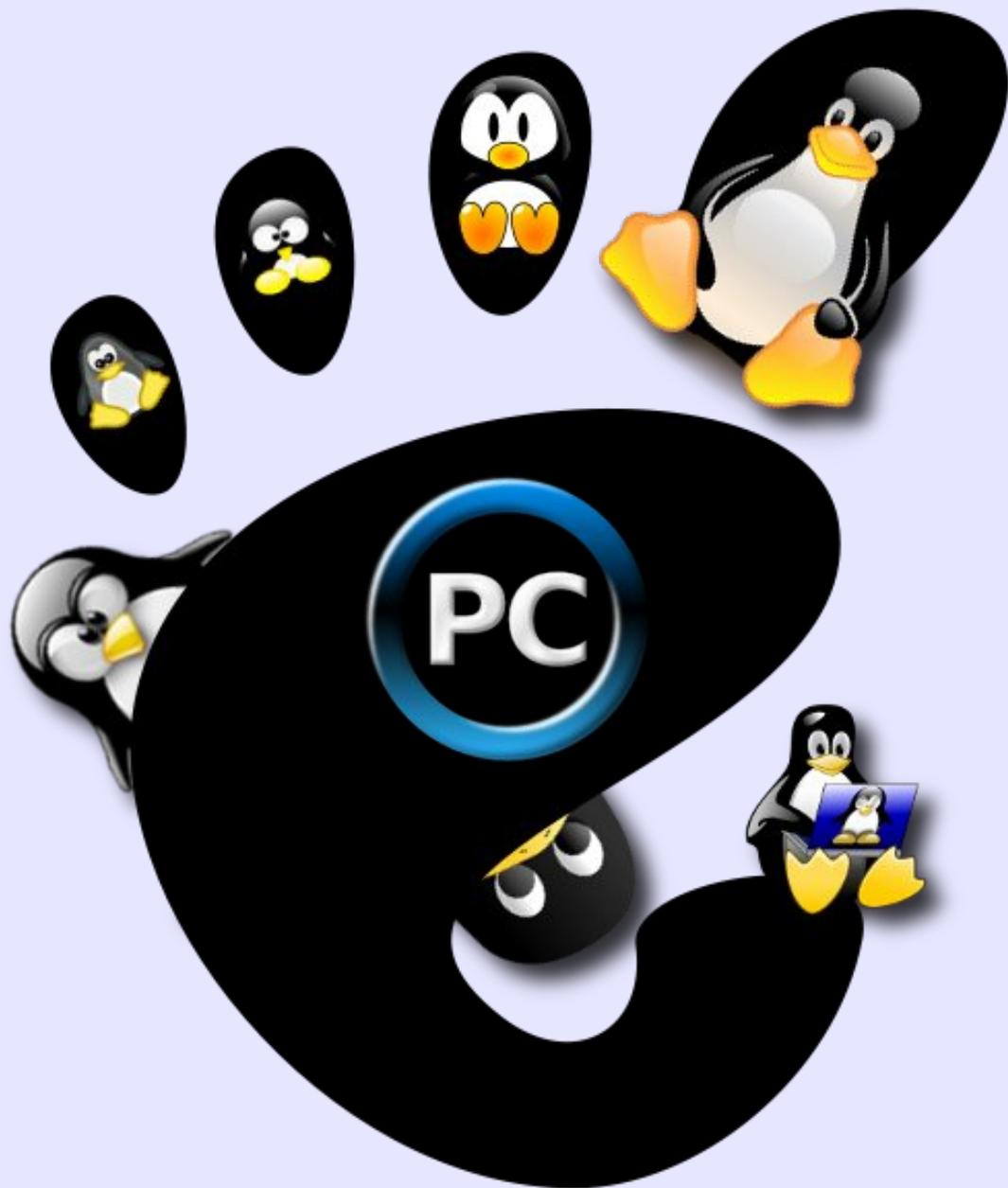


The **PCLinuxOS** magazine



**GNOME
2.32
Special
Edition**

May 2012

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The **PCLinuxOS** magazine

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Welcome From The Chief Editor

We hope you've enjoyed our coverage of the Gnome 2.32 desktop environment. Even though Gnome 3.x has supplanted 2.32 as the default offering for Gnome, I doubt that Gnome 2.32 will be going away anytime soon. Gnome 2.32 still has many, many followers and devotees.

Over seven months, starting in November 2011 and ending in May 2011, we ran three Gnome 2.32 articles a month (four in May 2011), for a grand total of 22 articles. That's more coverage than we've done for any other desktop environment in our desktop coverage in The PCLinuxOS Magazine.

During the time (a full two years) that we've been running articles on the various desktop environments, I've learned a few things. First, I came to appreciate some of these desktop environments. Had I not started work on covering these desktops, I doubt that I would have even considered using some of them. Remarkably, some of those are the ones I like best. Secondly, I discovered how passionate Linux users are about their favorite desktop environment. I also discovered that I am not immune to similar passionate feelings about my favorite desktop. I am a self-confessed Xfce lover. For me, it provides the perfect desktop environment. It doesn't go overboard with flash and glitz, it stays out of my way and lets me work the way I want to, and it's a fast and mature desktop.

To me, Gnome 2.32 fit me pretty well. It had a familiar "feel" with the top and bottom panel. It actually felt like Xfce with more whistles and bells. In all honesty though, I found the obscurity of settings in Gnome a bit unsettling. I'm still trying to find out why the Gnome developers feel that it is necessary to hide a lot of configuration settings from most users, except the Gnome power users who know where to find them. All reports on Gnome 3.x is that

the Gnome developers have taken this concept to new heights, much to the chagrin of many users. Maybe I've been spoiled by Xfce and KDE, where most of the settings are easily accessible and "in your face."

Nonetheless, Gnome 2.32 is a rich and robust desktop. We've collected all 22 Gnome 2.32 articles here, in one PDF-only special edition of The PCLinuxOS Magazine, so that you may use this compendium of Gnome 2.32 information as a resource. Gnome 2.32 is not dead – at least, not yet, anyways. It remains to be seen how the Mate desktop, the fork of Gnome 2.32, will fare with users. Early reports are encouraging!



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Gnome 2.32: An Overview

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

The Linux world has been all abuzz about the new Gnome 3.x desktop environment. Some like it. Many, including Linus Torvalds, hate it. Just as KDE went through a metamorphosis (with much consternation) a couple of years ago when the move from KDE 3.5.x to KDE 4.x took place, it's now time for Gnome users to experience similar growing pains.

Those Gnome users who hate the new version have few choices. First, they can opt to change desktop environments. As a result, the Xfce desktop is seeing many Gnome refugees, including Linus Torvalds. Some Gnome users are giving a more mature KDE 4 another shot.

As a second choice, many are opting to stay with Gnome 2.32 as long as possible. The third choice is to support the effort to fork Gnome 2.x, thus keeping it alive much longer. Such a fork has already taken root, with the [Mate Desktop Environment](#) project. Even Linus Torvalds, calling Gnome 3.x an “unholy mess,” [called out](#) to his Fedora/Red Hat friends, urging them to consider forking Gnome 2.x. Although unofficial, the [BlueBubble project](#) is yet another attempt to fork Gnome 2.x by a Fedora Ambassador. It's too early to tell if Mate or BlueBubble will have any more success than the Trinity project, designed to keep KDE 3.5.x alive.

Wait ... what? Starting off a Gnome 2.32 overview article talking about Gnome 3.x? Yep. Here's the deal. Much as was the case when KDE 3.5 gave way to KDE 4, Gnome 3.x is coming, like it or hate it ... and the “hate it” camp is rapidly filling up. Texstar and the rest of the PCLinuxOS development team are currently working to bring the Gnome 3.x

desktop to PCLinuxOS users. Members of the PCLinuxOS Testing mailing list have been able to run a testing version of Gnome 3.x. So why start off a talk about Gnome 2.32 by talking about Gnome 3.x? Well, there is a “fallback” mode in Gnome 3.x, allowing it to function much as Gnome 2.32. In order to understand and use that “fallback” mode adequately and efficiently, we need to cover Gnome 2.32.

Zen Mini 2011.07

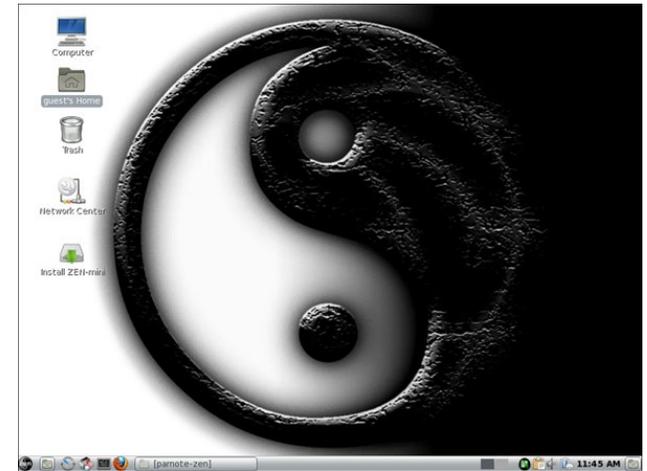
To get a good handle on Gnome 2.32, the magazine staff is using the last Zen Mini Live CD that siamer made before resigning from the project, due to changing demands and responsibilities in his life.

From the description about Zen Mini, on the Zen Mini home page:

ZEN-mini (often shortened to ZEN) is a minimal Live CD that is bootable and can be installed. It comes with a very basic GNOME desktop without additional applications. It is designed for advanced users or for users who wish to learn how to customize their system with the applications and support files they want to use. Additional software can be installed through the Synaptic Software Manager (requires network connection). Add your own background, window decorations, web browser client, email client, music client and fully trick out your desktop the way you want it. ZEN is based on PCLinuxOS!

Upon launching the Zen Mini 2011.07 Live CD, you will be greeted with a screen like that depicted at the top of the next column.

Upon first glance, you may be taken aback by its very non-Gnome-like appearance. In fact, the screen in the default Zen Mini installation could easily be



mistaken for an LXDE desktop. Or a KDE desktop. Or most any other Linux desktop. When most users look at a Gnome desktop, they expect to see the panels at the top and bottom of the screen, with the usual Gnome Applications, Places and System menus at the upper left corner of the top panel. After all, it's the “standard” appearance of the Gnome desktop that we've become accustomed to seeing. In fact, it's how many of us immediately recognize the Gnome desktop.

Siamer broke with Gnome tradition in Zen Mini, opting instead to go with a single panel at the bottom of the screen. As a result, he has produced a very clean looking, yet functional, Gnome desktop.

If you want a “more traditional” Gnome-like appearance to your Zen Mini desktop, it's easy enough to recreate the typical Gnome appearance, with panels at the top and bottom of your screen, along with the usual Gnome Applications, Places and System menus at the left side of the top panel. This is what I have done on my Zen Mini installation.

To do this, I moved the bottom panel to the top, then recreated a second panel at the bottom. I also inserted the typical Gnome menus on the left side of the top panel. In the process, I changed to a wallpaper created by PCLinuxOS Gnome/Zen Mini user Dragynn, as well as adding in some additional panel plugins that I typically find useful.



I have Zen Mini 2011.07 physically installed on my test machine. This computer, an IBM Thinkpad T23, has a 1.13 GHz Intel Pentium III Coppermine processor, 512 MB RAM, 8 MB video RAM, DVDRW/CDRW, and a 1024 x 768 LCD display. Despite the relatively old status and slower processor on this computer, Zen Mini 2011.07 flies on this T23. Certainly, it doesn't run as fast as the lighter weight desktops (such as Xfce, LXDE or Openbox), due to the overhead of all the Gnome dependencies, but the performance is quite adequate and sufficient. The only slowdowns that I have experienced is when the modest 512 MB of RAM becomes filled, and items are moved to the swap partition of the hard drive.

Plans & Conclusion

We hope, through our articles about Gnome 2.32, we can help unravel some of the mystery

surrounding Gnome 2.32. Just as we've done through articles on KDE 4, Xfce, LXDE, e17 and Openbox, we hope to give you greater insight into the Gnome desktop, and some of the things that you can do with it. Plus, with the "fallback" mode in Gnome 3.x, understanding Gnome 2.32 takes on even more importance.

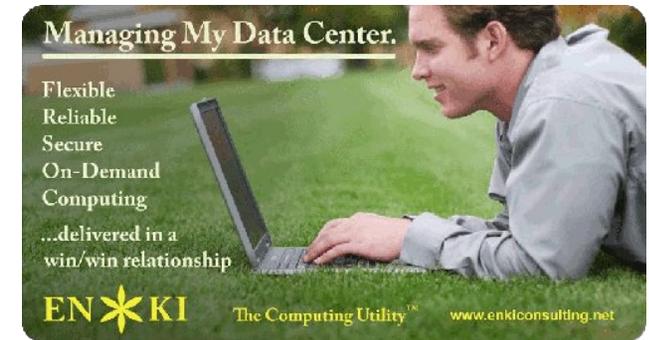
For the magazine staff, we picked the 2011.07 Zen Mini release from siamer. We believe that it is a more balanced version than the 2011.09 release from Melodie. Siamer had a better blend of included applications and multimedia codecs. It was as though he understood what a Gnome user was looking for when seeking out a miniature version of Gnome. Melodie's 2011.09 release strips out those codecs and adds in applications that are either redundant or unnecessary in a mini release. With a mini release, which is usually aimed at a more advanced user, any extra applications can be added as the user wishes right from Synaptic.



Undoubtedly, there will be many PCLinuxOS Gnome users who balk at using Gnome 3.x. It has been the same pattern of complaints with every distro that has released a version of Gnome 3.x. Gnome 2.x made many settings obscure to all but advanced users. Yet with Gnome 3.x, the Gnome developers have taken obscurity to a whole new level. According to Linus Torvalds, perhaps they have gone too far. When discussing Gnome 3.x, Torvalds has been quoted as saying, "This 'users are idiots, and are confused by functionality' mentality of Gnome is a disease. If you think your users are idiots, only idiots will use it."

You definitely owe it to yourself to give Zen Mini a try. It's fast, responsive and has a "just right" blend of applications to get work done. Sure, you may have to install a few applications from Synaptic, but

siamer has anticipated the needs of an average user in his 2011.07 release so well that you will find yourself installing a minimum number of extra applications. Most users installing a mini ISO of any desktop enter the equation with a core list of applications that they normally use. With Zen Mini, you get a very stable core of basic applications upon which to install your list of most-used applications.



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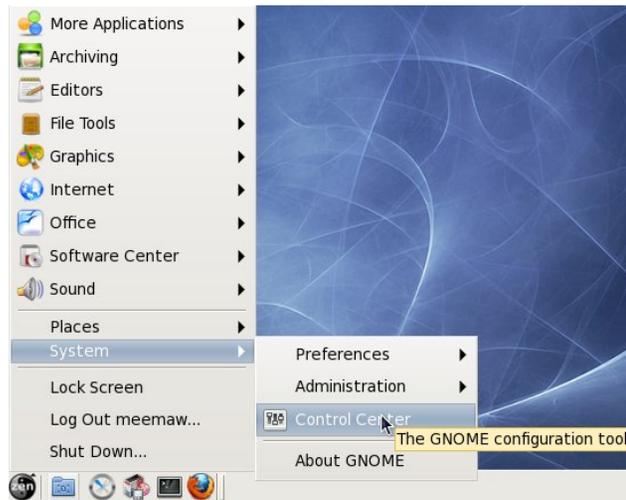


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Gnome 2.32 Control Center, Part 1

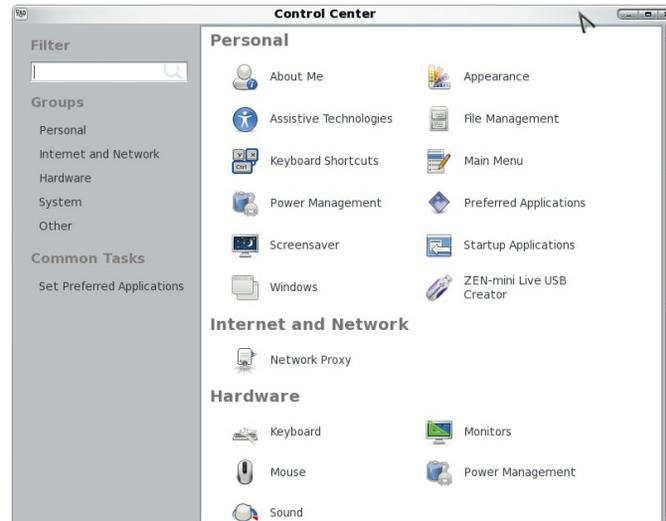
by Meemaw

The first thing many people do when they finish installing their new Live CD is configure their desktop, if they didn't already do it while running it while running the Live CD. The place to do that in Gnome is in the menu at **System > Control Center**.



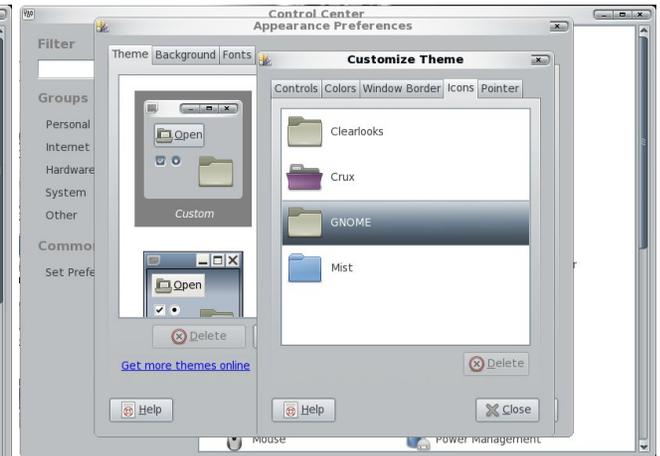
Clicking on this menu item will open the Control Center. The Control Center is arranged in five different sections, which are listed in the left-hand column. In this article we will cover the first two sections, Personal and Internet & Network.

Personal is the largest section. It has twelve sections, all dealing with configurations for your desktop. The first section, **About Me**, allows you to add in your personal information, if you want it to be saved on your computer. You can change your picture and password from here, as well as adding your email address(es), IM nicks, home address and even work information and your web pages.



The next section, **Appearance**, is where most of the desktop configuration can be done. This section works a little differently than it does in some of the other desktops. The first window presents you with theme, background (wallpaper) and fonts tabs. To find the additional items you may want to change (such as your mouse pointers), you should choose the theme you want to use, then click 'Customize.' You will see another window with five tabs: **Controls, Colors, Window Border, Icons and Pointer**. **Controls** is the configuration for buttons and check boxes. In **Colors**, you can change your window background color, highlight color, or default font color. **Window Border** lets you configure the shape of your title bar and border thickness. **Icons** is where you choose the icon set you wish to use from the ones you have installed, and **Pointer** is where you select your desired mouse pointer. It even has a slide bar so you can make your pointer bigger.

This configuration window works well, because if you like one theme's colors and another theme's window



borders, you can 'mix & match' until you get what you like. Changes that are made take effect immediately, so if you choose something you don't like, you are free to change it back immediately.

The next section is **Assistive Technologies**, which allow you to program special ways for computer access. When you click **File Manager**, you will get the Preferences window in the Nautilus file manager. **Keyboard Shortcuts** lets you designate hot-keys for specific functions. Clicking **Main Menu** gives you a window where you can edit your menu. Be careful that you don't delete something you need!!!

The next item is **Power Management**. From here you can configure the time frame for standby or sleep modes. **Preferred Applications** is next where you can decide the default program that opens when you click on a sound or video file, web link or terminal icon. You can also choose your default news reader. **Screensaver** lets you configure your screensaver, and **Startup Applications** lets you designate the programs, such as conky or Dropbox so that they start when your desktop starts.

Windows is actually Window Preferences, and you can choose other preferred actions for your windows (one being the action you want if you double-click a window's title bar). Finally, **ZEN-mini Live USB Creator** is located right here so you can make a backup copy of your install, just in case of a problem.

The second section, **Internet and Network**, contains a single item; **Network Proxy**. Most of us will choose direct connection, but many companies use a proxy, and would choose to configure it manually.

In Part 2 we will cover the rest of the Gnome Control Center.





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 PCLinuxOS Magazine, send an email to:
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We are interested in general articles about Linux, and (of course), articles specific to PCLinuxOS.



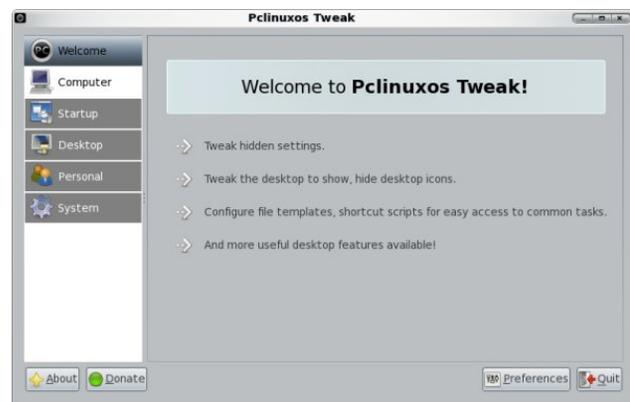
Posted by Dragynn.



Gnome 2.32: PCLinuxOS Tweak

by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)

PCLinuxOS Tweak is a custom package written for PCLinuxOS. It allows the user to set some "hidden" options within the Gnome desktop. Install the pclinixos-tweak package from Synaptic, then start the application by selecting System > Administration from the PCLinuxOS Gnome menu. You will be greeted with the Welcome screen.



Click the Computer button in the left panel to see system and user information displayed in the right panel. Although it may appear so, none of the information shown can be edited, even as user root. Both information lists are very basic (image top of next column).

Clicking on the Startup button in the left panel unhides two subsections, Session Control and Autostart. Session Control is selected automatically, and brings up an error window. Clicking on the Error message dropdown arrow shows us the error messages. Three python scripts are involved in the errors, /usr/share/pclinixos-tweak/mainwindow.py, /usr/share/pclinixos-tweak/session.py, and /usr/lib/python2.6/posixpath.py. This problem has

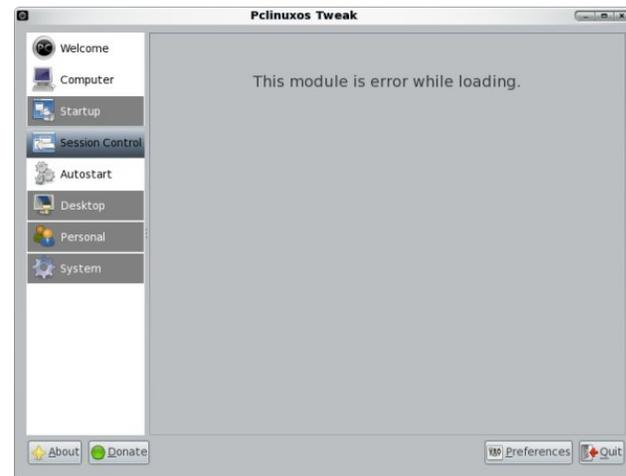


been reported [before](#). Note that the plans are to drop this package from the repository, as the settings will no longer apply in Gnome version 3.

Clicking on the Autostart button in the left panel shows a list of programs that are started when you login. You can enable or disable each one by



checking or unchecking the item. There are two options below the right panel. Show comments will enable a brief description for what each program does. I see

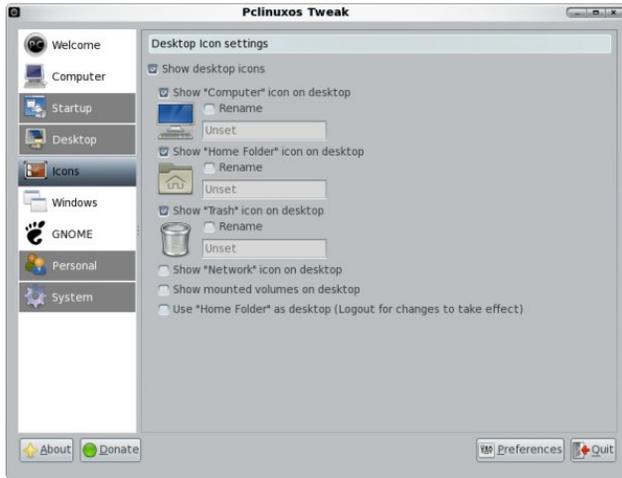


no extra programs displayed when I check the Show all runnable programs box.

Clicking Desktop, the next button down in the left panel, brings up three subsections. The first subsection, Icons, has the desktop icons settings. Except for the last settings, all options are for what



icons to show on the desktop. The last item is to show the contents of your home folder on the desktop.

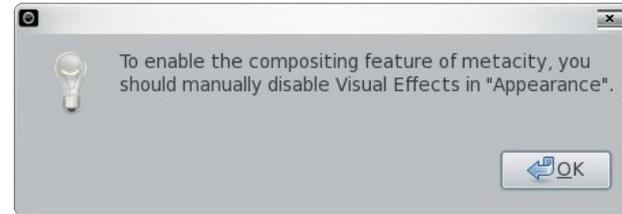


The next Desktop subsection is Windows. The first section in the right panel is Window Decorate Effect. We can choose to use the Metacity window manager's theme instead of Gnome's. We can also

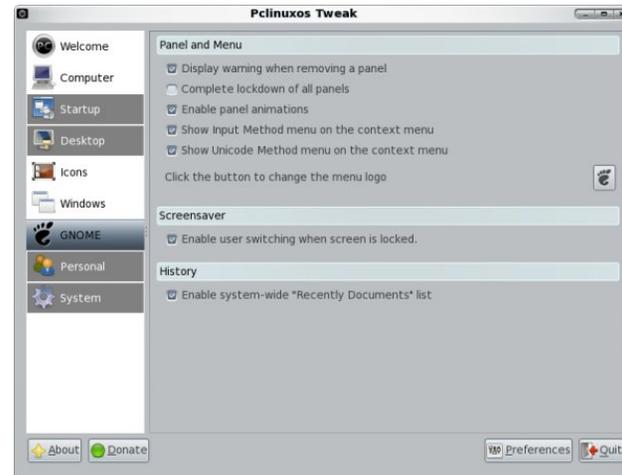


choose to enable active and inactive window transparency, and set the level of transparency for each. The second section in the right panel is Window Titlebar Action. All actions are based on the mouse wheel or mouse clicks. The mouse wheel has only two options, none or roll up. Each of the mouse clicks have six options: none, maximize, minimize, roll up, lower or menu. The third section in the right

panel is an option to enable Metacity's window compositor. Clicking on that option will bring up a message window stating that visual effects in "Appearance" should be disabled.

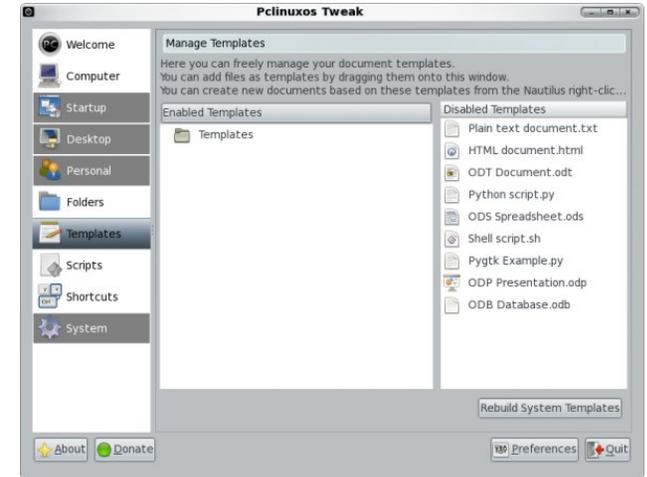
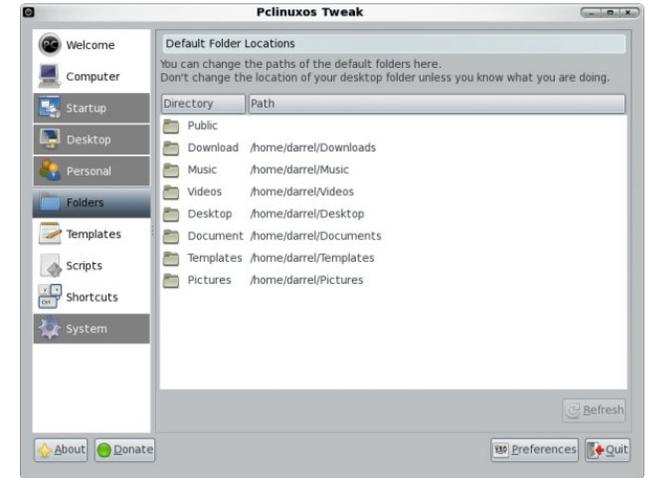


The third Desktop subsection is GNOME. Under Panel and Menu, we have three panel options and two input method options for the context menu. Next is a Screensaver section, followed by a History section, each with one option.



The next major button in the left panel is Personal. Clicking it reveals four subsections. In the first one, Folders, we can set the default paths for folders commonly used by programs (image top of next column).

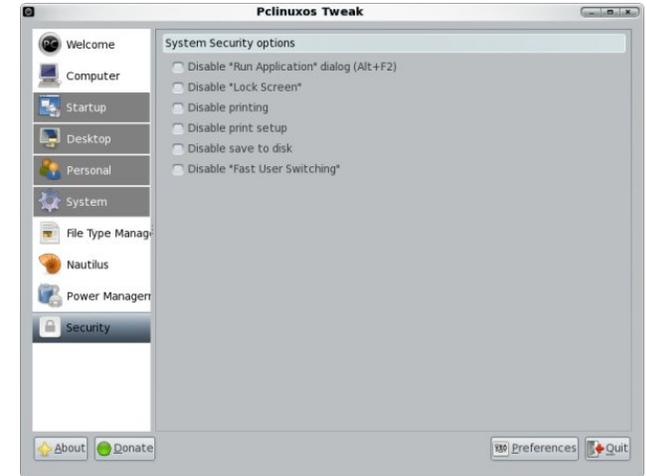
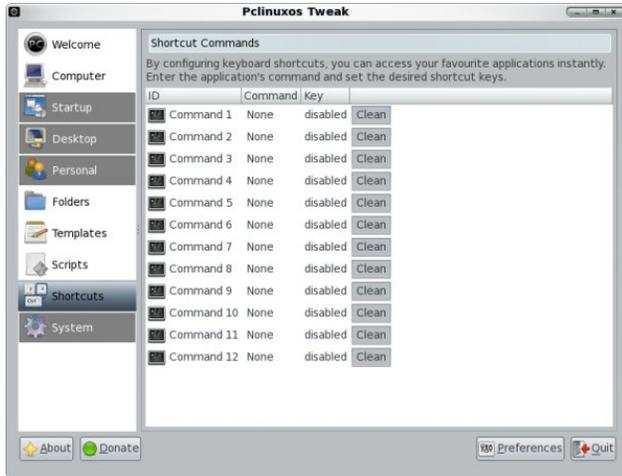
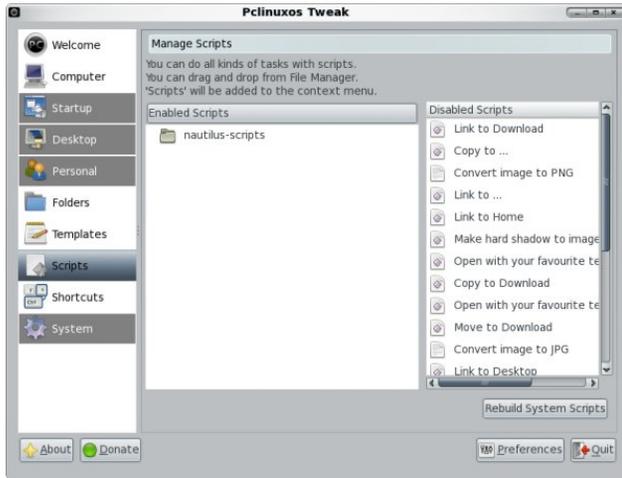
The next subsection button is Templates. Here, we can manage document templates by simply dragging them from one window pane to another. The active templates will be the ones shown in the



desktop and folder right-click context menu under Create Document.

The next subsection button is Scripts. Many of these are file manager shortcuts, such as Copy to or Link to. Some call external programs, such as Convert image to PNG.

The last subsection button under the Personal button is Shortcuts. This section is for defining keybindings. Double-click one to input a new key combination and the command to be associated with it.



Clicking the last major button, System, also reveals four subsection buttons. File Type Manager allows you to select what application program will open a particular filetype. Double-click one of the filetypes to make the program selection. Unchecking Only show filetypes with an associated application will show all system filetypes (first image, top of next column).

Clicking the next subsection button, Nautilus, will allow you to set a few Nautilus file manager options (second image, next column).

The third subsection button, Power Management, will allow you to set a few advanced power management options (first image, next page).

The last subsection button and last button in the left panel, Security, allows you to set some of the system security options.

PCLinuxOS Tweak gives you quick access to many Gnome desktop features, as well as a few not available in Gnome's desktop preferences. Note that

all the selections shown above are system defaults after a fresh installation with a few new packages installed.



Gnome 2.32 Control Center, Part 2

by Meemaw

In the first part of this article we looked at the first two sections of the Gnome Control Center, **Personal** and **Internet & Network**. In this part we will look at the remaining three sections of the Control Center: **Hardware**, **System** and **Other**.

Hardware

Hardware has five sections:

Keyboard

When you open this, you get 5 tabs.

General sets your preferences for actions to be taken if a key is held down, and how fast the cursor blinks.

Layout lets you add another keyboard layout (default is whatever you picked during install) and set options for your layout.

Accessibility sets options for 'sticky' keys, 'slow' keys and 'bounce' keys.

Mouse Keys lets you set your desired keys to use use the keyboard to move the cursor, if you wish.

Typing Break lets you set a timer to enforce a "timeout" from using

the computer. Check the Lock screen to enforce typing break option to enable the other options. Work Interval lasts is how many minutes to use the computer. Break interval lasts sets the number of minutes for the timeout. Check the Allow postponing of breaks option to optionally override the typing break options when the work interval has expired.

Monitors

Allows you to set your screen size, monitor refresh rate, and screen rotation to either landscape or

portrait mode. There is also a Detect monitors button for multiple monitors.

Mouse

Two tabs are in this section. **General** lets you configure pointer speed, click speed, drag & drop and designate if you need a left- or right-hand mouse. **Accessibility** allows for some extra options for easier mouse operations.

Power Management

This is where you set your options for hibernate and sleep modes.

Sound Preferences

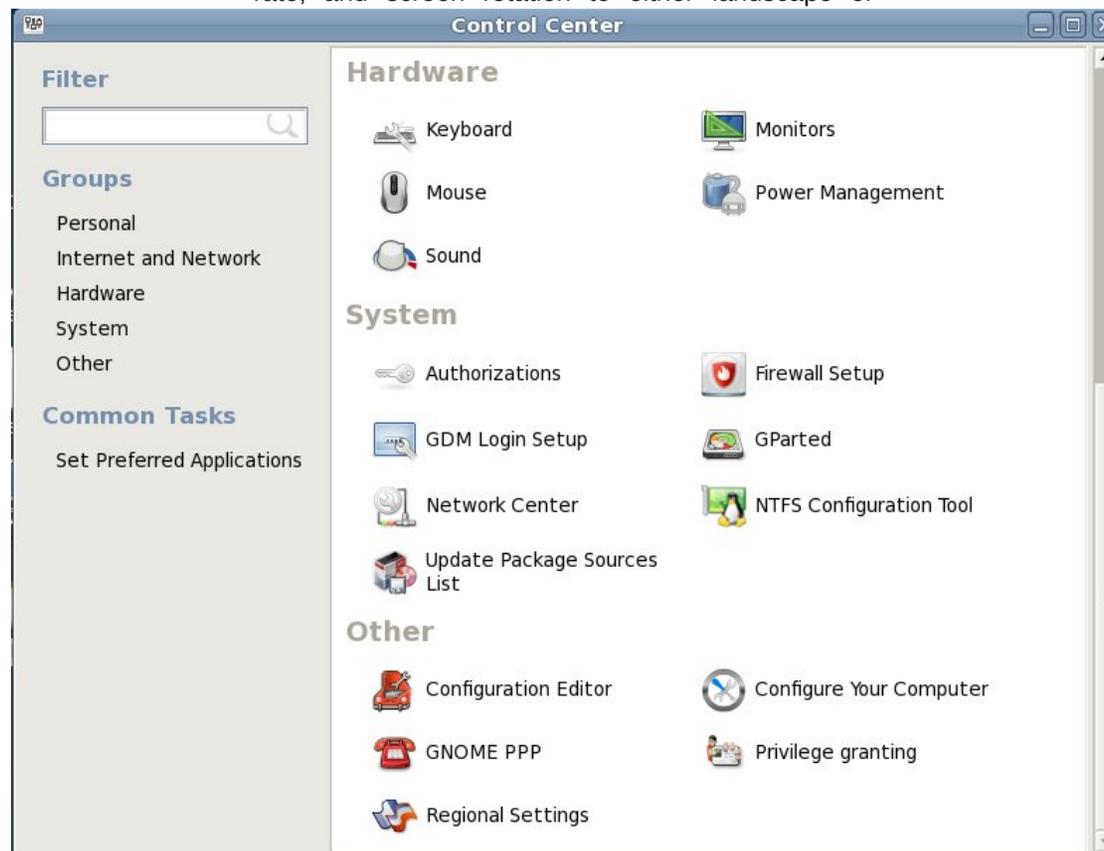
This section has five tabs;

Sound Effects - Here you can set not only the volume level for your default sounds, you can set a sound theme and a different volume level for alerts.

Hardware will let you configure your hardware, if needed.

Input lets you choose the hardware you want to use, plus other input settings.

Output lets you choose the hardware you want to use, plus other output settings.



Apps lets you configure settings in different audio programs. The program has to be running.

System

The sections here match the sections in PCLinuxOS Control Center. **Authorizations** (designates whether a user can perform a certain action or if only root can do it), **Firewall Setup** (configures a firewall), **GDM Login Setup** (everything from the login theme to enabling remote login), **GParted** (partitioning your drive), **Network Center** (configuring you Internet connection), **NTFS Configuration** (configure Windows compatibility) and **Update Package Sources List**.

Other

Configuration Editor is an editor for the GConf Configuration System.

Configure Your Computer This is another link to the PCLinuxOS Control Center.

Gnome PPP is for the configuration of dialup connections

Privilege Granting asks you to designate whether you use 'su' or 'sudo,' and will let you designate whether screen grabbing is allowed during root password entry, which means that your running programs are paused any time you are asked to give your root password.

Regional Settings lets you change your language settings.

Questions about Gnome programs can always be answered on the [Gnome forum](#).



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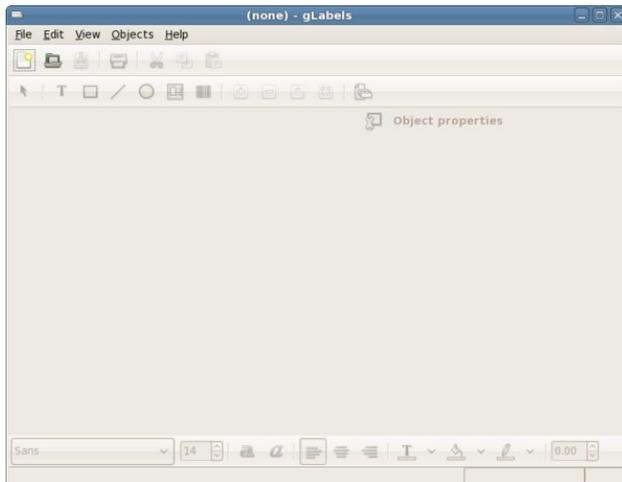


Gnome 2.32: gLabels Label Designer

by Meemaw

One program available in Gnome is gLabels. It is a very simple program that can do any kind of label or business card. While written for the Gnome desktop environment, gLabels will also run quite nicely on any other graphical Linux desktop environment. Like many Linux applications released under the GPL, it does one thing, and does it well. Unless you have Gnome 3, the version you are likely to see in the repo is version 2.3.0.

When you first open gLabels you get the following screen:



Notice that the only tools that are active are the 'New' and 'Open' buttons. When you click on 'New,' you will get a screen that asks which label type you wish to use.

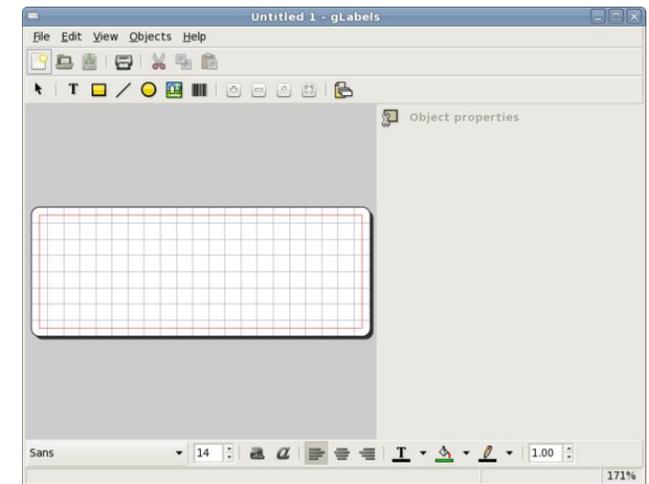
You can search for the one you want in the 'Search All' tab, or you can design your own in the 'Custom' tab. Any label you use will be saved in the 'Recent'



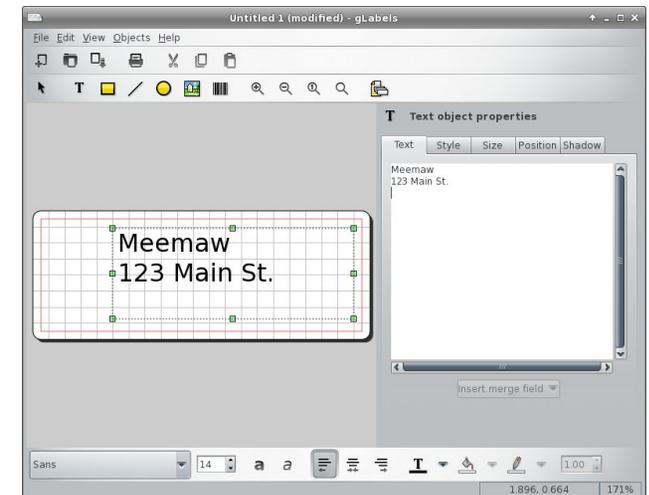
tab, so it will be easy to find later. I chose the Avery 5160 address label because that's what I use the most. You will also get a screen asking if you want your chosen label oriented horizontally or vertically, and another window giving you a page preview of the sheet you have chosen. After clicking on the OK button to verify your choices, the window at right top is visible.

Notice that now all the tools are active. We have in the top toolbar: New, Open, Save, Print, Cut Copy and Paste. In the second line of tools you will see: Selection tool, Text tool, Add Rectangle, Add Line, Add Circle, Add Image and Add Barcode. The four buttons to the right of that are the sizing buttons, where you can increase or decrease the size of your label in the window (zoom in, zoom out, actual size and fit in window). The last button in that row is the Mail Merge Properties button.

If you click the Add Text button, your pointer will change to a plus sign with the word Text next to it, and you can click on the label to place the text frame. Wherever you click will place the top left corner of the text frame. At right, the text formatting

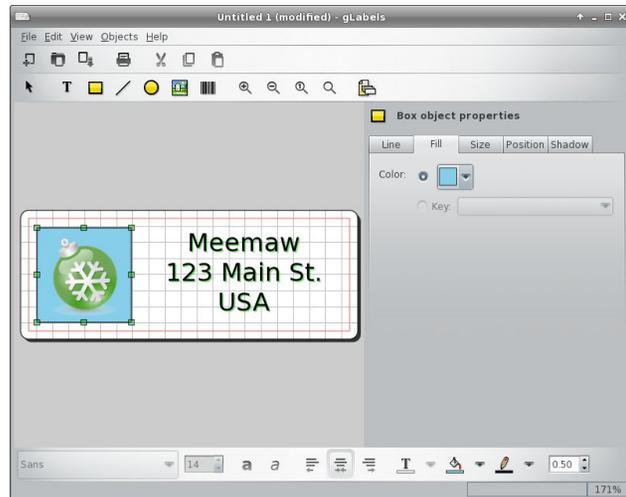
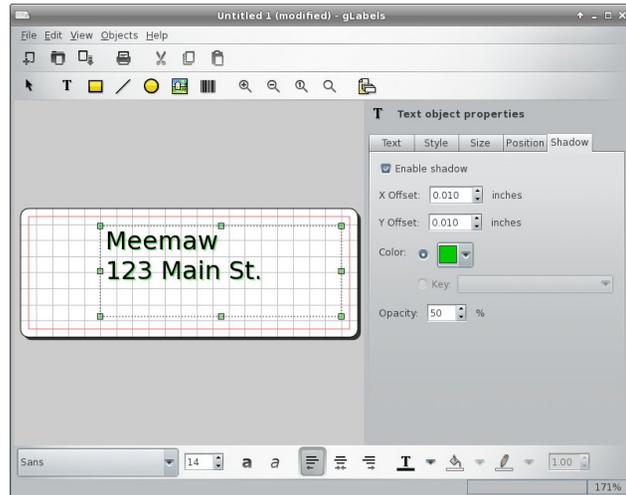


window will open and allow you to enter your text (the first tab in the section on the right is the text tab), then use the other tabs to format your text as desired. In addition, the toolbar across the bottom also includes text formatting items. You can always increase the size of your text frame by grabbing one of the corners and dragging and move it by hovering



over the text until the cursor turns into a 4-armed cross, then clicking and dragging. In the other tabs, you can set the style and size of the text and the position of the text frame. At the bottom, you can change the alignment of your text.

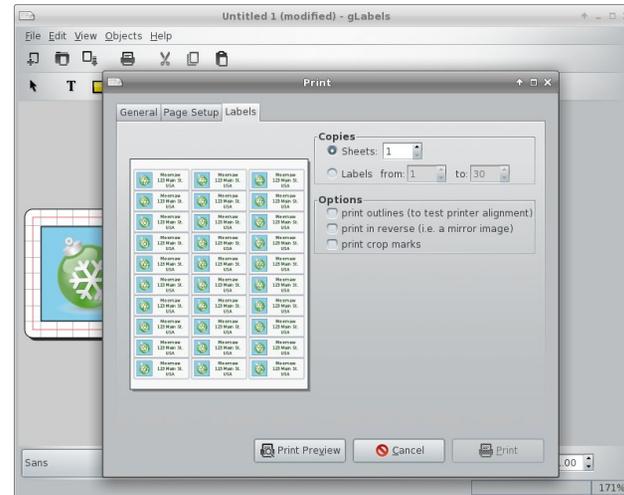
One thing that is in gLabels that I haven't seen in other programs is a specific tab just for text shadow. You have to enable the shadow, and then choose the offset color and opacity of the shadow. I made the shadow green so you could see it.



Using the toolbar at the top, you can also insert a rectangle, line, circle or picture into your label. Each item you choose opens a set of tabs at the right side of the window with your configuration choices. In the screenshot below, I added a blue rectangle and inserted a photo of a green Christmas decoration on top of it. The rectangle is selected and can be edited.

Don't forget to save your label design in a convenient place.

Printing is easy, as well. Clicking the print icon gives you a window that lets you designate your printer, verify your page setup (paper size, type, printer tray to use, orientation, etc.), and choose how many labels you want printed. The third tab, 'Labels,' shows you a preview of your page, and lets you print a certain number of labels on a page, or a certain number of full pages. I have printed 15 of one label

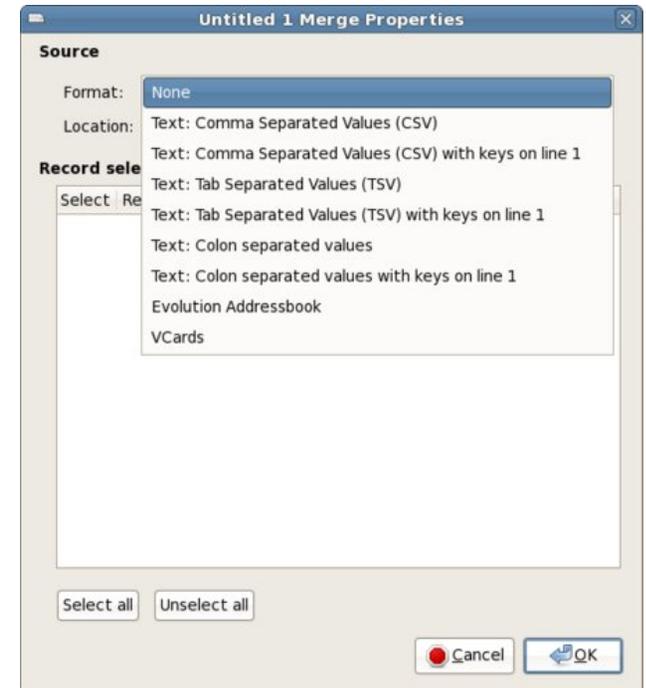


on the top of one page, then turned the page upside down and printed 15 of another label on the remainder using a 30-label sheet like this.

This latter feature is handy if you have a sheet of labels that have some labels missing. You can start printing from the first available label, and print out as many labels as you like (or use the rest of the labels

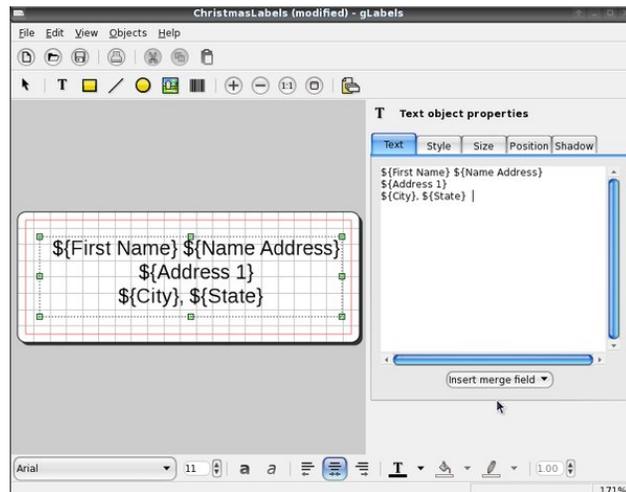
on the sheet with missing labels) on the sheet with the missing labels. It sure beats having to throw away a sheet of labels just because some labels are missing. Just select the radio button next to "Labels" under "Copies." Then, adjust the label number you want to start printing from, to skip the missing labels. Label 1 is in the upper left corner, label 3 is in the upper right corner, label 28 is in the lower left corner, and label 30 is in the lower right corner.

While it's nice to print a sheet of return address labels, we usually want to print a group of mailing labels with different names and addresses using a mail merge list. Merging a mailing list in gLabels is actually fairly easy. Many people use LibreOffice to do spreadsheets and labels. While I use LibreOffice for labels most of the time, I recently had gLabels open because I had some address labels designed in it. So, I decided to use it for the mailing labels for my Christmas cards. Click that last icon in the top toolbar, Edit Merge Properties.

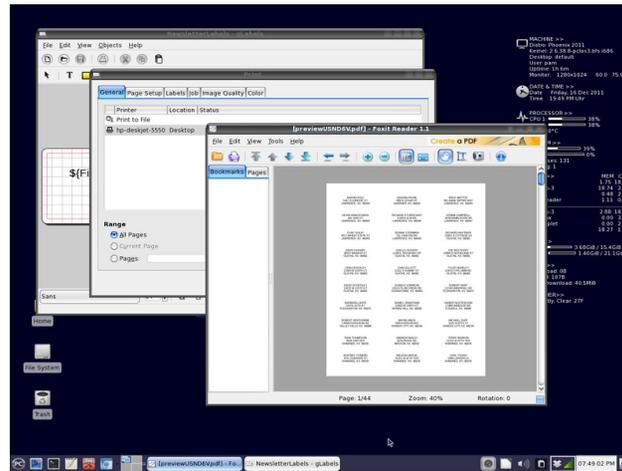


Assuming you have your mailing list in a spreadsheet, the first thing you need to do to use it in gLabels is to open it in the spreadsheet program you use, then save your spreadsheet as a comma or tab-separated text file. In LibreOffice, I saved mine as MeemawsList.csv. You can also use your Evolution addressbook or Vcards if you use those programs.

Select the type of file you are using and then designate the location of that file. You can even choose which records you want to include in your merge by checking or unchecking the 'Select' column in the merge properties box. (I don't send Christmas cards to my whole address book.) Put in your text frame, then click 'Insert merge field' at the bottom of the text frame properties window. Choose your fields, and arrange them in your label the way you want them. Save your file.



You can now go to Print. When you click on the Labels tab you will see a merged sheet. If you click on Print Preview at the bottom of that window, gLabels will display the merged labels as a PDF document in whatever reader you are using. The Print Preview might take a minute or two, if your list is long (top of next column).



Having used more than one word processing program for labels, I will say that I found gLabels to actually be easier. I once had a glitch during a larger printing. My newsletter mailing at work was almost 1,300 labels. During the printing, I found that one sheet of labels had fed through the printer improperly, and all the addresses on that sheet printed over 2 labels, rather than each one on its own. I went back into the merge properties window, selected only those addresses that misprinted, and printed a new sheet. Perfect!

You don't have to use it for just address labels! Some of the pages made today are also business cards, name badges, file folder labels, disk and tape labels, CD case plates and even table tent cards. You can also create custom designs on one of the many full sheet labels or plain paper. Let your imagination be your guide!



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Gnome 2.32: Sail Through Your Files With Nautilus

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

It's quite fitting that it's named after the infamous ship in Jules Verne's 20,000 Leagues Under The Sea. The Gnome native file manager, Nautilus, is a powerful tool for navigating and working with the files on your Gnome installation.

Looking at the screen shot, it's hard to distinguish Nautilus from any other capable Linux file manager. It looks a lot like KDE's Dolphin, Xfce's Thunar, or LXDE's PCManFM. Plus, in a lot of ways, it also functions similarly to all of its desktop brothers.

At the top left section of the Nautilus window, you have access to your home partition, the file system, any extra partitions or drives (such as USB flash

drive, USB external hard drives, or optical disks), and any network drives.

At the bottom left section of the Nautilus window, you have quick, one-click access to frequently used folders. To add additional folders to the quick access area of Nautilus, just drag the folder icon from the right window pane into its new location in the lower left corner of the Nautilus window.

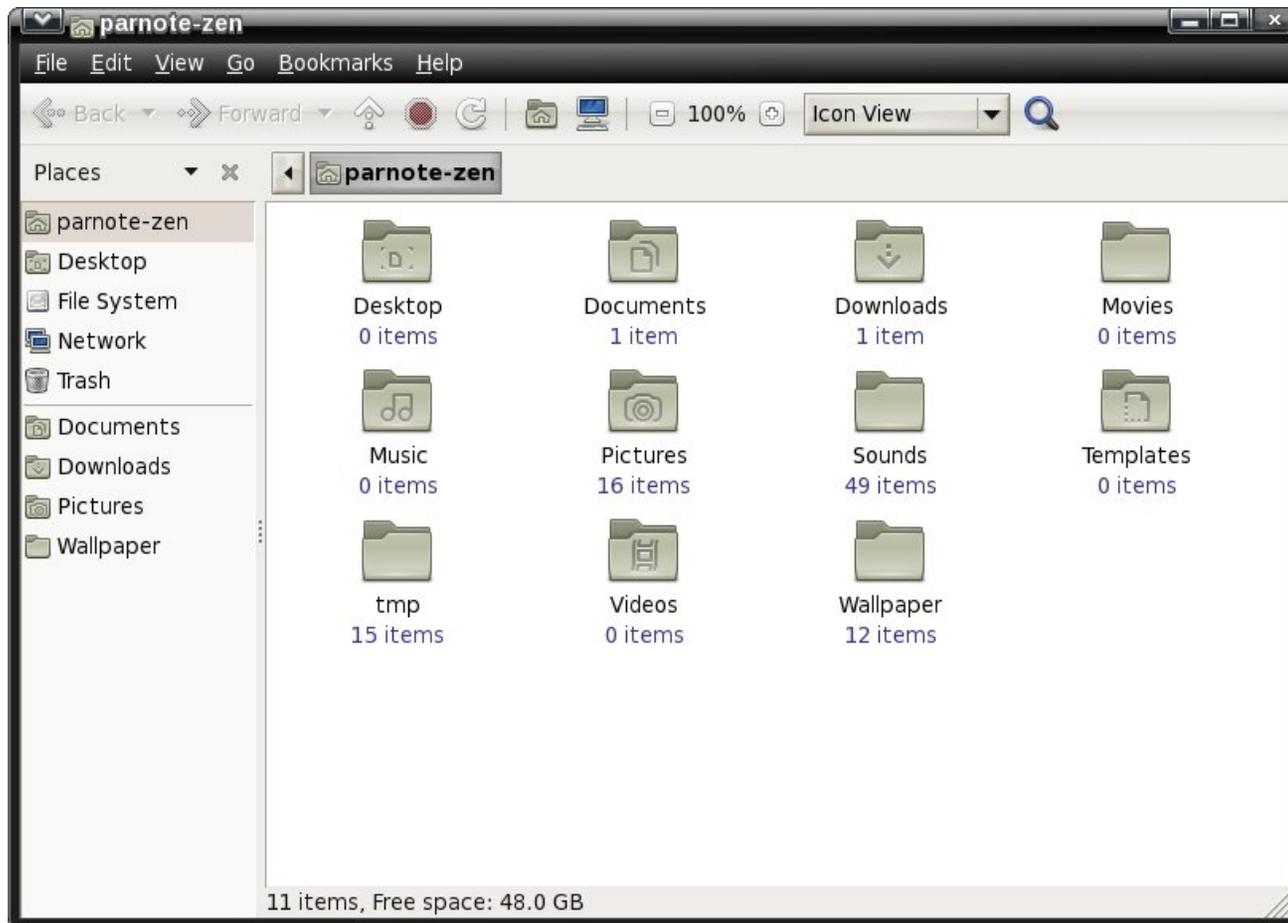
The right section – literally the rightmost ¾ of the Nautilus window – is dedicated to showing your files and subdirectories.

There are quite a few “hacks” for Nautilus running around out there, but “hacks” might not be the best term here. More than anything, there are quite a few hidden or not-so obvious settings you can adjust that will make it more useful, and that will customize how it displays file data.

One such place is Tech Drive-In, with their “8 Not-So-Common Nautilus Hacks & Improvements” [article](#). They also have [another article](#) that reveals a Nautilus script that will send documents to Google Docs. Just do an Internet search, and you will be flooded with results. Just don't be surprised when you see an overabundance of Ubuntu related results, given that Gnome is the main desktop environment of Ubuntu. Ubuntu-related or not, you will still find much of the information just as pertinent to Gnome running on PCLinuxOS.

Beyond Aesthetics: Extending Nautilus's Functionality

Just as with KDE's Dolphin and Xfce's Thunar (sorry, but PCManFM doesn't yet have this ability), you can extend the functionality of Nautilus's right-



click context menu. The tasks you can perform this way are truly only limited by your imagination, and can make file management tasks go from being a chore to being super simple and fast.

It's very easy to extend Nautilus's functionality. Basically, anything you can imagine using a bash script for can also be used with Nautilus. That's because Nautilus uses bash scripts as the basis for its extensions.

To facilitate the use of bash scripts, Nautilus will set some special parameters (known as environment variables) to the bash script that's being called. These environment variables help making bash scripts to extend Nautilus's functionality even easier to create and work with. They are listed below.

NAUTILUS_SCRIPT_SELECTED_FILE_PATHS:

newline-delimited paths for selected files (only if local)

NAUTILUS_SCRIPT_SELECTED_URIS: newline-delimited URIs for selected files

NAUTILUS_SCRIPT_CURRENT_URI: current location

NAUTILUS_SCRIPT_WINDOW_GEOMETRY:

position and size of current window

So, you can use traditional ways of enumerating file names or data sent to a bash script, or you can make use of the environment variables set by Nautilus. The choice is entirely up to you, as either will work perfectly fine.

Probably the best way to customize Nautilus's context menu is to find pre-made Nautilus scripts. There are plenty of them out there on the 'net for you to choose from. Below, I've listed just a few of the sites that I've found.

G-Script: this site is dedicated to Nautilus scripts, and has several freebie scripts, separated into categories. You might also want to visit the [FAQ](#)

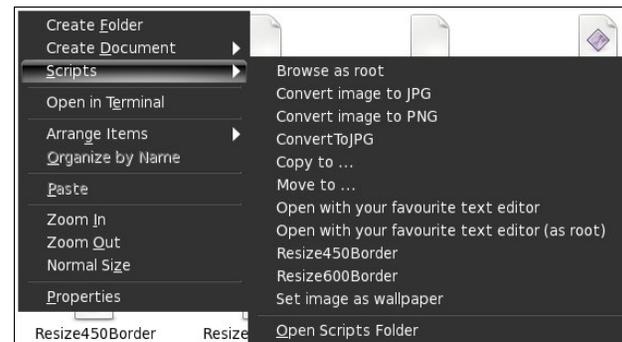
there, to learn more about creating your own Nautilus scripts.

My Nautilus Scripts: a collection of useful Nautilus scripts. The scripts are available as *.deb files (for Ubuntu and Debian), or as *.tar.gz archives. PCLinuxOS users will need to download the latter.

125 Nautilus Scripts To Simplify Nautilus: This is a collection of 125 Nautilus scripts, available in a *.tar.gz file. While some are overly simplistic, there are quite a few in the collection that should be useful to you.

Once you have your scripts in hand, you need to place them in the the hidden .gnome2 directory, in your home directory (/home/username/.gnome2), under the /nautilus-scripts subdirectory. Just the mere presence of the script in the appropriate folder is not sufficient. You will need to restart Nautilus for the script to be recognized.

Also, all of the directions say to make the script executable (easily done via the file properties "Permissions" tab). However, I've not done this to any of the scripts I've placed there, and they all seem to work just fine without the file being marked as executable. I don't know if this is a weird anomaly on my system, so if your script isn't working, you might want to check to make sure that it's marked as executable.



After you restart Nautilus, then your script will then appear in the Scripts context menu, as shown in the screen shot above.

These three aforementioned sites should give you a good start on finding pre-made Nautilus scripts. If you want to find more, just do an Internet search, using "nautilus scripts" as your search term.

Roll Your Own

If you feel so inclined, you can edit and further customize the pre-made Nautilus scripts to perform tasks that give you even more functionality. You can even write your own script from scratch, if you find that more to your liking. Personally, I find it advantageous to alter the pre-made Nautilus scripts to do what I want them to.

Having worked on The PCLinuxOS Magazine for as long as I have, there are a few things that I like to do that help me streamline the production of the magazine. Some of those tasks involve resizing images and placing a one pixel black border around images. Rather than open up an image editing application such as Gimp or MTPaint to perform those simple tasks, it's much easier to be able to perform these tasks from a special context menu item right from the file manager.

Because my requirements for these tasks are rather precise, I usually have to "roll my own" special functions to get them accomplished from a file manager context menu. So, I looked and found a Nautilus script that used ImageMagick's "convert" command. The script I found converted any image into a *.jpg file. I then changed the script so that it resized the selected images **and** placed a one pixel border around the image, all in one step.

Here is the script, in its original form:

```
#!/bin/bash

while [ $# -gt 0 ]; do
    picture=$1
    jpg_file=`echo "$picture" | sed
's/\.\w*$/\.jpg/'`
    /usr/bin/convert -quality 75 "$picture"
jpeg:"$jpg_file"
    shift
done
```

Here is the script after I modified it:

```
#!/bin/bash

while [ $# -gt 0 ]; do
    picture=$1
    convert -resize 598 -bordercolor Black -border 1x1
"$picture" "600-$picture"
    shift
done
```

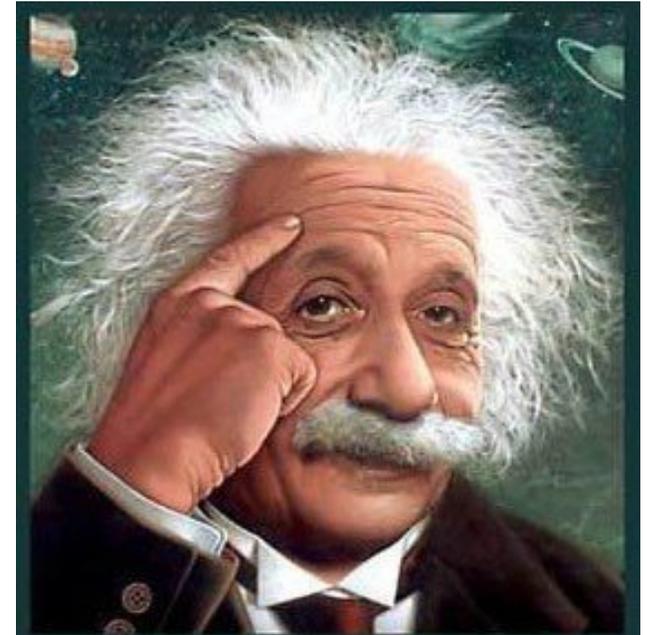
Since I'm not interested in changing the file to a *.jpg file, I completely eliminated the line that starts with "jpg_file." Next, I altered the "convert" line to resize the image to 598 pixels, then place a one pixel black border around the entire image, resulting in an image that's resized to 600 pixels wide, and renamed with 600 appended to the beginning of the resized image file name – all in one quick and easy step.

I saved the file to the /home/username/.gnome2/nautilus-scripts directory as Resize600Border. Upon restarting Nautilus, my new script is displayed by its name in the Scripts context menu. So, right clicking on an image file, I can select the script from the Scripts menu, and the image will immediately be resized to 600 pixels wide, with a one pixel black border surrounding it.

Summary

Nautilus is a very capable file manager, and one that is very easily extended with Nautilus scripts. If you are installing Nautilus on a desktop other than Gnome, be forewarned that it pulls in a literal TON of Gnome dependencies.

If you are a Gnome or Nautilus user, you owe it to yourself to explore the possibilities that are available to you, via Nautilus scripts. There are pre-made Nautilus scripts to perform all kinds of actions – from audio and video file conversion, to managing archive files, to sending files via email, to just about anything else that you might be able to imagine. You don't have to be a scripting guru to make good use of Nautilus scripts. Yet, if you are a script guru, there's virtually no end to what you might be able to accomplish.



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 ...



Gnome 2.32: Metacity Window Manager

by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)

Metacity is a lightweight window manager written by [Havoc Pennington](#) from Red Hat. The first version was 2.3, which was released in 2001. It is implemented with the GTK+ 2.x toolkit, and so integrates well with the GNOME 2.x platform. In fact, the intention is to remove the traditional separation between window manager and desktop, and present to the user a single desktop interface. Before the introduction of Metacity in GNOME 2.2, GNOME used [Enlightenment](#) (e16) and then [Sawfish](#) as its window manager.

Metacity was the window manager used by default in the GNOME desktop environment until GNOME 3, where it was replaced by [Mutter](#).

From the [Gnome 2.2 Release Notes](#):

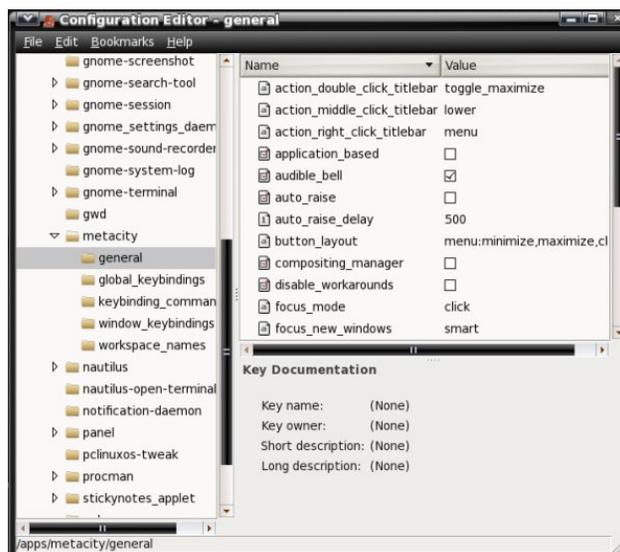
"GNOME 2.2 officially incorporates the Metacity window manager, a fully integrated window manager that uses GTK+ for UI elements, communicates tightly with the panel and other desktop elements, and is configured straight from the GNOME preferences dialogs."

At the same time, all interaction between the window manager and the desktop is done via documented standards (see [Section 6 — Standards Compliance](#)), so you can substitute the window manager of your choice from a long list of available options: Sawfish, fwm2, icwm, Waimea, Openbox, are just some of them."

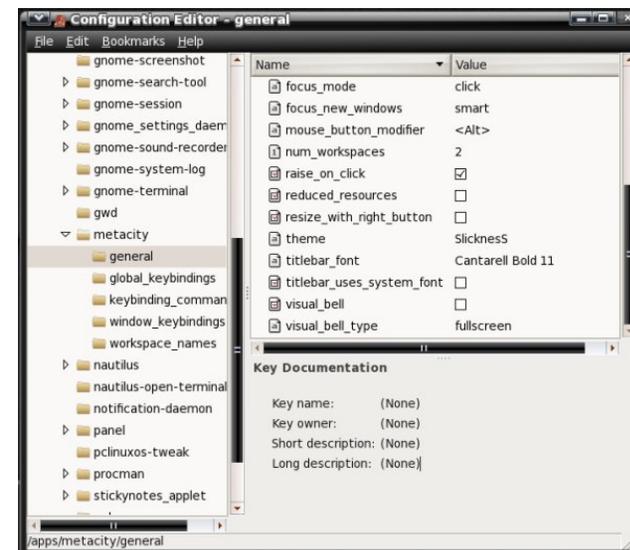
Metacity window manager is the default in PCLinuxOS Zen Mini edition. In the window below, I used `wmctrl` to show the window manager in use. To configure the Metacity settings, you can open a terminal and enter `gconf-editor`. The Gnome Configuration Editor window will then appear. You



can get the same results by launching the Configuration Editor from the menu, System > Preferences > Configuration Editor. Once launched, open the apps folder in the left pane, then scroll down and open the metacity folder to see the configuration categories.

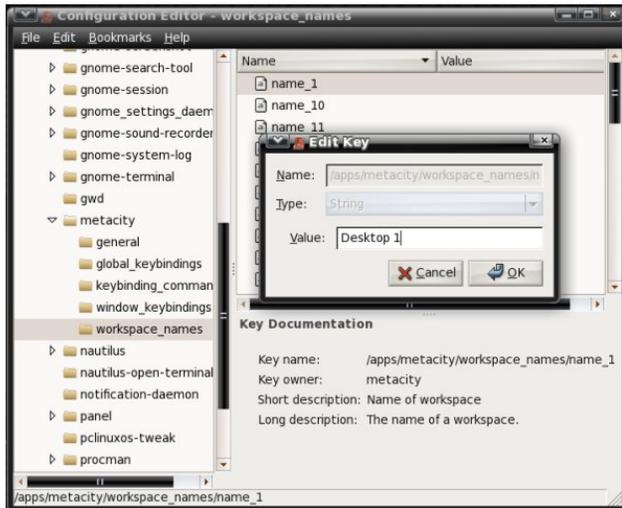


The general category gives us access to the compositing manager option as well as a few other audio and visual options.



To change the values in any entry, double-click the entry in the right pane and a preferences dialog window will appear for that entry. The choices will be different for each entry, depending on whether the values are boolean, integer or a string value. In the window below, we see a string value entered for workspace 1 under workspace_names options. Although "Desktop 1" is the new value entered, it could be any descriptor.

To see a few more options, and to more easily configure Metacity, we can install the package `pclinuxos-tweak`. After installing the package, we can launch it by going to the menu, System > Administration > PCLinuxOS Tweak. Then navigate in the left pane to Desktop > Windows. In the window shown below, I have just clicked the Enable Metacity's Compositing feature box. A dialog window

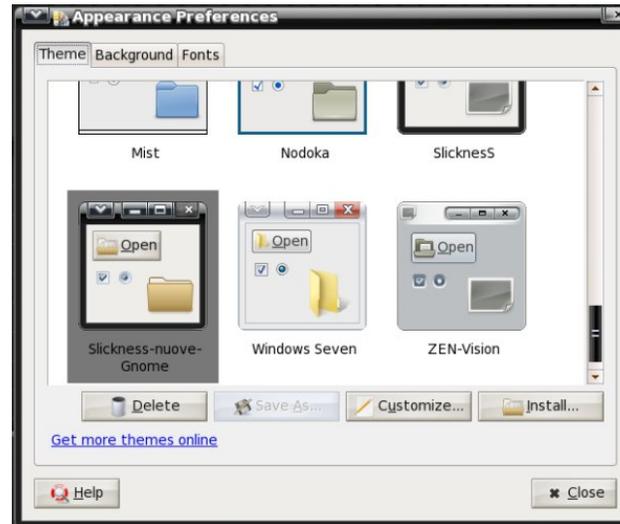


immediately appears with the message “To enable the compositing feature of metacity, you should manually disable Visual Effects in “Appearance”.

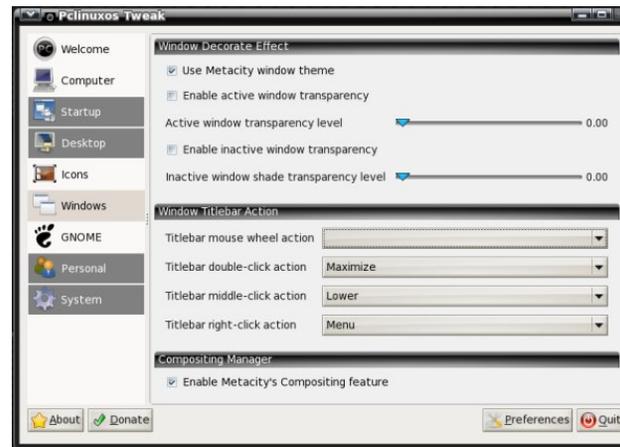


The dialog window is referring to a tab which no longer appears in the Gnome Appearance Preferences settings unless compiz is enabled. (From the menu, System > Preferences > Appearance).

Using the PCLinuxOS Tweak tool, we can set transparency levels for active and inactive windows, enable or disable use of a Metacity window theme,

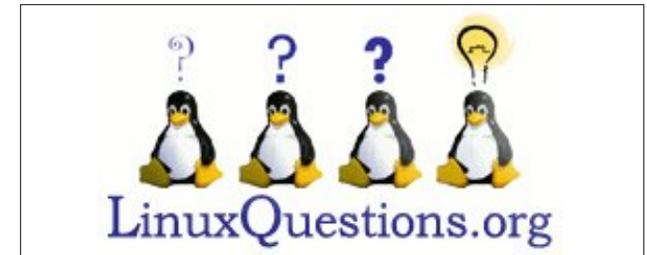
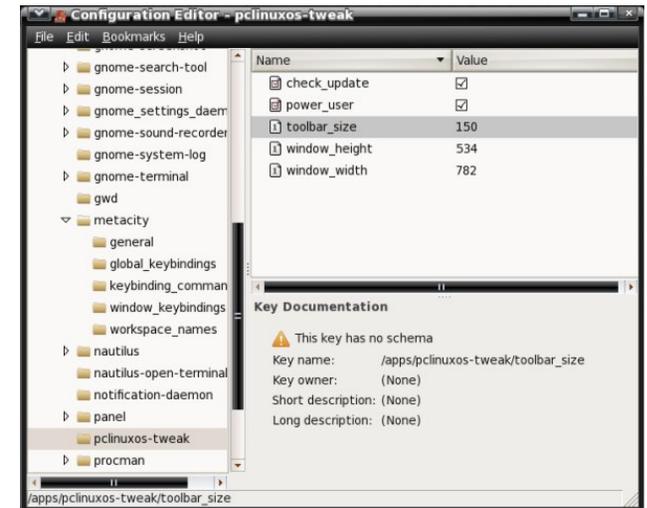


enable or disable compositing and set window titlebar actions with just a few mouse clicks.



And, going back to Gnome's Configuration Editor, there are five options for the PCLinuxOS Tweak tool listed there.

The addition of the pclinlinuxos-tweak package gives us a few more Metacity configuration options we don't have in Gnome's Configuration Editor.



Want To Help?

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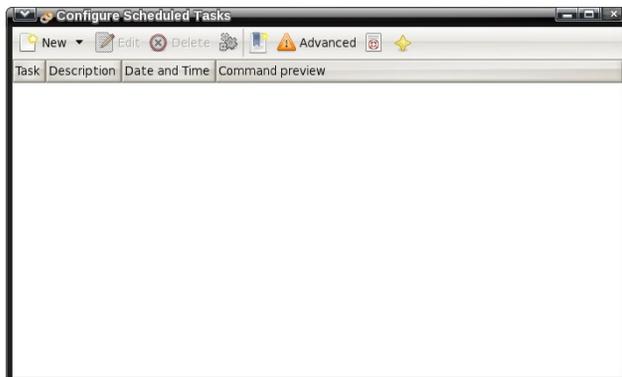
Gnome 2.32: Gnome Schedule Puts Gnome On A Schedule

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

There are times when you may want to run an application while you are away from the computer. The things you may want to do are limited only by your imagination and your needs. You may want to run a script that allows you to record your favorite TV program from your TV tuner card. You may want to sync the files on your laptop with the files on your desktop or server. Or, you may wish to sync your locally stored repository with one of the PCLinuxOS repositories, using rsync. Whatever it is that you would like to accomplish while you are away from your computer, Gnome Schedule 2.12 is your answer.

While it isn't installed by default in Zen Mini, it's no further away than installing it via Synaptic. Once installed, it will be listed under your More Applications > Configuration menu as "Scheduled Tasks."

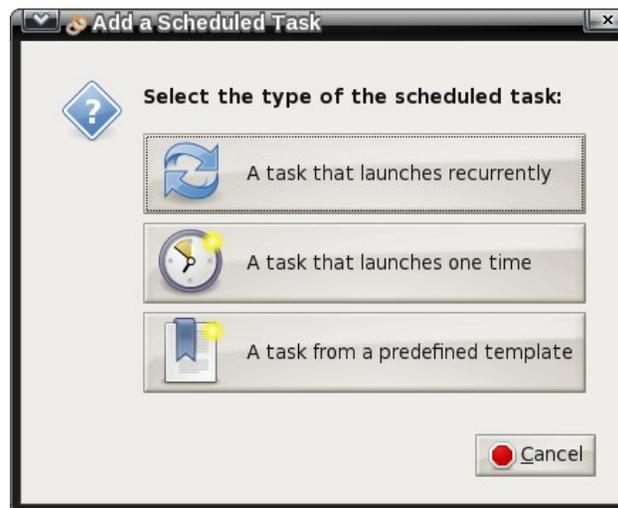
Once launched, you will see a window like the one below:



As it sits when you first launch it, it looks rather empty, devoid of any purpose. But don't let that fool

you. With very little effort, and in the right hands, Gnome Schedule is a very powerful tool. Written in Python and using pygtk, Gnome Schedule provides a visual interface for scheduling tasks to be executed by the "crontab" and "at" command line utilities, insulating you from the command line that instills so much fear into so many users. With a few exceptions, which I'll point out as we go, Gnome Schedule follows most of the rules of crontab. You can view those rules by checking out the online [crontab man page](#).

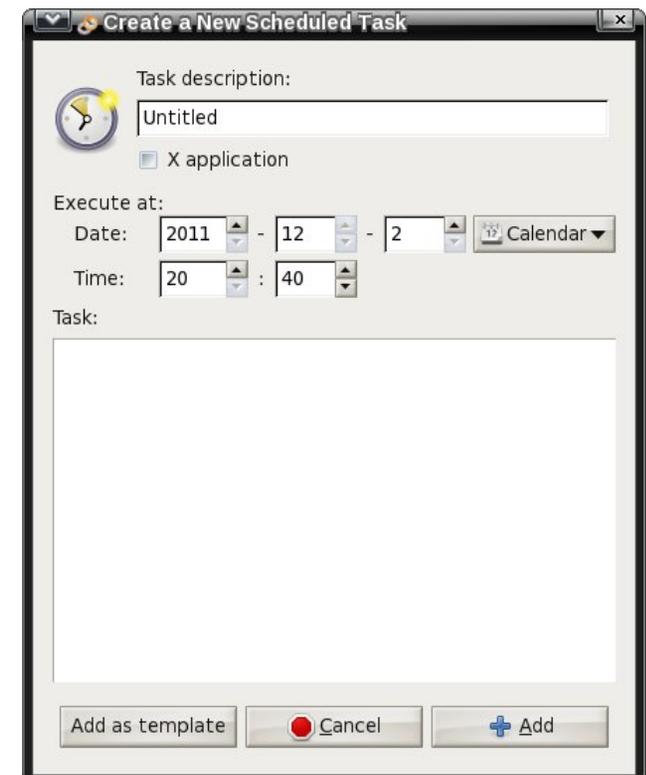
By selecting the "New" button on the toolbar, Gnome Schedule will display the following window:



Here, you select whether you want to schedule a recurrent task (as you may wish to do when backing up your laptop's data to your desktop every Sunday night after you're customarily in bed and your computer isn't routinely in use), schedule a one-time task (as you may wish to do when recording the airing of one of your favorite movies), or if you want to schedule a task from a predefined template.

For my personal use, I've found the one-time task option as the one that I use the most, since I currently use it to record TV programs aired on an irregular basis. However, your use, dictated by your individual needs, may differ.

Selecting the one-time task button, you will see a window like the one below:



At the top of the dialog box, you can give a title to your scheduled task. This helps keep your tasks separated and easily identified, especially when you have multiple tasks scheduled. If your task launches a GUI'd application that uses X, then check the box next to "X application."

Gnome 2.32: Gnome Schedule Puts Gnome On A Schedule

Next, enter the date and time you want your task to start. You can enter the date directly, or you can use the “Calendar” button to select the date. If you choose the latter, the date fields will automatically be filled in for you. When filling in the time, hours are expressed based on a 24 hour clock. Thus, 8 p.m. becomes 20 (12 + 8), 4 p.m. becomes 16 (12 + 4), and 11 p.m. become 23 (12 + 11). The minutes are simply entered directly, ranging from 0 to 59.

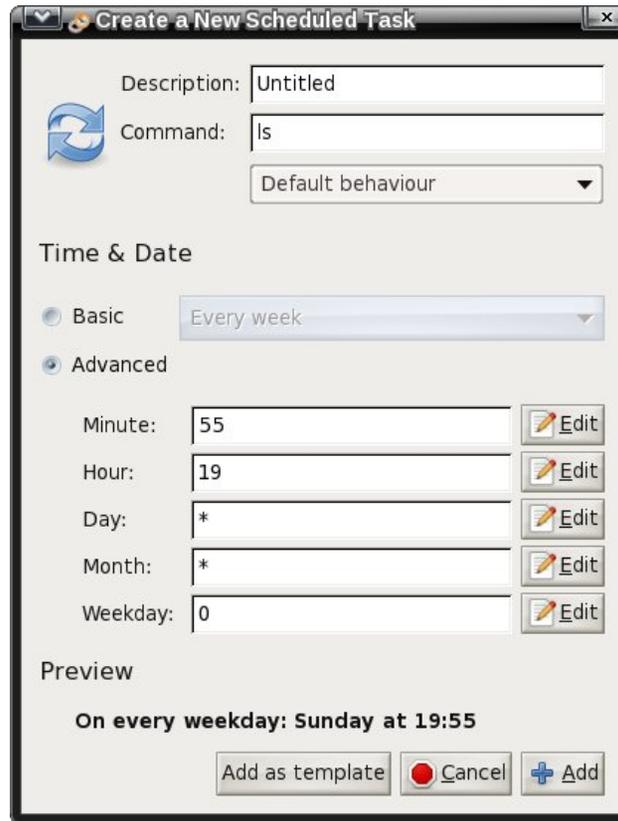
Below, in the “Task” area, simply enter the command that launches the application(s) you want to run at that scheduled time. Once you have everything as you like it, simply click on the “Add” button. If you change your mind – or screw things up badly – you can click on the “Cancel” button to discard your choices. Clicking on the “Add as template” button allows you to save your scheduled tasks as a template, so you can reload it again for later reuse.

However, if you choose to schedule a recurrent task, you will get a different dialog box, like the one shown at the top of the next column.

Things become a bit more complicated when scheduling recurrent tasks. Just as when you are setting up a one-time task, the first line in this dialog box allows you to provide a title for your scheduled task. The second line is where you put the command(s) that you want to be executed.

The next control is a button that brings up four choices: default behavior, suppress output, X application, or X application: suppress output. The default is the first choice, default behavior. This allows you to specify the behavior of the application you are running.

Even though grayed out in the image above, your next choice is the “Basic” control. Here, you select if you want your recurrent task to run every minute, hour, day, week, month or at every reboot. If you select anything other than running your task at every reboot, you will want to move the selection from “Basic” to “Advanced”



Under “Advanced,” you specify the minutes (0-59), hour (0-23), day (1-31), month (1-12) and weekday (0-6) you want your recurrent task to execute. The latter setting, “Weekday,” recognizes 0 as being Sunday, and 6 as being Saturday.

Alternatively, you can use the first three letters of the names of the days of the week (sun, mon, tue, etc.) and the month (jan, feb, mar, etc.) in place of the number designations. Normally, with crontab, case does not matter when using the names of the days of the weeks or the months. Thus, sun, Sun, SUn, suN, sUN and SUN all mean the same thing. But under the Gnome Schedule environment, you can only use all lower case letters. Otherwise, you will see an error message displayed under the “Preview” pane of the dialog box.

If you have everything set up properly, you will see the frequency of your recurrent scheduled task under the “Preview” pane of the dialog box. Once everything is as you like it, click on the “Add” button to add your recurrent task to the list of scheduled tasks. Selecting “Cancel” discards all of your selections. Clicking on “Add as template” adds your task as a template for later reuse.

Selecting the “Edit” button on the Gnome Schedule toolbar will display the appropriate dialog box depicted above, depending on whether the task is a one-time or recurrent task. Clicking on the “Delete” button will delete the currently selected task. To run a task now, instead of at its scheduled time, click on the “gears” icon on the toolbar. The next icon allows you to manage your saved templates.



The sixth icon allows you to select from a basic or advanced view of the tasks displayed in the task pane of the main window. Personally, I can’t see a whole lot of difference between the basic and advanced view, other than a rearrangement of the columns of information. The next to the last icon launches the help file for Gnome Schedule, if you happen to have it installed. The last icon displays the “About” dialog box for Gnome Schedule, when selected.

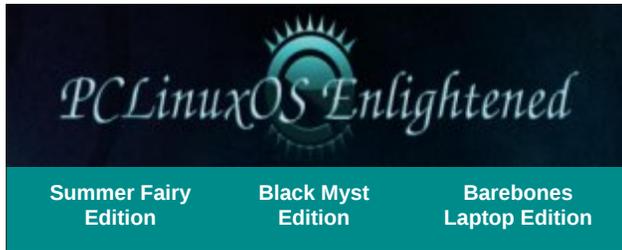
Summary

Because Gnome Schedule is a Python app, it doesn’t pull in a lot of Gnome dependencies. As such, Gnome Schedule is included on my Xfce installations, which is where I first “became friends” with it.

Gnome Schedule is a powerful tool that allows you to perform tasks at a time when your computer typically isn’t in use, like while you are sleeping. It also allows you to run virtually any command on a

schedule. The latter is the way I use it. I have some custom scripts (meaning ones I wrote myself) that I run to record "The Walking Dead" off of my TV tuner card every week when it airs.

Gnome Schedule goes a long way in buffering the user from the often perceived complications of trying to hand-code a crontab entry yourself, on the command line. You definitely owe it to yourself to give Gnome Schedule a look and discover how it can help you automate some routine tasks that you may repeatedly perform on your system.



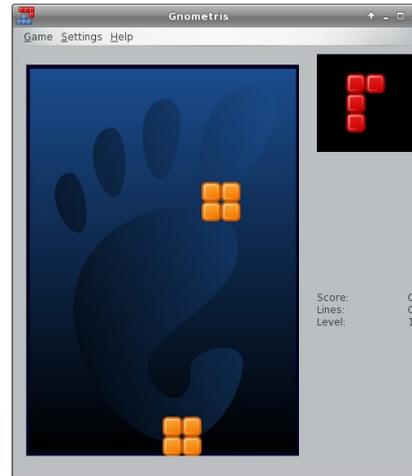
Gnome 2.32: Gnome Games

by Meemaw

While I'm not a big gamer, I do occasionally like a game or two. In Gnome, I installed the package Gnome Games. It is a collection of many popular computer games. The [Gnome Games Wiki](#) says:

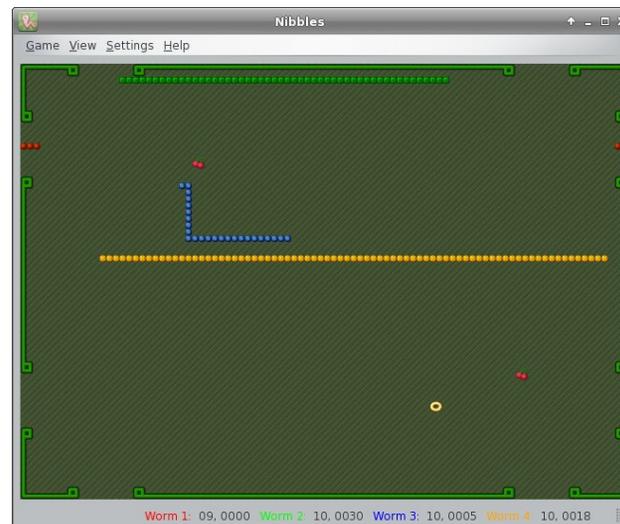
***GNOME Games** is a collection of fifteen small "five-minute" games in a variety of styles and genres for the GNOME desktop.*

Gnometriz is a version of the classic game Tetris, where different shapes fall and one must arrange them so each whole horizontal line



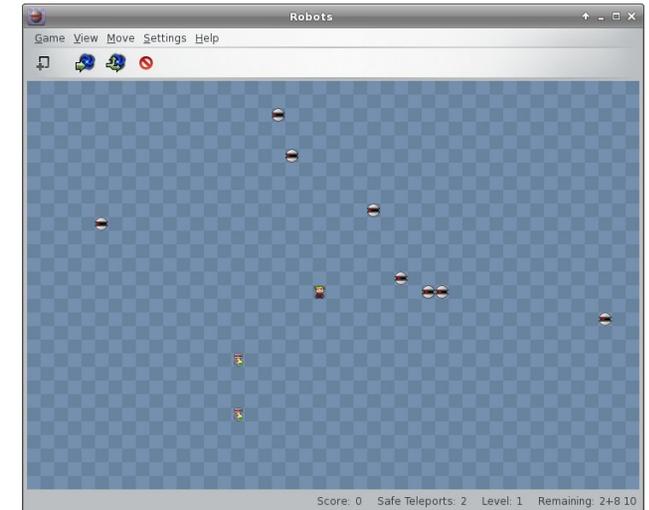
is complete. As soon as it is, the line disappears and all tiles drop to the bottom. As you proceed through the game the shapes drop faster. If you fill up the board and a shape can't drop, the game is over.

drop faster. If you fill up the board and a shape can't drop, the game is over.



In **Nibbles** (center, bottom), you control a worm or a snake. You are moving around the board eating diamonds (the round yellow circle at the lower right of the board). You are competing with up to 6 computer-generated worms competing for the same diamonds. Every time you eat one you get longer, and walls appear in other levels, so navigation around the board gets more difficult. If you run into a wall or another worm, you start over at the length you were at the beginning of the game.

In **Robots**, you are in a space with several Robots trying to kill you. You can use your mouse or keyboard to move away from them or use a limited



number of 'teleports' to get away. Your aim is to get them to collide with each other and explode. If you can escape and blow them all up, you win.

In the **Boards** section, you have Chess, Five or More, Four-in-a-Row, Iagno and Mahjong.

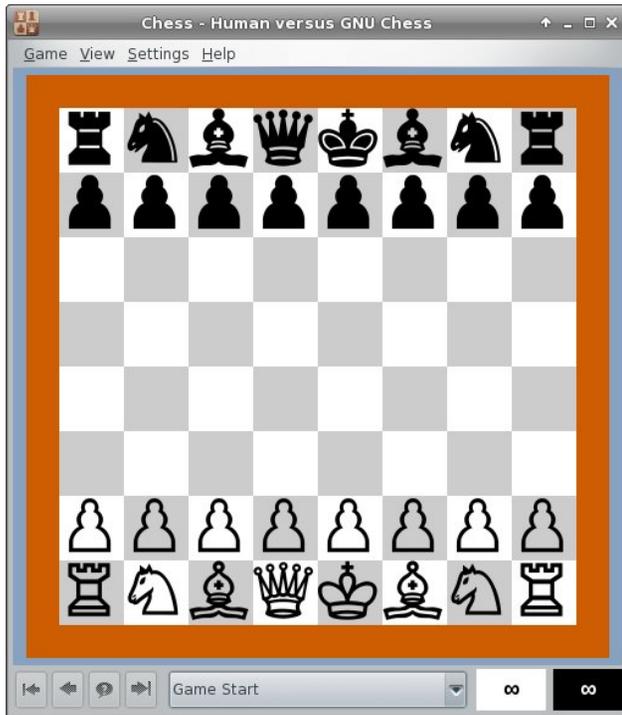
The GNOME Games Wiki



The game icons shown above from left to right are Lights Out, Five or More, Four in a Row, Chess, Gnometriz, Iagno, Klotski, Mahjong, Mines, Nibbles, Robots, Swell Foop (or Same Gnome), Tali, Tetravex, and Sudoku. However, besides the games the wiki shows at the top of the main page, I got Aisle Riot Solitaire, Blackjack and Freecell Solitaire but not Lights Out when I installed the PCLinuxOS package.

I think it is a nice assortment of games! You get a few arcade and board games, some are puzzle, and some are card games. In this article I will show a screenshot of each game in the PCLinuxOS package, and give a brief description of each.

In the **Arcade** section are Gnometriz, Nibbles and Robots.

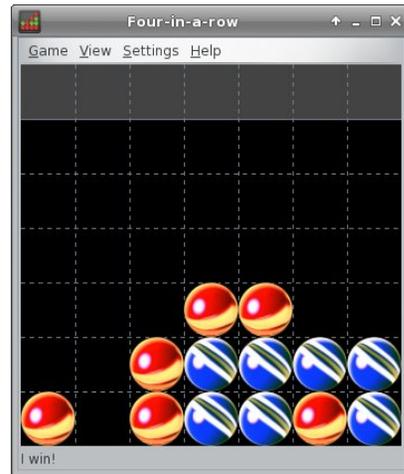


This is classic **Chess** (which I have never played). You can configure it to show a 2D or 3D view.

In **Five or More**, your aim is to clear the board by lining up five or more of the same color marble, while the board is filling with marbles. You can click on one and move it to where you want it, if there is open space on the board. For example, I can move the



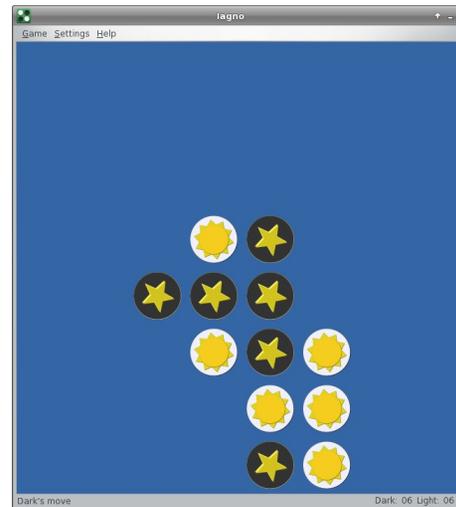
orange marble in the lower left corner to the vertical line of orange marbles to cause them to disappear, but the pink one next to the top on the left can't be moved because there are marbles surrounding it. The game is over when the board is full or empty.



Four-in-a-Row is the same as the commercial game, Connect Four. You play against the computer, dropping your pieces from the grey area at the top, while the computer does the same. You have to make a line of four pieces in any

direction, while blocking the computer from doing the same thing. As you can see, I have lost to the computer as its blue pieces have already formed a line of 4 across.

Iagno (right) is the Gnome version of Reversi. You play against the computer. When you place a piece on the board, all of the computer's pieces in between two of yours are captured and change to match yours.



However, computer can then place another piece and capture any of yours that are between its two. The game is over when the board is full. The winner is the one with the most pieces.

Mahjongg is, of course, the classic matching game. You click on two matching tiles and they are removed from the board. The aim is to clear the



board in the least time possible. The catch is that you can't remove a tile that is 'blocked' - that is, if there is a tile on each side of it. A tile has to be 'open' on at least one side to be removed. In the partially finished game above, the tile at top left has a match in the right side of the third row from the bottom, but it can't be used yet because it's blocked. The tile with the 4 dots to its right has to be removed first.

In the **Cards** section are Aisle Riot Solitaire, Blackjack, Freecell Solitaire and, for some reason, Tali.

Aisle Riot Solitaire contains 86 different versions of Solitaire. When you open it for the first time, the

Gnome 2.32: Gnome Games



default starting game is Klondike. You can choose the game you want to play by clicking on Game > Select Game. I play Klondike, Freecell, Spider and Gaps, but there are plenty more from which to choose!

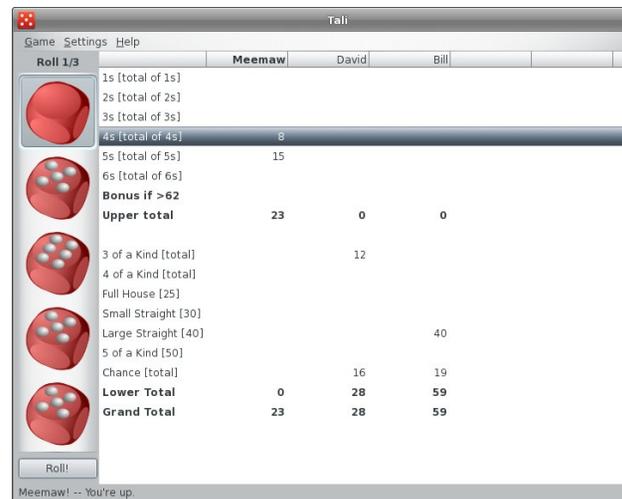


You are playing **Blackjack** (above) against the computer. You can choose how much to wager, and play the hand however you wish, clicking to deal

another card, or using the 'H' to Hit and the 'S' to Stand. Your balance is down in the status bar.



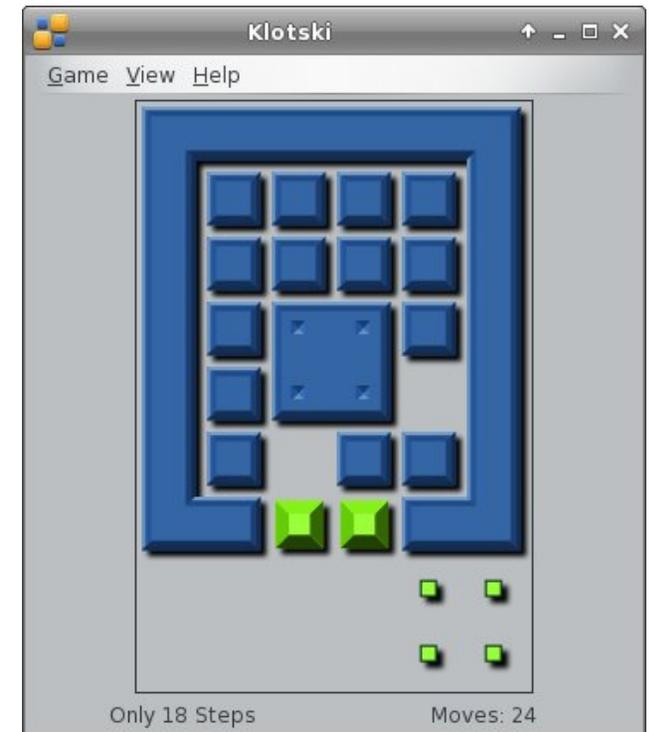
If all you ever play is **Freecell** (above), then having that as a stand-alone game is pretty handy.



While it is in the cards section, **Tali** is actually a dice game. It's the Gnome version of the popular game Yahtzee. You can play against up to 5 computer opponents. Each turn is 3 rolls, during which you are trying to get the highest score for each category. You keep the dice you want and roll the rest.

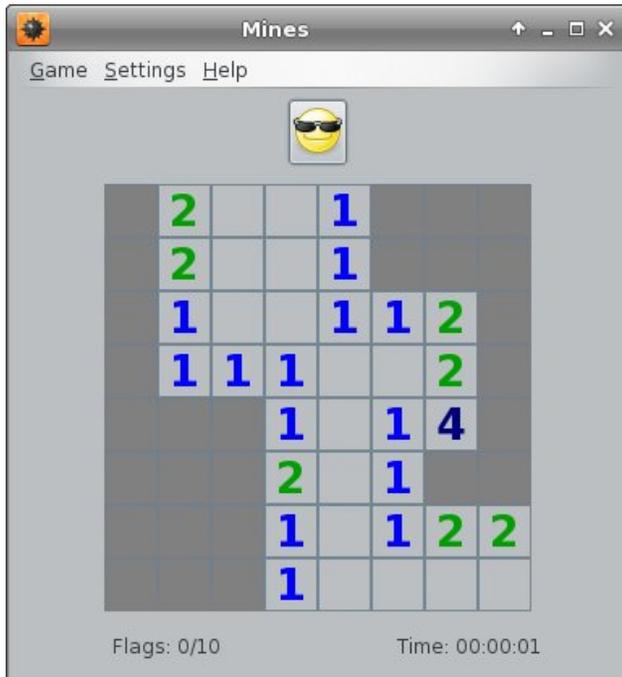
The **Puzzles** section has some of the previously mentioned games, plus Klotski, Mines, Same Gnome, Sudoku and Tetravex.

In **Klotski** (next page, top left), you have to move the large blue square out of the board through the opening where the green squares are. To do that, you must move the small blue squares out of the way so your path is clear. The green squares don't move, and the large blue square is the only square that's allowed out of the outer frame. You have



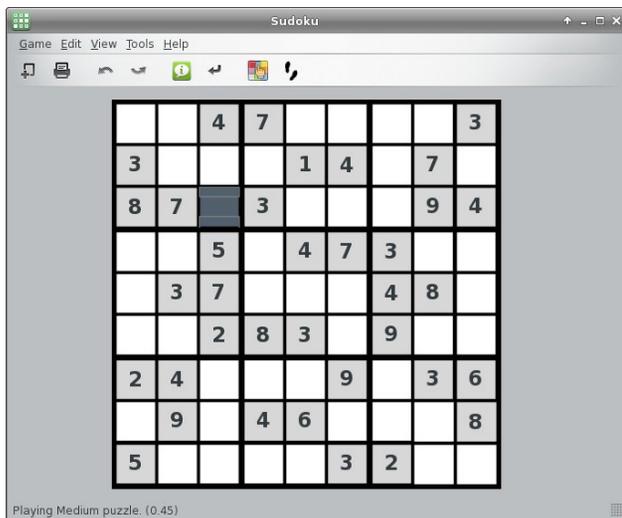
solved the board when the large square is placed over the four small green squares in the lower right of the window. The window shown is level 1, and they get much harder!

In **Mines**, you are trying to find and mark mines that are hidden on the board. When you carefully left-click on a square, the numbers that appear show you how many mines are in the vicinity so, hopefully,

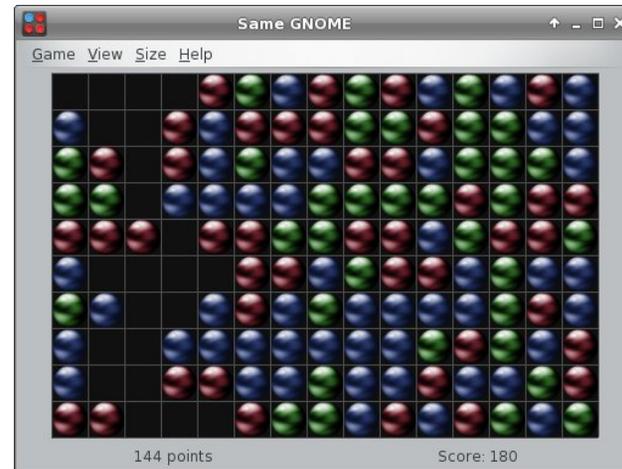


you can mark what you believe is the location of each mine (by right-clicking the board in that spot).

Sudoku is the number puzzle where you fill in the numbers 1 through 9. The catch is that each section



of the grid can ONLY have one of each number, PLUS each line and column can have only one of each number. So... if you are filling in the darker square, that 3 x 3 section already has 3, 4, 7 and 8, so your possibilities are 1, 2, 5, 6 and 9. However, the line that square is in has a 9 in it, and the column it's in has a 2 and a 5, so your choices are narrowed down to 1 and 6. Once you decide which one will work, do the rest of them the same way.



Same Gnome (top right) is a game we see everywhere. On the Gnome Games site, it is also called Swell Foop, but I've also seen it on Yahoo as



Bricks Breaking or in KDE as Same Game. You click on a group of 2 or more like-colored balls, and they disappear. Any balls above them fall down into the empty spaces. Your aim is to clear the board.

Tetravex is a number matching game. Your aim is to place the tiles into the board on the left in such a way that when you are finished, the tile edges that you place side by side have the same numbers. I've placed one in the center. The one I place to its right will need to have a number 5 on the left side to match the right side of the tile I've already placed. When all tiles are placed, all numbers must match.

Synaptic also adds another menu item to Games. The **Other** section has Tali and Same Gnome in it.

Have fun with Gnome Games!



Visit Us On IRC

- Launch your favorite IRC Chat Client software (xchat, pidgin, kopete, etc.)
- Go to freenode.net
- Type "/join #pclosmag" (without the quotes)

Some PCLinuxOS Gnome Post Installation Tips

by **sarcastic_bastard (David Lally)**

The following is a list of common tasks I find necessary to do after install and rebooting, as well as a few extras that have been worked out over time to fix a few annoyances. I thought by putting all of this in the one spot, it might be of help to someone, and can look thru and see what steps you may have left out that you might think are useful to you.

Ok, downloaded and installed Gnome on my main desktop, dual-booting with Win7 (which I need for certain work requirements). I give 12 GB to /, 4 GB to swap, and the rest (180 GB or so) to /home.

I have another box with Mint 9 that i use as a central repository for all my files, acting as a file-server (via NFS and Samba), torrent box (Transmission), and as a BOINC client. Since it's free most of the time, it may as well be doing something useful.

After installing and rebooting, setup with root and user credentials, then log in. For myself, I setup as root, then logged into it, since I needed to change a couple things for the user ID, due to the Mint 9 user ID. Went into Control Center and created user and group "david," and manually set the user ID to 1000 instead of 500 (which is the default). A user ID of 1000 is what Mint/Ubuntu uses as default, and I was having share issues (with earlier installs) until I clued on to why. Set that up, log out of root, and then log in as user.

Open terminal, "su" to switch to root, and run

```
"echo -e "MDV_MENU_STYLE=upstream" >> /etc/sysconfig/menustyle"
```

to change the PCLinuxOS Gnome menu back to the standard Gnome menu, as I much prefer its categories and layout. I personally find the standard Gnome menu much easier to work with, but you may be happier with it as it is.

Move the Show Desktop applet from bottom-right to bottom-left. Right-click on it and untick "Lock to panel", then do same to the little "Window List" icon at bottom right. Then right click on the Show Desktop icon again, and select "Move", dragging it all the way to far left, leaving Window List icon (the little upright rectangle with a dot at the center) just to the right of it. Then right click on both and lock them in place again.

Add the Trash applet next to the Workplace switcher at the bottom-right. Right click on the bottom panel, and select Add to Panel. Select the Trash applet from the list available, dragging it down to the bottom right. I stick it just to left of Workplace Switcher icon, but you may prefer the right, or somewhere else altogether. I definitely find it useful having it just a click away.



Open Control Center > System > Manage Date and Time. Set to my/your country and locale. Enable Time Network protocol, and select server nearest my/your location

In Control Center, go to Network and Internet > Set up new network interface. Choose wireless/ethernet/however you connect, then your network interface (eg. eth0) , then for "Please select your connection protocol" I recommend leaving as the default "Automatic IP", then for IP settings, leave at "Get DNS servers from DHCP" checked (this ensures your IP is set by your router's DHCP server), while making sure to set your hostname below (whatever name you want your PC called on the network). Complete the setup with defaults, and finish. If you are already connected, it will momentarily close the connection and recreate it, with the added details now. Wireless connection will ask for your wireless password during setup. Be sure to enter it correctly, as it is easy to fail to connect if you get it wrong. Your connection sets up, and your PC now has a properly set hostname. Even if you run thru Ethernet, and are already connected, I still suggest doing this. It will at least provide the PC with a proper hostname.

Open Synaptic, and select the repo to one nearest me/you. Then, click on Reload so it has the most up to date list of packages on the repo. I choose Internode, since it is close, well maintained and regularly updated. Check to see if your ISP mirrors the repo. If so, it should be faster for you. If you are an Internode customer, you'll be able to download from it quota-free. I used this a lot when I was using them at one house I was at.

Right-click on the clock at the top right, select Preferences, and make sure details are correct (Location, Weather details, etc). Set up properly, you

should get your local weather shown beside the clock, which is quite handy.

Ensure all drives are mounted correctly in the PCLinuxOS Control Center. They should be, but often your Windows drives/NTFS are not, and that is up to you whether to leave them unmounted or not.

Set up Video card in PCC. I like to do this to make sure it is using the Proprietary driver for my Nvidia card, as I want/need hardware acceleration.

Use the `chown` command (as "root") in a Terminal to reclaim ownership of the files on my storage drives

(eg. "`chown -R david:david /media/MY_STUFF /media/STORAGE-1TB /media/Hitachi-1TB`").

Open Nautilus, go to Edit > Preferences > Display. Set the top option to size, the second option to type, then Ok and close. Feel free to experiment and see which settings suit you best. I find this works for me. Also, make sure to untick "Show hidden files and folders." Otherwise, you'll have the view of all your "hidden" folders clogging up your view.

In Nautilus, I also drag all my commonly accessed folders to the left pane as shortcuts. This saves me a lot of time chasing them down, and makes them easily accessible.

I installed Guake, a drop-down terminal, as I like having a terminal at hand, without getting in the way, or needing to be launched separately all the time. Once installed, run it, then it will be sitting in your tray ready to be used. By default, F12 will activate it, dropping it into your view, and F12 again will make it retract. To ensure it starts automatically when you login, go to System > Preferences > Startup Applications, and look for Guake. It will be there, but not ticked/activated by default. Enable, and enjoy. You'll find it very handy if you use command-line/Terminal at all.

Install Comix as a reader for my digital comics (.cbr and .cbz files). Make sure it is set as the default viewer. Otherwise, it attempts to open them with the Archive Manager, which is no good for viewing them.

Install Dropbox and set it up. I find it handy to keep a copy of certain files and documents at all times at hand, and when moving around from the desktop to the netbook, to the notebook, and other desktops in the house, it's much simpler to keep them all synchronised and at hand. I used to copy them around, but those changes weren't always copied if I was forgetful. Dropbox fixes this.

I install and use Kompozer for simple web-page creation. I came up with the idea a while ago, as I tend to forget to save my bookmarks and assorted fave sites, so I created a simple Home-page and added all the sites I commonly visit (here included), as well as add anywhere new I find of interest and want to make sure I can find again (my memory is pitiful). Simple page, add the links, then names/descriptions. I save this in my Dropbox folder, so any changes/additions I make are reflected across all copies, and it's always up to date with my wanderings.

Next, I install privoxy (<http://www.privoxy.org/>) from the repos. I use it to filter out a lot of adverts and assorted cr*p on the web. Since I tend to use and install multiple web-browsers (Firefox, Chromium, Opera, etc) it's simple to install, then make sure that browser is set to point at it as a proxy. In Firefox, go to Edit > Preference > Advanced > Network > Settings, set to Manual Proxy Configuration, then set HTTP Proxy and SSL proxy to 127.0.0.1 and the ports to 8118 for both. Now, all your web-traffic is filtered thru Privoxy, and a lot of junk is never loaded.

For a lot of good Firefox extensions, I go here <http://www.gnu.org/software/gnuzilla/addons.html>. These are all Free, and released under Free Software licences. I've discovered a few nifty ones

here that I had not even heard of before. There are far too many to wade through on the main extensions site. My main ones are **Scriptish** (Greasemonkey fork, seems to work better), **Greasefire** (when you are on a page/site, it can show you what scripts are available for the site, etc), **Secure Login** (operates like Opera's "Wand" and enables you to login to sites you visit with one click, after you've logged in then first time and it remembers your details) and **DownThemAll** (mass downloader). Aside from those, my faves are the **Evernote extensions** (only started using this a month or so ago, and it is sooooo useful), **Flagfox**, **Video Downloadhelper** (for ripping vids and picture galleries from sites, including Youtube, etc), **Ghostery** (<https://www.ghostery.com/>, very handy, since it blocks a lot of sites snooping on your browsing, also shows the surprising number of sites that follow you around the web), **HTTPS-Everywhere** (automatically makes sites use HTTPS for added security if available), and **Social Fixer** (previously BetterFacebook). There's plenty to choose from.

I also install the Netusage extension for Firefox also (<http://netusage.iau5.com/>). It's great for me, but could also be useful for others to keep track of their net usage, and how much quota is used/remains. It's a must. You install it, restart the browser, go to View > Toolbars > Customize, and drag it onto your browser bookmark where you like, then right-click on it, and choose Preferences, adding your details so that it can grab your stats from your ISP. I have mine set to update hourly. It's very useful, allowing me to keep good track of my usage.

Oh, and before I forget, install libdvdcss2 if you plan to be able to play/read/rip/backup encrypted (commercial) DVDs. I also install DVDDecryptor under WINE (after installing WINE, of course) to rip my DVDs to hard drive, where I usually then point Handbrake (which is also a strong recommendation to install) at them to rip the disc contents to a .MKV file (or, if you prefer, MP4) for local playback. This spares my discs from excessive

movement, scratching, fingerprints, etc, since I do most of my viewing at my PC anyway, and only dig them out if actually planning to use the (region unlocked) DVD player with the TV. Also, if using DVDDecryptor, when you first run it, it won't see the DVD drive on your machine. Go to Tools > Settings > I/O, and change it to ASPI, and OK. Also, by default it rips them to a folder inside the WINE folder, which means you have to burrow down after them. I change this by going to Tools > Settings > General, go to Default Destination, and switch from Choose Automatically to Semi Automatic, allowing you to designate a folder to save the unencrypted results to.

For excellent CD rips, I prefer Rubyripper-gui, and set it to rip them to both OGG and FLAC. The OGG's are for loading onto my Samsung Galaxy phone (saves room), and the FLAC's are for playing from PC, etc (better quality, lossless sound).

GPrename is an excellent bulk-renaming utility. I used to use Pyrenamer, and it's still good, but I find GPrename to have just that bit more options and features, so it wins.

I sometimes download from certain sharing sites (Rapidshare, etc), and for that, jDownloader is excellent, and proven to be best of all the tools I've tested for this purpose, as well as being cross-platform (also available on Windows). It also can be used as a general download manager. It's not let me down yet.

VideoCut is an open source desktop application specialized for creating compositions of screenshots from video files. I use this to create a screenshots sample with each DVDrip. It's quick and simple.

If you haven't already done so, log out and back in to allow most changes to take effect. Now you should have a desktop that caters to virtually all your needs. If not, search and add more. Choice is a wonderful thing.



Screenshot Showcase



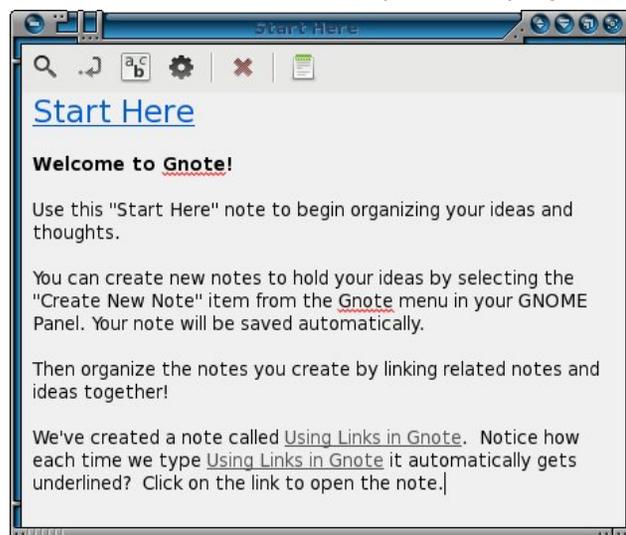
Posted by ongoto.

Gnome 2.32: GNote & Glista

by Meemaw

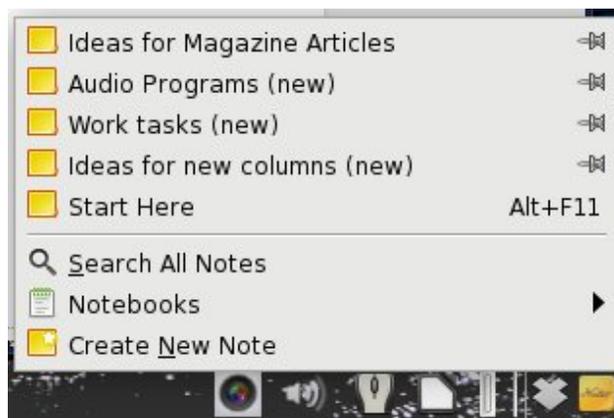
Sometimes you just want a simple little note-taking program, or maybe just a sticky note to remind you of things you have to do. Gnome has a couple of handy little programs just for those types of tasks.

GNote, according to the [Gnome Live Wiki](#), is the same note-taking application as Tomboy. When you start GNote for the first time, you get the window shown below, which introduces you to the program.



GNote will put an icon in your system tray, and if you wish, that's all you will see. Left clicking on the icon (yellow square in lower right corner) will pop up a menu with your existing notes and the option to create a new note. If you open a new or existing note, it can stay on your desktop as long as you wish.

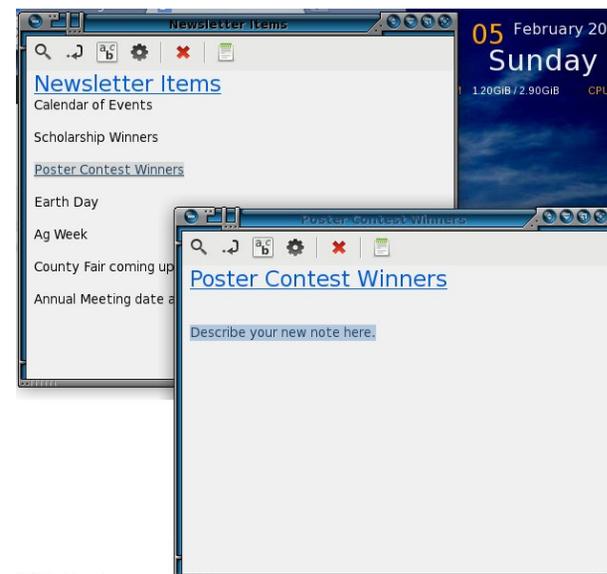
If you choose 'Create New Note', a window will pop up labeled 'New Note #' The # designates a number,



which corresponds to the number of notes you have created. (For me, this was New Note 6.) You should highlight that title and change it to something more meaningful. From the window above, you see the titles of my notes. Nothing complicated, but meaningful to me.

These can evolve into an outline of sorts. Your main note has a list of items in it, and each item can be 'linked' to its own note. In my job, I do a newsletter which contains many articles about recent happenings or coming events. In the note below, I have listed many items that may be in the upcoming newsletter. By highlighting one of the items, and clicking on the second tool in the toolbar (the arrow which circles around and points to a dot), you can link the item to a new note with that item as the title. In the new note I can write the article, list the major points or even link that note to another one.

Another feature of GNotes is that you can place your notes into Notebooks to organize them even more. I have two notebooks so far: Meemaws and Work. All the notes from my job are in the Work notebook, and the magazine notes are in the Meemaws notebook. From the menu, you can create a new note by itself,



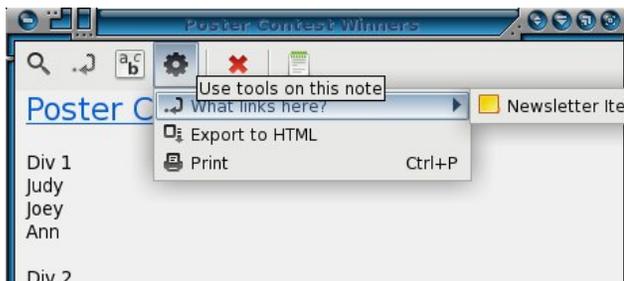
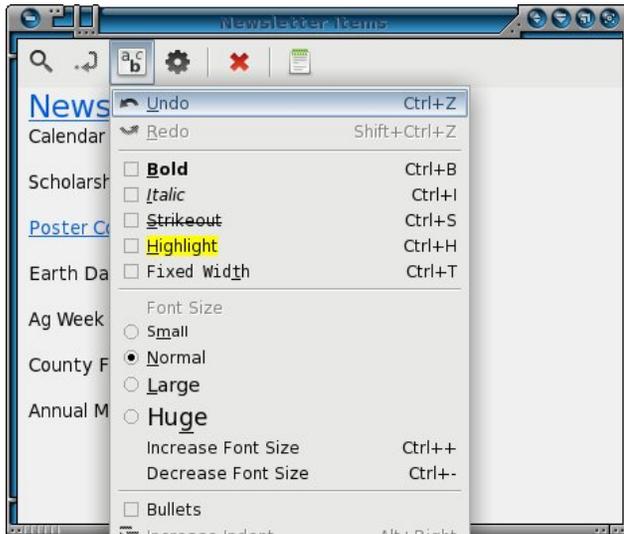
or you can choose to create a note inside a specific notebook. Those choices are at the bottom of the menu.



The toolbar on each note has a couple of handy items. The button that looks like a paper with an a,b,c on it is the text properties button. You can format your text using this button.

The next tool (gear) is the note tools button. You can export the note in html, print the note or see what note(s) are linked to it. There are a few other tools you can get, but these are the program defaults.

The red X is, of course, to delete your note. Make sure you really want to delete it! The last icon



(looking like a notebook) is to insert the current open note into the notebook of your choice.

Program preferences are available when you right-click the GNote icon in your tray. To close GNote, the right-click menu also has the choice "Quit"

Glista is a simple to-do list program. According to the [Glista website](#), it is written in Gtk+ so it integrates well with the Gnome desktop.

Glista also puts an icon in your system tray when you start it. But when you left-click it, you get a single window.

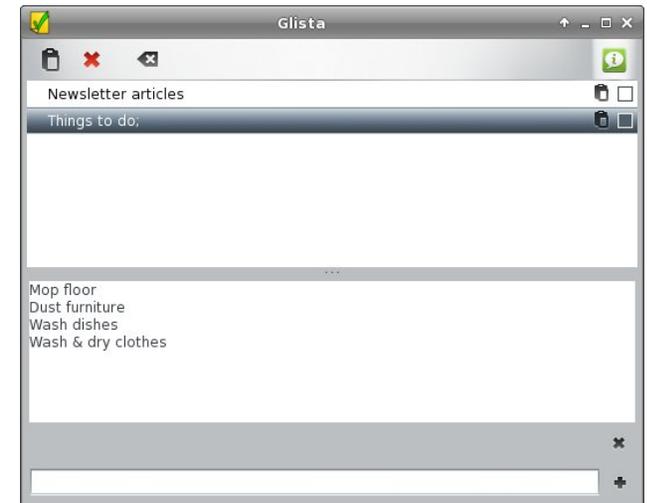
in the line at the bottom, then click the plus sign to the right.



You will now see the subject at the top of the window. If you have more than one subject for a list, they will be arranged in alphabetical order.



Notice in the list, two of the subjects have a little clipboard icon to the right. This means that items have been added to the lists. As soon as I added items to the Grocery List, the clipboard appeared there, too. If you double-click the title of the list, you can change the title. If you double-click the clipboard, the list appears in the bottom of the window. In addition, single-clicking the clipboard at the top will open the list at the bottom for whatever task you have chosen (next page, top).



When you complete the task list, simply click the box at the right of the clipboard. That is Glista's indication that the task is complete and Glista puts a line through the task title (next page, bottom).



When you need to clean up this window, simply click the "Clear Done Items" button, which looks like a box with the left side pointed, containing a white X. All your completed tasks will be removed. To remove a single task, even if you haven't marked it as completed, choose it and click the red X. To close the program, right-click the panel icon and choose Quit.

These two programs are small, but very useful.

Gnome 2.32: Customize Your Menu

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

As you might imagine, since Gnome is one of the two most popular desktop environments for Linux, there are a lot of applications that allow you to tailor Gnome to better reflect how you work with it. The ability to customize your Gnome menu is no exception.

Stock Gnome Menu

Before I go showing you custom Gnome menu configuration applications, we should first briefly review the layout of the stock Gnome menu. As I previously pointed out when we started the series on Gnome 2.32, a “fresh-out-of-the-box” PCLinuxOS Zen Mini installation does not use the typical Gnome menu and panel layout. In fact, one of the first things I did after installing Zen was to return Gnome 2.32 to its more usual appearance with two panels and the usual Gnome menu items.

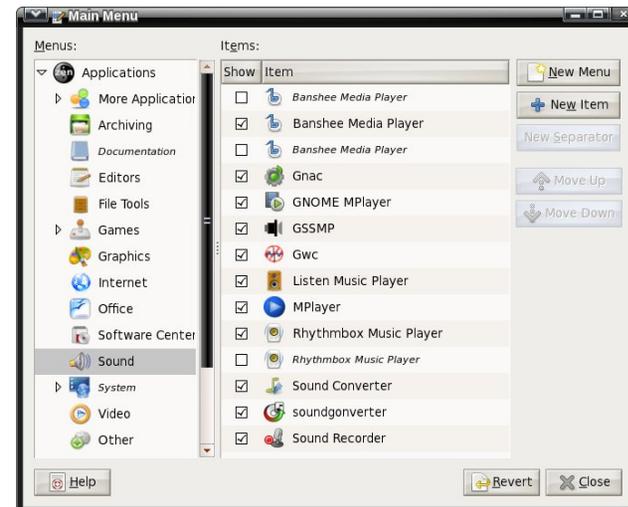
Under the “Applications” entry of the stock Gnome menu, you will find all of your installed applications neatly arranged into the standard menu structure used for PCLinuxOS.

The “Places” menu gives you quick access to a selection of common folders in your home directory. If you want a folder to show up in the places menu, simply drag the folder from the right pane in Nautilus to the lower left panel.

The “System” menu holds the menu entries for governing Gnome’s preferences, tools for administrative tasks, the Gnome Control Center, plus the Gnome about box and options to lock your screen from prying eyes, logging out the current user, or shutting down your session or computer.

Alacarte

Alacarte is the Gnome menu editor. You can launch it from a terminal session by typing `alacarte &` on the command line, or by selecting the “Main Menu” application from Applications > More Applications > Configuration menu entry.

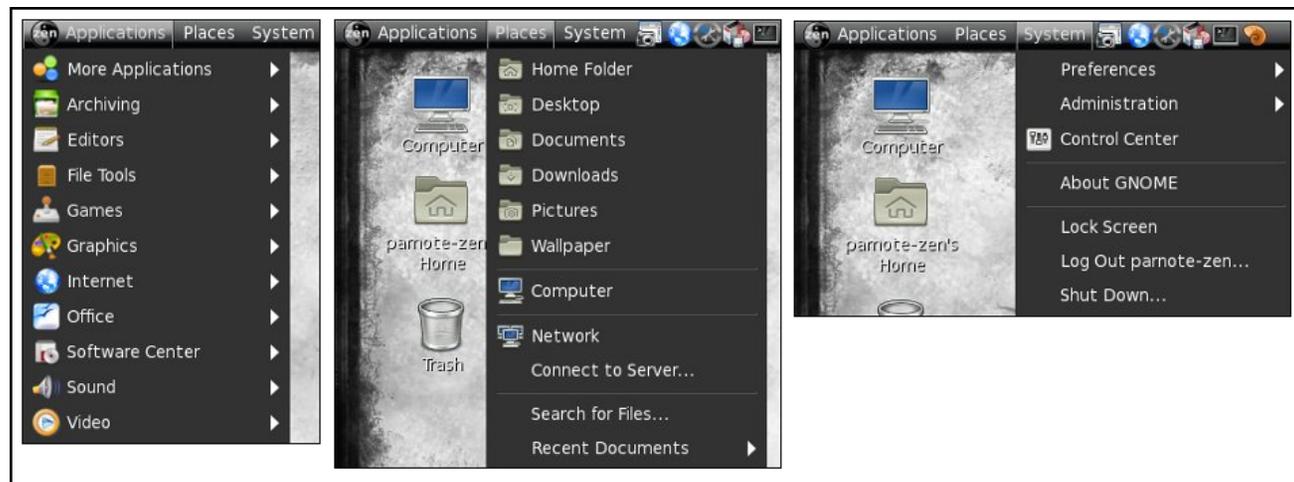


Gnome’s Alacarte menu editor.

Taking a look at the Alacarte window, it is quickly apparent how easy it is to use. Simply click on a menu item’s check box, checking or clearing the check next to it.

In case you can’t fathom why you might want to edit the Gnome menu, let me provide a possible scenario for you. Say you are setting up a computer that will be used by multiple users. As the administrator, you can go in and remove menu entries in the Applications menu that you may want to limit access to. Alternatively, you can use Alacarte to “clean up” the Application menu of items you rarely or never use. In either case, the application is still installed and can be accessed by a knowledgeable user from the command line, but the menu entry can be toggled on or off to suit individual tastes and needs.

Because Alacarte doesn’t pull in a lot of Gnome-specific dependencies, it is also used as the defacto menu editor for Xfce – at the moment. It can also be



The stock Gnome menu

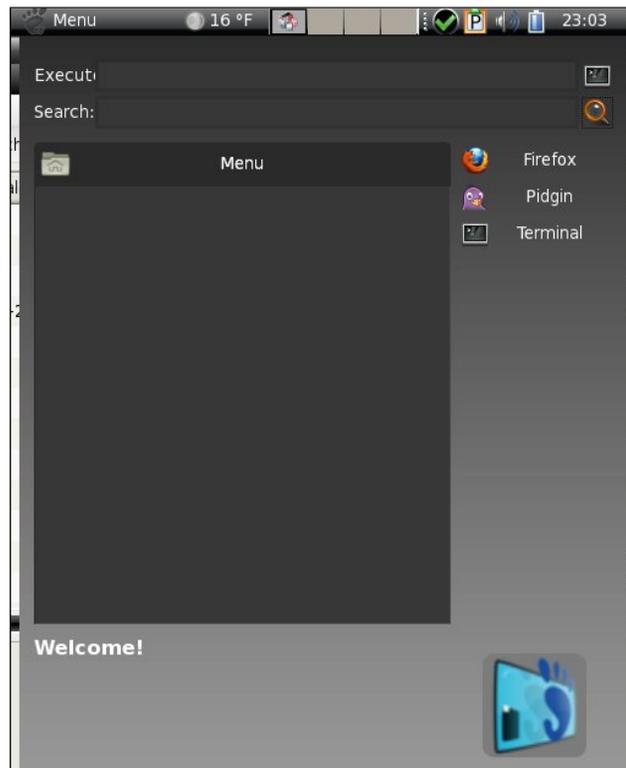


used to help manage the menu entries in other Linux desktop environments, like LXDE.

AGM: Advanced Gnome Menu

The Advanced Gnome Menu is a panel plugin written in Gtk+ and Python that is supposed to allow users to create their own custom menu, filled with their most commonly used applications.

Unfortunately, Advanced Gnome Menu hasn't seen active development since 2009, and the web site where you could download all the AGM plug ins is now defunct. While the source code is still available on the opendesktop.org web site (good for anyone who may wish to pick up the development reigns on this), AGM is of very little use without the plug ins.



AGM: Advanced Gnome Menu.

Also, since Gnome has moved on to the radically different 3.x version, it's doubtful that anyone is likely to resume active development on this promising plug in.

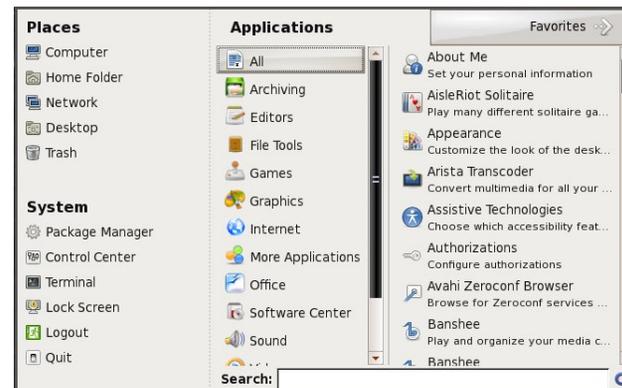
Mint Menu

Named after the Linux distro where it originated, the Mint Menu provides a neat, modern and organized appearance to the traditional Gnome menu that is very easy on the eyes.



Mint Menu main appearance.

Initially, Mint Menu opens to a screen displaying your favorite applications on the right two-thirds of the screen, while Places and System entries appear in the left one-third of the screen.



Mint Menu viewing all applications.

Gnome 2.32: Customize Your Menu

Selecting the "All applications" button in the upper right corner of the initial view brings up the view, shown above, that shows all of the application menu entries. They are either all shown, (as in the image below), or you can choose to view each subsection of the Gnome application menu to view the applications by sections.



Mint Menu also exhibits some flexibility regarding how it runs. It can run as a standalone application in a window on your desktop (like above), or you can run it as a panel plug in, which is the most likely way to use Mint Menu.

Summary

As you can see, Gnome provides several utilities to allow you to customize your Gnome menus. While Gnome has been often criticized for deliberately hiding configuration settings from their end users, it has also opened up the possibilities for additional apps to be written that fit well into the Linux way of doing things: apps that do one thing, and do it well.



Gnome 2.32: Guake & Other Popup Terminals

by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)

There are a few dropdown quake-like terminals available for Linux users. Yakuake is the one associated with the KDE desktop, and has quite a few Qt4 dependencies. Tilda can be used with most any desktop, and basically has only libconfuse as a dependency. Tilda's last package was released on June 29th, 2006, and is no longer in the PCLinuxOS repositories.

Terminator creates a window in which you can arrange multiple terminals in a grid. Version 0.95 is in the repositories. Version 0.96 has dropdown capabilities, but is still only available as testing packages and source code.

stjerm-terminal is another quake-like dropdown terminal. The source is available from [Google code](#). vterminal is described as "a dock and DE independent terminal applet for the masses." The source is available from [SourceForge](#).

[YeahConsole](#) turns an xterm into a gamelike console. This means it will slide down from top of your screen if you hit a shortcut key. It is associated with the YeahWM project and is available as source code.

In addition, there are web tutorials on how to configure gnome-terminal, konsole, xfce4-terminal and urxvt into dropdown terminals. We will be looking at the guake terminal, which is commonly associated with the Gnome desktop, and is available in the PCLinuxOS repositories. It has few dependencies, mostly python packages, and works well on almost any desktop.

My guake terminal is shown below. It usually has two tabs open with a folding@home client running in each tab. It also has some translucency, as well as text in the color I chose. The icon showing on the far left of the bottom window frame is simply a decorator. The buttons to the right of it are tab selectors. Each time a new tab is opened, an associated tab button is generated. The button to the far right is for adding a new terminal tab to the window.



The guake terminal has a few options. The first time the application is launched, the Guake properties window will be launched. The window has 5 tabs, each tab having a different set of configuration



options. After configuring guake and closing the window, the terminal will be running. Further configuration can be done by either selecting More Applications > Terminals > Guake Preferences from the main desktop menu, or by right-clicking on the running guake terminal and selecting Preferences.

Copy, paste, close tab and quit are other options selectable by right-clicking on the running guake window.



Beginning with the General tab, we first have the shell options. Default interpreter has a dropdown list of all installed user shells, with user shell being the default option. On PCLinuxOS, the user shell is generally /bin/bash unless the user changes it. Run command as a login shell is an option to do just that, login as a different user via a terminal emulator. Open new tab in current directory will begin the

guake session with two tabs open, the second one being in the user's desktop directory. I imagine this is for those users who download executables to their desktop and wish to run the executables from a terminal.

In the general options section, the first is an option to show a guake icon in the system tray or not. Enable popup notifications on startup will show startup messages on the desktop when guake is started. The next option is whether or not to prompt the user when the application is closed.

In the Main Window section, the stay on top option determines whether the window is above or below other windows on the desktop. Hide on lose focus determines whether the window will disappear when the desktop or another window is clicked. If

unchecked, the same keybinding that drops the window down will also hide it. Show tab bar is whether or not to show the bottom window decoration panel.

The Main Window height is set by using a slider bar.

Selecting the Scrolling tab, we have two main sections. In the General section, the show scrollbar option determines whether we have a method to

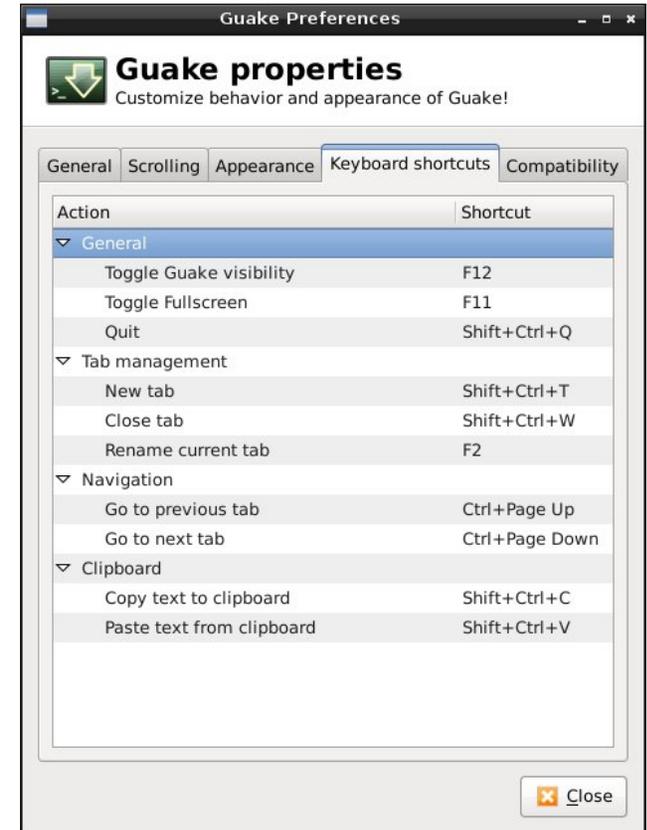
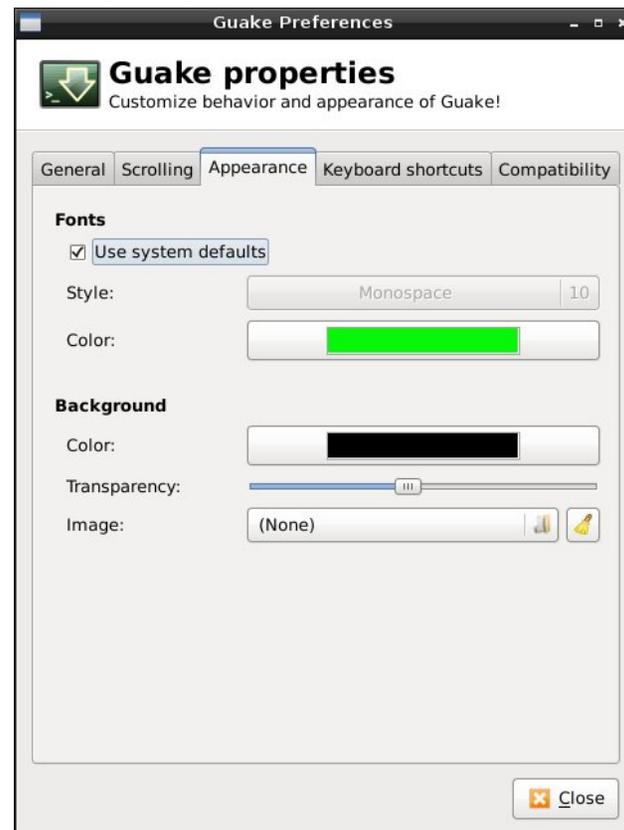
scroll backwards through the screen. The number of scrollbar lines can be selected.

In the Scroll section, I'm not sure what scrolling on output option does. The text scrolls down the window normally without this option selected. Scrolling on keystroke determines whether or not the

mouse can be used to scroll backwards through the screen's output.

Selecting the Appearance tab, we have two main sections. In the Fonts section, selecting use system defaults determines whether or not to use the system's default terminal fonts or custom ones. If the option is unchecked, the style button can be used to select both the font type and size. Selecting the color button gives us a color chart to choose from.

In the Background section, the color button gives us the same color chart to choose the background color from. The window's transparency level is selected using a slider bar. Selecting the image button gives us a file requester window from which to select a custom image for the window's background.



The Keyboard shortcuts tab gives us the keybindings window. All the actions shown are the only ones available for guake. Double-clicking one of the keyboard choices allows us to input the key binding to be used from the keyboard.

The Compatibility tab has only two item choices. Both the backspace key and delete key buttons have the same three options: ASCII delete, escape sequence or Control-H. ASCII delete removes the character ahead of the cursor's position. The escape sequence can be useful when connected to a remote system which does not recognize the delete key as input. For example the VT220 terminal uses the key sequence ESC [3 ~ to send a destructive backspace character. The destructive backspace removes the character behind the cursor's position. A Control-H keyboard sequence is used by some

systems as either a delete key or a destructive backspace. An ASCII 8 is a backspace character and an ASCII 127 is a delete character.

As you can see, guake can be customized to your personal preferences and to the situation the terminal is meant to deal with. Being able to reassign key bindings means that you can select ones that don't conflict with the keybindings of other applications.

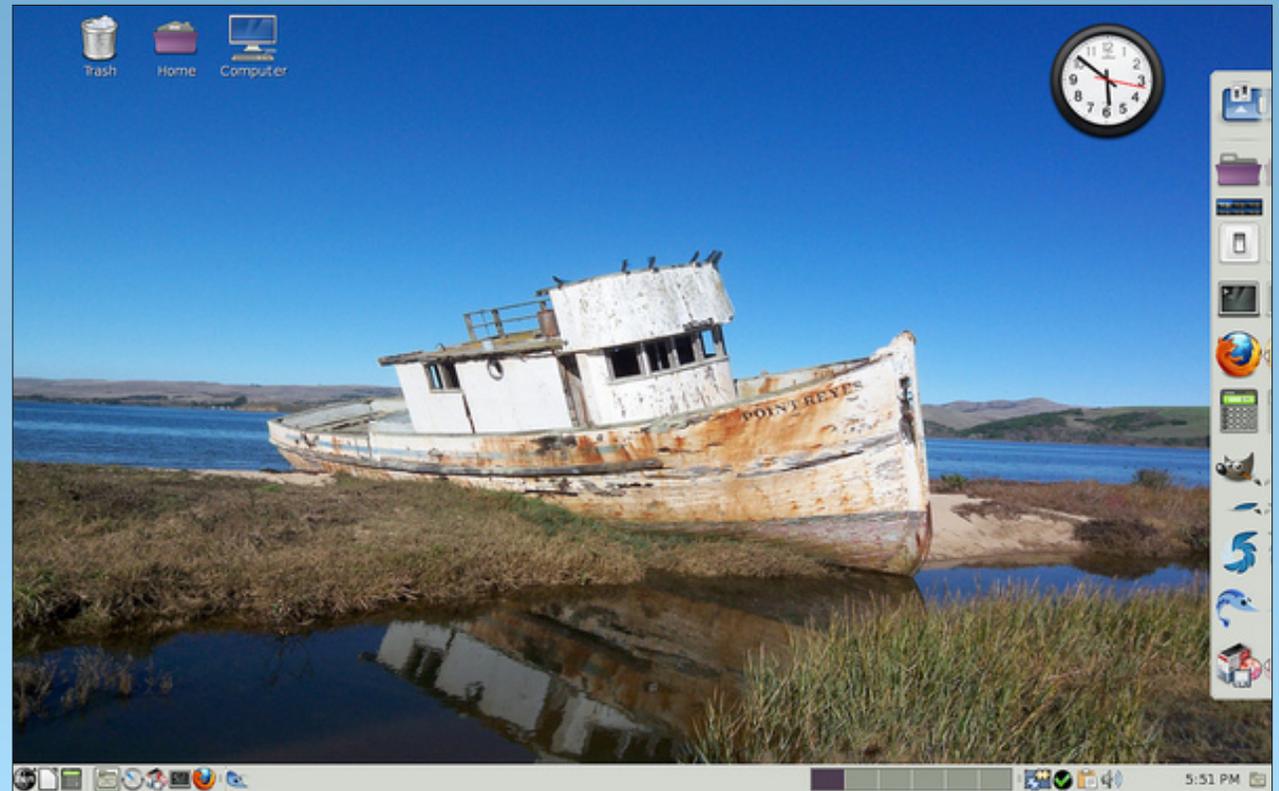
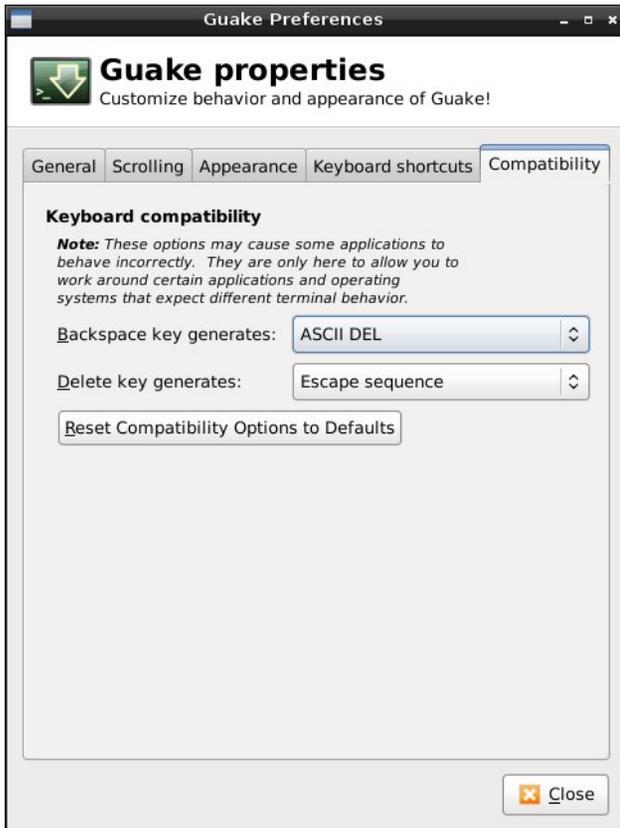


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Screenshot Showcase



Posted by konaexpress.

Gnome 2.32: Nine Re-Sounding Apps

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

There is no shortage of sound applications that have been specifically written for (or centered around) the Gnome desktop environment. Of course, many of these applications can be used in other Linux desktop environments, as well.

The criteria for inclusion as part of a Gnome 2.32 article was a) the description in Synaptic, b) being listed on the Gnome project site's Module Maintenance list, c) significant Gnome dependencies listed for a package in Synaptic, or d) my prior knowledge of a project belonging to (or catering to) the Gnome desktop. For example, the Python/Gtk+ app Exaile is a favorite of many users. But, it is not included because it's not dependent on Gnome. If your favorite app isn't listed below, it's simply because it didn't pass muster when the aforementioned criteria was applied.

So, without dilly-dallying around any more, let's look at the Gnome sound apps.

Banshee

Closely associated with Gnome, Banshee is a free/open source C#/Mono application, using the Gnome technologies and SQLite. It attempts to position itself as the "go-to" application for all of your multimedia needs, playing CDs, DVDs, digital music files, podcasts, Internet radio stations, audio books ... and just about any other multimedia format you can think of.

Unfortunately, Banshee in the PCLinuxOS repository is broken (at the time of this article being written), and will not launch on my copy of Zen Mini 07.11.

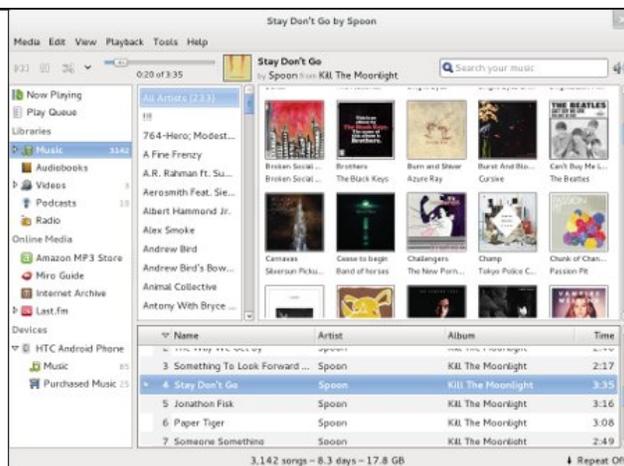


Image courtesy of the Banshee web site.

You can check out more information about Banshee by checking out the [Banshee home page](#).

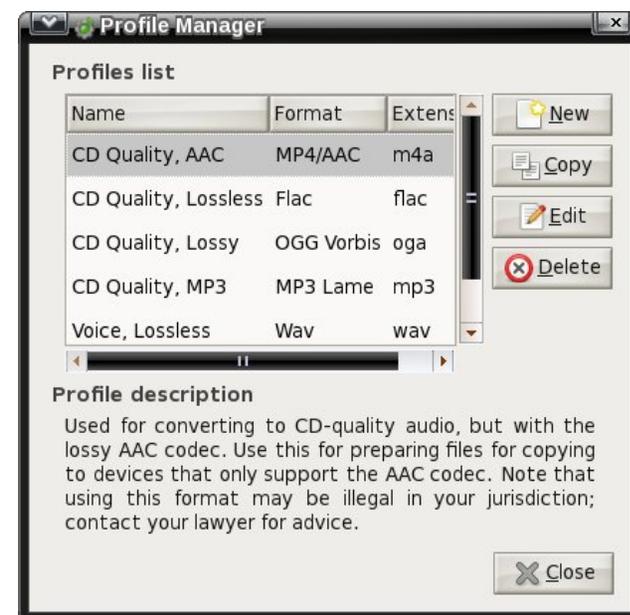
gnac: Gnome Audio Converter



Don't let the simple interface fool you. This application does one job – sound file format conversion – and does it well. To get started, click on the "+" icon and select the file(s) you want to convert. If you make a mistake and want to exclude

one of the added files from the conversion process, highlight the file and click on the "-" icon. To completely clear the list of queued files, click on the broom icon.

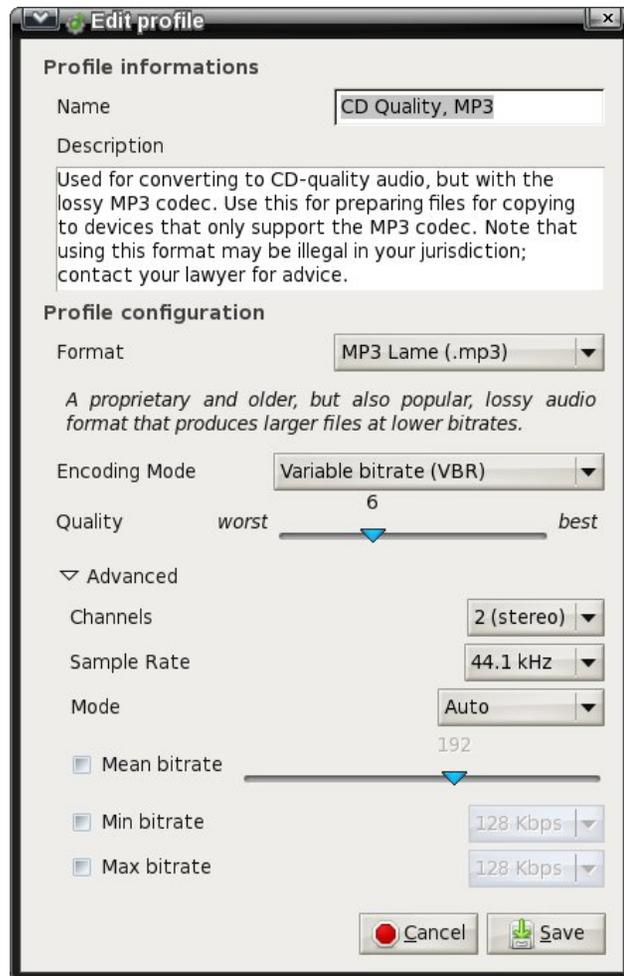
Next, click on the drop down list in the lower left corner, and select the format you want to convert to. If the format you want to convert to isn't listed, or if you want to see what parameters are applied, select a similar codec to use and click on the "Edit" button.



You will see a list of the predefined "profiles" listed in a dialog box similar to the one shown above. Select the one you want to alter (or select the "New" button on the right), and select the "Edit" button on the right.

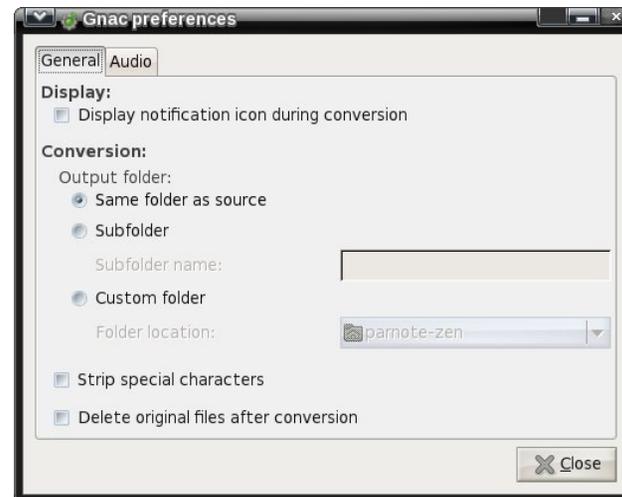
Using the "Edit Profile" dialog box (shown above), you can enter all of the variables that control the conversion of your sound file to the selected format.

Of course, different options may be presented with different formats, dependent upon what options your selected format supports.



Selecting the Edit > Preferences menu item will display the dialog box above. Set the general operation preferences for Gnome Audio Converter here. The “Audio” tab allows you to set a couple of options for how your converted sound files are saved. The [GAC home page](#) will fill you in on more information.

gssmp: Gnome Simple Stateful Music Player



With “simple” as part of its name, the Gnome Simple Stateful Music Player is exactly that. To start with, you need to choose the music you want to play. If you want to play all of the songs in a directory, simply choose the File > Play Directory menu item. GSSMP will start playback of the first audio file it finds in the selected directory, then proceed through the other audio files there, alphabetically. If you want to play a specific file, select the File > Play File menu item. Then, select the file you want to play.

You can also sync your music listening preferences with last.fm, if you choose, via the “Tools” menu. GSSMP also remembers the last file you were playing, and will allow you to directly access it via the “Recent” menu, in case you had to shut down GSSMP before you completed the playback of the file. The rest of the controls in the application window should be fairly self explanatory. The [GSSMP home page](#) will provide more information for you.

gwc: Gnome Wave Cleaner



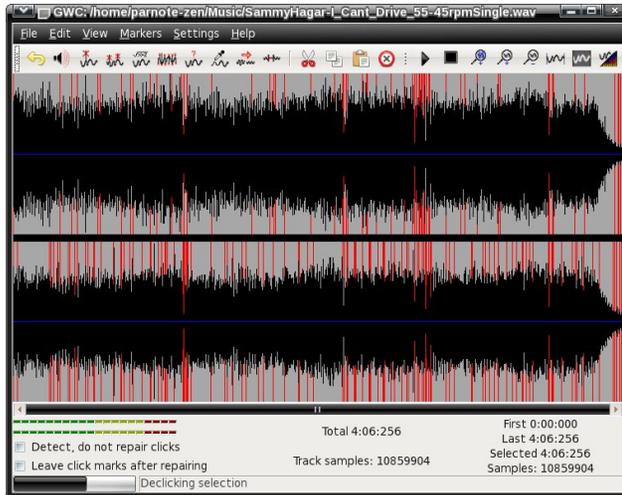
If you are one of the many MLU's (Mature LinuxUser s) in the PCLinuxOS forum, you most likely have a fairly extensive collection of music on vinyl records. I know I do. My wife got me a USB turntable as a present Christmas before last. In my leisure, I've been converting my old vinyl records to MP3 files that I can play on my assorted MP3 players and on my computer. No matter how hard you try, you cannot get rid of all the microscopic dust particles, not to mention the years of wear from listening to your vinyl records over and over again. Vinyl records DO wear out with repeated playings. Invariably, you will be left with a recording of your vinyl record tracks that contain “pops” and “clicks.” These are the direct result of all of that wear and microscopic dust.

Enter GWC, also known as Gnome Wave Cleaner. It's primary purpose is to automatically detect those “pops” and “clicks,” and remove them from the source file. You can run it once to get rid of the strong clicks, then again to scan and eliminate the weaker clicks. I recommend listening to the file after the first pass – you may be satisfied with the results after eliminating only the strong clicks.

As anyone who has worked with making digital copies of their vinyl music collection can attest to, old vinyl can also develop a “crackle” in the background that can also detract from having a clean digital copy. Fortunately, GWC also has the ability to remove that background “crackle” sound.

Keep in mind that GWC only works on sound files in the *.wav format, which is a good thing, since it is pretty much a universal lossless sound format. So, if you have recorded your vinyl tracks as MP3 files,

you will need to first convert them to the *.wav format. Don't worry – GWC will allow you to later resave your edited sound file as a *.mp3 file.



Prior to performing any action on your sound file, I recommend clicking your mouse on the black bar that separates the two sound channels (in a stereo file), then clicking on the “Select All” icon on the toolbar (next to last icon on the toolbar, at the upper right corner of the GWC window). This way, you will insure that both channels of your stereo file are analyzed for the editing you wish to perform. Otherwise, my initial use of GWC resulted in only the left channel being de-clicked, leaving the right channel untouched. Needless to say, I was still hearing “clicks” and “pops” in my sound file after attempting to remove the clicks, because the right channel had not been cleaned.

GWC can also “de-noise” your sound recording, as well as amplify your file. Most other sound editing functions can be done with a more complete sound editor, such as Audacity.

Just as many other Linux applications, GWC does one job, and does it exceptionally well. Let your ears be the judge. I know that I could certainly hear the

difference. I picked a song that I thought might give GWC difficulty (Sammy Hagar’s “I Can’t Drive 55”). However, GWC processed the file admirably and without any difficulty. GWC definitely deserves to be in your sound file editing and processing toolbox. Check out more about GWC by visiting the [GWC home page](#).

Listen



Written in Python for Gnome, Listen is a quite capable music manager and player. With Listen, you can playback your favorite songs, manage your music library, manage your iPod, make playlists, download album covers (and sync them with your iPod), burn an audio CD, retrieve data from Wikipedia when you play a song, view the lyrics of a song, retrieve statistics about your favorite songs, albums or artists, listen to web radio stations, and access to your last.fm account.

The latest version (0.6.5) is in the PCLinuxOS repository. While it can be used under other desktop environments, be forewarned that it will pull in a significant number of Gnome dependencies. You can visit the [Listen home page](#) for more information.

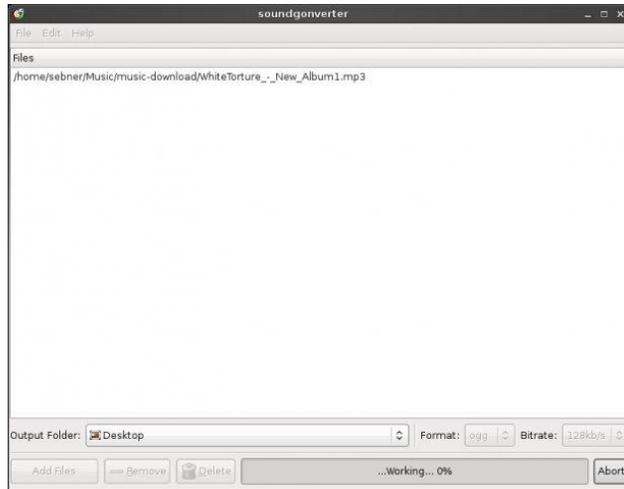
SoundConverter



Despite its simplistic appearance, Gnome’s SoundConverter is a powerful tool that automates conversion of various sound file formats. SoundConverter can read any input sound file that can be read by gstreamer, and output it to WAV, MP3, OGG, FLAC or AAC formats. You can specify the output format by selecting the Edit > Preferences menu, and changing the output format in the preferences dialog box. Additionally, SoundConverter can extract the audio from video files.

Written in Python, SoundConverter is a multithreaded application, that will use as many cores available to perform the file conversion as quickly as possible. Because of its multithreaded design, SoundConverter will convert multiple files simultaneously, placing each conversion process into its own thread. Visit the [SoundConverter home page](#) for more information.

SoundGonverter

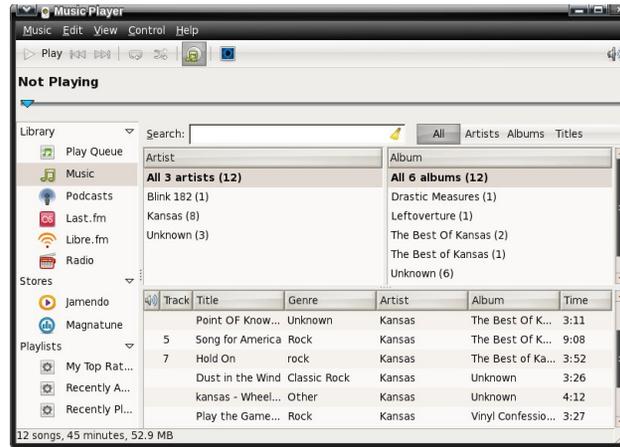


Soundgonverter is a sound conversion application written in Mono, the Linux equivalent of the Microsoft .NET application framework that utilizes the C# programming language. Unfortunately, I can't report very much about this application, since the version that is in the PCLinuxOS repository produces a segfault whenever I attempt to run it. You can visit the [soundgonverter home page](#) for more information.

RhythmBox

Taking its inspiration from Apple's iTunes, Rhythmbox is a Gstreamer application built for the Gnome desktop. Rhythmbox bills itself as more than a music player. Rather, it bills itself as an integrated music management application – and probably rightly so.

So what can Rhythmbox do for you? For one, it can play your music collection on your computer, as well as organizing it and allowing you to search and sort through the songs in your collection. It can also sync your music collection with your iPod or other MP3 music player. You can also burn audio CDs, listen to



Internet radio stations, listen to [last.fm](#) music streams, create playlists, download and view song lyrics and album covers, and display audio visualizations.

Additionally, there are several 3rd party plugins for Rhythmbox, that further extend the capabilities of Rhythmbox. These plugins range from graphical equalizers to adjusting the pitch and speed of your songs. To get the full lowdown on Rhythmbox, as well as a link to the 3rd party plugins, visit the [Rhythmbox home page](#).

Nautilus Sound Converter

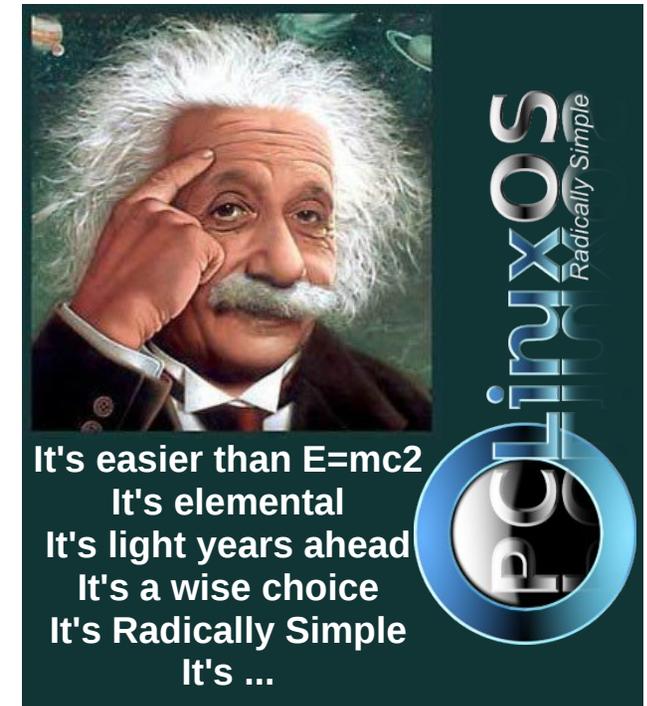


A product of a Google Summer of Code project, Nautilus Sound Converter is almost identical to the Gnome Audio Converter (GAC) – except, it's a

Nautilus extension. In fact, Nautilus Sound Converter uses the same configuration file as GAC. As such, Nautilus Sound Converter works exactly like GAC, which we talked about earlier in this article. The [Nautilus Sound Converter home page](#) has more information.

Summary

As you might expect, Gnome 2.32 has a plethora of sound applications to fit your sound file needs. While it's true that we left out some sound applications that are popular with Gnome users, such as Exaile, we did so because Exaile is not developed specifically for the Gnome desktop environment. Even without Exaile, the Gnome desktop has plenty of other sound applications to fulfill your sound application needs.



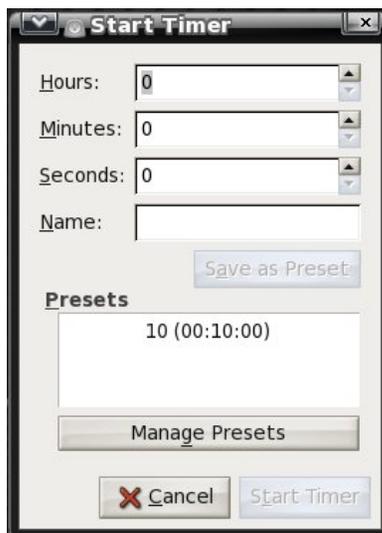
Gnome 2.32: Gnome Panel Applets

by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)



depend on the music player's ability to show the information requested.

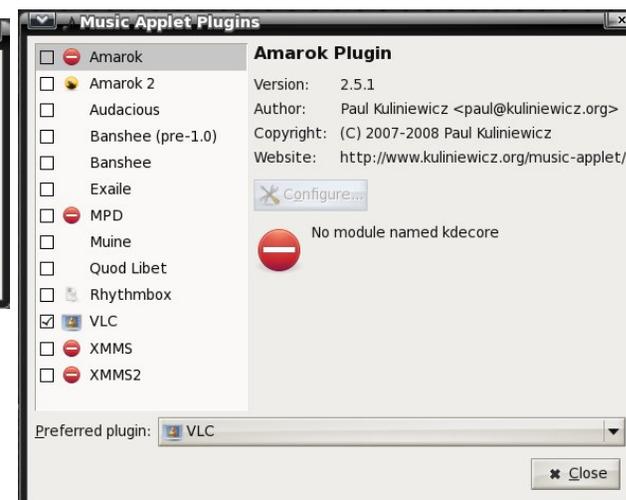
There are a dozen or more Gnome panel applet packages available in the PCLinuxOS repositories. We will look at six of them. Zen Mini comes with a single Gnome panel at the bottom of the desktop. I created a second panel and placed it at the top of the desktop so that I could keep track of the extra applets installed, and so that the bottom panel would not become cluttered. Above is a screenshot of the top panel. From left to right, the applets are, by package name, gnome-timer-applet, gnome-applet-music, file-browser-applet, istream and gnome-applet-netspeed. "Wait a minute," you may say. "That's only five." I'll cover the sixth one at the end of the article.



Right click the timer applet and select Preferences to set them (below).



Right click the music applet and select Plugins to see the window below, and to select your preferred music player. The plugins with the white bar inside a red circle next to them have the "No module named ..." message showing.



gnome-timer-applet

Hover your mouse over the timer applet and you will see a help balloon stating "Click to start a new timer countdown."



Left click the applet and a dialog window will appear. The countdown timer has fields for hours, minutes and seconds. Fill in the time desired, then click the Start Timer button. Click the Manage Presets button to create and store pre-configured countdown timers. I created one with a time limit of ten minutes and named the preset "10" (above).

gnome-applet-music

Hover your mouse over the music applet and you will see a help balloon stating "Launch Rhythmbox." Rhythmbox is the pre-configured default music player for this applet. The screenshot at right shows VLC because I changed the preferred plugin.



Right-click the music applet and select Preferences to see the window shown above right. Note that some of those preferences will



file-browser-applet

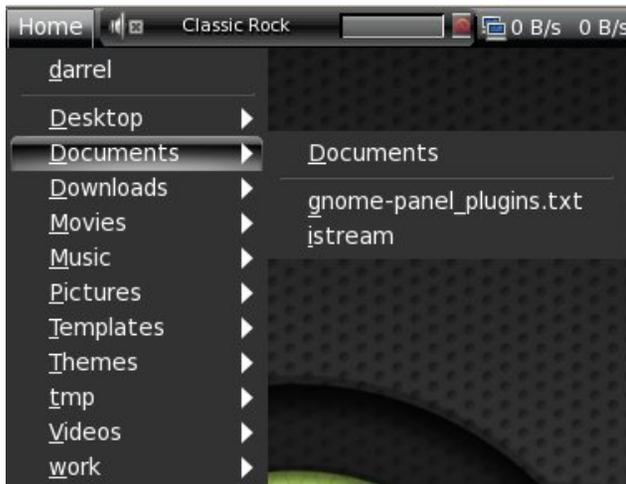
Hover your mouse over the file browser applet to see the help balloon "Browse and open files in your home directory". I could find no option to change the contents of the help balloon.



Right click the file browser applet and select Preferences to see the window below. You can add file browser paths with corresponding labels.



However, each new label will show the same “open files in your home directory” balloon. There are several folder view options. Although the Select applet icon button allows you to browse for an alternate icon image to be used, the icon does not show anywhere in the panel or in the file browser windows. The label name is what appears in the applet. You can also select an alternate terminal and text editor.



Shown at center top is the file browser menu that appears when you left click on the file browser applet. Simply navigate the menu to the folder or file you want opened.

istream

Hover your mouse over the istream applet to see a summary of the song title playing. The applet is an Internet radio station player similar to Radiotray. None of the stations selected would show any of the meta information associated with Album, Genre, Comment or Location.



Left click the red icon in the istream applet to see the radio station labels. There is no GUI configuration for the applet. The station list configuration is stored in a simple hidden text file in your home directory named .istream. Shown below is the default configuration.

```
#format is:
#
#<Displayed Text> (<invisible Text>)=<url>
#
#url format:
#
#http://<....>
#file:///home/user/<file>
#
# my radio stations:
#
Classic Rock=http://205.188.215.226:8018
Country=http://216.218.159.151:8020
Motown=http://208.53.158.48:9170
Rock=http://64.71.145.130:8070
Modern=http://207.200.96.230:8002
```

```
Urban=http://64.71.145.130:8055
Blues=http://64.62.252.130:8030
New Age=http://64.202.98.133:9130
Jazz=http://207.200.96.226:8052
Club mix=http://38.118.158.78:8070
Metal=http://205.188.215.225:8022
```

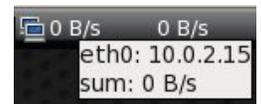
I changed the Classic Rock station to another URI and commented the Club mix line. Neither of those two stations would load for me. It should be noted here that if a station will not load, the istream applet will hang and refuse to respond to any mouse clicks. It doesn't seem to affect any other desktop operations. The only method I found of regaining control of the applet was to log out and log in again.

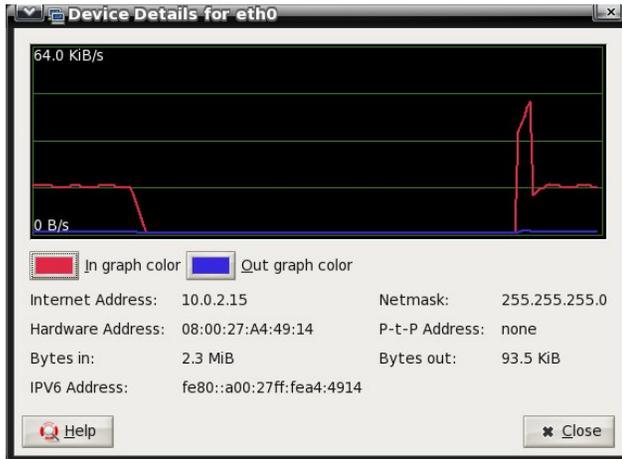
The istream applet does not automatically start when you log in. In trying to track down radio station URIs, I came across an excellent [radio tray station list](#) compiled by “wolfgar”. Although the radio tray format is a little different than istream's, the important thing is having a large list of internet radio station URIs, along with the corresponding port numbers, that can be easily copied from. Doing an Internet search for streaming radio stations can be a frustrating experience, as many of the compiled “lists” are actually just links to the stations themselves. Many of those stations require you to listen online using a flash player, or, worse yet, a Windows Media Player.



gnome-applet-netspeed

Hover your mouse over the netspeed applet to see a short summary of the monitored network device.





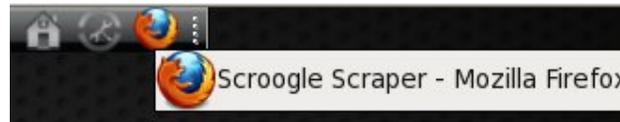
Right click the netspeed applet to see a more detailed summary of the monitored device.



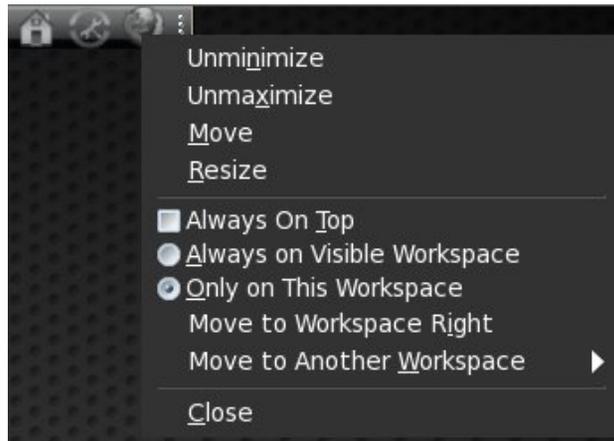
Right click the netspeed applet and select Preferences to see the window at above right. If you have more than one network device, you can select which one is to be monitored.

gnome-window-picker-applet

Last, but not least, is the window picker applet. This is the one applet that did not appear in the first screenshot of the Gnome panel. Until you open a window, you may not even be aware the applet is actually installed. All open windows, even when minimized, are shown in the applet, represented by the application's icon. Below, you see the home folder, PCLinuxOS Control Center and Firefox icons. Hover your mouse over one of the icons to see its window title.



The Gnome panel at the bottom of Zen Mini's desktop has a Window Selector applet at the far right side of the panel. However, using the window selector applet, you can only select a minimized window to be restored to the desktop. Right clicking on any icon in the window picker applet gives you a few choices to manipulate the application's window, all from the window picker applet.



These are but a few of the Gnome panel applets available from the PCLinuxOS repositories. How many of them will you find a use for?

International Community PCLinuxOS Sites

Netherlands
PCLinuxOS.nl

Turkey
PCLinuxOS
Daykonun mekanı

Denmark
PC Linux OS

Czechoslovakia
PCLinuxOS
síla jednoduchosti

Italy
PCLinuxOS.it

Poland
PCLinuxOS Polskie Centrum

FINLAND
PCLinuxOS

Brazil
PCLinuxOS

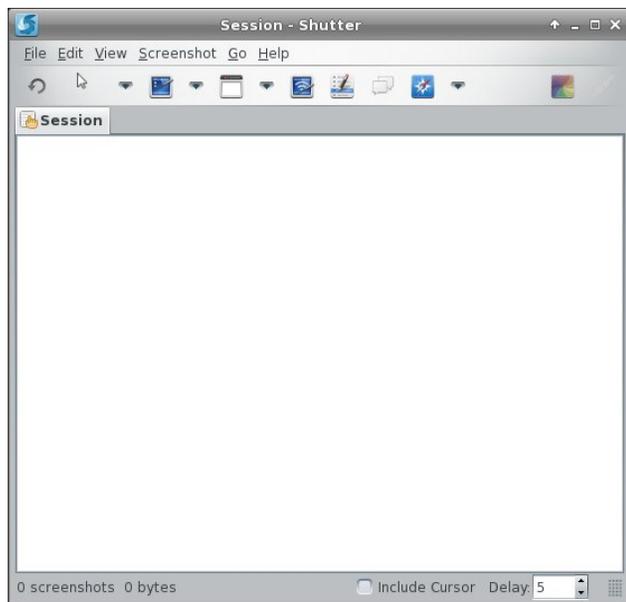
Gnome 2.32: Shutter Shoots Screenies

by Meemaw

We've seen Shutter before. Some of us use it as a simple photo editing program, and it works very well. We even covered it in the Photo Viewer series in this magazine earlier in the year.

Did you know that it also takes screenshots?

When you open Shutter, you get the main window:



The tab that's there already is the Session tab. As you open images or take screenshots, a thumbnail of each will appear on the Session tab. The tools are, left to right: Redo last screenshot, Selection Tool, Desktop screenshot, Window screenshot, Selection screenshot, Menu screenshot, Tooltip capture, Website capture, Edit and Upload. At the bottom, you will see dimensions and file size of any

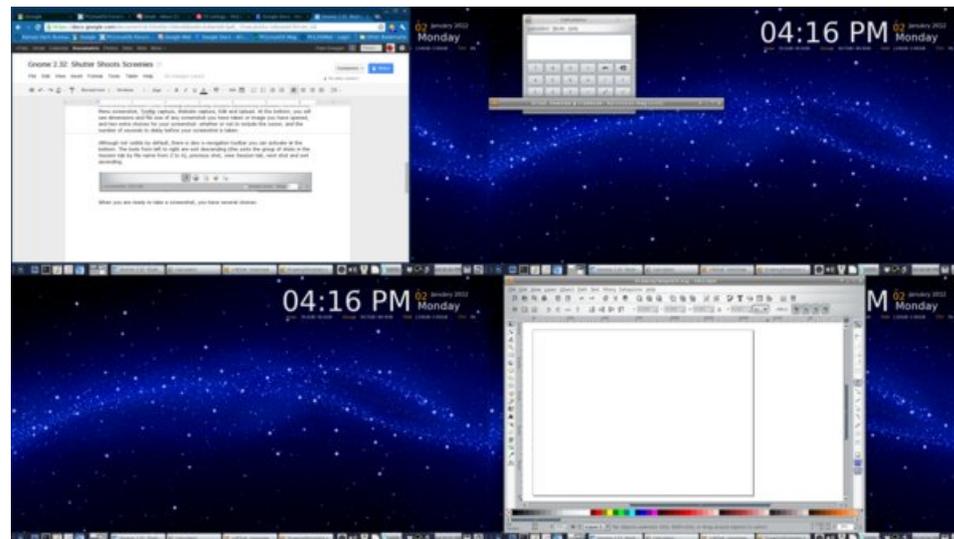
screenshot you have taken or image you have opened, and two extra choices for your screenshot: whether or not to include the cursor, and the number of seconds to delay before your screenshot is taken.

Although not visible by default, there is also a navigation toolbar you can activate at the bottom. The tools from left to right are sort descending (this sorts the group of shots in the Session tab by file name from Z to A), previous shot, view Session tab, next shot and sort ascending.

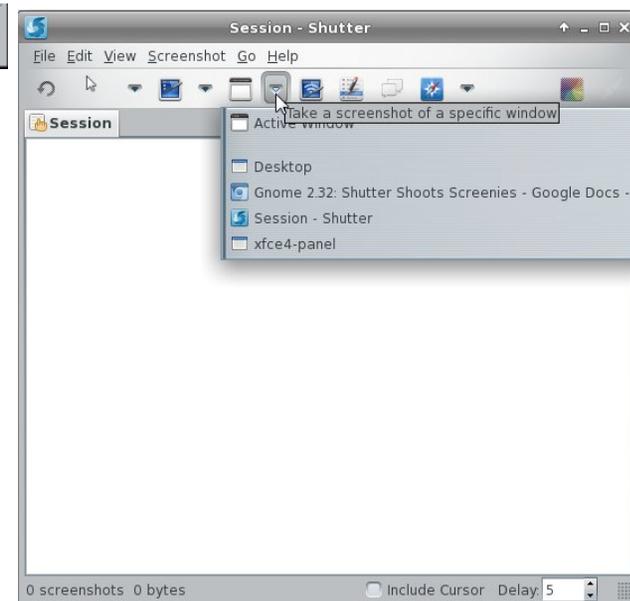


When you are ready to take a screenshot, you have several choices. Using the window tool, you can take a screenshot of any of your desktops (Shutter calls them workspaces) or all of them in order. If you do all of them, Shutter will save all the shots in one file. This (top right image) is a screenshot of my four laptop workspaces.

Your second choice is to take a screenshot of any window you have open. If you are trying for a specific window, the drop down arrow next to the window tool will list the windows you have open so you can choose the one you want. That way you won't have to crop a screenshot down to just one window. This is how I have taken most of my screenies for magazine articles.



Your next choice is to capture a section of a window.... I honestly haven't figured this out, since I



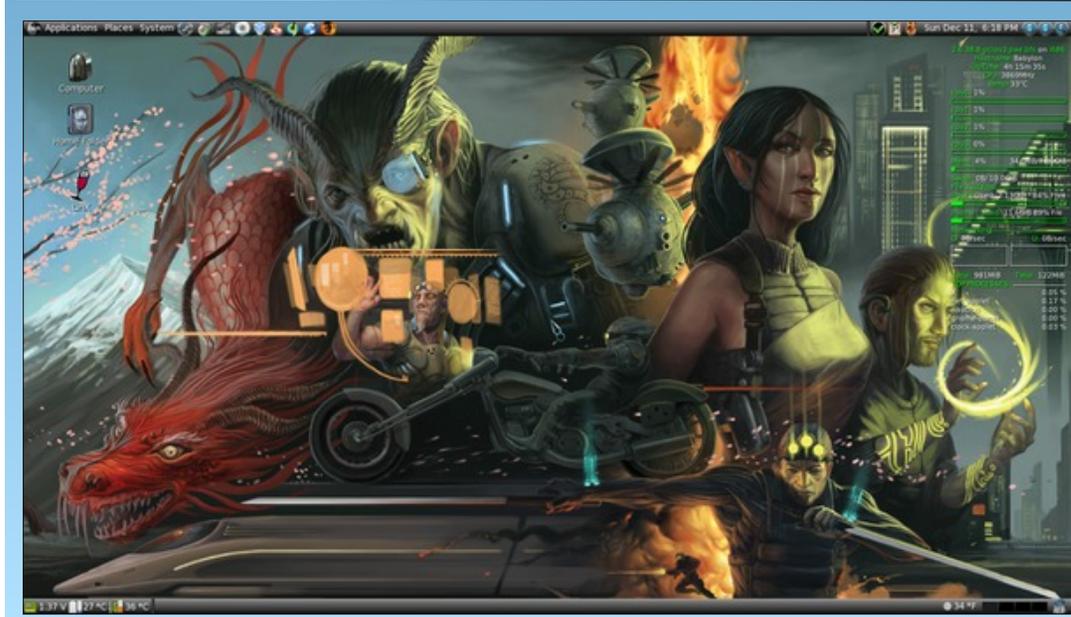
can't seem to take a screenie of anything but a single window with it. If I drag my cursor across it, then press Enter or click with my mouse, I don't get the section of the window that I seemingly outlined, but the whole window. If you want to take a screenie of your panel instead of your whole desktop, it works fine.

You can also capture a drop down menu, tooltip or a website shot from Shutter using the next 3 buttons. Make sure you have set a delay for the drop down or tooltip to give yourself time to access them.

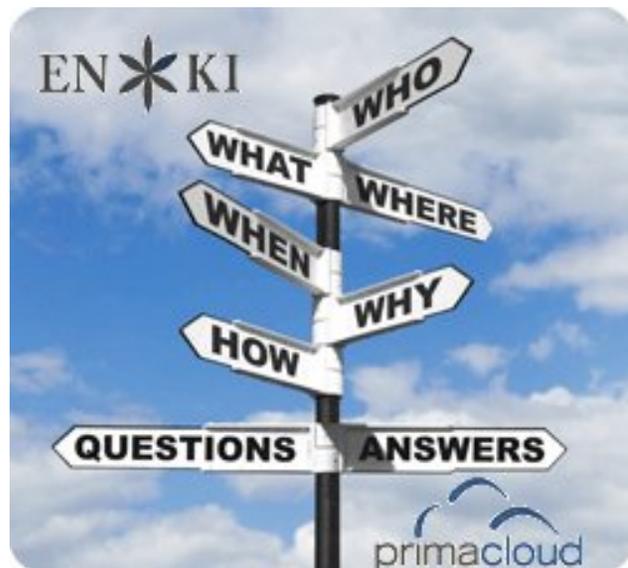
I covered Shutter in the photo editing series I did last year. The colored icon at the right side of the main Shutter screen is the editing tool. It will open your active shot in a larger window, and you can crop or edit it there This is very handy if you have taken a screenie, but decide you want a smaller area than what you shot, or want to add something to the screenie (text, lines, geometric figures or an indicator of some sort).



Screenshot Showcase



Posted by z3r0_k00175.



Gnome 2.32: Graphics Extras

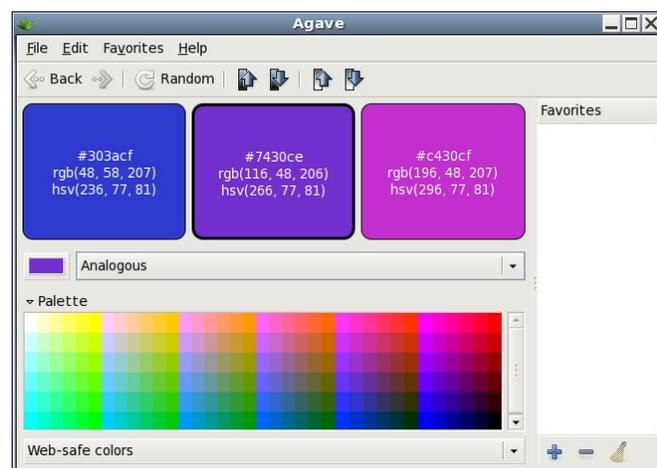
by Meemaw

While looking at some of the programs in Gnome, I came across three graphics programs that we haven't mentioned before.

Agave is a program which can help you plan a color scheme for a graphic creation. The Help file gives the following introduction:

Agave is an application for the GNOME desktop that allows you to select an initial color and generate a variety of different color schemes from that color. The primary audience of this application is graphic designers (and particularly web designers) though it can be used for anything where you might need to pick several colors that go well together, such as painting rooms in your house.

When you open agave, you will get the main window:

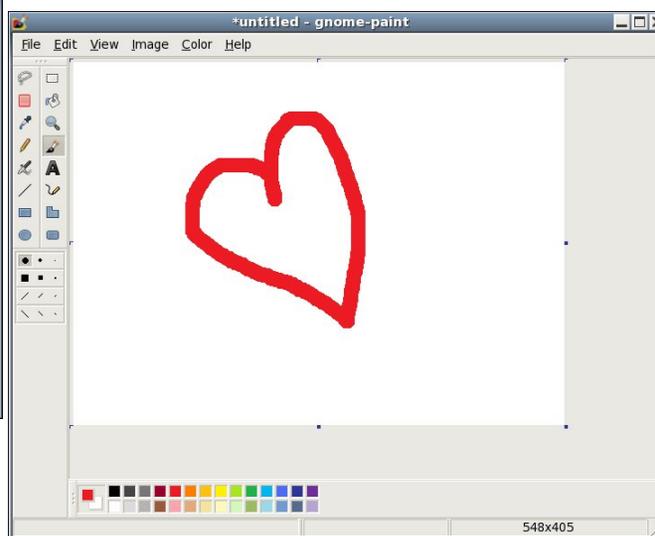


Using the color choice button on the left side of the window (above the Palette) you choose your

preferred color from the color wheel window that appears. As you can see above, I'm a fan of blue and purple. Then you must decide what kind of color scheme you want. You have six choices: Complements, Split-Complements, Triads, Tetrads, Analogous and Monochromatic. You can also use the Palette at the bottom of the window to choose your colors. Notice on each color chip are the color name (303acf on the blue above at left), along with the hue, saturation and value numbers (236, 77, 81) and the red, green and blue values (48, 58, 207). Using those, you can recreate any color correctly no matter what program you are using.

Also in the toolbar there are two pairs of arrows. the left ones increase or decrease the brightness of your colors, and the right ones increase and decrease the saturation of your colors so you can get them just right. When you have them right, you can choose to add that color scheme to your favorites.

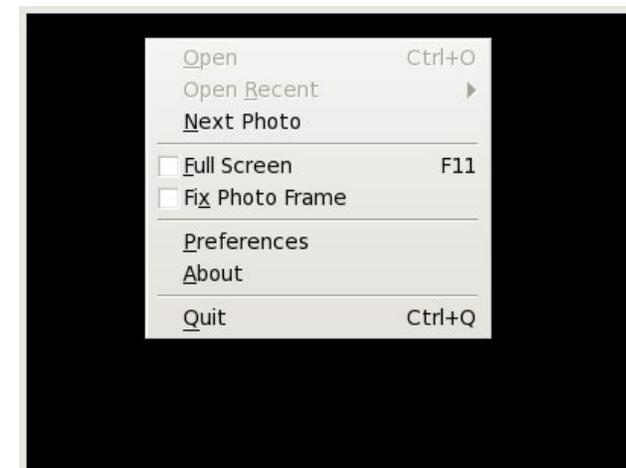
Gnome Paint is a simple paint program, reminiscent of MS Paint or the older Paintbrush.



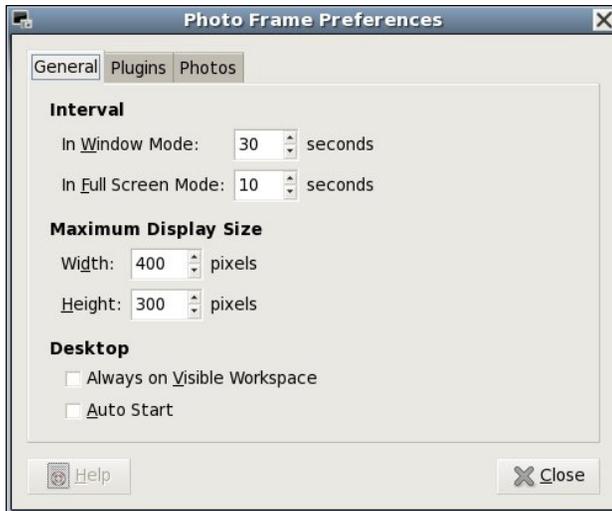
Actually, it looks exactly like MS Paint to me. However, upon use, I have found this program barely works at all. I did manage to draw the heart with the paintbrush, but no matter which size brush I chose, I only got the biggest size round brush. If I choose the selection box (at the top of the right-hand column of tools), I could draw a box around anything I wanted, and drag the box all around the canvas, but I couldn't cut, copy, move or delete anything that I had drawn. Maybe it's me. However, clicking on the eraser tool (second from the top in the left-hand column), I could drag it over my whole drawing and couldn't erase anything.

The view, image and color menus have no items, either. With all the other drawing programs I can use, I'm going to uninstall Gnome Paint.

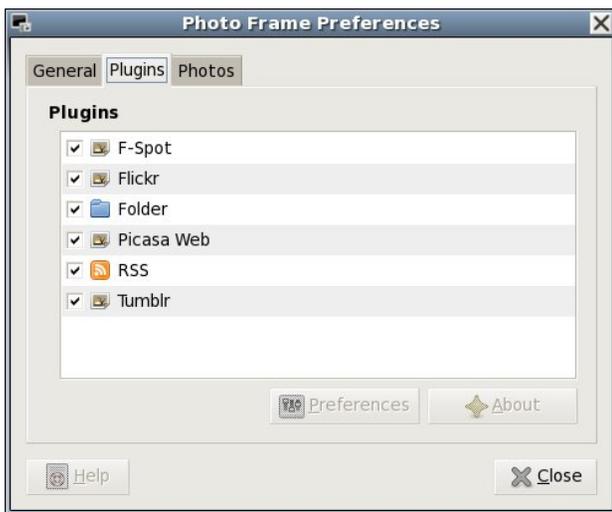
GPhotoFrame is a program which allows you to put a frame on your desktop and run a slideshow of your favorite photos. In your graphics menu, it is called Photo Frame. When you first open it, you will see a black screen with a plain frame around it. Right-clicking the black screen will give you a menu.



You should configure your Preferences first.

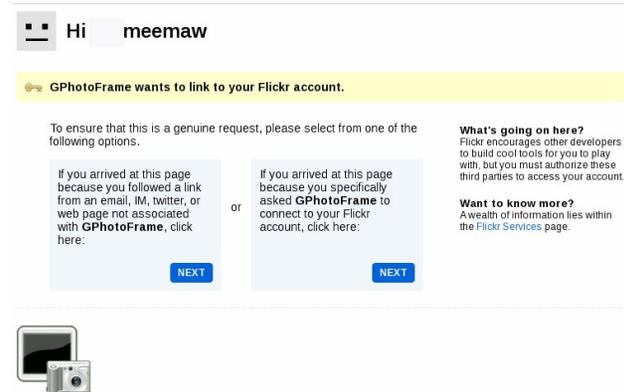


The general tab lets you configure the time between photo changes. Window mode and full screen mode can have different intervals. You can also set the maximum size for the frame, have it start when you start your computer, and have it show on whatever workspace is visible at the time.



The plugins tab shows you the sources you can access for your files. If configuring it to use Flickr,

Picasa Web or Tumblr, you should highlight your preferred site and click on the Preferences button below. You will be asked for your user name and password so the program can access your account on the site. Flickr asks permission to access the site, then takes you to a Flickr sign-on screen. When you sign on, the following window appears:



If you want GPhotoFrame to access Flickr, you should click the blue box in the center of the window that says “You arrived at this page because you specifically asked GPhotoFrame to connect to your Flickr account...”. From here you complete the authorization on Flickr, then go back to the Preferences window in GPhotoFrame and finish the process.



The third tab of Preferences is Photos. Here is where you actually tell GPhotoFrame where your photos are located. If you only want to access a certain folder in your system, or if you want to get them from Flickr, you need to add the location by clicking new. Another window will appear asking you to designate the location of your photos. I chose my wallpaper folder.



To do a fullscreen slideshow, simply right-click the frame and choose Full Screen. To go back to the frame, right-click the slideshow and your menu will appear again and you can uncheck the Full Screen checkbox.

You can move the frame anywhere on your screen, unless you right-click and choose “Fix Photo Frame”. This choice will ‘stickie’ your frame to your desktop wherever it happens to be located. I have noticed however, that even when ‘stickied’, the frame moves on the desktop. It resizes itself every time the image size is different, and instead of fixing a certain corner to a specific spot (for example, the top left corner of the frame could be fixed to the screen wherever you stickied it), it just keeps resizing and ‘crawling’ until the frame is somewhere else. Other than that, it’s a very nice program, and very easy to use.

As with any program, or any desktop for that matter, you should pick the ones that are easiest for you to use, and work best for you.

Gnome 2.32: 4 Miscellaneous Desktop Apps

by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)

gnome-specimen

According to the Synaptic description, Gnome Specimen is an application to “view and compare fonts installed on your system.”

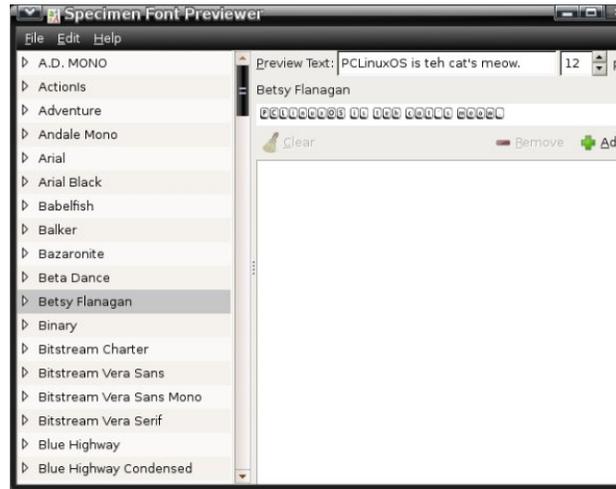
Gnome Specimen currently features:

- A list of all fonts available (the left pane)
- A list of font previews (the right pane)
- Configurable preview text and font size
- Configurable foreground and background colors used in the preview pane”

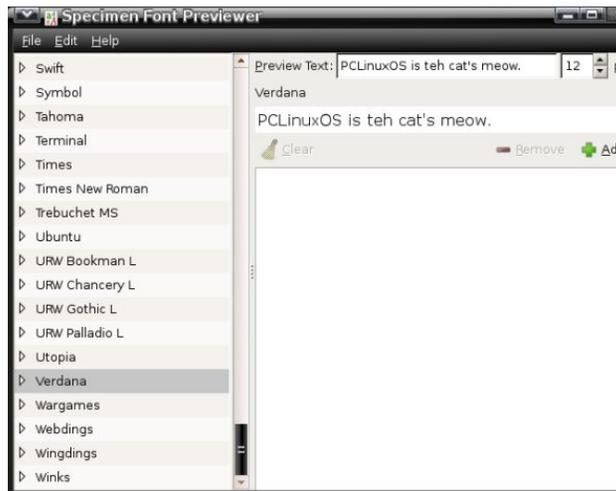
Other than being able to change the foreground and background colors of the preview, it has the same basic preview functions as the PCLinuxOS Control Center font manager (PCC > System > Manage, add and remove fonts). The other difference is that Gnome Specimen cannot add or delete system fonts. It is a bit dated, having not been updated since December 31st, 2007.



An unorthodox looking font.



This one is much more readable.



wallpapoz

Wallpapoz is a Gnome wallpaper configuration tool. You can have a different wallpaper for each workspace, as well as having them change automatically on a user-defined schedule. After installing the package using Synaptic, I had no menu entry for it. A quick look at the supplied desktop file showed why. The original wallpapoz.desktop file is shown below.

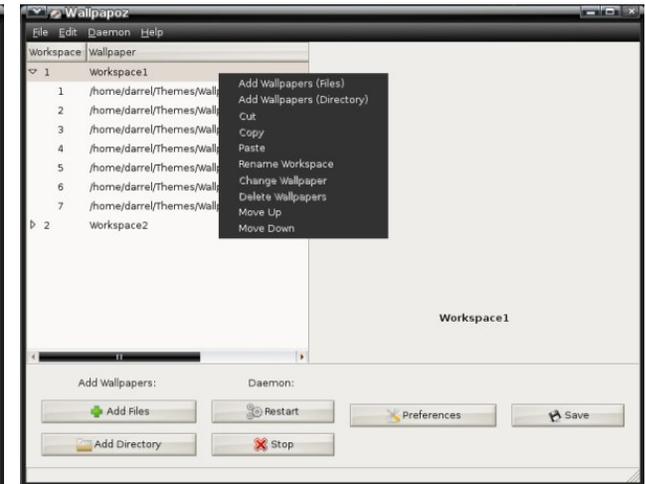
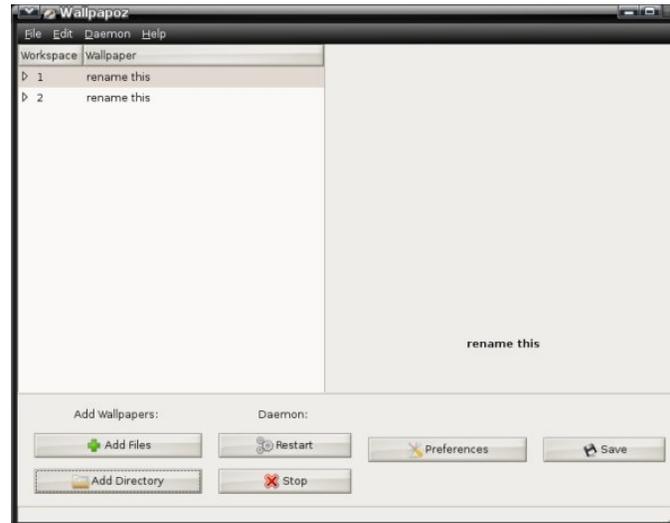
```
[Desktop Entry]
Encoding=UTF-8
Name=Wallpapoz
GenericName=Wallpapers tool
GenericName[id]=Alat gambar latar desktop
GenericName[ja]=
GenericName[sv]=Skrivbordsbakgrund verktyg
GenericName[de]=Wallpaper Tool
GenericName[es]=Configurar la imagen del fondo
GenericName[fr]=Outil pour les fonds d'écran
Comment=Gnome Desktop Wallpapers
Configuration Tool
Comment[id]=Alat Konfigurasi Gambar Latar
Desktop Gnome
Comment[ja]=Gnome
Comment[sv]=Gnome Skrivbord Bakgrunds
Konfigurerings Verktyg
Comment[de]=Gnome Desktop-Hintergrund
Konfiguration
Comment[es]=Herramienta para Configurar La
Imagen Del Fondo Del Escritorio
Comment[fr]=Outil de configuration des fonds
d'écran pour Gnome
Exec=wallpapoz
Icon=wallpapoz.png
Terminal=false
Type=Application
Categories=Utility;
```

There is no proper category defined. Change the **Categories=** line to what is shown below.

Categories=GTK;X-MandrivaLinux-System-Configuration;Settings;

Save the edited `/usr/share/applications/wallpapoz.desktop` file to `~/.local/share/applications/wallpapoz.desktop`. The menu entry will then survive any updates to the wallpapoz package.

To have the wallpaper changer start automatically on login, add `/usr/bin/daemon_wallpapoz` to startup apps (System > Control Center > Startup Applications in the main menu).



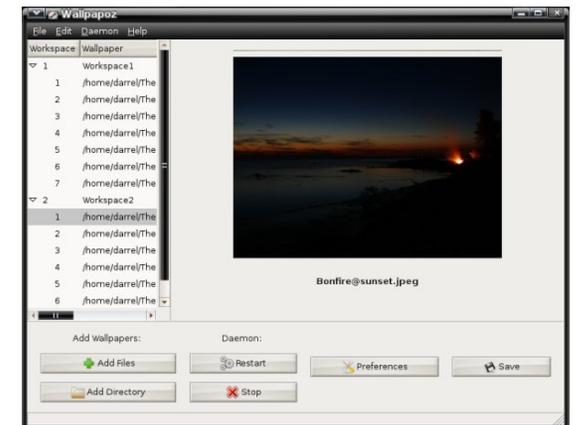
When the application is first started, all desktops will have one wallpaper defined, the currently configured one. Each workspace will also contain the default "rename this" for the user-definable Wallpaper field. Double-click the entry to edit it. Click on the arrow to the left of a workspace number to see the wallpapers that are associated with it (center, top).

You can choose to add individual files or an entire directory's files to a workspace. If you choose a directory, you can also add all subdirectories by checking the recursive option. I chose to create two directories, one for each workspace, and store the wallpaper images in each workspace's folder (center, bottom).

Right-clicking the wallpaper group name or an individual wallpaper in the group will bring up a window with additional options (top, right).

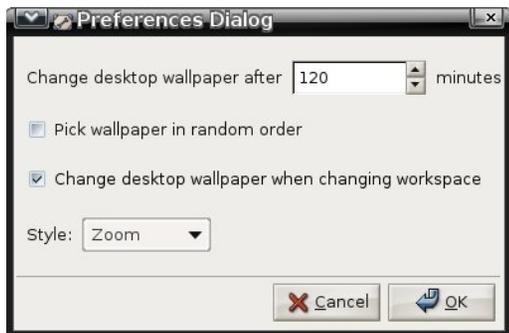
This is a preview of the first wallpaper in the Workspace1 group (center, right),

This is a preview of the first wallpaper in the Workspace2 group (bottom, right),



You can stop and restart the daemon by clicking a button. Click the Preferences button to open the configuration window.

I tried setting the change interval to 0 minutes, so that the wallpapers would never change. But, after saving, it reverts to 1 minute. Nevertheless, this application offers the ability to have a different wallpaper for each workspace in Gnome2 by checking the Change desktop wallpaper when changing workspace option. Click the Style pulldown menu button to choose the method of scaling the wallpaper image to the desktop.



Here is workspace number one showing one of its wallpapers (center, top).



Here is workspace number two showing one of its wallpapers (center, middle).



gpass

The GNOME Password Manager lets you manage a collection of passwords. The password collection is stored in an encrypted file, protected by a master-password. GPass encrypts the password file by using Blowfish encryption. It has a heavy dependency on a full Gnome desktop environment. Its functions are similar to Keepass and Revelation. This is another dated application, as the last version, 0.5.1, was released on March 25th, 2006.

Once installed, the menu entry is in the Office section of the main menu. The first run window is shown below.



Enter a master password.



Click the Add button to add a password for an application.



gnome-pim

The GNOME Personal Information Manager currently consists of:

- gnomecal : personal calendar and todo list
- gnomecard: contact list of friends and business associates

After installing the gnome-pim package using Synaptic, I had no menu entries for these applications. There is no desktop file included for the Gnome Calendar and Planner application, so I created my own and stored it in the `~/local/share/applications` directory. The contents of the desktop file are shown below.

gnomecal.desktop

```
[Desktop Entry]
Encoding=UTF-8
Name=Calendar & Planner
Comment=Manage your appointments and deadlines
Exec=/usr/bin/gnomecal
Terminal=false
Type=Application
StartupNotify=false
Icon=/usr/share/icons/gnomecal.png
Categories=Utility;X-MandrivaLinux-Office-Accessories;GTK;
X-Desktop-File-Install-Version=0.11
```

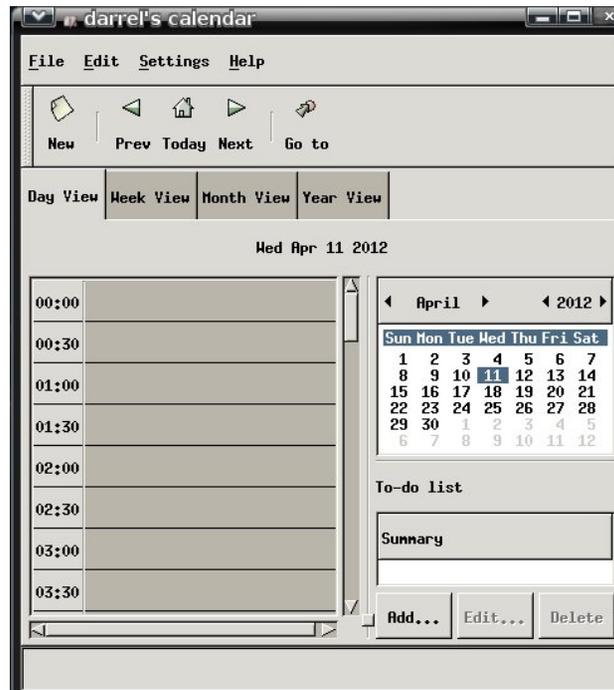
The Gnome Contacts Manager had a desktop file in the `/usr/share/gnome/apps/Applications` directory, but the file had no `Categories=` entry at all, and did not show in the menu. Again, I created one and saved it as `~/local/share/applications/gnomecard.desktop`. The contents are shown below.

gnomecard.desktop

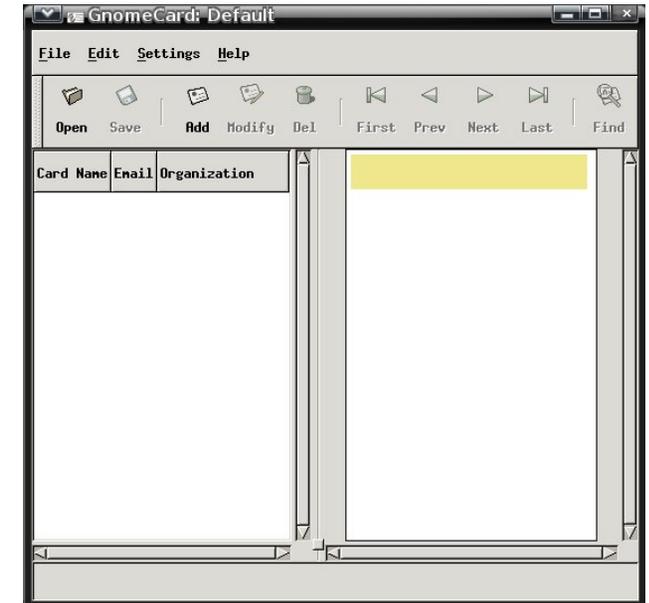
```
[Desktop Entry]
Encoding=UTF-8
Name=Contacts Manager
```

```
Comment=Manage your contacts
Exec=/usr/bin/gnomecard
Terminal=false
Type=Application
StartupNotify=false
Icon=/usr/share/pixmaps/gnome-gnomecard.png
Categories=Utility;X-MandrivaLinux-Office-Accessories;GTK;
X-Desktop-File-Install-Version=0.11
```

I found the calendar and planner to be a bit counter intuitive. You can add an item by selecting a day, then clicking on the time period in the left pane. Even if you enter the beginning time as the half hour, the planner enters the item as beginning on the hour. Once an item has been added, it cannot be edited or deleted, except in the To-do list Summary area. Also, there are no alarms or notifications given when an item is due. You have to open the planner application to scan the entered items.



The contacts list is a standalone application. None of the contact information can be shared with other applications, making its use somewhat limited. I should also add that both the Personal Information Manager applications look outdated, as if they were designed with GTK version 1.



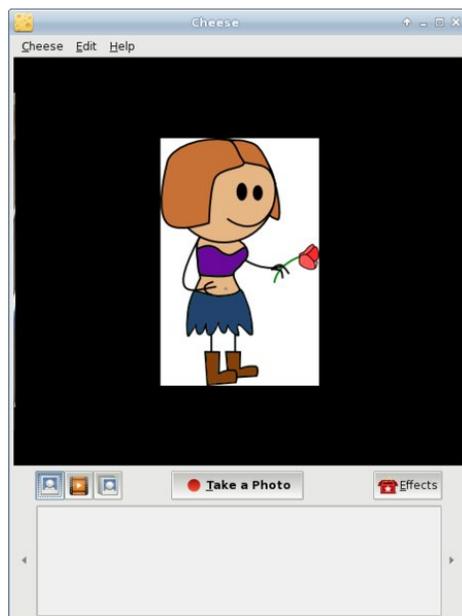
Gnome 2.32: Say Cheese!

by Meemaw

As technology advances and we communicate with each other more and more, we don't just want to text back and forth with old friends across the country, we actually want to see them as well. So we get a web camera to use on our computer, or have one already on our laptop. Now we need a program that will run our webcam. In PCLinuxOS, we can use Cheese.

The website is <http://projects.gnome.org/cheese/>. If you click on the tour links, you can learn all about it:

"Cheese is a program for the GNOME Desktop which allows you to take photos, videos, and anything else you can think of with your webcam. Just start it up and shoot! Gather all of your friends around, have some fun! When you're done, share your photos and videos with 'em!"



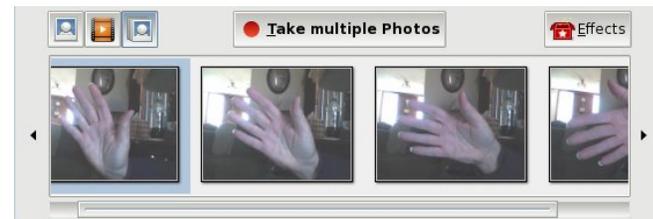
After installing from the PCLinuxOS repo, Cheese is in the Video section of the menu. When you start it up, your camera may already be recognized and is showing you a view of wherever the camera is pointing. This is the main Cheese window (below left).

You can take a single photo, a video or a burst (series of photos) with this program. The icons at left below the image screen let you choose which you want. Since the photo icon was clicked, the button in the center is what you would click on to take a photo. If you choose video, the button will say 'Start Recording'. If you want a burst, click the burst icon, and the center button will now say 'Take Multiple Photos'.

The first thing you should do after you open the program is go to Edit > Preferences. You can set your image resolution and image properties (brightness, contrast, saturation and hue), and configure your burst properties - how many photos you want in your series, and how long the program should wait in-between shots.

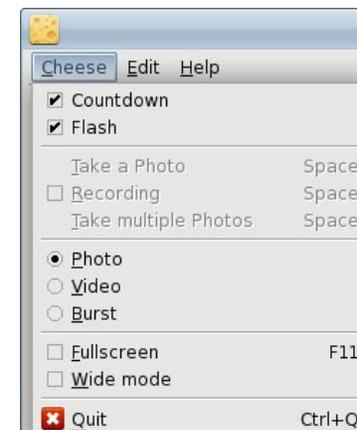
You can take up to 100 photos in your burst, and can set a delay of up to 100 seconds. When you take a burst, the series will be shown at the bottom

of the main window. I was practicing with the image properties settings in my living room:



I made it too light! Fortunately, Edit > Preferences is just a mouse click away.

There are only three menus in Cheese: Cheese, Edit and Help. The "Cheese" menu has the majority of the items, while the "Edit" menu just has a few.



In the "Cheese" menu, you have the check boxes for Countdown and Flash. When you want to take a picture, you can do a 3-second countdown before the photo is actually taken, and when the photo is being taken, Flash makes your whole screen turn grey for a second or two.

In that menu are radio buttons for choosing whether you want a single photo, video or burst (or you can choose from the buttons in the main screen). You can also choose whether you want the program to be visible in full screen, or just wide mode.



Preferences is in the “Edit” menu so you can configure your program. Notice that you have the two choices “Move to

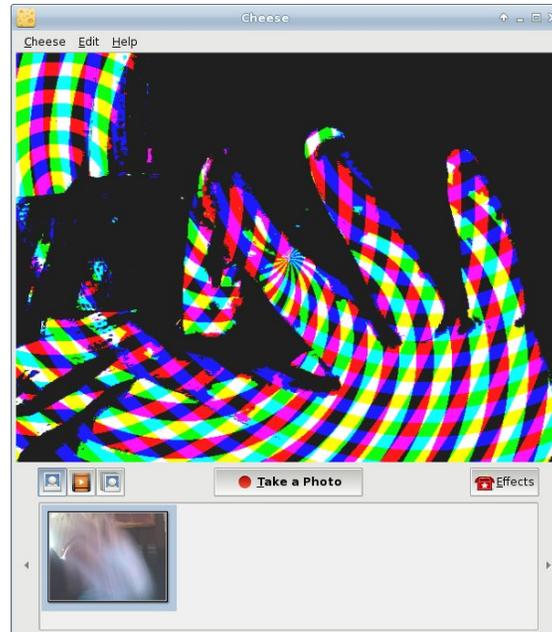
Trash” and “Move All to Trash.” When you have taken a photo or a burst, these won’t be greyed out. You can choose a photo you don’t want and click ‘Move to Trash’, or just select “Move All to Trash” and the program will delete them all.

Also in the “Edit” menu is another box to select or deselect the effects screen:



The effects are shown above. This screen shows up when you choose effects from the menu or click on the effects button towards the bottom right of the screen. You can choose one or multiple effects simply by clicking on them. Clicking the effects button again takes you back to your visible image in the main screen with the effects applied. That way you can see how each effect looks, but you don’t have to take multiple photos to see them. Take your photo, video or burst when you have the effect you

want enabled. You see below a webcam photo with the effect “Shagadelic” enabled.



When this program is installed, a folder called Webcam will be created in your /home. Any photos or video you take will be saved here.

You can have loads of fun with Cheese!



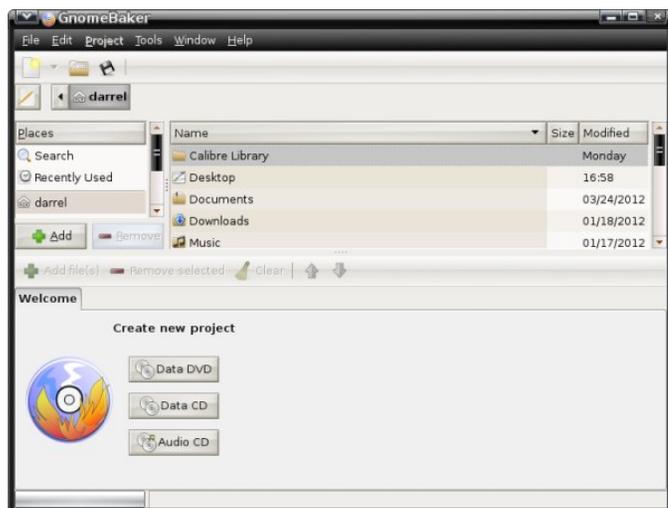
Gnome 2.32: Two Optical Burners

by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)

GnomeBaker

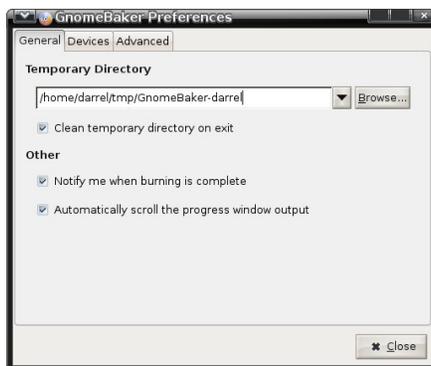
Described as GnomeBaker CD/DVD Writer in the menu, it can be found in the Archiving section. It is usually the default optical disc burning application for a Gnome desktop. The [project page](#) shows version 0.6.4 as being the current one, last updated on June 9th, 2011. This is the version in the PCLinuxOS repositories.

After starting the application, you will see the default window shown below.



The Edit pull down menu has only one option, Preferences. It is here that you set the default settings you want when you open the program. These settings can be changed while performing an operation. But, the program defaults won't be changed unless done from the Preferences window.

Under the General tab, you can choose a temporary directory to use, and whether or not to clean the directory upon exit of the program. You can also choose to be notified when burning has completed, and whether to display a progress bar or not.

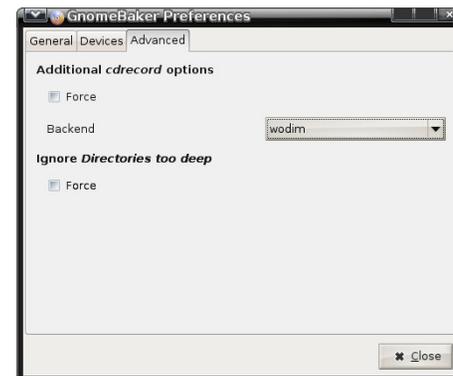


Selecting the Devices tab shows the system's optical devices, and whether they are writable or not. I found that you can manually check and uncheck the Write CD-R, Write CD-RW, Write DVD-R and Write DVD-RAM boxes, but it makes no difference to the actual operability of the program or the optical device being used. You can click the Scan for devices button, and all appropriate write options for a given device will be automatically checked.

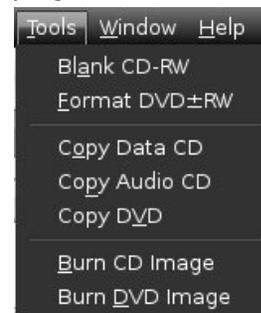


You can manually add a device to the list and always scan for devices at program startup.

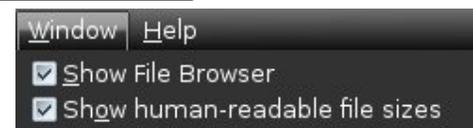
Selecting the Advanced tab shows that the default backend used for burning is wodim. I did not attempt to add any other backends. You can also opt to force recording and ignore directories too deep warnings. I do not know if the latter option will overcome some of the limitations of the genisoimage CLI program.



Selecting the Tools dropdown menu from the program's main window shows all of the burning options.



The Window dropdown menu is shown below. Note that if Show File Browser is not selected, you won't see the Places and Name sections in the program's main window.



- Auto
- 1X
- 2X
- 4X
- 6X
- 8X
- 10X
- 12X
- 16X
- 24X
- 32X
- 40X
- 48X
- 52X

I chose to erase the contents of a rewritable CD. 4X was chosen by



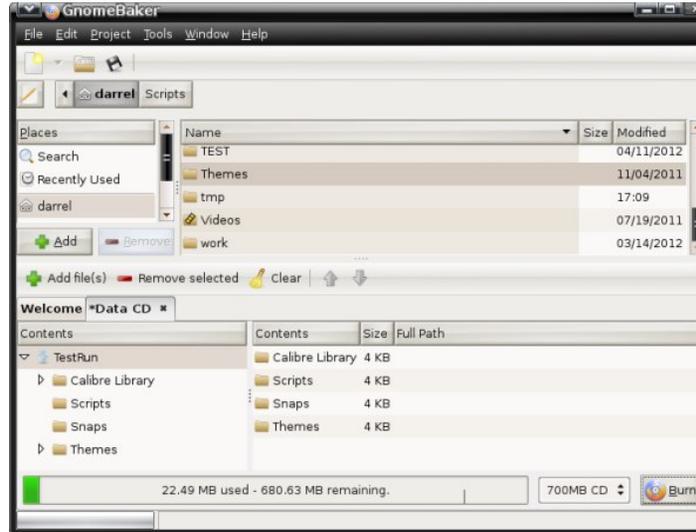
default, which was the speed the disc was last written at.

Selecting the Speed pulldown menu shows all possible speeds available on the burning device (above left).

The window below shows the CD being erased. After the operation completed, I was given a message to respond to and then returned to the main program window.

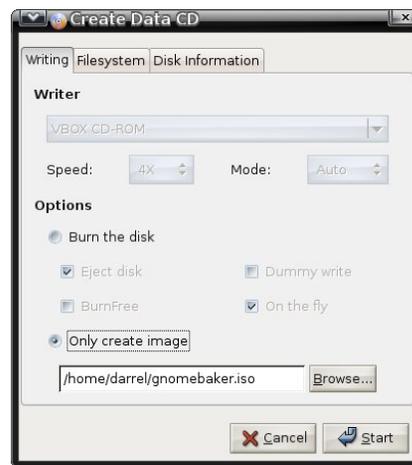


From the main window, I next clicked the Data CD button. In the Contents section, double-click "GnomeBaker data disk" and enter a new name to change the volume label of the CD or DVD. I



changed it to "TestRun". You can simply drag and drop files and folders from the file browser section to the contents section to have them included. Used and remaining space is displayed. Once your selections are complete, click the Burn button.

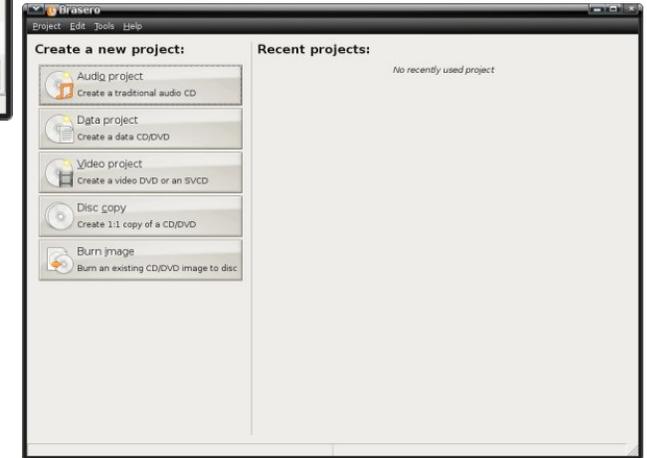
You can elect to write the contents to an image file instead of an optical disc. For some reason, the previously entered volume name is not carried over to an image file as it is to a disc. So, change the name of the image's iso file in the next window from "gnomebaker.iso" to whatever is desired.



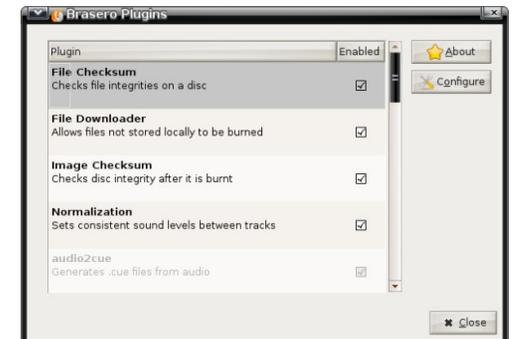
all the bells and whistles of K3B, but it is adequate for almost any optical burning task.

Brasero

Described as Brasero Disc Burner in the menu, it can also be found in the Archiving section. According to the [project page](#), the latest stable version is 3.0.0, dated April 5th, 2011. But, browsing the [archive](#) at <ftp://ftp.gnome.org/pub/GNOME/sources/brasero/>, we see that the latest version in the directory tree is 3.4.1, released on April 16th, 2012. The version in the PCLinuxOS repositories is 2.32.1. Shown below is the main window that is displayed when the program is launched.



The functions contained within the program are handled by plugins. The plugins window is shown below. Notice that one of the plugins is grayed out, or "ghosted".



In fact, only the first four plugins listed can be selected in order to activate or deactivate it or configure the options for that plugin. Reading the package's document file at `/usr/share/doc/brasero-2.32.1/README`, we see this:

Notes on plugins for advanced users

1. configuration

From the UI you can only configure (choose to use or not to use mostly) non essential plugins; that is all those that don't burn, blank, or image.

If you really want to choose which of the latters you want brasero to use, one simple solution is to remove the offending plugin from brasero plugin directory ("`install_path/lib/brasero/plugins/`") if you're sure that you won't want to use it.

You can also set priorities between plugins. They all have a hardcoded priority that can be overridden through Gconf. Each plugin has a key in "`apps/brasero/config/priority`".

If you set this key to -1 this turns off the plugin. If you set this key to 0 this leaves the internal hardcoded priority - the default that basically lets brasero decide what's best.

If you set this key to more than 0 then that priority will become the one of the plugin - the higher, the more it has chance to be picked up.

2. additional note

Some plugins have overlapping functionalities (i.e. `libburn/wodim/cdrecord/growisofs`, `mkisofs/libisofs/genisoimage`); but they don't always do the same things or sometimes they don't do it in the same way. Some plugins have a "speciality" where they are the best. That's why it's usually good to have them all around

As examples, from my experience:

- `growisofs` is good at handling DVD+RW and DVD-RW restricted overwrite

- `cdrdao` is best for on the fly CD copying

- `libburn` returns a progress when it blanks/formats

That is a very imprecise way to handle program functions to me. The best way to handle program plugins would be to include a plugin manager that either enables or disables them. The installation path for the plugins is `/usr/lib/brasero/plugins/`. Asking a user to remove unwanted plugins by deleting files in the system area is asking too much. Suppose the user decides s/he wants that function later on? Reinstall the program?

While browsing the plugin list, I noticed many items did not show a check mark as being enabled. The first was `cdrdao`, used for copying, burning and blanking CDs. That function should be enabled by default. I opened Synaptic, installed the `cdrdao` package and restarted Brasero. The `cdrdao` plugin was then enabled, but still grayed out. The `dvdauthor` plugin was disabled, which is used for creating disc images suitable for video DVDs. Installing the `dvdauthor` package from Synaptic enabled the plugin. The `libdvdcss2` package was also installed to enable the `dvdcss` plugin. That one is understandable, as the package is considered to be illegal in some countries.

Going further, the `dvd-rw-format` plugin was disabled. Installing the `dvd+rw-tools` package enabled it. The `transcode2vob` plugin shows that "mplex" GStreamer plugin could not be found. In an attempt to enable the plugin, I installed the `gstreamer0.10-a52dec` and `gstreamer0.10-dv` packages, but to no avail. The `transcode2vob` plugin is inoperable, although the `/usr/lib/brasero/plugins/` directory contains both `libbrasero-transcode.so` and `libbrasero-vob.so` files. The `vcdimager` plugin states

that "`vcdimager`" could not be found in the path. Yet, the file `libbrasero-vcdimager.so` exists in the `/usr/lib/brasero/plugins/` directory.

Even more puzzling are these three plugins, not enabled:

`cdrecord` - burns, blanks and formats CDs and DVDs

`mkisofs` - creates disc images from a selection of files

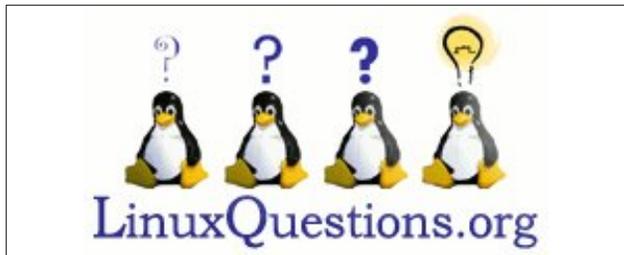
`readcd` - copies any optical disc to a disk image

Not only should all three of those plugins be enabled by default, each one is listed as a symbolic link pointing to another program. Well, the binary executable programs all exist in the `/usr/bin` directory, named `cdrecord`, `mkisofs` and `readcd`, the exact same names as the plugins. Not only that, the files `libbrasero-cdrecord.so`, `libbrasero-mkisofs.so` and `libbrasero-readcd.so` exist in the `/usr/lib/brasero/plugins/` directory. If anything, those plugins should have double functionality, not none at all.

In searching the internet for information on the Brasero plugins, I found quite a few user posts echoing the lack of usability, some as late as May of last year. I suspect that having a newer version of the program in our repositories would not add much functionality, if any at all.

Of the plugins that are enabled by default, and not ghosted, Normalization should not be on by default. Imagine that you are creating an audio disc with a recording of Ravel's Bolero on it. The exceedingly soft passages at the beginning would be enhanced and made louder. The thundering crescendos at the end would be watered down in volume. You'd be left with a recording that would not display the extreme dynamic range of volume in the concert that Ravel originally intended. For me, that would be extremely disappointing.

It is my opinion that the program should be completely revamped. A working plugin manager should be used to handle the program's functions. That, or package it with dependencies on the backend binaries to be used, and include softlinks to any external binary executables needed. There's no need to reinvent the wheel. Just make one that rolls efficiently. Brasero's usability and functionality cannot hold a candle to GnomeBaker's.



Screenshot Showcase



Posted by Dragynn.

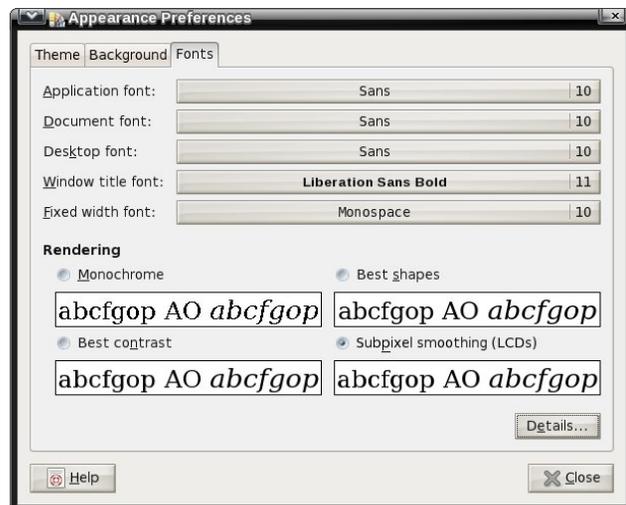
Gnome 2.32: Tips, Tricks & Tweaks

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Just as with any major desktop environment available for Linux, there will always be tasks and settings that are not the easiest to accomplish or change – or even find. This couldn't be any more true than it is with Gnome, since the Gnome developers have this mindset that obscurity is a good thing. Never fear – they have taken that obscurity to a whole new level with Gnome 3.x.

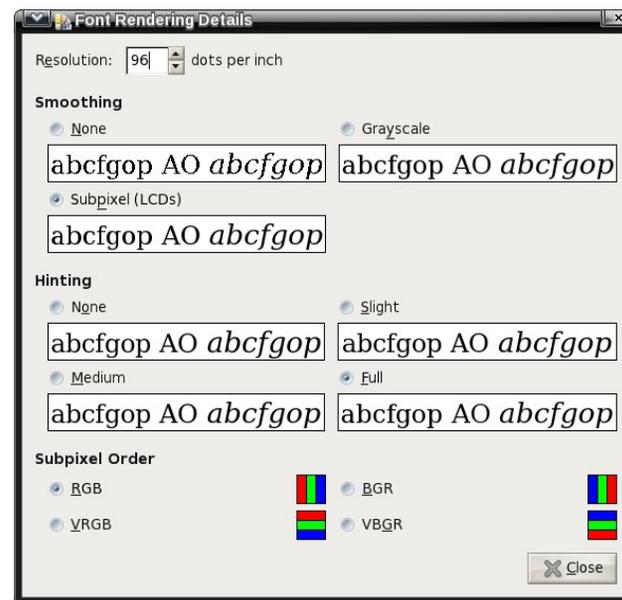
Some obscurity is a good thing, since you don't want all these settings and tasks to get in the way of the user actually being able to use their computer. But taken too far (as many, including [Linus Torvalds](#), claim the Gnome developers have done), excessive obscurity prevents the end user from performing many critical and necessary tasks. I hope that these tips, tricks and tweaks help lift the veil of obscurity from Gnome 2.32.

De-skew Your Fonts



If your fonts are appearing rather skewed, it's actually quite easy to fix. First, right click your mouse on an empty spot of your desktop window, and select **Change Desktop Background** from the context menu that appears.

Select the **Fonts** tab, then select the **Details...** button.



At the top of this new window, set the resolution. Typically, a resolution of 96 dpi works for most people. If you select a lower resolution – say, 72 dpi – then your text will appear larger. If you select a higher resolution – say 120 dpi – your text will appear smaller. Adjust this value until your text appears as you like. Don't worry if you mess things up. You can always return this value back to 96 dpi (provided you can still read the screen!).

While we're talking about fonts, and while we're already in this window, you can also change "Hinting" from "Full" to "Slight" to gain a slight speed enhancement. I would not recommend turning hinting off, since doing so may make your fonts look fuzzy.

Speed Enhancement: Icons

There are many that criticize Gnome as being a heavy, resource-hog desktop environment. If you are trying to run Gnome on an older and/or slower computer, you can help improve performance by changing your icon theme.

Avoid using SVG icon themes. SVG icons are re-rendered every time the icons are redrawn or resized. Instead, use a PNG icon theme. If you find a SVG icon theme that you just can't live without, convert the SVG icons to 128 x 128 PNG icons.

Speed Enhancement: Nautilus

There is no denying that Nautilus is an excellent and powerful file manager. It's the favorite of many Linux users, in part due to how configurable and extensible it is. However, on slower and older computers, Nautilus can slow to a crawl. All of those extra "bells and whistles" can cause a performance hit.

Luckily, we can turn off – or seriously trim back – most of those bells and whistles, and in the process, make Nautilus much more responsive on slower and older computers.

From Nautilus' menu bar, choose **Edit > Preferences**.

Speed Enhancement: Startup Applications

Select System > Preferences > Startup Applications, and the window below will be displayed.



There are quite a few applications that are started by default in Gnome 2.32. However, there may be applications that aren't actually needed, and that many people don't use. Remove the check mark next to those applications that you don't need or want to run when your computer starts up. Not only will it help your Gnome session start faster, it will also consume fewer precious resources on an older or slower computer, since those applications won't be running in the background.

Also, so you can get to a working desktop faster, you can select the "Options" tab and make sure that the option to restart the applications from the previous Gnome session are NOT automatically started the next time you start up your computer.

Speed Enhancement: Compiz

Basically, turn it off. All of that eye candy comes with a high price – a price that is exacted on your computer's resources. This includes processor usage and memory usage. For some users, it boils



Click on the **Preview** tab. Once there, you can make some changes that will help improve the responsiveness of Nautilus.

First, under **Text Files**, set "Show text in icons" to **Never**. This will prevent Nautilus from scanning the text to show a preview of the text file when you hover your mouse over the icon.

Second, under **Other Previewable Files**, set the "Only for files smaller than" setting to something less than 100 MB, which is the default in PCLinuxOS Zen. I recommend setting this to either 10 MB or 5 MB. Files larger than the limit will no longer display a thumbnail depiction of the file, and will revert to displaying a generic icon associated with that particular file type. If you find that these reduced

settings still result in sluggish performance from Nautilus, you can set the values to even lower file sizes. You can also set "Show thumbnails" to **Never**. This will cause Nautilus to never show thumbnail representations of previewable file types.

Third, under **Sound Files**, you can set "Preview sound files" to **Never**. This prevents Nautilus from playing back sound files when you hover your mouse over the sound file icon.

Fourth, under **Folders**, you can change "Count number of items" to **Never**. This prevents Nautilus from displaying the number of files in the current folder in its status bar.

Speed Enhancement: Metacity

Gnome 2.32 uses the Metacity window manager. You can lessen the impact of Metacity themes on the resources of an older or slower computer by selecting Metacity themes that use simple colors. Using themes that use images will slow down rendering, causing a potential performance issue with older or slower computers.

While you're at it, you can also turn off Metacity animations. From a terminal session, enter the following (all on one line):

```
gconftool-2 --type bool --set  
/apps/metacity/general/reduced_resources  
true
```

Speed Enhancement: Gtk+ Themes & Wallpaper

Use Gtk+ themes that allow the user to change colors. They are the simplest of all Gtk+ themes, and thus consume the least amount of resources. For wallpaper, use only wallpaper that uses "web safe" colors, or solid colors. They are the ones that consume the least amount of computer resources when they are rendered.

down to whether to have a functional computer, or one with flash and glitz. Personally, I choose functional every time, over flash and glitz. The latter is fine – if you have a computer that can handle it, without having a noticeable effect on functionality.

Speed Enhancement: Replace Nautilus

While the added functionality of Nautilus is nice to have, it does come at a price. Replace Nautilus with PCManFM. You will save about 100 MB of memory overhead by replacing Nautilus with PCManFM. The choice of PCManFM is not only because it is a lighter file manager, but also because once you get rid of Nautilus, you will need something else to manage the desktop – otherwise you won't have any way of managing the desktop. PCManFM has this capability.

You don't have to remove Nautilus from your system. Just remove it as the default file manager and desktop handler. First, enter the following in a terminal session (all on one line):

```
gconftool-2 --type bool --set
/apps/nautilus/preferences/show_desktop
false
```

Don't panic. The above setting will probably mess your desktop up (removing icons and wallpaper), since you just removed Nautilus's ability to manage the desktop.

Second, install PCManFM from Synaptic. Once installed, launch it, and select Edit > Preferences from the PCManFM.

Click on the "Desktop" tab, then check the boxes next to "Manage the desktop and show file icons," "Show menus provided by WM when desktop is clicked" and "Wallpaper." Select your wallpaper by clicking on the far right side of the "button," and select the "Mode" to use when displaying your

wallpaper. Select the "OK" button to save your settings and exit the dialog box.



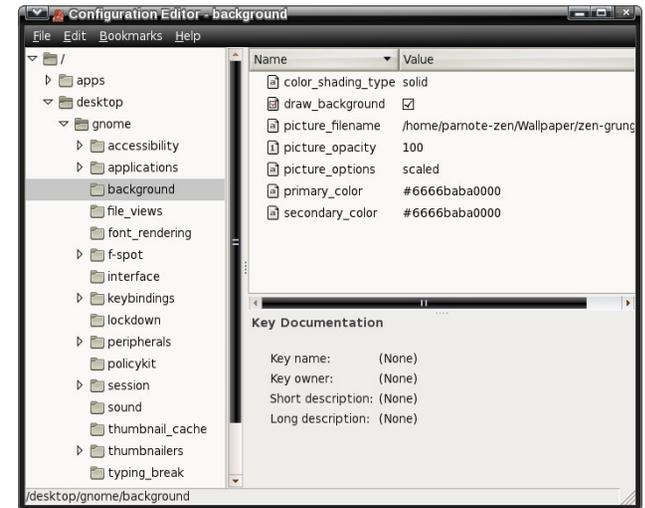
To make things easier, create a launcher on your panel for PCManFM. Click on it whenever you have work to do on files or you need a file manager.

Change Default Background Color

The default background color in Gnome is green. This can be problematic if you are using a PNG file with some transparent areas. Fortunately, this is easy to change.

First, launch the gconf-editor from a terminal session, by typing `gconf-editor &` at the command line. This will launch the GUI version of gconf-editor. Under PCLinuxOS, you do not have to be the root user to use this utility.

Travel through the tree in the left pane to `desktop > gnome > background`. Once you get there, you will notice an appearance of the right pane that is a lot like in the image below.



Note that the color designation (primary_color and secondary_color) is a bit different than what you use in Gimp or for the background color designation in a web page. The first thing you will (should?) notice is that the RGB color designation is twice as long as you would normally expect. That is because the typical color designation repeats for each color. So, the #6666baba0000 green color designation translates into #66ba00 in Gimp or HTML color code.

Say you wanted to change the background color from the default green to orange. Opening up Gimp, we see that the color designation for orange is #ffa000, in hexadecimal. In gconf-editor, it becomes #ffffaaa0000. Notice how we double entered the typical RGB values. Thus, the ff designation for the red color channel in Gimp becomes ffff in gconf-editor. Similarly, the aa designation for the green color channel in Gimp becomes the aaaa. The 00 designation for the blue color channel in Gimp becomes 0000.

Clicking on any of the values in the right pane will display a brief explanation of the expected values in the lower right portion of the screen. Feel free to experiment with the values. If you do, I recommend

writing down the default values – just in case you mess things up and want to return things to their default values.

There are some transparent PNG wallpaper files in the default installation of PCLinuxOS Zen. Changing the background colors, as well as the `color_shading_type`, will alter how the background appears when you use them.

Of course, you can also control most of this by right clicking on an empty spot on your Gnome desktop, and selecting Change Desktop Background from the context menu that appears.

Clean Up Your Desktop

There are many users who don't like to have a lot of icons on their desktop. It reminds them too much of Windows, where **every** application you install wants to put its icon on your desktop.

Fortunately, with Gnome's `gconf-editor`, it's easy to clean it up in a manner that is easily reversible at any time. From a terminal session, type `gconf-editor` & at the command line. When the `gconf-editor` window appears, go to `apps > nautilus > desktop` in the left pane. In the right pane, uncheck the icons you wish to clear from your desktop. They should disappear immediately.

Similarly, if you are a user who actually likes a gazillion icons on your desktop, you can add any that are listed by making sure the icons are checked.

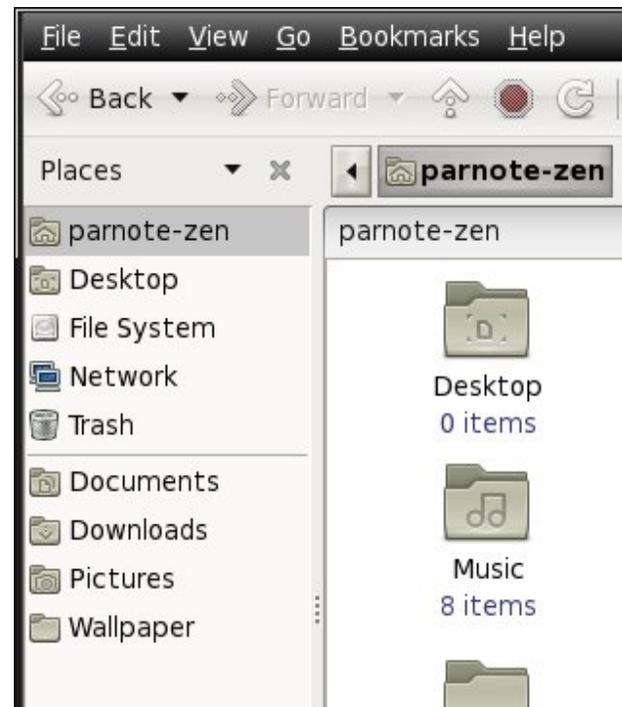
Gnome Power Manager

If you are running Gnome 2.32 on a notebook computer, you will want to install the Gnome Power Manager, since it's not installed by default. With Gnome Power Manager, you can keep close tabs on the state of your battery. Gnome Power Manager will also control when you receive warning messages

about a low battery and a critically low battery. It will also automatically take the assigned action (power down, suspend or hibernate) when your battery reaches the defined low level.

New Places – The Easy Way

One of the default menus in the standard Gnome menu is the "Places" menu. When browsing around, looking for ideas for the Gnome desktop article series, I came across multiple users complaining about how "difficult" it was to add new folders to the "Places" menu.



It's actually much easier than these users were making it out to be. To add items to your "Places" menu, simply click and drag a folder from the right pane of Nautilus to the bottom left pane in Nautilus. Voila! There it is. You can organize them by dragging them to their new position within the list.

Summary

I'm sure there are many more tips, tricks and tweaks. I've tried to include the ones I thought would be the most useful to the most number of people. Particularly, the speed enhancement tips, when applied, make Gnome as nimble and quick as the lighter Xfce desktop. Gnome is a very robust desktop environment, and it has a lot of fans, despite the obscurity built into it by the Gnome developers.



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Gnome 2.32: Resources

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

As the magazine closes out coverage of Gnome 2.32, I'd like to leave you with some additional resources that you can call upon to further expand your knowledge. As you can imagine, since the announcement of Gnome 3.x, most of the remaining Gnome 2.32 documentation is found at the sites of other Linux distros.

Before long, much of the Gnome 2.32 documentation may become difficult to find. Thus, you may want to print out any of the Gnome 2.32 documentation that you find for future reference. Perhaps an even better idea would be to convert it all to PDF files, rather than relying on a fragile paper copy as your only source of reference.

[Gnome 2.32 Desktop User Guide](#) - this is a copy of the official Gnome 2.32 user guide, from the Linux Mint web site. If you want to know "typical user" stuff about Gnome 2.32, this is the definitive resource. Just in case you are unable to access the aforementioned copy of the Gnome 2.32 Desktop User Guide, you can also access a copy stored at the [Linux Mint](#) web site.

[Ubuntu Pocket Guide and Reference](#) - if you stop and think about it, this one makes sense. Ubuntu's "flagship" release is (was) built around Gnome. Therefore, books that deal with Ubuntu-proper will obviously have to deal with Gnome.

[Mate Wiki](#) - just as there is the Trinity desktop fork for KDE 3.5.x lovers, Gnome 2.32 loyalists have forked Gnome 2.32. The project's name is Mate. It's only natural to want to keep an eye on this page, as well as the [Mate home page](#). Since Mate is an attempt to keep Gnome 2.32 breathing and with a

heartbeat, the information should be applicable to Gnome 2.32 – at least for a while. Since it only really got off the ground in December, 2011, given a little time, it should be quite the source for Gnome 2.3x information.

[Gnome Library](#) - there is plenty of Gnome 2.x documentation still available on the Gnome Library site. This is one site with literally TONS of information. The areas are divided into subsections for users, administrators and developers. Steadily, and unfortunately, Gnome 3.x data is starting to supplant the Gnome 2.x information. I do hope that someone has the foresight to archive the Gnome 2.x information (Mate developers? Are you listening?)

[FreeBSD GNOME Project](#): Gnome 2.32 - FreeBSD has a good bit of support information for Gnome 2.32. Be selective with the information there. The information is FreeBSD-centric, so some stuff will apply, while other things won't.

[Mate Desktop](#) - since the Mate Desktop is the "official" effort to keep Gnome 2.3x alive, you may be interested in keeping track of what is transpiring with its continued development. You can also check out the special Mate Desktop sections on the [Ubuntu](#), [Linux Mint](#), and [Arch Linux](#) forums.

[Linuxgator.org](#) - finally, PCLinuxOS Gnome has its own site and forum. This should be the first place PCLinuxOS Gnome users go for assistance, since the information is PCLinuxOS-centric. Just as in the main PCLinuxOS forum, the folks there are very nice and friendly. In fact, you are likely to see a few familiar faces haunting the forum there.

Summary

I hope that you have found the magazine's coverage of Gnome 2.32 helpful. Since Gnome 3.x has a special "fallback" mode, I thought it was important to cover Gnome 2.32 before covering Gnome 3.x. Also, Gnome 2.32 – or some resemblance of it – should remain persistent for a while longer. Of course, no one can tell the future of the Mate Desktop project, and whether it will fail or succeed. One thing is for certain: Gnome 2.32, and the Gnome 2.x releases that preceded it, has left an indelible mark on Linux history.

The logo for PCLinuxOS Radically Simple, featuring a blue circular icon with a white bull silhouette on the left, and the text "PCLinuxOS" in a large, blue, sans-serif font above "Radically Simple" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font.

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 PCLinuxOS Magazine, send an email to:
pclinuxos.mag@gmail.com

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

