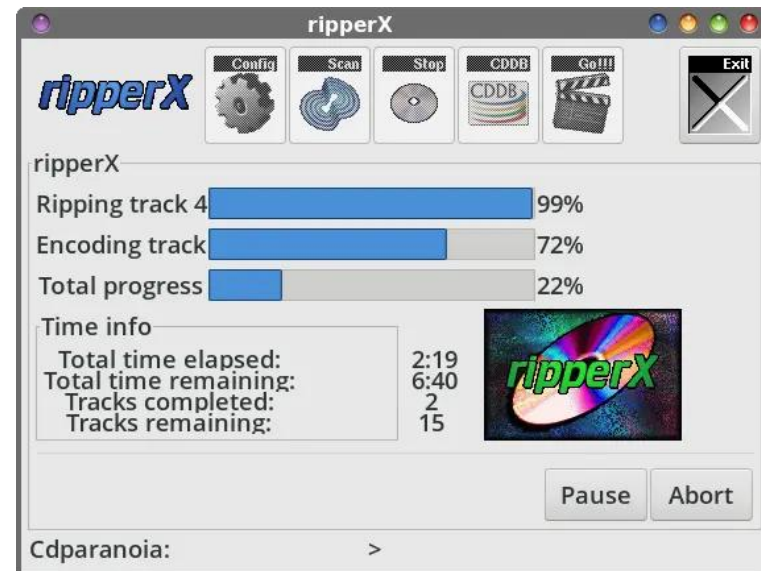
RipperX



The third audio CD ripping program we’re going to cover is RipperX. The current version in the PCLinuxOS repository is 2.7.3. On the sourceforge.net site for RipperX, the latest version is 2.8.0, last updated in March, 2014. The 2.7.3 version was last updated in November, 2010.



The 2.7.3 version was last updated in November, 2010.



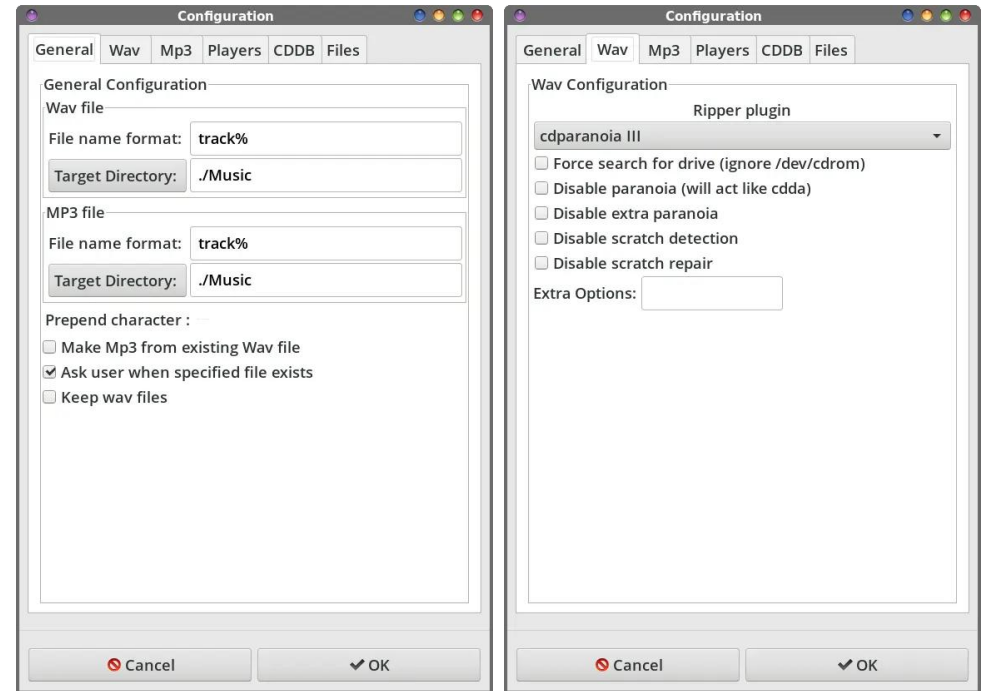
Twenty years or so ago, Jos Dehaes of Belgium was its maintainer, before handing over the reins to other maintainers. Joske (as he goes by) was a bit surprised to find the source code still available on sourceforge.net. He then attempted to update the source code to take advantage of later Gtk+ releases (he originally wrote it for Gtk+ 1.x). After a while, he realized that it would be easier to rewrite the entire program in Rust, rather than its original C programming language. He now [hosts](#) his new Rust version on GitHub, as RipperX 4.

But, don't let the age of RipperX in the PCLinuxOS repository deter you from giving this program a try. Even 14 years later, it still works very well for ripping your audio CDs.

Just as with the other rippers we've covered in this article, the configuration of CDDB no longer works "out of the box" because it relies on the now-defunct freedb CDDB server. You will need to change the CDDB server information to one of the two CDDB servers listed at the beginning of this article. Once you do, it retrieves album, artist, and track information as it should.

Notice how each track in the main program window has a green checkmark next to it? That means it has been queued up for ripping and encoding. If you don't see a green checkmark, you can select the "Select All Tracks" button in the upper left corner of the RipperX window, or select the tracks you want to rip and encode, one by one.

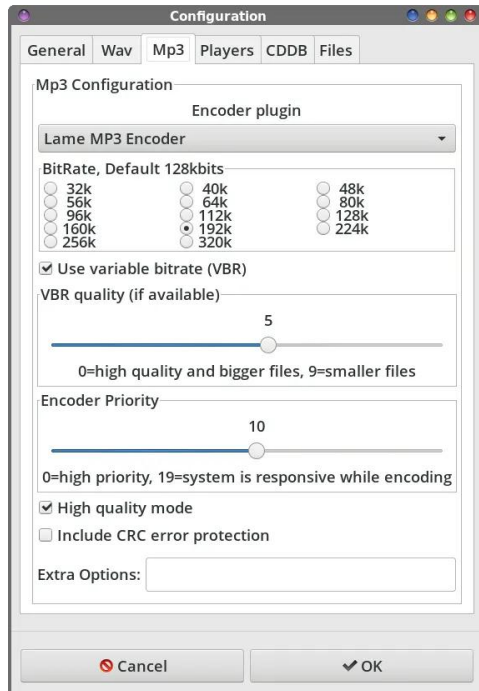
You'll also notice that there is a "play" button at the far left side of each track listing. Currently, I can only find one command line program in the PCLinuxOS repository that allows the play button to function ... which is OK, because we're not as interested in using RipperX as a player (there are better programs available for that, anyways) as we are interested in RipperX to rip our audio CDs to our chosen digital sound file and format. We'll cover that when we get to the configuration dialog, where we define the player to use to play the individual CD tracks.



Like other CD ripping programs, RipperX extracts the audio from your CD as a WAV file, and then encodes the WAV file with your encoder of choice. To avoid problems, point both the WAV and MP3 target directory to where you want RipperX to store your digital audio files, which is typically the same directory. Don't worry, because unless you have a checkmark in the checkbox "Keep wav files," the WAV files will be automatically deleted after encoding them to your desired file format.

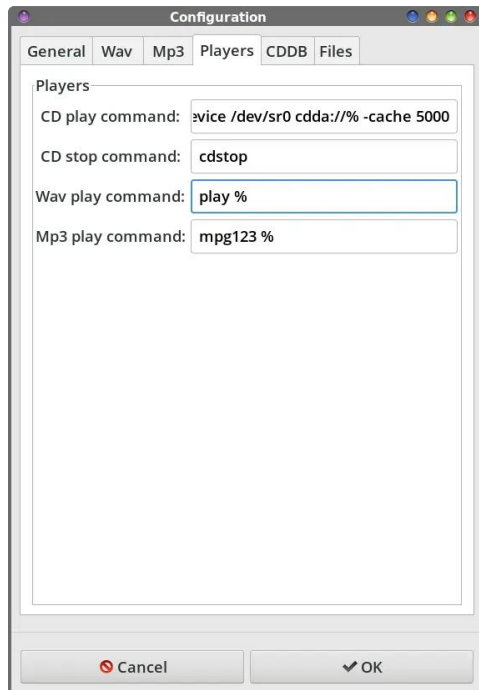
Under the "Wav" tab, I've kept all of the defaults for RipperX ... which is nothing selected. I suspect it'll be a similar case for most users.





Under the “Mp3” tab is where you set RipperX up for whichever encoder you want to use for your final audio files. On my system, I have two MP3 encoders (lame and bladeenc) listed as available, as well as Ogg Vorbis (for OGG files) and a FLAC encoder. Again, I chose lame, because that’s the one I’m most comfortable and familiar with.

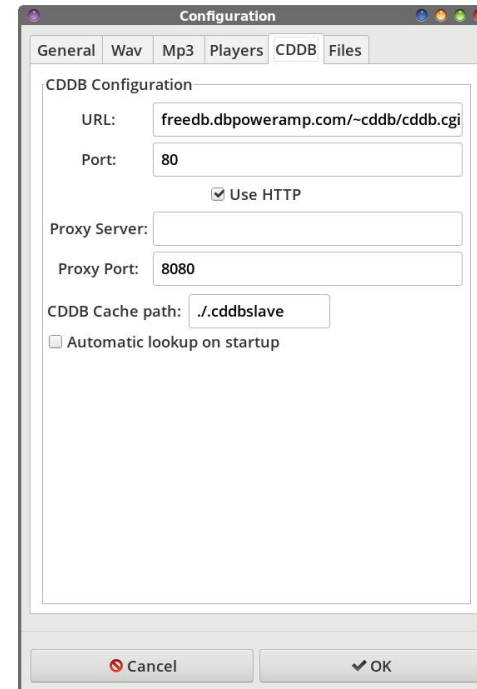
You select the bitrate of your encoded files in the sea of radio buttons. Like I mentioned earlier, I chose 192kbps as my bitrate, since it gives me fairly decent sound quality, while keeping file sizes relatively small.



I also check the VBR checkbox, to further help in the creation of smaller MP3 files.

Under the “Players” tab, the “default” values for the first two fields are cdplay % and cdstop %. However, those programs are not available in the PCLinuxOS repository. I was not able to find a replacement for cdstop, but I did find a command line replacement for cdplay. Replace the “cdplay %” line with **mplayer -cdrom-device /dev/sr0 cdda://% -cache 5000**. You won’t be able to stop playback once it starts, so you’ll have to listen to the entire track before

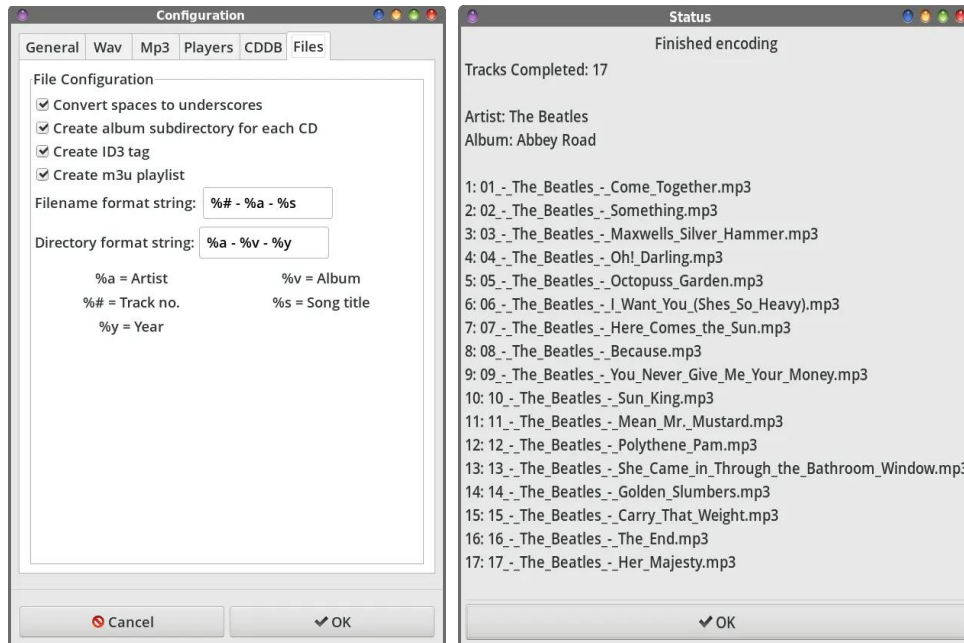
playback stops. Or, you can kill mplayer from a command line. I use “pkill mplayer” to stop playback, with no perceivable problem. If you choose to go this route, you will have to install **pkill** from the PCLinuxOS repository. The “-cache 5000” is very important in this command line, since leaving it out will result in interrupted playback as the buffer fills with the next part(s) of the track. The extra command sets up a five-second buffer, which tends to be sufficient to stop those buffering interruptions. I left all of the other fields at their default values.



The “CDDb” tab is where you make the necessary changes so you can have a working CDDb server. In the image above, I’ve set up the second CDDb server that I told you about at the beginning of the article. Put **freedb.dbpoweramp.com/~cddb/cddb.cgi** as the CDDb server, and **80** as the port (you can use the gnudb CDDb server if you want ... I just used dbpowerap here to show you it works). If you want RipperX to automatically query the CDDb when you start up the program, put a checkmark in the checkbox next to “Automatic lookup on startup.” Unfortunately, I’ve not had good luck with RipperX being able to read the

CDDb data for a newly inserted disc, without exiting and reopening the program. Instead, it just keeps the data for the previous disc, and nothing I do (short of closing and reopening RipperX) will get it to read the CDDb data for the new disc.





The “Files” tab is where you format what information makes up the filename format for your encoded files. The dialog box (above) makes it very easy to understand what the variables are and mean. I would recommend making sure there’s a checkmark in the “Convert spaces to underscores” checkbox to ensure there aren’t spaces in your filenames.

When RipperX has completed ripping and encoding your files from an audio CD, it displays a “Finished encoding” dialog box that shows the number of tracks ripped/encoded, the artist, the album, and the filename of every file that RipperX produced.

Summary

There you have it. There are other programs in the PCLinuxOS repository that are capable of ripping and encoding your audio CDs, but as we said from the outset, those programs (like K3b) also perform other tasks. Remember, we restricted the list of programs to those whose primary function is to rip and encode audio files from your audio CDs. There are

even some programs in the PCLinuxOS repository that are command line programs (e.g., abcde ... I swear ... that’s its name) that are just as capable. But, given how reluctant a lot of users are to use the command line, I’ve not included them here.

I know that some users think optical discs should go the way of the dodo bird, but then the same thing was said of phonograph records when CDs came onto the scene. Today, phonograph records are seeing a niche comeback among audiophiles. I suspect that the same thing is likely to happen to CDs and other optical media. They may wane in popularity to the latest/greatest delivery method d’jour, but I’m pretty confident that they will be with us for the foreseeable future.

With new vehicles coming out that don’t even have a CD player, this method of ripping and encoding them as audio files, and then (from last month’s article) putting them onto a USB thumb drive may be the only way to keep listening to your music collection as you travel down the road.





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Screenshot Showcase



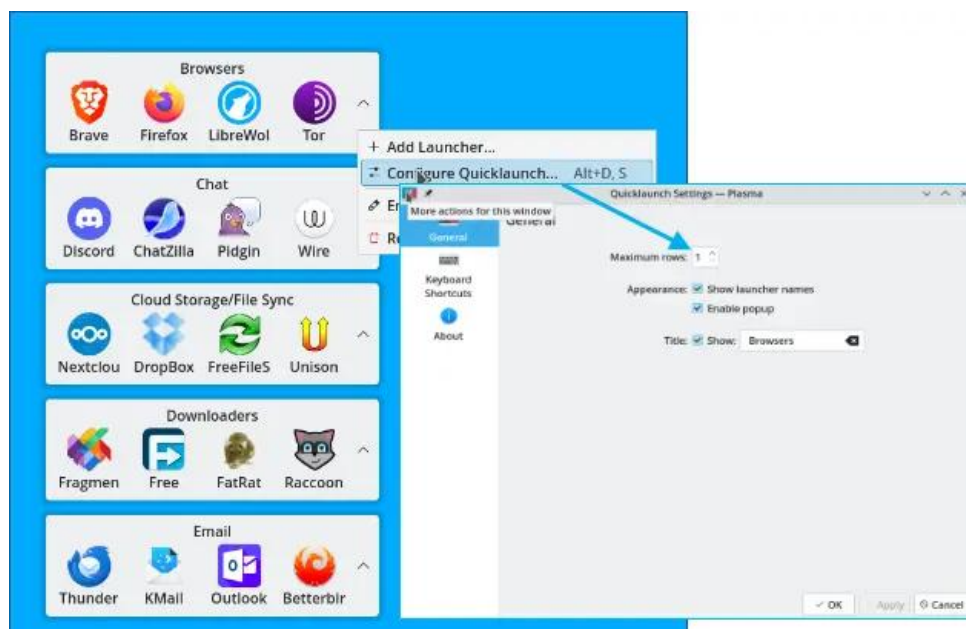
Posted by tbs, on June 10, 2024, running KDE.

How To Use The BigBoy FM Desktop

by yourfriendisaac

QuickLaunches

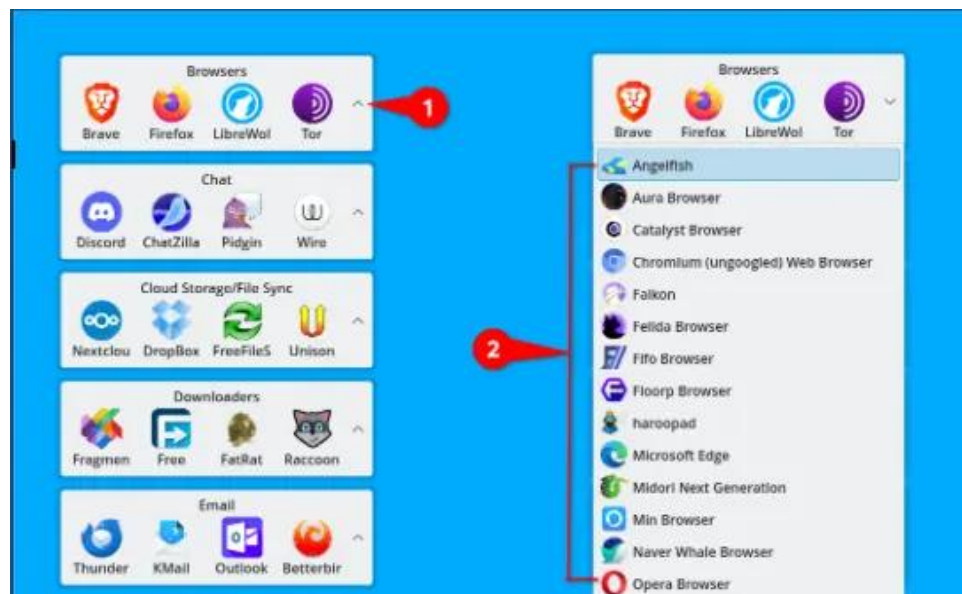
In the previous version of the KDE Full Monty (FM) desktop, the quicklaunch wasn't working correctly for everyone due to a sizing issue that occurs between display resolutions on different video cards, so I set it up as one row. All the quicklaunches are now as small as I can make them, so they should be okay on any configuration.



Click on the hidden launchers caret to show all items in that category as shown below. Hidden items can be put into any category by this method, and can be applied to any quick launch (top, right).

To move launchers to or from the hidden items:

1. Just click and drag the item you wish to move, and drop it where you like.



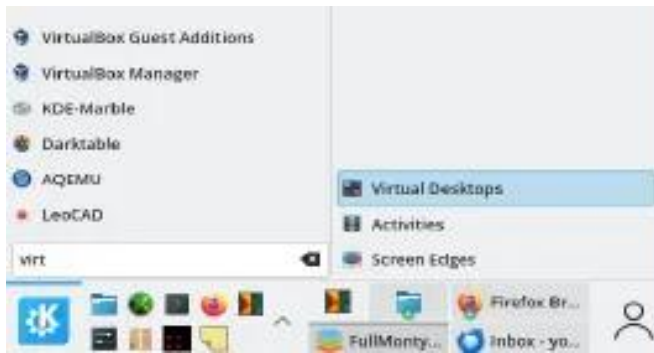
2. Do the same thing, if you want to change the order in which the launchers appear (see example right pic). If you only have one screen, you will not be able to move launchers between activities.

What are “Activities”?

Historically, before the use of activities, and currently on non-KDE distros/desktop environments, virtual desktops work by themselves. They are very handy as they allow you to have separate work locations for all your open apps in the

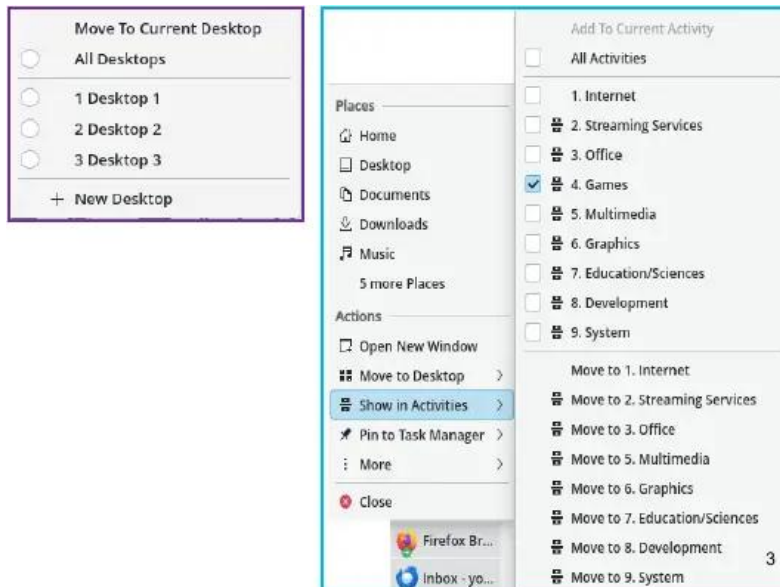


same or separate categories while working.

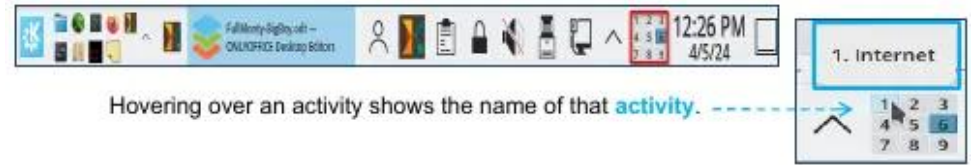


Activities adds a layer of usability by separating your workloads into designations that you assign. All this means, for example, that you can use a money manager on one desktop, and a word processor open on another. Alternatively, you can use them both on the same desktop, and have whatever you want opened anywhere you want. This allows you to work without distraction and is done by only allowing access to only those programs you open within that activity.

Of course, you do have the option of having the application show up anywhere, or everywhere. Just right click any icon on the task manager on the taskbar, and you will have the option of “Move to Desktop”, or “Show in Activities”. This allows you to move the app to any or all Desktops or Activities.



Each activity can have its own separate background wallpaper, allowing you to know at a glance which activity you are in. To change activities at any time, click on the activity pager shown below.

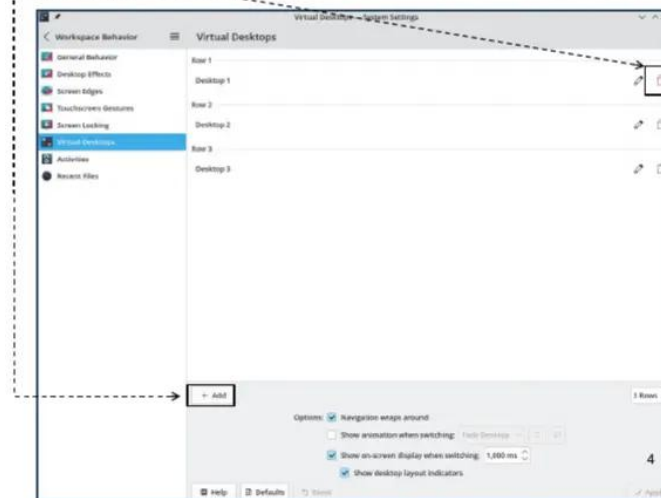


Change the current desktop in your activity

To change desktops, just mouseover your desktop and use the wheel mouse to change desktops. The current desktop is the one you are on, and the label shows the number.

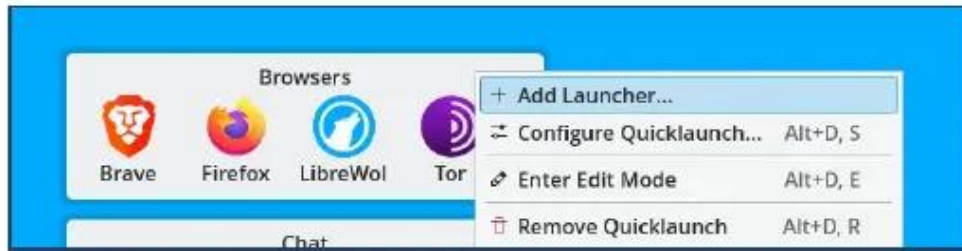


You can add or remove virtual desktops at anytime by going to the virtual desktop manager

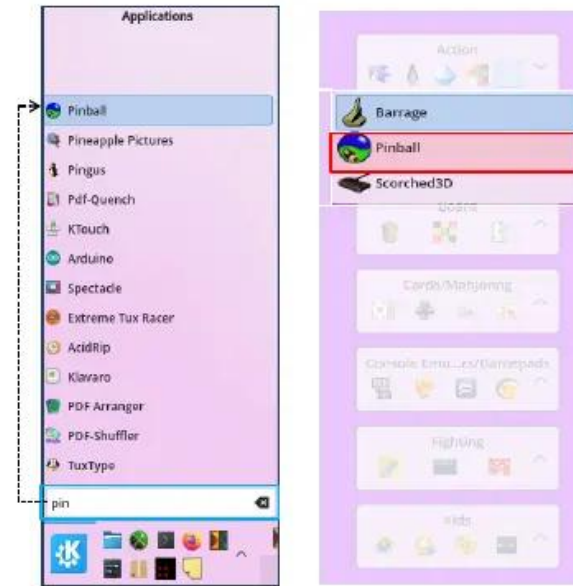
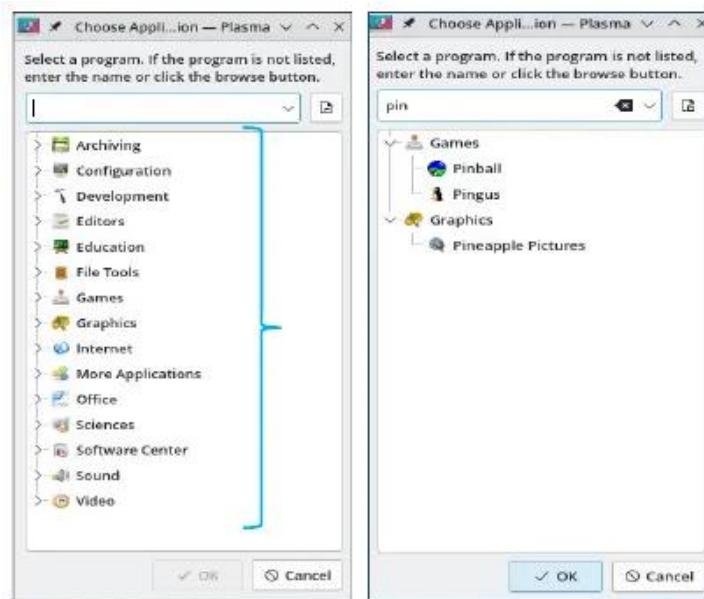


To add additional items to a quicklaunch:

1. Just right-click the quicklaunch, and select Add Launcher.



2. Choose a launcher from any category, as shown on the left. Or you can type the name of a specific app in the search box (right). As you type the name of the app, the programs starting with those letters will show up, and then you can choose your desired program.



3. Another way to do it is open the menu to the app you want, and just drag it to the desired quicklaunch, as shown in the image at top right.

The screenshots at right show a large complement of apps. That image size is 29 GB and was just too big. So I have a smaller version available that has all the basics, as well as one that has the basic setup also, so I made it smaller. The current size is 16 GB.

[Here](#) is the download mirror for BigBoy FM. If you have questions or comments, please send me a WhatsApp message at +1x918x213x9723 (replace the “x” with a space) or [email](#) me.

Unoconv: A Handy Tool For Converting Between Competing Office Document Formats

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Can you imagine what an utter mess things would be if you could only read CDs or DVDs on the brand of device that created them? Thanks to a formalized standard, CDs and DVDs, for the most part, are readable on every CD or DVD player.

Those “standards” don’t exist for office document formats, unfortunately. You may be able to open a document created in Microsoft Word or WordPerfect, for example, but the document formats are not held to any industry-wide standard. Among office suites, which proclaim a focus on productivity, it’s the wild, wild west.

In fact, it’s anything but “productive” to be tied to one vendor, one software suite. You can be “productive,” just so long as you use/buy THEIR product(s) and use their “approved” third-party vendors.

It’s only in recent history have things like Google Docs, Zoho Office and other online “office suites” made it possible for computer users to experience anything that even approaches interoperability between office document formats. Both Google Docs and Zoho Office, for example, offer the ability to import and export documents created on “other” office suites. Both Google Docs and Zoho Office offer up their cloud-based office productivity tools for free.

Even more recently, Linux users have been able to access things like Microsoft Office, via Microsoft’s online subscription office suite, named Microsoft 365. Of course, many Linux users have a “bad taste” in their mouth when it comes to using ANYTHING from Microsoft, and cringe even more at the prospect of handing over their hard-earned money to Microsoft. The “subscription” to Microsoft 365 will run an individual \$70 (U.S.) per year for a single-user plan, or \$100 (U.S.) per year for a family plan that accommodates up to six family members.

There is ONE (and, sadly, only one) document format (other than plain text files) that even comes close to “universal” access: PDF files. And, if you’re merely sharing information with an audience (small or large), the PDF file is universally accessible across most computing platforms and operating systems.

But what happens when you share a document with another user far, far away, and you need them to be able to edit or contribute to that document? In that case, a PDF file is NOT what you want to use.



LibreOffice

In a more “perfect” world, you and that far, far away person could just use LibreOffice, to help ensure equal access to shared documents. Or, you could both use Google Docs or Zoho Office. But either way, it usually requires that you both are using the same platform.

Or does it?

What about a situation where everyone else is using a Microsoft Office product, but you are using LibreOffice because it’s what you’re more familiar and comfortable with, and maybe that’s all you can afford? Or what if you’re having to write a term paper/thesis/dissertation and are required to submit your paper in *.docx format? I’m sure you can think of a thousand other scenarios where users are “locked in” to submitting documents in the format(s) supported by (and created by) the closed-source, proprietary, commercial software packages.

Without a doubt, you could open each *.odt file in LibreOffice Writer and resave it in the Microsoft Word default format of *.docx. And that works

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```
[parnote@localhost ODT2DOCX]$ unoconv --help
usage: unoconv [options] file [file2 ..]

Convert from and to any format supported by LibreOffice

unoconv options:
  -c, --connection=string  use a custom connection string
  -d, --doctype=type       specify document type
                          (document, graphics, presentation, spreadsheet)
  -e, --export=name=value  set export filter options
                          eg. -e PageRange=1-2
  -f, --format=format      specify the output format
  -F, --field=name=value  replace user-defined text field with value
                          eg. -F Client_Name="Oracle"
  -i, --import=string      set import filter option string
                          eg. -i utf8
  -l, --listener           start a permanent listener to use by unoconv clients
  -n, --no-launch          fail if no listener is found (default: launch one)
  -o, --output=name       output basename, filename or directory
  --pipe=name             alternative method of connection using a pipe
  -p, --port=port         specify the port (default: 2002)
                          to be used by client or listener
  --password=string       provide a password to decrypt the document
  --preserve              keep timestamp and permissions of the original document
  -s, --server=server     specify the server address (default: 127.0.0.1)
                          to be used by client or listener
  --show                  list the available output formats
  --stdin                 read from stdin (filenames are ignored if provided)
  --stdout                write output to stdout
  -t, --template=file     import the styles from template (.ott)
  -T, --timeout=secs      timeout after secs if connection to listener fails
  -v, --verbose           be more and more verbose (-vvv for debugging)
  --version               display version number of unoconv, OOo/LO and platform details
```

very well, if you have one or three documents to convert. But that can be quite time-consuming, especially if you have a lot of documents to convert (maybe you have three or four dozen files to convert). Fortunately, there IS a tool that allows the bulk conversion of files, without opening each one and resaving it.

This utility, named unoconv, is NOT installed by default when you install LibreOffice. It is, however, installable from the PCLinuxOS repository, via Synaptic. Unoconv does one thing, exceptionally well: it reads files in one format, and writes them out to another. It automates document conversion by leveraging an existing installation of LibreOffice to do most of the work. Thus, you will need LibreOffice installed to run unoconv.

Unoconv is a command line utility that can convert any file format that LibreOffice can import, to any file format that LibreOffice is capable of exporting. If you tend to shy away from command line utilities, this may be a good time to relax your command line resistance. The command line

to convert files with unoconv is actually pretty easy to implement. Plus, using this utility will save you a TON of time, especially when compared to opening each file in LO and performing the conversions one file at a time.

The “help” listing (image, left) for unoconv is relatively short, especially when you compare the number of options to something like MPlayer (who’s listing of options goes on overwhelmingly for pages and pages and pages).

If you want extra explanations of the options, I’ll refer you to the [man page](#) for unoconv.

For most users, the vast majority of these options will NEVER be used. There are just a few options that a “normal user” will ever need or use. Most likely, you’re going to find yourself using just a small handful of these options. Those are (in no particular order) -e (--export), -f (--format=format), -o (--output=name), -d (--doctype=type), --password, -v (--verbose), and --show. When applicable, the “shortened” version of the option is given first (not all options have a shortened version), with the full version of the option shown in parentheses. Those will be the options that we’ll cover in this article. The rest of them are left for those with special use cases to figure out on their own.

Ordinarily, unoconv goes about doing its job very quietly, meaning you won’t see much output in a terminal session. If you want to see more information about the conversion process, use the “-v” option as your first command line option. Personally, I’m quite happy with the lack of details, as I’m mostly interested in the results, rather than the hoops it jumps through to perform the conversions.

If you type “**unoconv --show**” at a command prompt, unoconv will show you all of the different file formats it is capable of converting. I’ve broken the listing up in categories, since showing it all here in one contiguous listing would be too long. The image below (next page) shows all of the document formats (translate that into word processing document formats) unoconv can convert from and to.

Unoconv: A Handy Tool For Converting Between Competing Office Document Formats

The following list of document formats are currently available:

```
bib      - BibTeX [.bib]
doc      - Microsoft Word 97/2000/XP [.doc]
doc6     - Microsoft Word 6.0 [.doc]
doc95    - Microsoft Word 95 [.doc]
docbook  - DocBook [.xml]
docx     - Microsoft Office Open XML [.docx]
docx7    - Microsoft Office Open XML [.docx]
fodt     - OpenDocument Text (Flat XML) [.fodt]
html     - HTML Document (OpenOffice.org Writer) [.html]
latex    - LaTeX 2e [.ltx]
mediawiki - MediaWiki [.txt]
odt      - ODF Text Document [.odt]
ooxml    - Microsoft Office Open XML [.xml]
ott      - Open Document Text [.ott]
pdb      - AportisDoc (Palm) [.pdb]
pdf      - Portable Document Format [.pdf]
psw      - Pocket Word [.psw]
rtf      - Rich Text Format [.rtf]
sdw      - StarWriter 5.0 [.sdw]
sdw4     - StarWriter 4.0 [.sdw]
sdw3     - StarWriter 3.0 [.sdw]
stw      - Open Office.org 1.0 Text Document Template [.stw]
sxw      - Open Office.org 1.0 Text Document [.sxw]
text     - Text Encoded [.txt]
txt      - Text [.txt]
uot      - Unified Office Format text [.uot]
vor      - StarWriter 5.0 Template [.vor]
vor4     - StarWriter 4.0 Template [.vor]
vor3     - StarWriter 3.0 Template [.vor]
wps      - Microsoft Works [.wps]
xhtml    - XHTML Document [.html]
```

The image below shows all of the graphic file formats that unoconv can convert from/to.

The following list of graphics formats are currently available:

```
bmp      - Windows Bitmap [.bmp]
emf      - Enhanced Metafile [.emf]
eps      - Encapsulated PostScript [.eps]
fodg     - OpenDocument Drawing (Flat XML) [.fodg]
gif      - Graphics Interchange Format [.gif]
html     - HTML Document (OpenOffice.org Draw) [.html]
jpg      - Joint Photographic Experts Group [.jpg]
met      - OS/2 Metafile [.met]
odd      - OpenDocument Drawing [.odd]
otg      - OpenDocument Drawing Template [.otg]
pbm      - Portable Bitmap [.pbm]
pct      - Mac Pict [.pct]
pdf      - Portable Document Format [.pdf]
pgm      - Portable Graymap [.pgm]
png      - Portable Network Graphic [.png]
ppm      - Portable Pixelmap [.ppm]
ras      - Sun Raster Image [.ras]
std      - OpenOffice.org 1.0 Drawing Template [.std]
svg      - Scalable Vector Graphics [.svg]
svm      - StarView Metafile [.svm]
swf      - Macromedia Flash (SWF) [.swf]
sxd      - OpenOffice.org 1.0 Drawing [.sxd]
sxd3     - StarDraw 3.0 [.sxd]
sxd5     - StarDraw 5.0 [.sxd]
sxw      - StarOffice XML (Draw) [.sxw]
tiff     - Tagged Image File Format [.tiff]
vor      - StarDraw 5.0 Template [.vor]
vor3     - StarDraw 3.0 Template [.vor]
wmf      - Windows Metafile [.wmf]
xhtml    - XHTML [.xhtml]
xpm      - X PixMap [.xpm]
```



Introduction to Linux
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Unoconv: A Handy Tool For Converting Between Competing Office Document Formats

The next two images (I had to use two images to show them all) show the presentation formats that unoconv can convert to/from.

```
The following list of presentation formats are currently available:
```

```
bmp      - Windows Bitmap [.bmp]
emf      - Enhanced Metafile [.emf]
eps      - Encapsulated PostScript [.eps]
fodp     - OpenDocument Presentation (Flat XML) [.fodp]
gif      - Graphics Interchange Format [.gif]
html     - HTML Document (OpenOffice.org Impress) [.html]
jpg      - Joint Photographic Experts Group [.jpg]
met      - OS/2 Metafile [.met]
odg      - ODF Drawing (Impress) [.odg]
odp      - ODF Presentation [.odp]
otp      - ODF Presentation Template [.otp]
pbm      - Portable Bitmap [.pbm]
pct      - Mac Pict [.pct]
pdf      - Portable Document Format [.pdf]
pgm      - Portable Graymap [.pgm]
png      - Portable Network Graphic [.png]
potm     - Microsoft PowerPoint 2007/2010 XML Template [.potm]
pot      - Microsoft PowerPoint 97/2000/XP Template [.pot]
ppm      - Portable Pixelmap [.ppm]
pptx     - Microsoft PowerPoint 2007/2010 XML [.pptx]
pps      - Microsoft PowerPoint 97/2000/XP (Autoplay) [.pps]
ppt      - Microsoft PowerPoint 97/2000/XP [.ppt]
pwp      - PlaceWare [.pwp]
```

```
ras      - Sun Raster Image [.ras]
sda      - StarDraw 5.0 (OpenOffice.org Impress) [.sda]
sdd      - StarImpress 5.0 [.sdd]
sdd3     - StarDraw 3.0 (OpenOffice.org Impress) [.sdd]
sdd4     - StarImpress 4.0 [.sdd]
sxd      - OpenOffice.org 1.0 Drawing (OpenOffice.org Impress) [.sxd]
sti      - OpenOffice.org 1.0 Presentation Template [.sti]
svg      - Scalable Vector Graphics [.svg]
svm      - StarView Metafile [.svm]
swf      - Macromedia Flash (SWF) [.swf]
sxi      - OpenOffice.org 1.0 Presentation [.sxi]
tiff     - Tagged Image File Format [.tiff]
uop      - Unified Office Format presentation [.uop]
vor      - StarImpress 5.0 Template [.vor]
vor3     - StarDraw 3.0 Template (OpenOffice.org Impress) [.vor]
vor4     - StarImpress 4.0 Template [.vor]
vor5     - StarDraw 5.0 Template (OpenOffice.org Impress) [.vor]
wmf      - Windows Metafile [.wmf]
xhtml    - XHTML [.xml]
xpm      - X PixMap [.xpm]
```

Finally, the image below shows all of the spreadsheet formats that unoconv can convert to/from.

```
The following list of spreadsheet formats are currently available:
```

```
csv      - Text CSV [.csv]
dbf      - dBASE [.dbf]
dif      - Data Interchange Format [.dif]
fods     - OpenDocument Spreadsheet (Flat XML) [.fods]
html     - HTML Document (OpenOffice.org Calc) [.html]
ods      - ODF Spreadsheet [.ods]
ooxml    - Microsoft Excel 2003 XML [.xml]
ots      - ODF Spreadsheet Template [.ots]
pdf      - Portable Document Format [.pdf]
pxl      - Pocket Excel [.pxl]
sdc      - StarCalc 5.0 [.sdc]
sdc4     - StarCalc 4.0 [.sdc]
sdc3     - StarCalc 3.0 [.sdc]
slk      - SYLK [.slk]
stc      - OpenOffice.org 1.0 Spreadsheet Template [.stc]
sxc      - OpenOffice.org 1.0 Spreadsheet [.sxc]
uos      - Unified Office Format spreadsheet [.uos]
vor3     - StarCalc 3.0 Template [.vor]
vor4     - StarCalc 4.0 Template [.vor]
vor      - StarCalc 5.0 Template [.vor]
xhtml    - XHTML [.xhtml]
xls      - Microsoft Excel 97/2000/XP [.xls]
xls5     - Microsoft Excel 5.0 [.xls]
xls95    - Microsoft Excel 95 [.xls]
xlt      - Microsoft Excel 97/2000/XP Template [.xlt]
xlt5     - Microsoft Excel 5.0 Template [.xlt]
xlt95    - Microsoft Excel 95 Template [.xlt]
xlsx     - Microsoft Excel 2007/2010 XML [.xlsx]
```

You have to admit that the list of file formats that unoconv can convert between is long and impressive. As you can see, it's not "just" office document formats, but also graphic file formats. Given that we have ImageMagick, I'm not exactly sure how useful unoconv's ability to convert graphic files is or will be. Still, I guess it's good to have "other options."

In its most basic form, the command line for running unoconv is "**unoconv -f odt [name-of-file-to-convert]**". That command line command will convert the ONE file listed at the end. Even if it's just one file, unoconv is much faster to use to perform file conversions than opening LO and

Unoconv: A Handy Tool For Converting Between Competing Office Document Formats

resaving the file in the desired file format. The “**-f [file-extension]**” parameter tells unoconv what format you want for the final, converted file.

But, you can also use wildcards for the filenames. For example, typing “**unoconv -f docx7 *.odt**” will cause all of the *.odt (LO Writer) files in the current directory to be converted to the latest version of the MS Word *.docx format.

Sometimes, unoconv can't resolve what format a file is in. If you happen to know, you can help unoconv out by providing the “**-d [document-type]**” parameter. There are four document types that are valid: document, graphics, presentation, and spreadsheet. So, specifying “**-d document**” will specify a word processing document, while “**-d presentation**” will specify a presentation document. If you use this parameter, make sure it matches up with the type of file you're trying to convert. For example, I tried using “**-d document**” for an MS PowerPoint presentation, being converted to a LO Impress file (*.odp). Doing so totally confused unoconv, which exited with an error message. Once I changed it to “**-d presentation**”, unoconv made the proper and appropriate file conversion.

Watch. Your. Filename. Spellings. If you misspell a filename, unoconv will not forgive you. Instead, it will exit with an error, and without doing anything but displaying a cryptic error message.

If you are using unoconv to convert files that are password protected, you can use the “**--password=[password]**” option to provide the password to decrypt the file prior to conversion.

Similarly, you can use the “**-o [directory-name]**” to specify the output directory for your converted files. Without it, the new files will appear in the same directory as your original files. If your destination directory is a subdirectory of the parent directory where your original files are stored, precede the directory name with “**./**”. Otherwise, you can also provide a fully qualified path name, if that destination directory is somewhere else in your /home directory. Also, the destination directory must already exist. Unoconv will not, as far as I can tell, create the destination directory for you “on the fly.”

For what it's worth, your original files are retained and should be unchanged as a result of your conversions, if you're careful in your use of unoconv. As far as I can tell, there is no error checking or checking to see if a file already exists with the file name you're attempting to convert to. But using a bit of discipline and common sense here will go a long way towards preserving your original files exactly as they were when they were created.

Using the “**-e PageRange=[start-page]-[end-page]**” parameter may (or may not) work as you intend. For example, using “**-e PageRange=1-3**” to convert only the first three slides of a presentation does not work as you might expect. Instead, the entire file is converted. At that point, the best thing to do will be to open up the converted presentation file and manually delete the slides you do not want.

Keep in mind that if you have MS Office files that use VBA (Visual Basic Assistant) macros, those macros most likely will not be converted. Fortunately for the “rest of us” non-Microsoft users, VBA is an MS-only albatross curse thing. In fact, I've been reading reports recently of Microsoft's plans to deprecate Visual Basic by the end of 2024. And, to be perfectly honest, I don't know if that extends to VBA, which is sometimes used to encode macros in MS Office.

Summary

So, you may be wondering what brought this topic up. Meemaw retired from her job in mid-June. She was commenting to me that she had some files for work that she needed to convert before handing off her work laptop to her successor. Meemaw, preferring LO over MS Office, used LO to create these files. There's no guarantee that her successor will even know what to do with the *.odp, *.odt, and *.ods files that LO creates. So, she wanted to convert the LO files to their MS Office equivalents, before turning in her work laptop.

Her conversation made me remember seeing unoconv in the PCLinuxOS repository. I quickly installed it, and had her send me a handful of files. On my first “test,” all of the files she sent me were successfully converted to

Unoconv: A Handy Tool For Converting Between Competing Office Document Formats

MS Office files, and those converted files opened perfectly in MS Office.

Unoconv will help bridge the office file format gap for a LOT of people. Not everyone can afford to use things like MS Office. Even back in my computer-infancy, I was one of those users who could not afford MS Office. Instead, I discovered (and used) OpenOffice, which provided everything I needed. Plus, it also allowed me the ability to save files in the MS Word format d'jour, *.doc files, as well as being able to load up *.doc files sent to me.



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Screenshot Showcase



Posted by Snubbi, on June 1, 2024, running Mate.

GIMP Tutorial: Playing With G'MIC, Part 3

by Meemaw

We've been looking at G'MIC Filters for a couple of months (March & May). There are over 500, however, so we probably won't get to all of them. We left off in the Details section, and I'll do one more using a photo of a truck my husband bought several years ago to restore. (He didn't get a chance to restore it, but sold it instead.)



One of the filters is **Details > Simple Local Contrast**. This one sharpens the photo, and has several settings. There are 13 other sharpening filters in that section, and I'm sure something in that section can work with your photo (center, top).



The next section is called **Frame**, and it has several different ways you can frame your photo. The three I picked were **Blur**, **Droste** and **Fuzzy**. Blur puts a smaller version of your photo in the center, with a frame around the photo and the original blurred out around the edge. Droste also puts a smaller version of your photo in the center, but the edges aren't blurry. Fuzzy puts a white border around your photo with a roughed-up edge. All are shown below.



Frame [Blur]

You can choose the size of the blur around the photo, and also the size and color of the frame/outline, and a few other settings.



Droste

Droste stacks up progressively smaller copies of your photo. You can choose the size of the inside photo (and how many of it you want to have), and how far inside the outer border you want the inner photo.



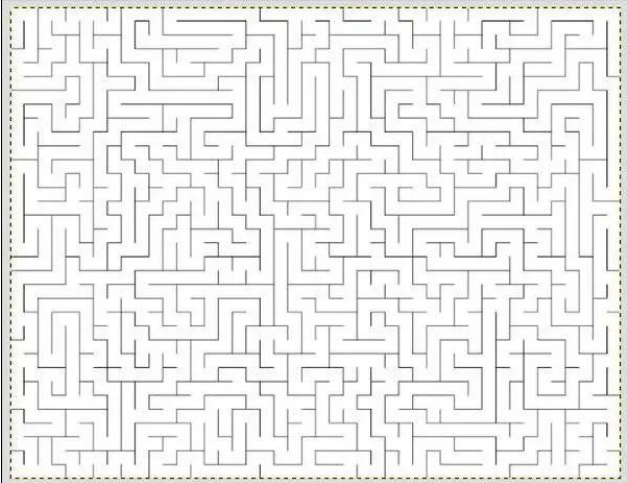
Frame [Fuzzy]

You can choose what percent of the horizontal and vertical sides need to be fuzzy, and also how fuzzy you want them to be.

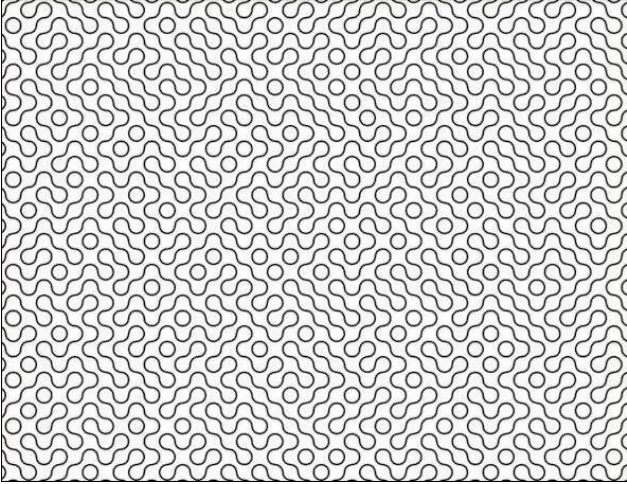
I visited the section **Light & Shadows** and tried **Drop Shadow**. You can choose what size shadow you want.



You can also put **Patterns** in your artwork. Some of them affect your photo, and some overwrite it. For two of these, I used a white background and nothing else. One is a **Maze**:



I don't know if it's a solvable maze, but it looks fun. The setting to size it is called Cell Size, and you need bigger numbers to be able to see the maze. Smaller numbers look like small graph paper. The setting above was 75 on a letter-sized canvas.

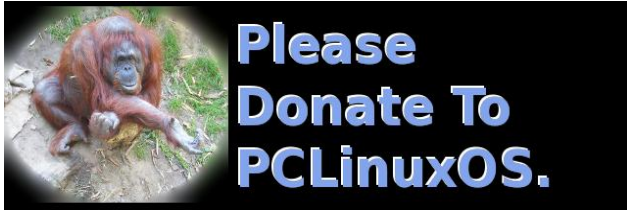
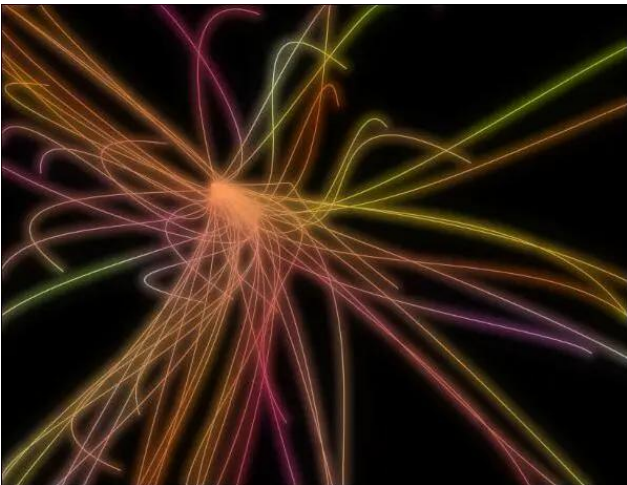


One is called **Truchet**. You can choose how big it is, how thick the lines are, and whether it's a white background with black lines or the other way around.

I also looked at the **Rendering** section, trying **Neon Lightning** and **Quick Copyright**. When you choose Neon Lightning, you'll see a circle or two in the sample. They can be moved and that will designate whether the lightning originates in the center or not, and helps determine the shape (right, top).

Quick Copyright puts a copyright watermark on your photo. You can make it say anything you want and put it in whatever corner you want.

There are loads of filters in G'MIC! Have fun!





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Screenshot Showcase



Posted by polema, on June 18, 2024, running Mate.



How Well Do You Know Your FOSS Mascots?

by David Pardue (kalwisti)

The open-source community has a tradition of creating mascots — which tend to be cute, cuddly animals — rather than adopting staid logos. Sometimes whimsical, the mascots indicate that they do not take themselves too seriously. Although some users believe this type of branding is unprofessional or amateurish, mascots are arguably part of Linux culture. I would like to survey computing mascots in this month's article. They may represent software, hardware or any project or collective entity behind them.

It might be useful to distinguish between mascots and logos. A mascot is a character that represents a brand's personality. It is more complex than a logo and can take a variety of forms, such as animals, people, or objects. A mascot can convey emotion and personality through its expression. According to graphic designer [Lenore Ooyevaar](#), a mascot “has a life outside of the logo”. Logos and mascots are not mutually exclusive, however. Organizations can have both a logo and a mascot, e.g., KDE, Java, the FreeBSD operating system.

GNU

Historically, Richard Stallman's GNU Project (“GNU's Not Unix”) preceded Linux (and Tux).

The gnu (wildebeest) mascot/logo was created by illustrator Étienne Suvasa in the 1980s. It is regularly used by both the GNU Project and by the Free Software Foundation in advertising and advocacy. The gnu often appears alongside Tux, to signify the longtime combination of the GNU operating system with the Linux kernel in most Linux distributions.



There is a simpler version of the gnu head, which is now [preferred](#) because it looks better at low resolutions but also works well at high resolutions for printing. It was created by Inkscape developer Aurélio Heckert.



The etymology of “gnu” is interesting. The word was coined by the Khoisan people of Southern Africa and refers to the sound made by wildebeests. Wildebeest means ‘wild beast’ in Afrikaans.

Debian's [first logo](#) — before its legendary crimson swirl — was “Baby GNU” by Étienne Suvasa. The design pictures a baby gnu holding a blanket and sucking his thumb à la Linus van Pelt (from Charles Schulz's Peanuts comic strip).

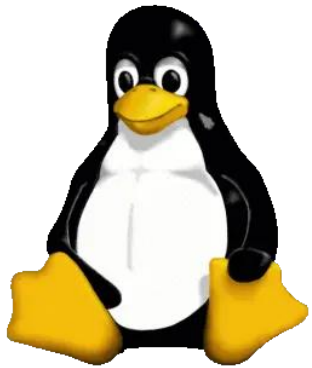


Tux

Tux the Penguin needs no introduction. He is so iconic and ingrained in our community that it is hard to imagine any other mascot. The suggestion of having a logo/mascot dates back to a discussion in 1996, on the Linux kernel

developers' mailing list. The first few iterations they made were based on mocking other operating systems. For example, there was one that looked like the Microsoft Windows logo but ended with an L. One had a shark in it, another featured an eagle. Linus Torvalds mentioned that he liked penguins, and that [settled the matter](#).

Tux was created by computer programmer Larry Ewing in 1996, while he was a student at Texas A&M University. His design was approved by Linus. Ewing [describes](#) how he drew the penguin, using GIMP (ver. 0.54), a mouse and “a lot of patience”.



James Hughes suggested the name Tux, which is short for TorvaldsUniX. Tux is also an abbreviation for “tuxedo”, which resembles the penguin’s typical markings. For a time, the name “Homer” was a candidate because several developers thought the character resembled Homer Simpson. (This was during the height of The Simpsons’ popularity).

Although there is [much](#) Tux [trivia](#) available online, I found a few tidbits which I would like to share with you. In addition to Tux's role in the [SuperTuxKart](#) video game, he makes a brief

appearance in a Kellogg’s Froot Loops [commercial](#) — as a squeaky toy that distracts the Abominable Snowman’s sled dogs.

Tuz (also known as Tazzie Tux) temporarily relieved Tux of his duties in 2009, to support the effort to save the Tasmanian devil species from extinction. Tuz was the mascot of the Linux Conference in Australia (Hobart, Tasmania).

Tuz, created by Andrew McGown, has a Tasmanian devil's body with Tux's penguin beak.



Eric Harshbarger, a builder of large-scale Lego brick mosaics and sculptures, created a 25-inch tall [model](#) of Tux.



In [Tyumen](#), Siberia, a group of Linux devotees obtained permission from the municipal government in 2010 to erect a small monument to Tux. The small plaque has a winged Tux, ready to take off into the air. The monument symbolizes the unlimited possibilities and independence of open software.



Many Tux variants have been created over the years. Some resemble pop culture characters such as Batman, Superman, SpongeBob SquarePants, and so forth. My personal favorites were CrystalXP.net’s “Tux Factory” icons. Although the original website is now defunct, a group of industrious fans have [salvaged](#) a portion of the [artwork](#) and made it available again.

Tux Gallery

Click on the images to enlarge them.



PCLinuxOS's Dobie



Our favorite distro features Dobie the Bull as its mascot. In 2009, a design competition was held to find a mascot for PCLinuxOS. There were approximately thirty entries, and forum members voted for their favorite in an online poll. The top three submissions were then voted on by Texstar and the other members of the PCLinuxOS development team.

The contest results were announced in the August 2009 [issue](#) of The PCLinuxOS Magazine. The winner was Dobie the Bull, created by forum member timeth with Inkscape. timeth kindly provided me with some background about his creative process.

“I drew Dobie for the purpose of the competition. I had started doing a lot of graphic design work for the distro after I discovered it, and wanted to give back in some way because I could see how much work Tex and the community were putting into it. I really loved the community, and also the fact that I’d found something that wasn’t Windows. It was the first Linux distro I had tried. There were some really

talented artists back when I first joined the community: Sproggy [Kori Tilcock] (R.I.P.) and Archie, just to name a couple. I was inspired by the work that they were doing.

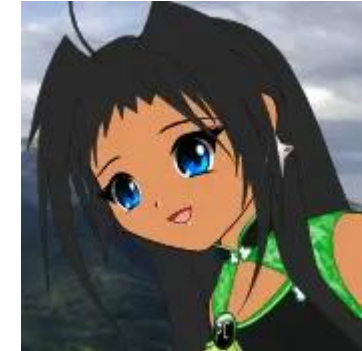
I started to think about what a meaningful mascot would look like. I thought about Tex being from Texas, USA, and what might suit. I decided on a longhorn bull, and started looking for images for inspiration. I found a real image of a bull (not a longhorn) that I liked, so I used that to help create a stylised, general shape, and then I changed the horns to long ones. I gave him blue horns in keeping with the blue of PCLinuxOS. I wanted to create something very simple that could be edited and improved by others, although I think it has remained largely unchanged.

The name Dobie comes from James Frank Dobie [1888-1964] who was an influential figure in Texas and who helped save the Texas Longhorn breed of cattle from extinction. I thought that would be a fitting name.”

PCLinuxOS-tan

While researching this article, I came across a concept new to me: [OS-tans](#) (or “[OS girls](#)”). OS-tans are anthropomorphic personifications of computer operating systems, created by various amateur Japanese artists. The characters are typically female and usually depicted as sisters of varying ages. The “-tan” suffix in Japanese is a mispronunciation of “-chan”, which is an informal, affectionate and diminutive honorific (implying cuteness).

I was surprised to discover a PCLinuxOS-tan. Although I have used this distribution since 2007, I had never seen this [image](#) before. The character is personified as a tall young woman, with black hair and a blue dress. She has a quiet personality and “rarely makes trouble, stemming from the OS’s stability and good performance (like most of her sisters)”.



I suspect this character (by an uncredited artist) is completely unofficial and rather outdated (ca. 2007–2010). However, I decided to mention it as a curiosity.

Other Distributions

(These are not listed in any particular order)

openSUSE’s mascot is a chameleon named “Gecko”. Gecko was the winner of a naming contest that took place in 2000. The new portmanteau consists of “gecko” (a kind of lizard) and “geek” (which, in addition to its computer-related meaning, alluded to a member of the SUSE management team, Jürgen Geck, whose nickname was “Gecko”).



Red Hat Linux had the iconic figure, “Shadowman”, as part of its logo. When Red Hat began in 1995, it was an unknown startup “sneaking” into data centers with boxed copies of a Linux OS. As Red Hat evolved and grew, the company decided to replace Shadowman in 2019. Steven Vaughan-Nichols [noted](#) the results of a 2017 survey which revealed that people saw Shadowman as a ‘sinister, secretive, evil sneaky’ fellow who did not inspire their trust. So the company decided that it was time to change the logo.



Lubuntu’s mascot is a penguin with blue hair named “Lenny.” Although Lenny became the project’s mascot in 2014 (when releases were using the LXDE desktop environment), he has not appeared much in branding/marketing

materials since Lubuntu transitioned to using LXQt in October 2018.



As an unofficial mascot, Gentoo Linux has [Larry the Cow](#). Astute readers observed that since he has no udders, Larry is a male and should more appropriately be called “Larry the Bull”. A bug report was filed discussing this, but the Gentoo Documents Team closed it, with the status “Resolved — Won’t Fix”. So Larry is still Larry the Cow.



Puppy Linux’s namesake was a tiny Chihuahua whose actual name was “[Puppy](#).” Barry Kauler, the original creator of Puppy Linux, [wrote](#) that Puppy was totally fearless and did not seem to know that he was vulnerable because of his small size. “Puppy used to chase kangaroos and

other big wild animals. Anyway, Puppy Linux is like that, reckless, unshackled, in memory of the mascot, even though we know there’s some risk”.



Makulu Linux features an unnamed hippo as its mascot. “[Makulu](#)” is the Zulu word for ‘figure of authority’ (such as ‘Big Chief’, ‘Big Mama’). That concept ties in nicely with the hippo — one of the largest and most dangerous African animals. According to Makulu’s development team, “The name and logo reflects who we are. We are exotic, and we like pushing boundaries, often doing the unexpected”.



[Kurumin](#), founded by Carlos E. Morimoto, was at one time the most popular distro in Brazil, until it was discontinued in 2008. The name’s origin is Tupi. “Curumim” means ‘boy’ or

‘child’ and alludes to an easy, simple system for beginners. The “K” at the beginning refers to Knoppix (its original base). The mascot is a childlike penguin, thinner than Tux. Another notable characteristic is the headdress with the colored feathers (which represent the Brazilian flag).



Desktop Environments & Window Managers

KDE’s mascot is a friendly green dragon named “Konqi” (full name “Konqi the Konqueror”). He was named after Konqueror, KDE’s default web browser. The first version of Konqi was designed by Stefan Spatz and was used from KDE version 2.x through version 4.x.



Konqi was redesigned by [Tyson Tan](#) in 2013, with a more modern look for the Plasma 5 desktop environment. Tan created the design with Krita, KDE’s painting application. Tan has an immediately recognizable style that is inspired by both anime and western cartoons. He generously provides mascot designs for FOSS projects — free of charge and under a free license.



Katie is the mascot of the KDE Community women’s group. Although some say that she is Konqi’s girlfriend, Tyson Tan’s light-hearted [lore](#) indicates that she lives next door to Konqi and acts more like his younger sister.



[Kandalf the Wizard](#) was KDE’s mascot before Konqi. He sports a long white beard and waves

a magic wand. (For some mysterious reason, there is a fish bone sticking out from the pocket of his robe). When you installed KDE, Kandalf helped customize your brand-new setup.



The Xfce desktop environment has a cute female mouse named “Xue.” According to Xfce’s [FAQ](#), the logo is “a mouse, obviously, for all kinds of reasons like world domination and monsters and such.” A member of the Xfce Forum [commented](#) that “The mouse represents a fast, agile creature, and Xfce aims to put those attributes at your fingertips by way of using the (mouse) pointer”.



The mascot of the LXQt desktop environment is a hummingbird named “Helix”. Although I could not find much information about him, the logo was [designed](#) by user @Caig.

Software

(These are not listed in any particular order)

Although the GIMP's (GNU Image Manipulation Program) mascot has received a lot of exposure, not everyone knows that his name is "Wilber". He somewhat resembles a fox or dog. However, Wilber is officially classified as a fictional species called a "GIMP". Designer Tuomas Kuosmanen wanted to highlight GIMP's cool image manipulation capabilities, and have some fun by keeping users guessing as to what animal Wilber is. Kuosmanen [wrote](#): "What a GIMP is, is sort of a joke, because people kept asking it so much: It would be so boring to say it's a dog or a fox or whatever. And when I designed the character, I did not really have any particular animal in mind."



LyX, the document processor, has an unnamed platypus as its mascot. According to the [LyX wiki](#), it is simply known as "The LyX". Although the mascot's origin is unknown, a reasonable guess is that the association of a platypus to LyX is related to LyX' C++ roots. (In object-oriented programming textbooks, the

platypus is sometimes associated with the concept of [polymorphism](#)).



Thunar, Xfce's default file manager, is named for the Norse God of Thunder. "Thunar" is the Old Saxon name of Thor. In several icon themes, Thunar's icon is depicted by Mjölfnir, Thor's mighty hammer. [Mjölfnir](#) was used to protect heaven and Earth from enemies, and was said to have been forged by a dwarf.



[Window Maker](#) is a window manager which reproduces the look and feel of the NeXTSTEP user interface. This project had Amanda the Panda as its mascot, designed by Agnieszka Czajkowska. She wrote that the idea for a panda bear was inspired by the black-and-white GNUstep logo (which is reproduced in the pattern of the panda's ears). Although it appears likely that Amanda has been [dropped](#), she is still an interesting piece of mascot history.

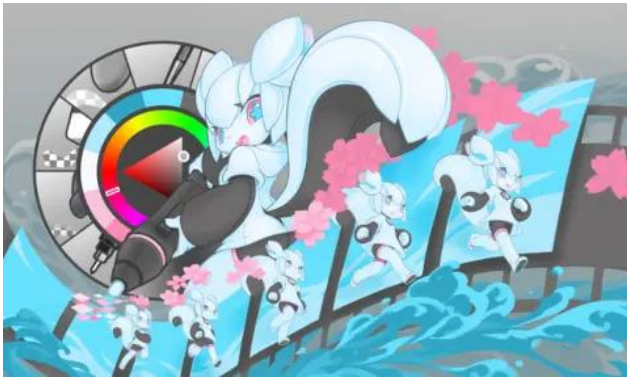


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[Kiki the Cyber Squirrel](#) (or just Kiki) serves as the mascot for Krita, KDE's painting application. A squirrel was chosen because the word "krita" means 'squirrel' in Albanian. Designed by Tyson Tan, Kiki first appeared in 2013 on the cover of the Krita 2.6 release booklet. She travels through time/space/universes to study the works of the masters, and to enrich her life experiences for her creative endeavor.



[Libbie the Cyber Oryx](#) (or simply Libbie) was a proposed mascot, designed by Tyson Tan, and submitted to the 2017 LibreOffice mascot competition. Unfortunately, the contest was controversial because of its organization and the way that requests were handled. Although Libbie garnered the most votes in the first round, The Document Foundation eventually canceled the contest. Out of frustration, Tan decided to place Libbie in the public domain.



The TeX and LaTeX typesetting programs have an (unnamed) lion as a mascot. The TeX lion was designed for the illustrations of Donald Knuth's *The TeXbook*. The lion was drawn by cartoonist Duane Bibby. Leslie Lamport's *LaTeX: A Document Preparation System* and Knuth's *The Metafont Book* were also illustrated with Bibby's lions, which reinforced the brand.

Bibby described the genesis of the idea in an [interview](#): "A possible source of the lion idea was a very large Maine Coon cat — a rather large breed of house cat — that was wandering around [our cabin]. It had been abandoned, was looking for a new home, and was giving us new arrivals the look over, trying to decide if he would adopt us. He later did ..."

The TeX lion's mate is a lioness named "Meta" (like [Metafont](#) and its derivative [MetaPost](#) programming language).



Donald Knuth himself [remarked](#) on the symbolism of the lions.

"One final note: People often ask me why TeX and Metafont are symbolized in these books by a lion and a lioness. When Duane Bibby first

came up with the lion idea, I instinctively felt that it was right, but I never understood exactly why this was, until about a month ago when I was in the Boston Public Library. I passed by the magnificent stone lions on the library's grand staircase, and I thought: "That's it! TeX and Metafont try to be like these lions, fixtures that support a great library. I love books, and lions represent books!" No wonder I'm so happy when I realize that TeX and Metafont have already contributed to the making of several dozen books of fine quality. It makes me extremely pleased to think that this research will probably contribute to the making of many more fine books in years to come." (p. 98b)

When Mozilla had to change its original [Phoenix/Firebird logo](#) due to a trademark dispute, they were forced to come up with an



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alternative. Mozilla's team decided on the name "Firefox" after adopting two red pandas (their common name is 'firefox') to raise awareness of the creature's endangered status. However, the red panda "didn't conjure up the right imagery," so the designer began working on a concept [inspired](#) by seeing a Japanese-style brush painting of a fox. So, even though the famous web browser's name comes from the red panda, the icon depicts a fox. The fox' tail encircling the globe represents Mozilla's blazingly fast speeds and global reach.



The instant messaging client Pidgin (formerly named Gaim) has a purple pigeon as its mascot. The name was [chosen](#) in reference to the term "pidgin", which describes a type of simplified language used to communicate between people who do not share a common language. "Pidgin" is a homonym for "pigeon", so its development team took advantage of the pun to create a cartoon mascot.

The reason for the purple color is that Pidgin is based on a library named libpurple that has support for many instant messaging protocols.



The idea for [GitHub's](#) logo came from its "octopus merge" – the practice of combining three or more branches of development. The logo's designer, Simon Oxley, thought about calling his creation "Octopuss" (a portmanteau of 'octopus' and 'pussycat') to represent how complex code combinations can create peculiar things. But in the end, GitHub decided to go with "[Octocat](#)." Octocat's name is Mona (Mona Lisa). It was named by the daughter of one of GitHub's developers. Mona was redesigned by illustrator Cameron McEfee in 2011.



(Although it is technically not software, I did not have a handy category for Wikipedia). Wikipedia held a mascot [competition](#) in 2002. It was abandoned because the community could not reach a consensus. However, the top two contenders were a "[wikipe](#)" named Kip, and an ant called the "Miwiki." Voters liked the Kip character but criticized the idea of a centipede as "too creepy" (hence he is usually drawn with six or eight legs). The ant was popular since it presented several [design alternatives](#), but it lacked the individuality of Kip the Wikipe.



Blender, the 3D computer graphics program, includes a 3D model of a chimpanzee head. The model was created by Willem-Paul van Overbruggen, who named it "[Suzanne](#)" after the orangutan in the film Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back (2001, directed by Kevin Smith). Suzanne is Blender's alternative to more common 3D test models such as the [Utah teapot](#) or the [Stanford bunny](#). Suzanne is often used as a quick and



easy way to test materials, animations, rigs, textures, and lighting setups.

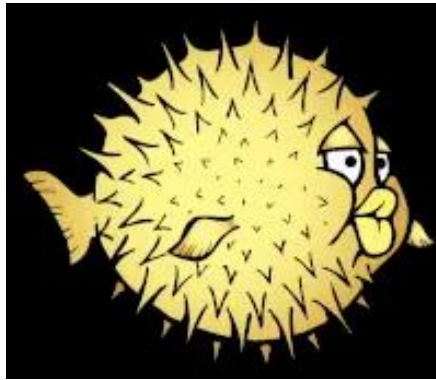
The BSDs and Other Operating Systems

“Beastie” is the generic mascot of [BSD operating systems](#). Beastie is a slurred phonetic pronunciation of “BSD”. The character takes the form of a cartoon demon (referring to the term “[software daemon](#)”) and carries a trident (symbolizing the [forking](#) of processes). Although Beastie was first drawn by Phil Foglio (in 1976), John Lasseter’s version of him became the most popular. (Lasseter is famous for writing and directing the Pixar films Toy Story, Toy Story 2, Cars and Cars 2).



There is a false rumor that the mascot’s name is “[Chuck](#),” probably because he is normally pictured wearing shoes which are similar to Converse’s Chuck Taylor All-Stars.

OpenBSD’s mascot is a cartoon porcupine fish named “Puffy”. Puffy’s external spikes symbolize OpenBSD’s zealous commitment to security.



[DarwinOS](#) previously existed as an independent, open-source OS (released by Apple in 2000). (Darwin is used as the base of macOS, but it cannot run macOS programs by itself). Its mascot was a platypus named “[Hexley](#),” created by Jon Hooper. Hexley is depicted with demon horns and a trident. The original design included an apple on Hexley’s fork, but Apple Inc. requested that the apple be removed for legal trademark reasons.

The name “Hexley” was proposed since Darwin’s assistant was named Hexley. However, this suggestion was a mistake. They actually meant [Thomas Henry Huxley](#) (1825–1895), a prominent biologist in his own right. Huxley was a vociferous defender of Darwin’s theories, but not his assistant. By the time the mistake was discovered, “Hexley” had escaped into the ether and



DarwinOS community members felt that it was too late to change the name to Huxley.

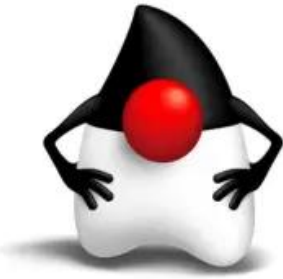
[MINIX](#), a free Unix-like OS, was created by [Dr. Andrew Tanenbaum](#) for teaching purposes. Its mascot is a smiling raccoon named “Rocky Raccoon”. The raccoon was [chosen](#) because raccoons are small, agile, intelligent, friendly – and best of all – eat bugs (at least, when there are no garbage cans available).



Programming Languages

The Java programming language has “[Duke](#)” as its mascot. Duke is an amorphous blob with a large red nose. Some say that he is a Java Bean, although he was initially designed to represent a “software agent” (interactive host) that performed tasks for the user.

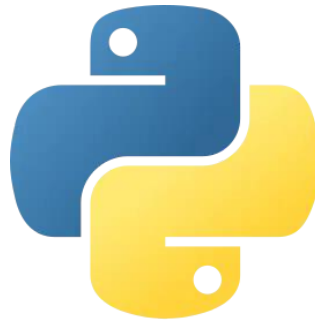
Duke was created by graphic artist Joe Palrang (who later worked on popular animated movies such as Shrek, Over the Hedge, and Flushed Away). Each year, Oracle released a new Duke [personality](#), such as Scientist Duke, Adventure Duke, Astronaut Duke, etc.



The Python programming language is represented by two intertwined snakes. In Japan, the snakes are named “Py-chan” and “Thon-kun”. Python’s author, [Guido van Rossum](#), was a fan of Monty Python’s Flying Circus. He was influenced by the humor and uniqueness of the show’s name, aiming for something short and memorable. (Fun fact: In Python’s documentation, spam and eggs are used instead of the common placeholder names foo and bar).

The logo was created by designer Tim Parkin. Parkin [wrote](#) that the logo is actually based on Mayan representations of snakes, which very often represent only the head and perhaps a short length of tail. The structure of the snake represents the natural coiling/nesting of a snake as seen from the side.

The snake symbolizes the power and flexibility of Python. If you squint and look at the logo slightly out of focus, you can see that the blue snake looks like a P, and the yellow snake looks like a Y. “Py” is the most widely accepted contraction of the name.



The Rust programming language’s unofficial mascot is an orange crab named “[Ferris](#).” Some Rust users refer to themselves as “Rustaceans” — a play on the word “crustacean”. Ferris also puns off the adjective “ferrous” (‘of or pertaining to iron’). Since Rust often forms on iron, it seemed like a fun origin for the mascot’s name. Ferris was first drawn by [Karen Rustad Tolva](#). The spikes on top of the crab’s shell echo the sprocket design in the official Rust logo.



Additional Information

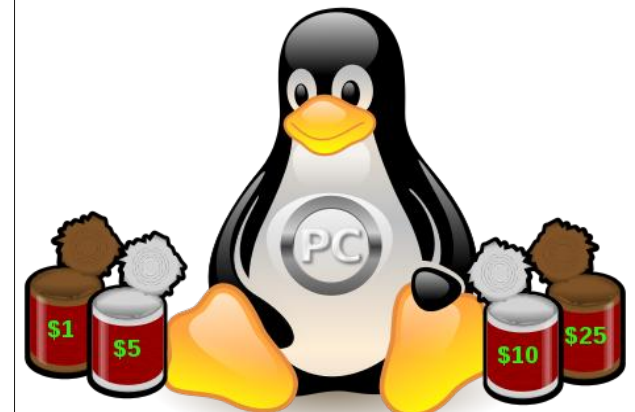
I hope that you have enjoyed learning some trivia about the FOSS mascots discussed in this article. Due to space limitations, I only highlighted thirty-nine of them. If you would like to delve further into the mascot universe, the websites below are good starting points:

Wikipedia’s [“List of computing mascots”](#) [61 listed]

ChI’s homepage of [“Free mascots”](#) [176 listed]

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PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner Bonus



Sausage & Apple Cheddar Biscuit Bake

Serves: 12

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 package (1 lb) bulk pork sausage
- 4 medium cooking apples, coarsely chopped (4 cups)
- 1 large onion, chopped (1 cup)
- 6 eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 6 tablespoons firm butter or margarine, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 1/2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese (6 oz)
- 2 medium green onions, finely chopped (2 tablespoons)
- 1 cup buttermilk

DIRECTIONS:

Heat oven to 425°F. Spray the bottom and sides of a 13x9-inch (3-quart) glass baking dish with cooking spray or grease with shortening. In a 12-inch skillet, cook sausage, apples and onion over medium-high heat 8 to 10 minutes, stirring frequently, until sausage is no longer pink; drain if necessary. Spoon into a baking dish.

In a medium bowl, beat eggs and 1/2 teaspoon salt with a wire whisk or fork until well mixed. Pour eggs over sausage mixture.

In a large bowl, mix flour, baking powder, sugar, baking soda and 1 teaspoon salt. Cut in butter, using a pastry blender (or pulling 2 table knives through ingredients in opposite directions), until the mixture looks like coarse crumbs. Stir in cheese and green onions.

Add buttermilk; stir just until combined. Drop dough by rounded tablespoonfuls evenly onto sausage mixture.

Bake uncovered 20 to 30 minutes, or until biscuits are deep golden brown and done in the middle. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

NUTRITION:

Calories: 340 Carbs: 28g Fiber: 2g
Sodium: 880mg Protein: 14g





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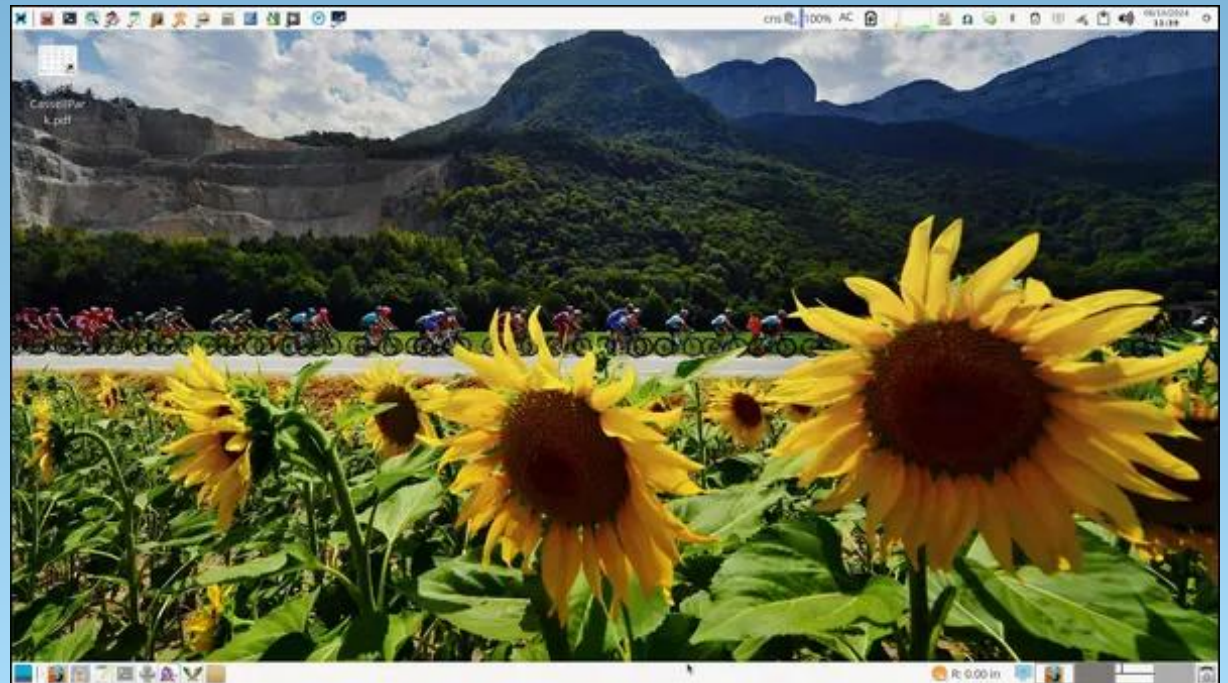
A magazine just isn't a magazine without articles to fill the pages. If you have article ideas, or if you would like to contribute articles to the

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[***pclinuxos.mag@gmail.com***](mailto:pclinuxos.mag@gmail.com)

We are interested in general articles about Linux, and (of course), articles specific to PCLinuxOS.

Screenshot Showcase



Posted by parnote, on June 10, 2024, running Xfce.



How To Make OpenJDK Work On PCLinuxOS

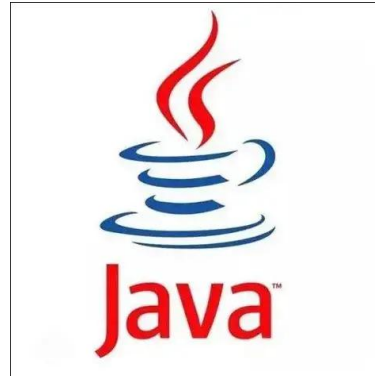
by Agent Smith (Alessandro Ebersol)



OpenJDK (Open Java Development Kit) is a free, open source implementation of the Java Platform, Standard Edition (Java SE). It is the result of an effort that Sun Microsystems started in 2006. The implementation is licensed under the GPL-2.0, with only one linking exception. If it weren't for the GPL linking exception, components linked to the Java Class Library would be subject to the terms of the GPL license. OpenJDK has been the official reference implementation of Java SE since version 7.

OpenJDK components

The OpenJDK project has several components: the most important are the virtual machine (HotSpot), the Java class library and the Java compiler (javac).



The web browser plug-in and Web Start, which are part of Oracle Java, are not included in OpenJDK. Sun previously indicated that it would try to open source these components, but neither Sun nor Oracle have done so. The only free implementations of the plugin and Web Start currently available are those provided by IcedTea.

OpenJDK 9+ supports AOT compilation (jaotc) using GraalVM (JEP 295). The experimental `-XX:+EnableJVMCIProduct` flag allows the use of Graal JIT (JEP 317).

The development of OpenJDK

OpenJDK was initially based only on the JDK 7 version of the Java platform.

Since JDK 10, the effort to produce an open source reference implementation of the Java SE platform has been transferred to the JDK

Project. Unlike the previous JDK Release Projects, which produced only one feature release and were then shut down, this long-running project will produce all future JDK feature releases and ship one feature release every six months, according to a strict time-based model.



JDK builds

Basically, there is only one set of source code for the JDK. It is hosted on Mercurial, at <http://openjdk.java.net/projects/jdk/>. Anyone can take the source code, produce a build and publish it. For this reason, Oracle has created a certification process that must be used to ensure that the build is valid.

This certification is carried out by the Java Community Process, which provides a Technology Compatibility Kit (TCK or JCK as in Java). If an organization produces an OpenJDK build that passes the TCK, that build can be described as “Java SE compatible”.

Some of the most popular OpenJDK builds in existence:

- Oracle OpenJDK
- RedHat Open JDK
- Azul Zulu
- AdoptOpenJDK
- Amazon Corretto
- Eclipse Temurin
- IBM Java SDK
- Microsoft Build of OpenJDK
- Alibaba Dragonwell

Why use OpenJDK?

Well, since Oracle's Java license changed in 2019, using OpenJDK, which uses the GPL2.0 license, is the safest move. Also, some programs were made for older versions of Java, so being able to use other versions of OpenJDK is extremely advantageous.

And, how to use OpenJDK on PCLinuxOS?

Well, it is possible to use OpenJDK on PCLinuxOS, and even better, it is possible to use more than one version of OpenJDK concurrently on your system.

How to do it? It's not difficult, just create two scripts and download a version of OpenJDK from the official website <https://jdk.java.net/archive/>. (center, top)

On the site, choose the version you need and download the pre-compiled tar.gz files. (center)

Releases	22 GA (build 22+36)	64-bit	zip (sha256) 192M
	Windows	64-bit	tar.gz (sha256) 187M
	Mac/AArch64	64-bit	tar.gz (sha256) 189M
	Mac/x64	64-bit	tar.gz (sha256) 191M
	Linux/AArch64	64-bit	tar.gz (sha256) 193M
	Linux/x64	64-bit	Source
			Tags are jdk-22+36, jdk-22-ga
	21.0.2 (build 21.0.2+13)	64-bit	zip (sha256) 193M
	Windows	64-bit	tar.gz (sha256) 189M
	Mac/AArch64	64-bit	tar.gz (sha256) 191M
	Mac/x64	64-bit	tar.gz (sha256) 193M
	Linux/AArch64	64-bit	tar.gz (sha256) 195M
	Linux/x64	64-bit	Source
			Tag is jdk-21.0.2-ga

I chose version 11.0.1

11.0.1 (build 11.0.1+13)	64-bit	zip (sha256) 179 MB
Windows	64-bit	tar.gz (sha256) 174 MB
Mac	64-bit	tar.gz (sha256) 179 MB
Linux	64-bit	Source
		Tag is jdk-11.0.1+13

In /opt, I created the openjdk folder.

And, inside the openjdk folder, I extracted the files I downloaded, openjdk-11.0.1_linux-x64_bin.tar.gz

In this case, the jdk-11.0.1 folder was created.

Well, now we have to create the launchers to call OpenJDK Java and Javac, if you want to compile your Java sources.

To run a .jar file, I created the script (openjdk11) below:

```
#!/bin/bash
/opt/openjdk/jdk-11.0.1/bin/java $1
$2
```

And to compile a jar file, I created the script (openjdk11c) below:

```
#!/bin/bash
/opt/openjdk/jdk-11.0.1/bin/javac
$1 $2
```

These two scripts must be placed in /usr/bin and must have the execute attribute (chmod +x).

Then, to run a Java program, you must type `openjdk11 -jar program_name.jar`

To compile your sources into jar code, type `openjdk11c [options] [sourcefiles]`

Advantages

There are some programs that only work with specific versions of Java. In my case, the income tax return program, from Brazil's government, only works with Java 11, and because of this, I had to find a way to run OpenJDK and fulfill my tasks with my country's tax authorities.

One of the advantages is that you can use OpenJDK side by side with Oracle's Java, or, you can have several versions of OpenJDK installed on your system, and, thanks to the launchers in /usr/bin, you can use them together.

I hope you enjoyed this tip. Best regards and see you next time.





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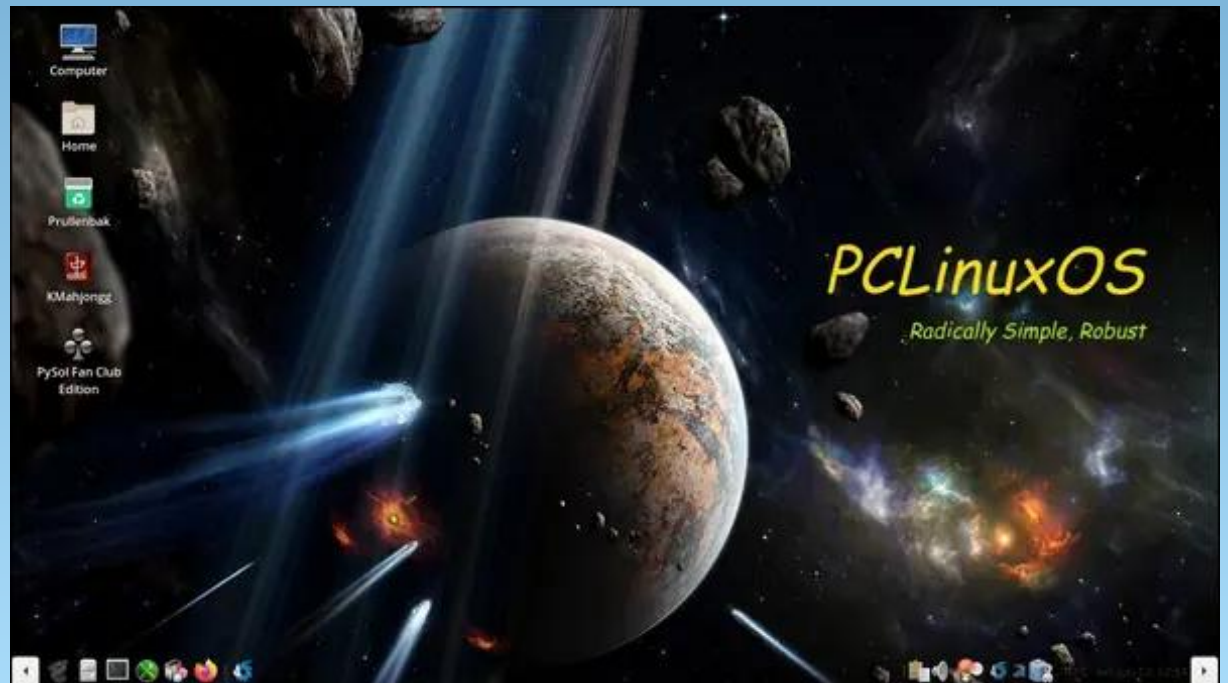


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Screenshot Showcase



Posted by mutse, on June 12, 2024, running Mate.



PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

	7			8		2		
				5		1		
5	3							9
9			6	3				
	6				5			
	4		2			6	5	
		3	4		8			
	9	2			1	7		8
							1	

SUDOKU RULES: There is only one valid solution to each Sudoku puzzle. The only way the puzzle can be considered solved correctly is when all 81 boxes contain numbers and the other Sudoku rules have been followed.

When you start a game of Sudoku, some blocks will be prefilled for you. You cannot change these numbers in the course of the game.

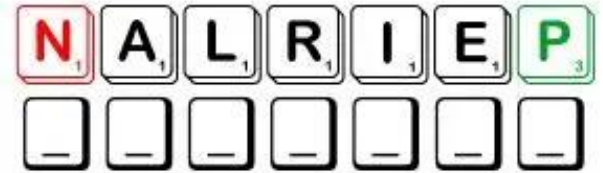
Each column must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same column of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same. Each row must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same row of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.

Each block must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same block of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.

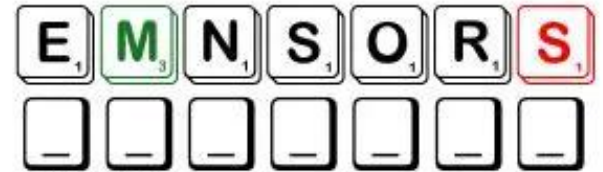


SCRAPPLER RULES:

1. Follow the rules of Scrabble®. You can view them [here](#). You have seven (7) letter tiles with which to make as long of a word as you possibly can. Words are based on the English language. Non-English language words are NOT allowed.
2. Red letters are scored double points. Green letters are scored triple points.
3. Add up the score of all the letters that you used. Unused letters are not scored. For red or green letters, apply the multiplier when tallying up your score. Next, apply any additional scoring multipliers, such as double or triple word score.
4. An additional 50 points is added for using all seven (7) of your tiles in a set to make your word. You will not necessarily be able to use all seven (7) of the letters in your set to form a "legal" word.
5. In case you are having difficulty seeing the point value on the letter tiles, here is a list of how they are scored:
 - 0 points: 2 blank tiles
 - 1 point: E, A, I, O, N, R, T, L, S, U
 - 2 points: D, G
 - 3 points: B, C, M, P
 - 4 points: F, H, V, W, Y
 - 5 points: K
 - 8 points: J, X
 - 10 points: Q, Z
6. Optionally, a time limit of 60 minutes should apply to the game, averaging to 12 minutes per letter tile set.
7. Have fun! It's only a game!



Triple Word



Double Word



Possible score 261, average score 183.

Download Puzzle Solutions Here



July 2024 Word Find

Desserts

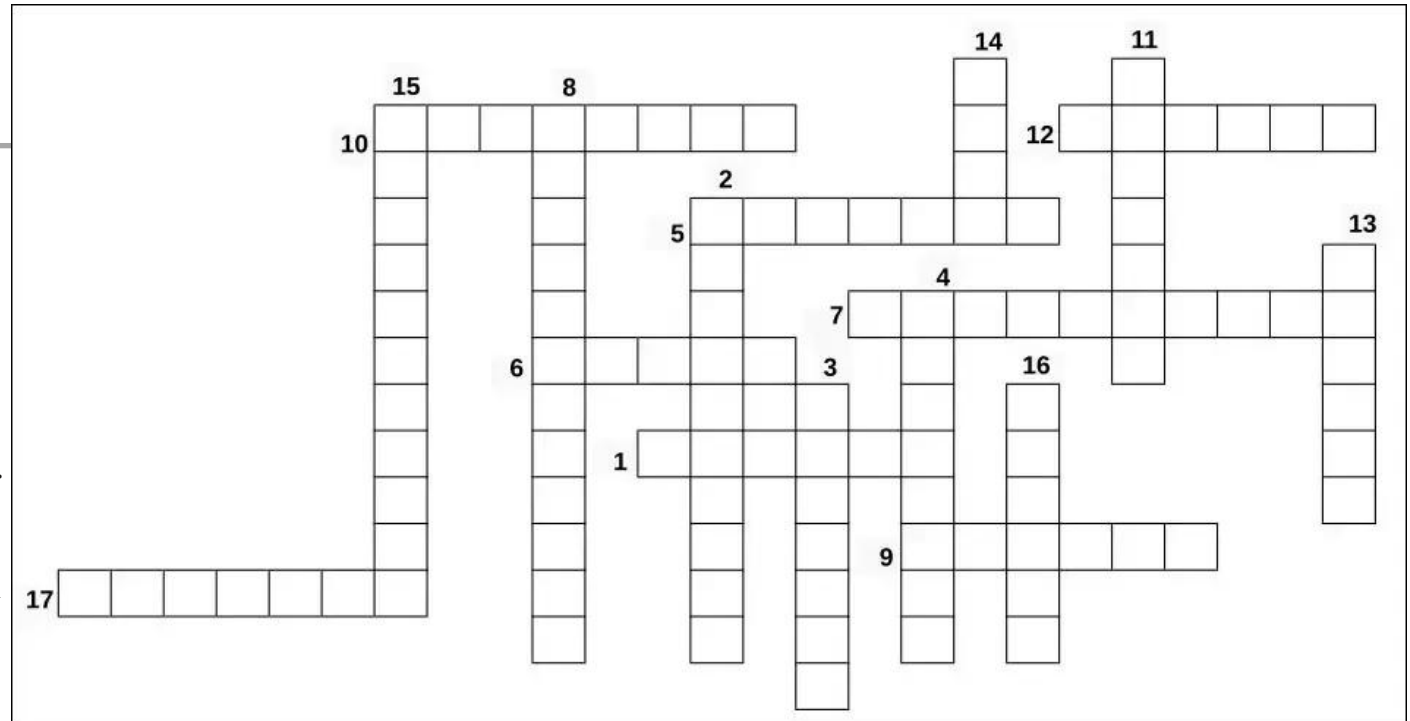
W M H E G N M M J F P F U Z A P D S C K E Q P H R A O R F I
 M E A A K C F G Y A D Z U I Q A T I B H L U O K H Z R H Y P
 A W R H F G E I T O R Q S Q H N R D U E D L O C U P C A K E
 C F V Q I P A K L B W O U D E U P V Y D H R H Y K N F O B N
 A X G U L V D D R Q R G C P X M E C I P F O F S S L Z N U L
 R O N I F P N E D B W O W S F H C N G L C C E A I C Y G M G
 O W I A I P U G M U B J W D S W G X S O J Q M O L Y O K V P
 O N J L K L S A I E N K I N C X N U L U Y Y T Y O W F N N E
 N D G I E W E Z C H U R R O I S K A Q P J R S W N C V R E Q
 L L S I F A G E K Y D U O C E E T W K C J N Y A N H I D N Q
 M B B B H T D R L Q P M B R E E U K H X O D F B A E J R E W
 G Q Y I A T U R Q F B B O O B E K A C E S E E H C J Q A V Y
 M X B N S O F R G A I M H A S V M T A E G I J L E O T U D P
 U M J O C C T I K A S R R J E T I L P S A N A N A B L Q T B
 X B O B U A O H T U A R T K K E O S E S V O I J U O I H J A
 L I H Q U N H T Z A C L Z T V R I N O D B L S U M S C J Q K
 B W F A U N Q W T I N K N C D R C J C X A G X C P O K N A E
 L K B U M A Z V U I X G M D C Q X J I R X E T Y U R Y M P D
 H Q L R R P C T R X Z Q O E A L R H P A E Q I A U V J V P A
 F D A J I E Q J C N I G L U Z R D S U T Y A C P F P I I L L
 Y R M L A D H H T X S P R U L A X F J M X D M M Y S M O E A
 B W M Q L I T E H T P T B C D D Q X L V L F C P A R O G P S
 I J S Q C K P T A A N G E L F O O D C A K E G U I P R A I K
 I V V G E L A T O V L C U I W I U H J F N H B Y O E Y E E A
 T Z M N N V H N U M A T M P E T N M R T E B R O S T Q O H N
 I M I U L E Z A B A G L I O N E X E B G K U H N E M W R F C
 Q Y C N A G S Y K S B K K V E N Q E T T E Z U S E P E R C F
 J B J I Y D T U F D A S V A D G I Y S W E E T R O L L U X B
 G N X X V U G H O R I F O I B E I P M A E R C T U N O C O C
 W Y H X K F V D D Y P Q U P O P S I C L E L F F U R T J W A

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| AMBROSIA | ANGEL FOOD CAKE |
| APPLE CRISP | APPLE PIE |
| BAKED ALASKA | BAKLAVA |
| BANANA SPLIT | BISCOTTI |
| BOSTON CREAM PIE | BROWNIE |
| CANNOLI | CHEESECAKE |
| CHERRY PIE | CHOCOLATE BAR |
| CHURRO | COCONUT CREAM PIE |
| CREPE SUZETTE | CUPCAKE |
| ECLAIR | FLAN |
| FUDGE | GELATO |
| HOT FUDGE SUNDAE | MACARON |
| PANNACOTTA | POPSICLE |
| PRALINE | PUDDING |
| S'MORES | SCONE |
| SORBET | SWEET ROLL |
| TRIFLE | TRUFFLE |
| ZABAGLIONE | |

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July 2024 Crossword Desserts



1. A frosted oblong pastry filled with whipped cream or custard.
2. An Italian dessert of sweetened cream thickened with gelatin and molded.
3. A fried pastry roll with a sweet creamy filling.
4. An American variety of fruit salad originating in the Southern United States.
5. A French confection of sugar, nuts, and vanilla, or a sugar-coated nut.
6. Yeast bread dough, deep-fried and served with honey and butter or with a savory filling.
7. A custard-like dessert made with egg yolks, sugar and Marsala wine.
8. A thin folded or rolled pancake, in a sugary sauce made with fruit and liquor.
9. A frozen dessert made primarily of fruit juice or fruit purée, sugar, and water.
10. A twice-baked cookie, designed to be dipped in coffee or wine.
11. Any of various round candies made of chocolate, butter or cream, sugar, and various flavorings, often coated with cocoa powder.
12. A dessert consisting of plain or sponge cake soaked in liqueur and topped with layers of jam or jelly, custard, and whipped cream.
13. A type of ice cream made from whole milk, sugar, and flavourings, with less air and more intensity than American ice cream.
14. A custard that is baked in a caramel-lined mold and served chilled with the caramel side up.
15. Cake covered with ice cream and meringue browned quickly in an oven.
16. A Spanish and Mexican pastry made from deep-fried unsweetened dough and sprinkled with sugar.
17. A dessert made of paper-thin layers of pastry, chopped nuts, and honey

[Download Puzzle Solutions Here](#)

Mixed-Up-Meme Scrambler



NAPOR

_ _ _ _

NISOB

_ _ _ _

MORRET

_ _ _

YEAGIT

_ _ _ _

When the teen outlined his homework plans, Mom thought it was

" _____ "

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More Screenshot Showcase



Posted by Meemaw, on June 12, 2024, running Xfce.



Posted by jogurtmen, on June 2, 2024, running Mate.



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