# The PCLinuxOS magazine

Volume 124 May, 2017

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*aTunes: Importing Your CD Collection*

*GIMP Tutorial: Using The Clone Tool To Edit Photos, Again*

*Repo Review: Android Related Programs*

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The PCLinuxOS magazine

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The PCLinuxOS Magazine is a monthly online publication containing PCLinuxOS-related materials. It is published primarily for members of the PCLinuxOS community. The magazine staff is comprised of volunteers from the PCLinuxOS community.

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# From The Chief Editor's Desk ...

Almost three months ago, my son (Ryan) started going to a Head Start Early Childhood Education class. The Independence (MO) Public School District (where we live) sponsors it for a modest fee of $75 per week. He goes for four hours each weekday. They provide breakfast and lunch for him (which he mostly doesn't eat … and I can't say I blame him … school food definitely hasn't improved any since I was in school). He also gets the chance to socialize with other kids around his own age, and gets some structured early education.

Of course, being around the other children has its negative side effects. Namely, he's exposed to a wider range of pathogens, which he then brings home to share with his sister, mom and dad. In the three short months he has been attending school, he has brought home norovirus and two colds. Lexi (thankfully) somehow avoided contracting the norovirus, but mom and dad weren't as lucky. We're basically on track to get one new infection every month, thus far.

If you've never had a norovirus infection, you don't want to sign up for the experience – trust me. It's 24 hours (or so) of hell that leaves you feeling completely drained. Most people call it "stomach flu," but it isn't influenza. This food borne illness will leave you confused about which end (front door or back door) to put over the stool.

Ryan then passed his next illness – a cold – to his sister, and I was the recipient of the virus from both of them. With a toddler and an infant sneezing and coughing in my face from about a foot away, I was doomed. That cold persisted for a couple of weeks before turning into a sinus infection that necessitated a trip to the urgent care clinic and a 10 day course of antibiotics to treat that sinus infection.

This latest round will hopefully be the mildest. It's already seeming that way, anyway. Ryan passed his next cold on to his sister, who then passed it on to me. It has more of the rhinitis symptoms than anything else, and (as of the writing of this article) seems to be waning after only a couple of days misery.

You wouldn't think that I'd be as susceptible to these infectious agents he brings home from school, since I work in a hospital around sick people all the time. But at least in that environment, I have the ability to take the necessary precautions to prevent me from being a casualty. That isn't necessarily so when it's your own child or children. When you spend the day wiping their noses, being coughed on, and changing diapers, there is bound to be a break in your defenses at some point in the day. It just isn't like when I'm at work and always on guard. Plus, it's next to impossible to teach a toddler the proper hand hygiene that's key to preventing the spread of pathogens. Shirt sleeves also make handy tissues, at least in their minds.

So, until next month, I bid you peace, happiness, prosperity, serenity … and good health.

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A magazine just isn't a magazine without articles to fill the pages.

If you have article ideas, or if you would like to contribute articles to the 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.

# Control Screen Brightness Without A Power Manager

**by Paul Arnote (parnote)**

I have to totally honest. I have this laptop that was given to me. It's a Toshiba Satellite L305-S5957 with a single core Celeron processor, 4GiB RAM, and a 160 GiB hard drive. Of all the laptops I have, it's the only one with a single core processor. Yet, it's probably the one that I use over 90% of the time. All of my other laptops (notably excepting my 32 bit laptops and netbooks that I still have), have dual core processors.

Even though the processor stinks on the Toshiba, I use it most because I like the keyboard, both the feel and layout. It may seem to be a small thing, but the keyboard layout on the Toshiba frees me to work the way I'm most accustomed to working. Sure, I could attach a full size USB keyboard to the other laptops, but that isn't always as convenient as I would like.

At any rate, the Toshiba does have some issues that I just put up with. It's very heat sensitive, won't run my own program that's in the repository (Touchpad Toggle) without rendering my wifi inoperable, and it freezes up – as in locked up tighter than a drum – when running Xscreensaver and any power management software. When it locks up, nothing but a hard restart will resurrect the computer. R-E-I-S-U-B won't work (I've tried it many times).

So, I've strayed away from running power management software and Xscreensaver (which is the worst). But by not running power management software, I was left without an easily accessible way to dim my laptop screen (no, the Fn keys don't work, as is frequently the issue with laptops). Or so I thought.

**xrandr**

Xrandr is a powerhouse of a utility for when it comes to dealing with displays, especially laptop displays. Typically, standalone desktop monitors have separate controls to adjust the screen brightness, so xrandr definitely won't be needed to control screen brightness on a desktop monitor. But not so for laptop displays, and this is where xrandr really shines. Xrandr was installed by default on my PCLinuxOS Xfce installation.

For those of you who shy away from the command line, I have one word: don't. The xrandr utility is easy enough to use. All the commands are entered as a normal user, so you don't even have to su to root.

First, we need to know some information. Enter **xrandr --listmonitors** on the command line of a terminal session. Your output will look something like this:

```
$ xrandr --listmonitors
Monitors: 1
 0: +LVDS1 1280/330x800/210+0+0  LVDS1
```

This tells you that xrandr sees only one monitor on the laptop, which it refers to as LVDS1. It also tells you the resolution of the monitor.

You can use another command to give you an even more detailed report, by entering **xrandr --current** on the command line. Your output will look something like this:

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```
$ xrandr --current
Screen 0: minimum 8 x 8, current 1280 x 800, maximum 32767 x 32767
LVDS1 connected 1280x800+0+0 (normal left inverted right x axis y
axis) 330mm x 210mm
   1280x800      60.00*+  60.00*
   1280x800_60   60.00
   1024x768      60.00
   800x600       60.32
   640x480       59.94
DP1 disconnected (normal left inverted right x axis y axis)
TV1 disconnected (normal left inverted right x axis y axis)
VGA1 disconnected (normal left inverted right x axis y axis)
VIRTUAL1 disconnected (normal left inverted right x axis y axis)
```

This command tells you not only the current resolution and screen identity, but also the other resolutions that are available, their refresh rates, and a status report on all of the other display connections. Still, we see our primary (and only) screen being identified by xrandr as LVDS1.

So, now that we're armed with that information, it's very easy to control the brightness of our laptop screen. Let me show you the command, and then I'll walk you through it.

```
xrandr --output LVDS1 --brightness 0.72
```

The "--output LVDS1" tells xrandr that you want to target the display that it calls LVDS1. Then, "--brightness 0.72" sets the brightness to just under 3/4ths full brightness. The value for the --brightness parameter must be a fractional value between 0.0 and 1.0, with 1.0 being full brightness. Lately, I've changed the --brightness parameter to 0.50, preferring an even darker starting screen.

It doesn't get much easier than that. If you place a space and ampersand (" &" … without the quotes) at the end of the command, the command will be executed in the background and you will immediately regain control of your command line. This is a habit I've gotten into over the years to force execution of a command to the background, instead of it staying in the foreground and tying up my command line prompt.

This is exactly the command that I have placed into my startup commands in Xfce. As soon as the laptop is booted, the command is executed and my display brightness is set from the time that the desktop appears.

**But wait – there's more**

Well, of course there's more. This wouldn't be Linux if there wasn't more than one way to get this – or any other – task done.

First, you need to open Synaptic and install the command line utility **xbacklight** from the PCLinuxOS repository. Below is the help text for xbacklight.

```
$ xbacklight --help
usage: xbacklight [options]
  where options are:
  -display <display> or -d <display>
  -help
  -set <percentage> or = <percentage>
  -inc <percentage> or + <percentage>
  -dec <percentage> or - <percentage>
  -get
  -time <fade time in milliseconds>
  -steps <number of steps in fade>
```

The options we're most interested in here are -set, -inc, and -dec. Keep in mind that xbacklight uses whole number percentages, different from xrandr's --brightness option, which uses fractions.

Thus, **xbacklight -set 72** performs exactly like **xrandr --output LVDS1 --brightness 0.72**. In fact, they can most often be used interchangeably.

But xbacklight differs from xrandr with its -inc (increase) and -dec (decrease) options. You can specify to increase or decrease the screen brightness by a set percentage every time the command is issued. A good use for this is to bind this command to a keyboard combination, replacing the typically non-functioning screen brightness keys.

So, xbacklight -inc 2 will increase the brightness by two percent, while xbacklight -dec 2 will decrease the brightness by two percent. I have, however, found the functionality of this to be somewhat dependent on your hardware configuration. Nothing I do can get the xbacklight -inc 2 command to work, but the xbacklight -dec 2 command works exceptionally well. I can't even get the command to increase the screen brightness to work from a naked command line.

**Summary**

Of course, xrandr is capable of doing a lot more. The purpose of this article wasn't to give complete coverage to everything that xrandr can do. Rather, we used xrandr to meet a specific need. In this case, we used xrandr to control the

screen brightness on a laptop, where there are no independent controls for brightness.

I usually have my computer on 24/7. I frequently check my email and do other things on my computer early in the morning, before the kids get up. At that time, I'm sitting in the dark, and the only light in the room is from the screen on my laptop. The last thing I want to do is to stare at a laptop screen that's at full brightness. It can be blinding, in the sense that such a bright screen destroys my night vision that's necessary for seeing in the room beyond my laptop.

With xrandr and xbacklight, you can have full control over the brightness of your laptop screen, without having to run a power management program. This is one thing I really love about Linux. There seems to ***always*** be more than one way to get something done.

# PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner

## Bacon Salt

**BACON, BACON, BACON**
**Bacon makes everything taste better!**

**Ingredients:**

500g/1 pound bacon
1.5 tablespoons good quality sea salt
2 teaspoons ground black pepper

**Directions:**

Preheat oven to 180C/350F and place a rack on top of a baking tray (line with foil if you want to minimise the cleaning necessary). Cook bacon for 15-20 minutes checking after 15 minutes and drain on paper towels removing any excess fat.

Cool slightly and then place the bacon, salt and pepper in a food processor and blitz until fine (or as fine as you want). Store in the fridge in an airtight container and extend the life of this by using a clean spoon every time you use it.

Sprinkle a little bit on everything from salads to baked goods.

Pass the caramel ice cream and bacon salt.

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# Is There A VPN In Your Future?

**by Paul Arnote (parnote)**

Ok. I know how some get their britches twisted into knots when something I write is perceived to have "political" overtones. So, this I'm about to say is definitely NOT about politics. Rather, this is about what this all means, not only to U.S. users, but those who also communicate with U.S. users, and the ramifications and fallout that's expected. Like it or not, sometimes the things that happen in the political arena have an effect on the daily lives of folks who would rather remain apolitical.

Back in 2013, the U.S. government passed a set of "net neutrality" laws. Among the restrictions it put into place, ISPs were not allowed to mine the data and online habits of their users without users "opting in." The broadband industry vehemently opposed these restrictions, since they had their eyes and hearts (and wallets) set on selling user data about what users searched for online, who they emailed, what they did online, etc. to whomever was willing to pay for that data.

Very recently (around the end of March, 2017), the U.S. legislative branches capitulated to the will of the broadband industry, forsaking the privacy of the users, and repealed that restriction, which was to take effect December, 2017. What this means for the average user is that all of their internet searches, who they email, and all of their other online activity is available to anyone willing to pay for it.

It's official. You have NO online privacy. By repealing the FCC (Federal Communication Commission) rule, you don't even have an expectation that anything you do online will remain private. All of your online activity is up for sale to the highest bidder.

Did you get into a spirited conversation with another individual? Did you search for _____? Did you say something in jest that, taken out of context, could be taken in a different manner than you (and your conversation partner) understood it to mean at the time? The potential ramifications are HUGE. Even the EFF has come out in strong opposition to the repeal of the rule.

The fallout remains to be seen. It isn't a huge leap to expect that those who value their privacy will soon be finding a good VPN (Virtual Private Network) to help protect that very same privacy. I can only imagine that those who run VPN services must be jumping up and down with joy over the recent repeal of the rule. They are certain to see an explosion of new subscribers.

But what about the average, less-than-tech-savvy user who doesn't know about using a VPN to enhance their online privacy? These poor, unsuspecting souls are like meat about to be run through a grinder.

Like I mentioned before, this isn't meant to be a political commentary or anything of the sorts. Rather, those of us who value our privacy must be made aware of these types of things so that we can take the necessary steps to protect our privacy. Knowledge is, after all, power. If you lack the knowledge about the rule change, then you will also lack the power to tip things back in the favor of your privacy.

Since all of this has happened, interest in the U.S. has skyrocketed in VPNs. So, what does a VPN offer you that helps protect your privacy?

**NOITPYRCNE**

Just in case you didn't catch that, the subheading is "encryption" spelled backwards.

With the use of a VPN, you connect to the internet through your local ISP. However, you local ISP has absolutely NO idea what you are sending from your computer or receiving to your computer when you use a VPN. That's because both ends of the VPN connection are encrypted. The data you send is encrypted before it leaves your computer, and decrypted at the VPN server. Likewise, the data that is sent from the VPN server is encrypted prior to being sent to your computer, where it is decrypted once it arrives. All that your ISP sees is traffic, without the ability to tell what kind of traffic you are sending and receiving.

Thus, your ISP has no idea if that traffic is an internet search, torrents, online chat, video streaming, file sharing, or anything else. Because

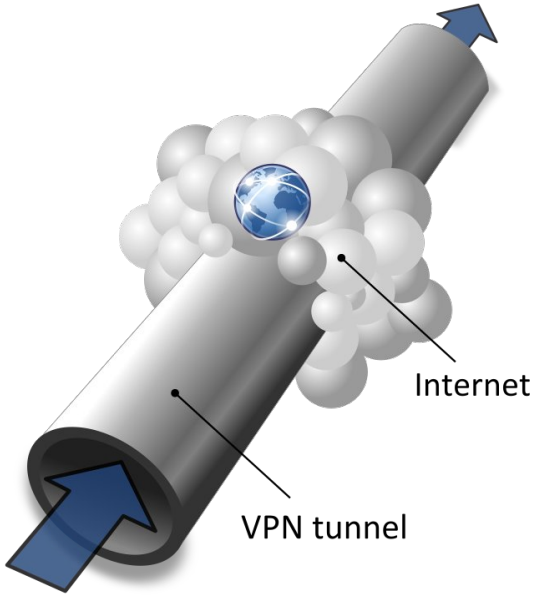
they cannot see what you are doing, they cannot mine your data. And if they cannot collect data on what you are doing, what you are searching for, etc., they cannot profit from selling that data to advertisers.

Of course, the encrypted traffic between your computer and your VPN also protects your privacy from the prying eyes of those three and four letter government agencies. Most of the traffic between your computer and your VPN is encrypted – minimally – with AES 256 encryption.

**Lots to choose from**

You have a LOT of choices out there when searching for a VPN provider. In fact, you can quickly become overwhelmed by all the choices out there. There are free VPN providers, and there are VPN providers you have to pay a monthly or annual subscription fee. But this is just the beginning of the things you need to consider when making your choice of a VPN service.

Besides budgetary limitations and considerations, there are other things to consider. First, and probably foremost, is whether or not the VPN service keeps logs. These logs can be used to identify what you are doing while connected to the VPN service. The PCLinuxOS Magazine once ran an article (September 2013) about a free VPN service called VPNBook. They claimed to not keep or maintain logs of their users' VPN sessions. But, that wasn't entirely true. Repeatedly, logs (that they said they didn't keep) kept being entered into evidence in court trials against Anonymous members. In that same issue, we ran another article extolling the (mis)deeds of VPNBook, and offered up alternatives that PCLinuxOS users might want to consider using as a replacement, as well as reasons then why you might want to consider the use of a VPN service. All of those reasons listed in the 2013 article are still just as valid today as when they were written nearly four years ago.




Which brings us to another thing you will need to consider: how much do you trust your new VPN provider? Some VPN providers haven't been around long enough to garner a reputation one way or another, positive or negative. In those cases, you're pretty much operating on blind faith. Others have been around for long enough, with enough users, to have solid reputations, both positive and negative. Like with VPNBook, they could tell you one thing – like them not keeping logs of your online activity – but then do something entirely opposite. For what it's worth, VPNBook is still operating a VPN service. I am unaware if they have changed their business practices. Most consumers won't go back to a service once they've been burned, or know of a provider's penchant for dishonesty.

While you're encrypting the traffic between your computer and your VPN service, who's to say that your VPN provider isn't collecting and selling your information on the other end, just as your ISP might do if you weren't using a VPN? Typically, VPN services won't, because they won't be in business for long if they did. Word would get around pretty quickly. But who's to say that there aren't a few unscrupulous operators out there to make their quick buck and then disappear into the night? Most who provide a VPN service fully understand their role and their market niche, which should keep their performance in line with the expectations of their customers.

Another thing to consider is that you may end up subjecting yourself to the laws of another country (regarding copyright, what's acceptable use and what's unacceptable use, etc.), based on what country the company that operates the VPN service is "based," or where their servers are based. It's not always quickly apparent which applies. One service (which I'll talk about later) has its domain registered in Sweden, its business registered in Malta, and at least one of its servers located in France.

**Make a GOOD choice**

With so many choices around for VPN service providers, it might be difficult to figure out which one

is right for you. Fortunately, one guy has made it his "mission" to help users like you and me at least make an informed and educated decision about VPN service providers.

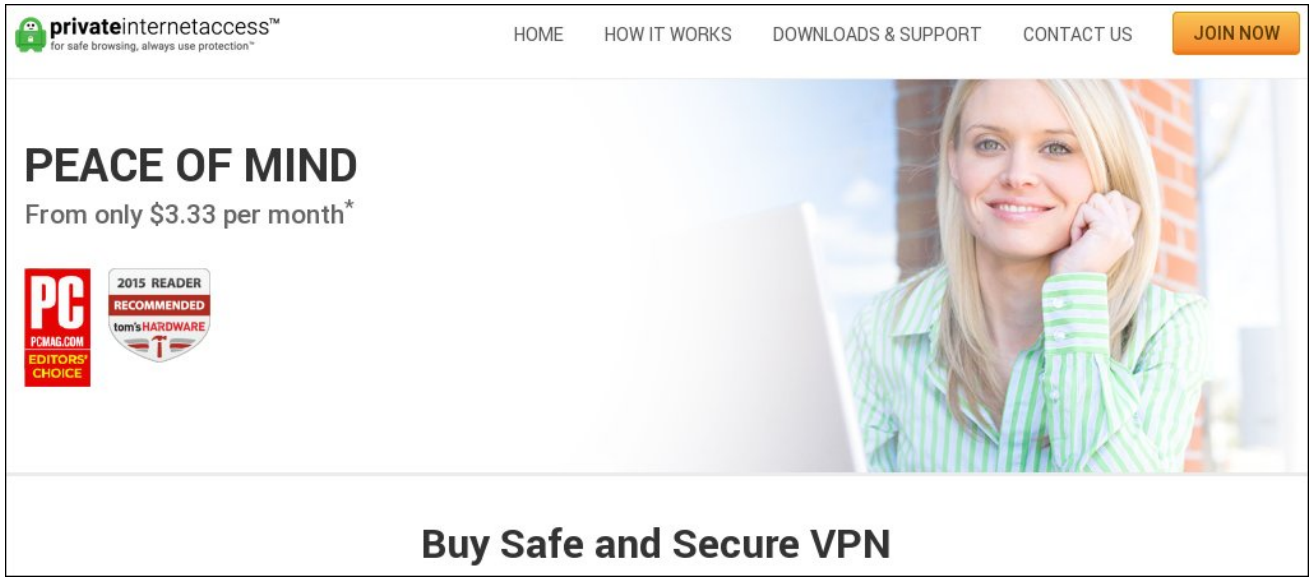
That One Privacy Site, run by "That One Privacy Guy," features a selection of charts that compare VPN service providers. You can choose from a simple comparison chart, or from a detailed comparison chart. The entire chart may be a bit difficult to view online. To make it easier to study, he has provided the various charts in both Excel *.xlsx and OpenOffice/LibreOffice *.ods Calc files that you can download and compare offline. Select which version of the chart you want to download – simple or detailed – and you will be presented with a link to download the appropriate file. You might have to scroll down a bit to see the links.

With that said, Lifehacker has recently been featuring quite a few articles on VPNs lately … well, ever since the rule change was voted on by U.S. legislators. They ran an article on what they viewed to be the five best VPN providers, and even asked their readers which VPN provider was their favorite.

The "winner" of the reader poll on Lifehacker was Private Internet Access, a.k.a. PIA. Indeed, they sound like the role model of VPN providers. They have expanded their customer base by providing a honest service with integrity. They do not keep logs of your activity, and are very affordable. You can pay monthly ($7 U.S.), or you can pay yearly ($40). By far, the yearly rate is the best deal, coming in at $3.33 (U.S.) per month.

From the Lifehacker article:

*PIA is one of those VPN service providers that both protects your privacy and security by encrypting all of the traffic between your home computer (or home network) and their service, but also anonymizes it and helps you get around regional content restrictions by giving you a choice of exit servers (close to 1000, in 10 different countries.) PIA doesn't log data about your session or connection details, they don't discriminate against protocols or IP addresses, and they don't host any data about its users activities at all. They support a number of different authentication and encryption methods, support virtually every mobile and desktop operating system, and their pricing isn't bad either ($7/mo or $40/yr for up to five devices connected simultaneously.)*




*PIA has made the list every time Torrentfreak looked into privacy protecting VPN providers, and picked up an Editors Choice award from PCMag. Those of you who chimed in in the nominations thread noted that they also provide connectivity options for your home router so you can stay constantly connected, connect to your home network when you're away, or customize your solution. Many of you praised their customer support and technical expertise.*

I did download the installer from PIA, and paid for a one year subscription. So, if you decide to go with PIA, there are a few things you will need to do to get the installer to work on PCLinuxOS. First, you will need to install **sudo** from the PCLinuxOS repository. Keep in mind that PCLinuxOS is one of the few Linux distros around that shuns the routine use of sudo, opting instead for the much more secure **su** method of elevating user privileges. Next, you will need to edit the /etc/sudoers file. Right after line 72 of the sudoers file, you will need to add a line that reads something like this:

**parnote-toshiba ALL=(ALL) ALL**

Of course, you will replace "parnote-toshiba" with the name of the user you want to allow elevation of user privileges. While you're editing the sudoers file, remove the "#" from in front of line 82. Above all, DO NOT edit the /etc/sudoers file with anything but a simple text editor. On my computer running Xfce, the simple text editor is Mousepad. On LXDE it would be Leafpad. On KDE, it would be KWrite or Kate. On Mate, it would be Pluma. Other good choices would be Geany, Vim, Emacs, Nano, Pico, Gedit, gVim, or (the tool designed for the job of editing the sudoers file) visudo. However, if you aren't familiar with how to navigate in vi (or use its relatively obscure commands), visudo might not be the best choice for you. LibreOffice, AbiWord or any other word processor SHOULD NOT BE USED. There is a huge difference between a simple text editor and a word processor, and a file edited and saved with a word processor very well might just leave you with a corrupted sudoers file.

Next, add the user to whom you want to grant sudo privileges to the sudo group in the PCLinuxOS Control Center. Launch the PCLinuxOS Control Center, go to System, and select "Manage users on system." If the group sudo does not exist, add it. Then, double click on the username you want to have sudo access, and make sure that user is a member of the sudo group.

Now, go to the directory where you saved the installer files to, and open a terminal session. ***As a regular user*** (as in, not root), enter ./pia-v68-installer-linux.sh. Later versions of the Linux installer will require you to change this line to match the name of the installer file (this is the current name of the installer file as of the writing of this article). If you've installed sudo and properly edited your sudoers file, everything should install just fine.

Remember that the admonition about installing from outside the PCLinuxOS repository still stands. Once installed, you should see a red padlock icon in your notification area, and you should be presented with the PIA Settings window (above). On your first run of the settings window, you will need to enter your password. I also checked all of the options in the lower half of the window.

To connect to the PIA VPN, right click on the red icon in your notification area and select either "Connect Auto" or the location of the server you want to connect to. While it's connecting, the icon will change from red to gray, and then turn green when your connection has been established. Since I have selected it in the PIA Settings window, my VPN connection is set to start at login, and to auto-connect on launch. PIA will remember the last server you connected to, and reconnect you to it the next time you connect. You can always select a different server from the list at any time you choose. Currently, PIA is running over 3100 servers in 25 different countries.

Admittedly, it took me a few times to install it properly. My issue had to do with not having to deal with sudo and the sudoers file since my very brief time with Ubuntu 10 years ago. During that time, I probably forgot more about sudo than I ever knew. Back then I was also a Linux noob, and really didn't yet have a grasp of everything that was going on.

If a free VPN service is more your speed (or all you can afford), there is a newer service available that ***seems*** to be on the up and up. Remember that service I mentioned earlier who had registered their domain in Sweden, registered their business in Malta, and had at least one server in France? Well, that VPN provider would be freevpn.se. These guys seem to be too new to even appear on "That One Privacy Guy's" list of VPN providers.

I have tried them, with very good results. In fact, I'm writing this article in Google Docs while connected through their VPN service. Earlier in the day, I streamed a torrent video with excellent results. Despite the really good performance, I consider the "jury to still be out" on these guys. One question I keep asking myself is how do these guys afford server space/time by giving it away for free? Color me jaded, but in today's profit driven, greedy world, I just don't see people, much less companies, doing something out of the goodness of their heart. They HAVE to have an income source to stay in business. Nice rhetoric and good intentions don't go far towards paying the bills that will inevitably accompany any endeavor.

You connect to freevpn.se through openvpn (in the PCLinuxOS repository). Just download their certificate file(s), and extract them from the archive. On my computer, I've placed those files in their own directory in a directory I created in my /home directory, called VPN. I start the VPN with this command (all on one line), from a root command line:

```
openvpn --config /home/parnote-toshiba/VPN/www.FreeVPN.se_OpenVPN-Certificate-Bundle/FreeVPN.se-TCP-80.ovpn --auth-user-pass /home/parnote-toshiba/VPN/www.FreeVPN.se_OpenVPN-Certificate-Bundle/vpn-login.txt &
```

From what I can tell, most of the VPN service providers support openvpn, which is pretty much a standard on Linux. So whichever method you choose to connect to your VPN service provider, you should be covered and have a fairly painless experience.

commandlinefu.com

**Summary**

If you value your privacy, you are going to have to take matters into your own hands. Your politicians don't seem to be too motivated to protect it (but watch them squawk like a wounded chicken when theirs is violated).

There is another option, and that is to use the Tor browser and network. Anonymity and privacy are its cornerstones. But that is another story for another time. At this time, VPN service providers are getting most of the attention, and rightly so. The Tor browser and network have a reputation for being slow, even on broadband connections. VPNs work right now, with the programs you're already using.

I started with using freevpn.se, before forking over the cost for the paid PIA VPN service. While both seemed to work well, using PIA was a much easier experience. PIA's reputation also went a long way towards putting to rest any doubts I might have had about the integrity of the VPN service. Both appear to be a good choice, at least until they (or someone) proves them to be untrustworthy, like VPNBook. If you can afford the modest cost, I'd recommend you go with a paid VPN service provider, like PIA.

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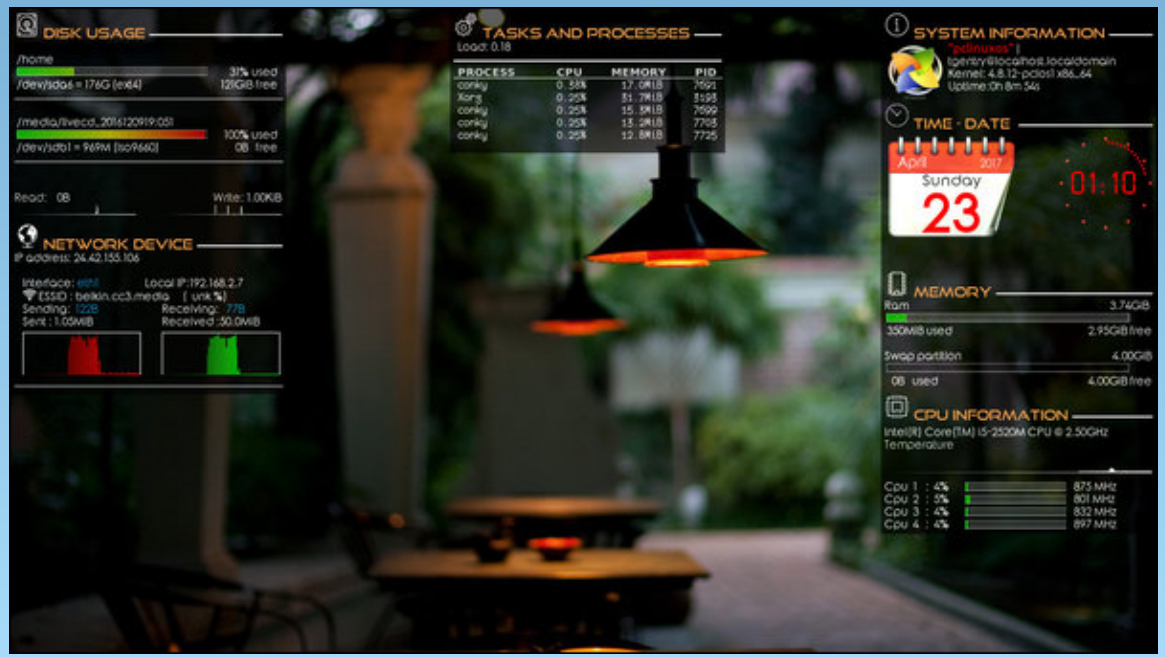
# Screenshot Showcase




*Posted by tgentry, on April 23, 2017, running e21.*

# PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight: Pat

**As told to YouCanToo**

**What is your name/username?**
Pat Lawrence/Pat

**How old are you?**
66

**Are you married, single?**
I got lucky and married a man who can can fix or build almost anything. He built acoustic guitars for years (and a two story home), has repaired, rewired and plastered much of our historic 1875 house and has been building computers, writing code and supporting free operating systems for decades.

**Do you have pets, what is your favorite?**
We generally prefer animals to people and currently have two cats, Alice and Otis, and a loving and loved shih-tsu, Penny. They are in many ways the center of our lives. We have no favorites, as each of them brings a different kind of joy into our lives. My husband prefers them to people.

**Are you retired, still working and if working, what do you do?**
I'm a retired editor and journalist and former nurse who also spent 13 years in construction sales and five years as an art center director. I was editor of a woman oriented publication in West Virginia for several years, and in 2006 I was awarded Region III Journalist of the Year designation by the SBA. I was privileged to profile more than a hundred extraordinary women over the years, from a race car driver to the astronaut Sally Ride. Each of them was an inspiration in some way and I was fortunate enough to allow my readers to meet them personally and professionally. I have always been a writer, in some way, and most recently completed and published (via Amazon) two biographies by request. I still do articles occasionally and enjoy doing research just to satisfy my curiosity.

**Where do you call home?**
We live in Hillsboro, Ohio, but my husband still calls West Virginia home and I think I will always be a Texan in my heart. My dad was in the Air Force, and our family moved over 30 times. I went to eight schools before graduating from high school in Houston.

**Where did you go to school and what is your education level?**
I have a BS in Nursing, with a minor in political science, though it took three colleges and about ten years to gather the degree. My super-smart spouse has Master's degrees in English Literature and Biochemistry. We are really good at crossword puzzles.

**What kind of things do you like doing?**
We love going to movies and plays, antique shopping (he likes the fine old furniture, I like the fine old silver) and watching British mysteries with our pets. Plus, we do lots of crossword puzzle, especially NY Times Sunday puzzles.

**Why and when did you start using Linux?**
I started using Linux in 2006. I was a reporter and editor, working from home, and very reliant on my computer, as any wordsmith tends to be. I was also completely dependent on my husband for technical support since my expertise in this area began and ended with the power button. After four years or so of fighting (and cursing) with Windows, he simply insisted that I switch to Linux. I worried, of course, about compatibility with the layout guys, sharing files with other staff, and so on, but that never became an issue. He did have to write a macro or two for what was then OpenOffice so I could have certain functions that I was accustomed to using in Microsoft Word (document word count, an essential, was missing at the time), but other than that, the transition was pretty straightforward. I actually became almost proficient with the GIMP, a necessity since I took and edited the photographs for my newspaper articles. The second book was written and laid out using PCLinuxOS, which made it infinitely easier to prepare for publication.

I used OpenSuSe for several years, switched briefly to Mint in 2010, and finally to PCLinuxOS in 2012. It was very pleasant - no more fighting with upgrades, no worrying about video viewing, and no worry about hardware support. This will be our fifth year with PCLinuxOS. We have changed the hard drive once in that time (I say "we" as an interested, coffee-fetching bystander), and the transition was as simple as copying the home directory.

**What specific equipment do you currently use with PCLinuxOS?**
I use an HP Pavilion 2.4 G Duo core computer with 4G memory, 1T WD hard drive, Nvidia graphics card, and 24” ASUS monitor. We also have an HP laptop with PCLinuxOS, and my husband has a desktop as well. Additional accessories generally include a kitten on the keyboard and a dog in the lap.

**What would you like to see happen within PCLinuxOS that would make it a better place. What are your feelings?**
Life is so much better with PCLinuxOS! Everything runs smoothly, it's safe and always up to date. It would be nice to know a little more about the development team. We know Tex by reputation, but it would be good to know who does what around the house, you know. I feel confident that my husband

won't be caught up in the usual hell of upgrading with PCLinuxOS, and that is worth a hug in any language.

*PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight is an exclusive, monthly column by YouCanToo, featuring a PCLinuxOS forum member. This column will allow "the rest of us" to get to know our forum family members better, and will give those featured an opportunity to share their PCLinuxOS story with the rest of the world.*

*If you would like to be featured in PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight, please send a private message to youcantoo, parnote or Meemaw in the PCLinuxOS forum expressing your interest.*

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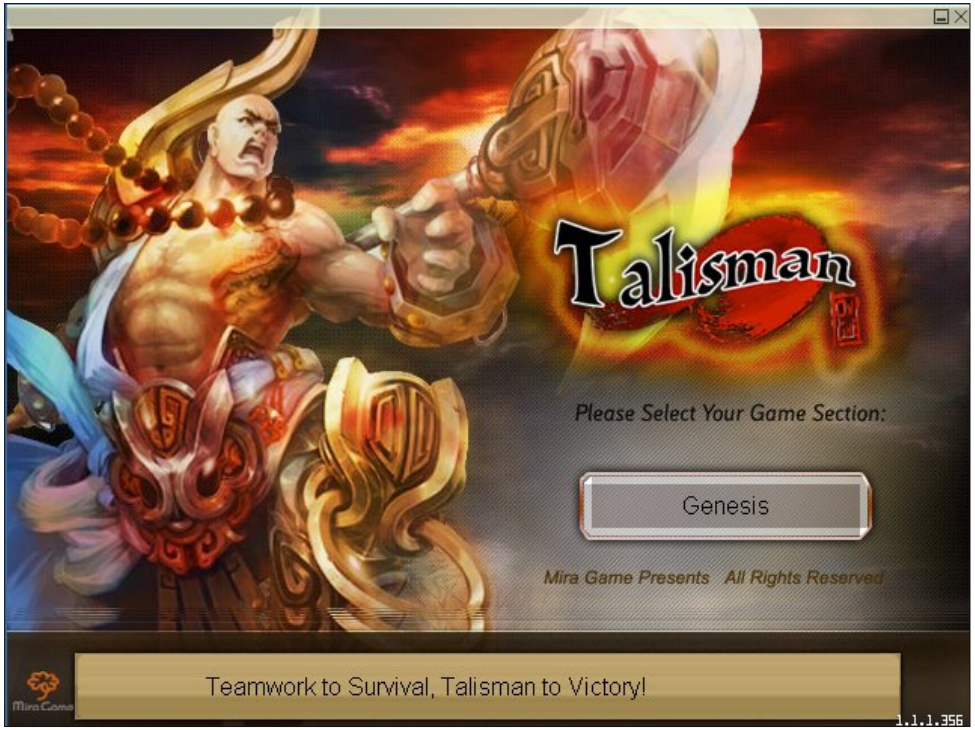
# Screenshot Showcase

*Posted by tbschommer, on April 25, 2017, running KDE.*

# Playing Talisman Online In PCLinuxOS

**by Alessandro Ebersol (Agent Smith)**




A legendary journey ...

In the ancient Far East, there was a peaceful and serene continent. The people there were living and working in peace and contentment. Their families thrived for generations.

However, a huge unknown evil force was brewing in the darkness. Once it had collected enough energy in the last thousand years, the evil force eventually turned into a huge monster called Master Blood. Its birthplace was called the Blood Palace.

With the arrival of Master Blood, peace ended. Master Blood kept killing humans and other living beings to strengthen its power. It fed up absorbing their poor souls.

At that time the whole world was at the mercy of Master Blood. The poor had become destitute and homeless. The beautiful and peaceful continent became a living hell. Dead bodies were everywhere.

But as the old saying goes, "Where there is oppression, there is opposition." The Grand Master Tian Meng, who comes from the north, was determined to exterminate the horrible Master Blood.

Under the leadership of Master Tian Meng, a just organization was quickly formed. Those warriors of justice came together to suppress Master Blood and his minions.

The battle between justice and evil lasted for 100 days. Both sides were severely injured. Finally, Master Tian Meng and his four companions fought with Master Blood on Blood Mountain. That incredible battle lasted for five days!

Fortunately, Master Blood was defeated by the magic of Master Tian Meng, called Heaven Ice, in the end. The soul of Master Blood was sealed in an ice cube which is located at the bottom of a natural pool in Green Scarp Valley.

*The 5 Classes: Wizard, Tamer, Monk, Assassin and Fairy*

The surface of the pool was locked with the "Thousand-year Ice" magic. From that moment on, the faithful Nanmu family has guarded the icy prison of Master Blood.

After Master Blood was sealed, the world regained peace. People began to rebuild their homeland. The whole continent gradually witnessed the return of peace and harmony. With the experience gained in the battle with the evil force, Master Tian Meng and his companions decided to create their own classes and accept many pupils to increase the force of justice.

With that mutual intention, it was created the well known 5 classes – Monk, Wizard, Fairy, Tamer and Assassin. The force of justice grew more and more.

However, 500 years later, the ice cube that was in the deep pool bottom in Green Scarp disappeared suddenly!

Then, various types of ghosts and evil monsters appeared continuously. The breath of evil was gradually suffocating the people. What the hell had happened? Master Blood resurfaced or a new monster was born? The five just classes made the pact to act together and find out the truth.

**Talisman Online, the game**

After this breathtaking introduction, you better be ready for many adventures in ancient China. The game is based on ancient local legends, with lots of Chinese folklore, Taoism and Buddhism, and beautiful scenery of the area where the game unfolds.

**Fact sheet**

Talisman Online was developed by the Chinese company Mira Games. Mira Games was founded in the summer of 2007 and is committed to the development of MMOs in English for the global community. The company also developed similar MMORPG, as Asura Force, Dragon Heart and Oceans Uncharted. Talisman Online was launched on 17th October 2007.

**Review**

Talisman Online is heavily inspired by the mega hit World of Warcraft from Blizzard, but still manages to look and play like an original game.

Much of the interface, mini-map and other details were taken directly from WoW, while the improvement of equipment and auto-walk are new features that help Talisman Online stand out from the crowd of WoW clones. Although Talisman Online is a unique and interesting game there is a little lack of content, and sometimes sameness.

The game does not offer a lot of customization and you are only able to choose the face and hair style of the five templates provided. The missions are highlighted in green on the map and click on them easily allows your player to go where the quests are. Keyboard shortcuts make it the ideal interface for the players. It is quite easy to navigate the world of Talisman Online.

New, different from other MMORPGs is that in Talisman Online, the player does not get stat points when leveling up, instead, stats increase automatically with each increase in level. That is, the game increases the stats of your character automatically. The amount of increase is different for the different classes.

**Classes**

* **Wizard** (male/female) - Wizards are masters of the arcane arts. They may have weak defense and low HP, but can cause great damage with their spells.

* **Monk** (male) - Monks are the warriors/tanks of Talisman Online. They fight with big weapons and inflict heavy damage. Monks have high defense and use stamina to use their skills.

* **Assassin** (male) - Assassins are quick specialists in close combat that have low defense, but high attack rates and evasion. As Monks, Assassins use stamina instead of mana to fuel their skills.

* **Fairy** (female) – Fairies, a supporting class, that have healing spells and buffs. Fairies can cause enough damage but suffer with low defense.

* **Tamer** (female) - The Ranger class, Tamers stand out in long range combat with their trusty arches. Tamers can persuade creatures of the same or lower level, to fight by their side.

**Verdict**

It is worth exploring the world of Talisman Online, because the graphics are quite beautiful, there are interesting visual effects and the hardware requirements are very low (P III and Nvidia/Intel compatible with DX 8.1, with at least 32 MB ram).

It has sometimes an annoying music and some translations of "Engrish" that are hilarious, but all in all, it is worth it.

**How to run it in PCLinuxOS**

You'll need Play-On-Linux (POL).

* Open POL.

* Click Install a Program.

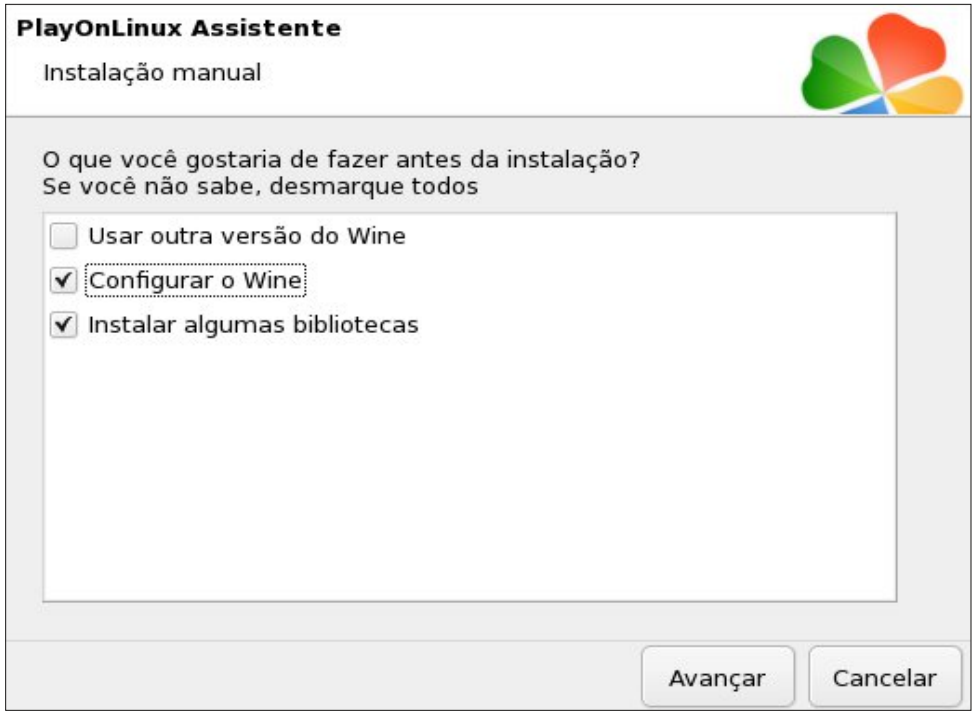
* Click Install a program not listed.

* Click Next, Next, Next until you reach the manual setup screen.

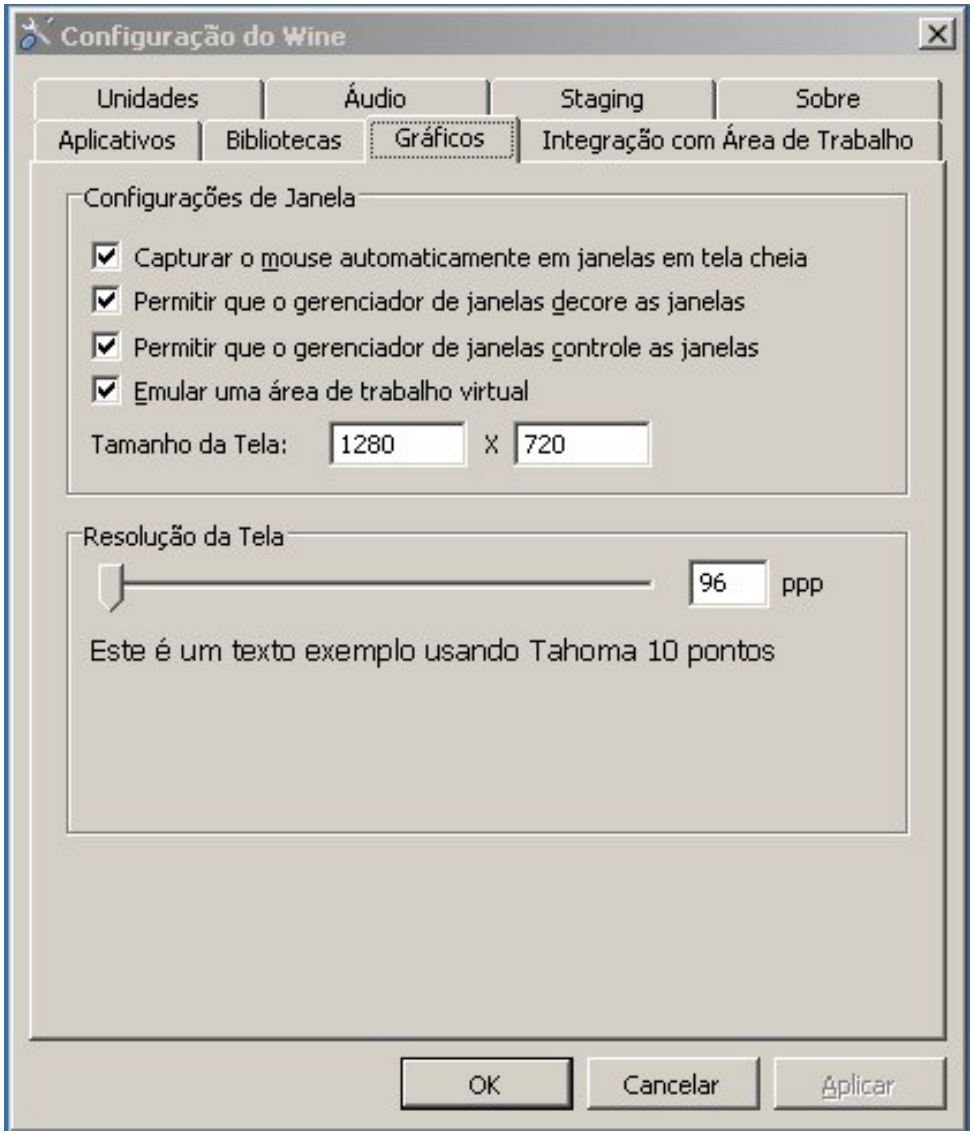
* Click Install a program on a new virtual drive.

* Create a new virtual drive, and give it a name. I called it talisman.

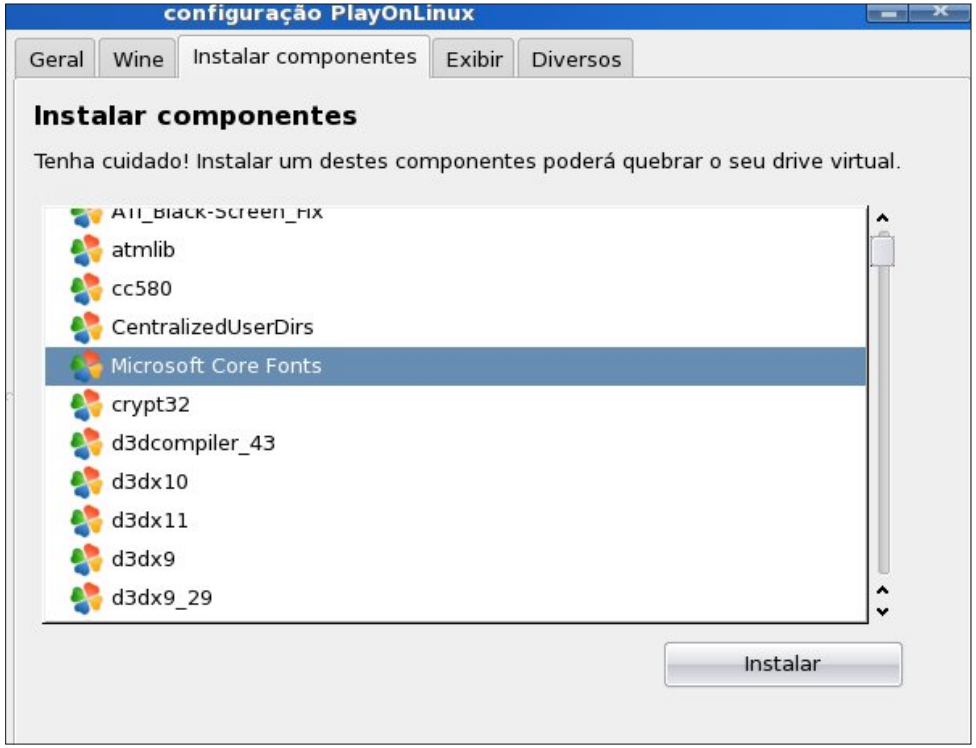
* On the next screen, select Configure Wine / install some libraries. Then click Next.




Now, configure Wine to Windows XP. Click the Graphics tab and configure as shown below:




In the DLL installation wizard, click POL_Install_microsoft_core_fonts, and then click POL_Install_d3dx9_36.




In the Talisman Online site http://www.talismanonline.com/, download the client TalismanOnline_3124_2_Setup.exe.

Click Next and choose TalismanOnline_3124_2_Setup.exe to start the installation.

Proceed to install the program normally, with the next, next, finish and accept the terms of the EULA.

After performing the installation, **do not check** the Run the program after installation.

Follow the POL process, and choose the icon to create the launcher. Choose game.exe.

And that's it. You are now ready to live great adventures in Talisman Online.

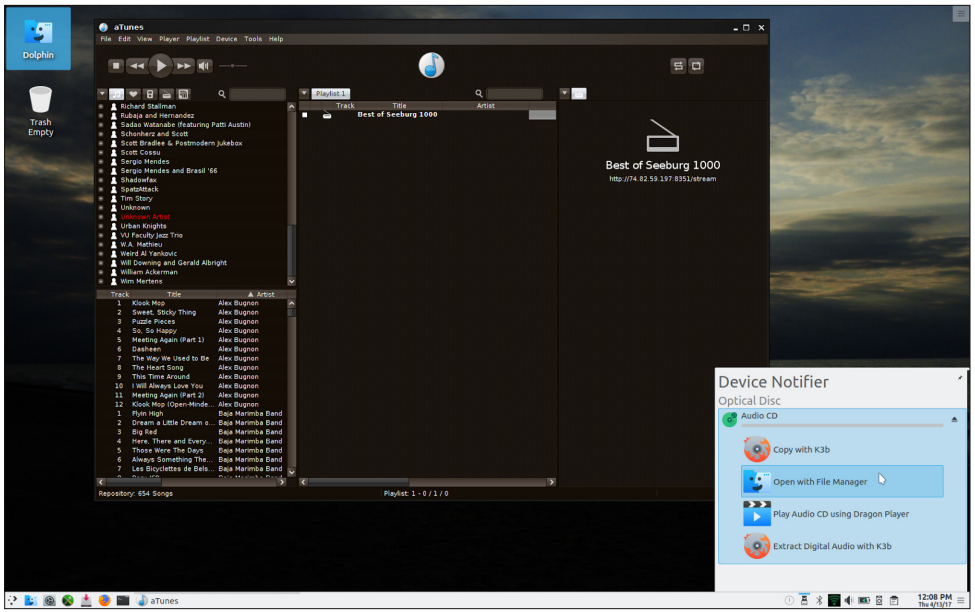
I recommend that the resolution be set at 1280x720, or you'll have the game running in a window, since it has problems with the mouse capture in full screen.

# aTunes: Importing Your CD Collection

**by phorneker**

If you are like me and have a collection of audio CDs, you will want to be able to play them without having to have a portable CD player or spending time going through your CD library. aTunes allows you to import your CD collection to its music repository.

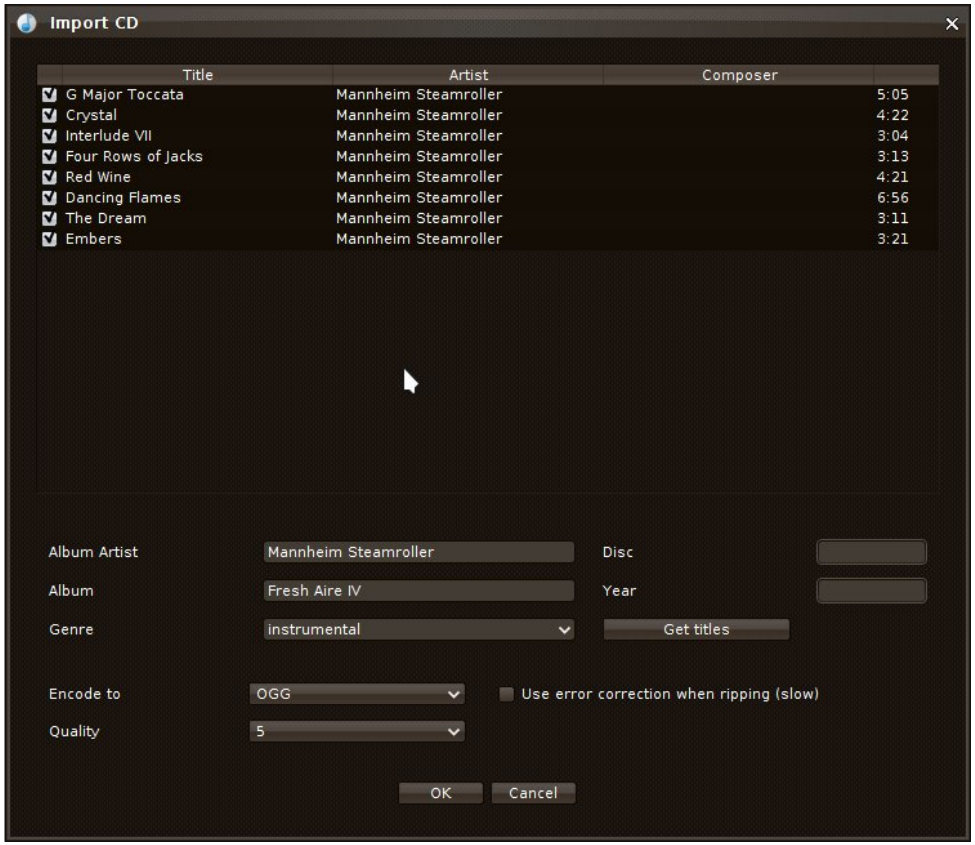
Obviously, to import a CD, you must have a CD/DVD drive available. Most PCs (and Intel-based Macs) built in the past five years do not include a CD/DVD drive as part of the system. Fortunately, you can purchase external CD/DVD drives that plug into a USB (2.x or later) port. As these are USB mass storage devices, you should have no trouble getting one of these to work with PCLinuxOS.




When you insert a CD into the CD/DVD drive, PCLinuxOS will mount the CD and give you a list of options on what to do with the CD. In this case, PCLinuxOS has correctly identified the CD as an audio CD.

Under KDE Plasma 5, you get the **Device Notifier** asking what to do with the audio CD. We can safely ignore this as we are using aTunes to import the CD.

To import a CD into aTunes, select **Import CD** from the **Tools** menu. For this example, I used Mannheim Steamroller's *Fresh Aire IV*. aTunes utilized Last.FM to get the information about the CD just inserted into the CD/DVD drive, so all of this became available *without any intervention on our part*.




By default, aTunes encodes each track on the CD in Ogg Vorbis format. You may wish to change this to MP3 if you want to export the tracks to a media player that does not support Ogg Vorbis.

The *Use Error Correction when ripping option* is useful of your CD contains scratches and other physical flaws on the disk that prevent the CD from playing properly.

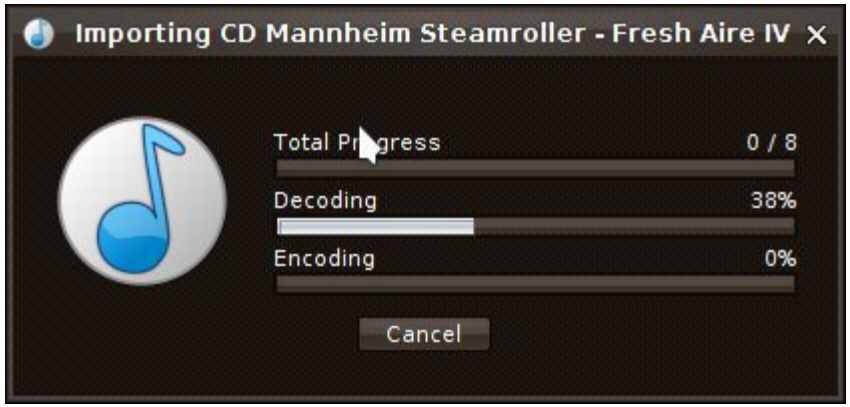
*For those of you not familiar with Mannheim Steamroller, this is the musical group best known for their holiday music releases back in the 1980s. American Grammaphone is the Omaha-based record label where Mannheim Steamroller (and its members) recorded their albums. Both entities were founded by Chip Davis, who first got his fame from his collaboration with Bill Fries (aka C.W. McCall) on the composition of the song Convoy back in 1975.*

*The Fresh Aire series was produced from 1975 to 2000, and was a series of compositions that combined the styles of baroque, jazz and rock. The first four albums in the series represented the four seasons of the year. This example represents winter.*

*The fifth album in the series represents the moon, the sixth album focuses on Greek mythology, the seventh album represents the number 7, the eighth album represents infinity, and there is an album of interludes which is a compilation of piano interludes from the first four albums performed by Jackson Berkey.*

*Wikipedia has an extensive article on Mannheim Steamroller.*

You may change other fields about the CD if necessary. Click on OK to import tracks from the CD.

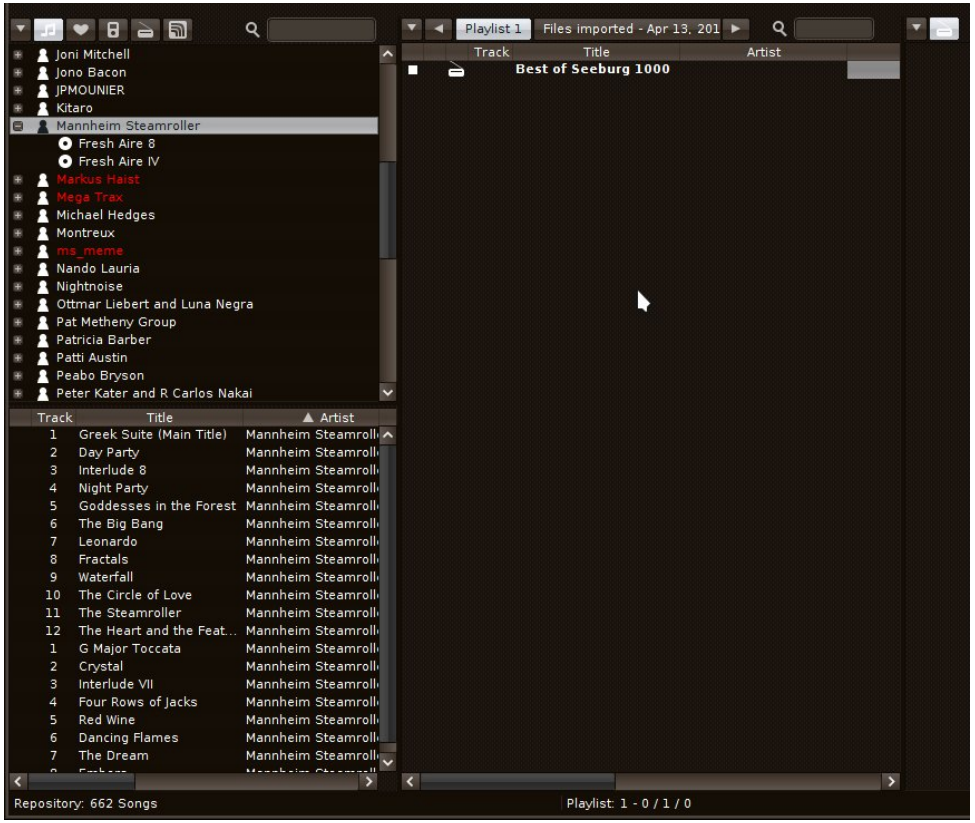



Here, we can view the progress of the import. *Decoding* here refers to the CD being read. A normal CD contains standard WAV format tracks. Some CDs have individual tracks that are encoded in MP3 (those labelled as MP3-CDs), and hence the tracks are decoded as they are being read. *Encoding* here refers to the encoding of the current track to Ogg Vorbis (unless you changed the format to encode in the previous dialog box).

*Muzak Corporation (now Mood Media) had a music player system called the Emcompass XD CD Music System. From the outside it looked like a CD duplicator, with a few controls. Essentially, it was a media player embedded onto a circuit board with a IDE controller for the CD-ROM drive. The controls on the front of the unit are used to navigate the CD. CDs produced for the Emcompass system were nothing more than a single directory containing MPA files where each file contains track information that is displayed on the two line LCD screen.*

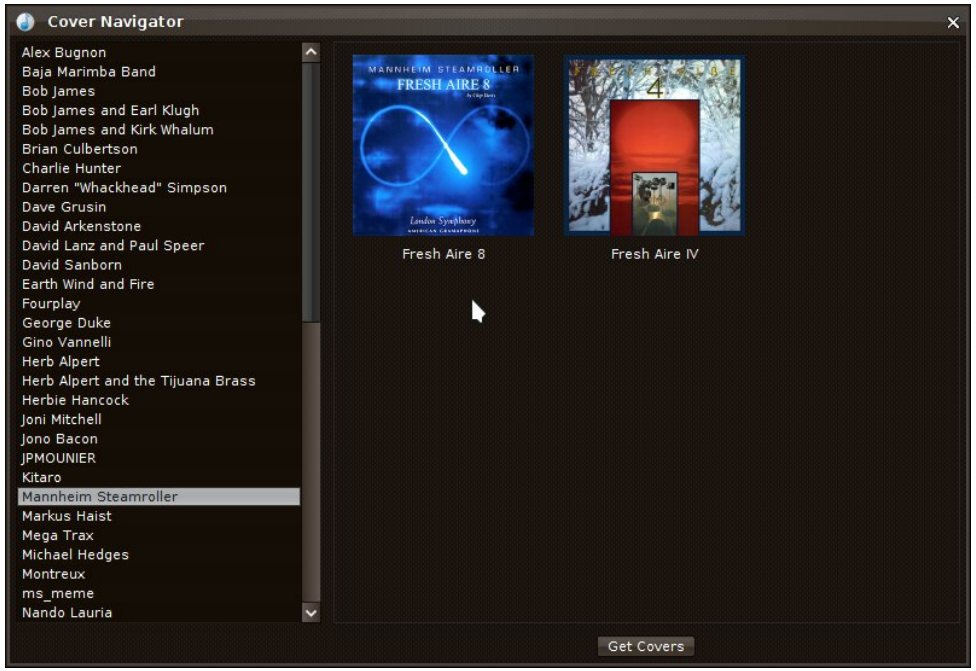
*MPA is not the same as MP3, though they are both audio file formats. MP3 refers to a third layer compression of digital audio, which is not present in the MPA format. MPA files are audio-only MPEG files, with the audio taking up both the video and audio layers of a MPEG file.*

*aTunes can import this type of CD as it supports MP2 files, not just MP3 and standard WAV.*



When aTunes is finished importing the CD, it appears in the track listing. In this example, *Fresh Aire IV* appears below *Fresh Aire 8* and the tracks are listed on the bottom side of the panel.

aTunes utilizes LastFM to retrieve album covers that are displayed when the album (or any one of its tracks) is playing. Selecting **Cover Navigator** from the **Tools** menu will bring up the utility to retrieve and view the database of album covers used by aTunes.




Click on Get Covers to download album covers for the collection of albums by each artist listed on the left side of **Cover Navigator**. Here, the album covers are correct for the albums that are in the repository.

*Not all albums have downloadable covers. Where there is no album cover available, there is no image to see and hence that cover remains blank.*

Once you are done with the **Cover Navigator**, your CD collection should be accessible and playable through aTunes.

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Windows I'm insisting
quit hanging around
My 'puter you're wrecking
now get out of town

You thought you were something
I don't know why
You never did nothing
on me you would spy

Now everyone knows
it's Linux I choose
Best operating system
PCLinuxOS is what I use

Windows I'm persisting
I'm taking you down
No more on me checking
start heading outbound

MP3

Windows I'm insisting
quit hanging around
I'm sending you packing
now get out of town

You thought you were something
I don't know why
You never did nothing
on me you would spy

Now everyone knows
it's Linux I choose
Best operating system
PCLinuxOS is what I use

Windows I'm persisting
I'm taking you down
You I'm a sacking
start heading outbound

OGG

# GIMP Tutorial: Using The Cloning Tool To Edit Photos, Again

**by Meemaw**

In the December, 2012 issue of the PCLinuxOS Magazine, I did an article about photo editing which centered on removing unwanted items from your photo. This uses the Clone tool, which is different from the Clone menu in Inkscape. Inkscape's Clone tool is used to make exact duplicates of an object, while the Clone tool in GIMP allows you to cover up an imperfection in a photo with something that will blend with the surrounding features.

In my original article I used the Clone tool to remove a traffic sign from a photo, replacing it with the appearance of the surrounding vegetation. In this article we will explore ways to make this a bit easier.

One of the forums I used to frequent was the Linux Graphics Users Forum, which I'm sad to say has disappeared. However, one of the members posted this list of suggestions for cloning:

*A few things that I have found helpful when cloning are : --*

*• Select the area to clone over to avoid having to go so carefully near the edges.*

What this means is that you can select an area you want to clone (or one you don't want to clone). I have a photo of my mother that was damaged years ago. I repaired it in an earlier GIMP article as well, but let's do something different. This time I used the **Scissors Select** tool to draw around her so I can clone in a different background (center, top).

*• You should make sure you have the selection pretty close to what you want to keep.*

I zoomed in to make sure things like lips and eyebrows were selected smoothly, then when I'm satisfied, I press Enter, and the selection is shown (top, right).

*• When backgrounds blend into the edges around a person. Selecting them, enlarging the selection by one or two pixels and then cloning around the edges helps clean the edges.*

Before I started on anything else, I did **Select > Grow** and grew the selection around her by 1 pixel.

Since I want to keep her and clone in a different background, I'm going to choose **Select > Invert**. This will choose the background and allow me to use the clone tool without worrying that I'm going to cover her image with a color I don't want.

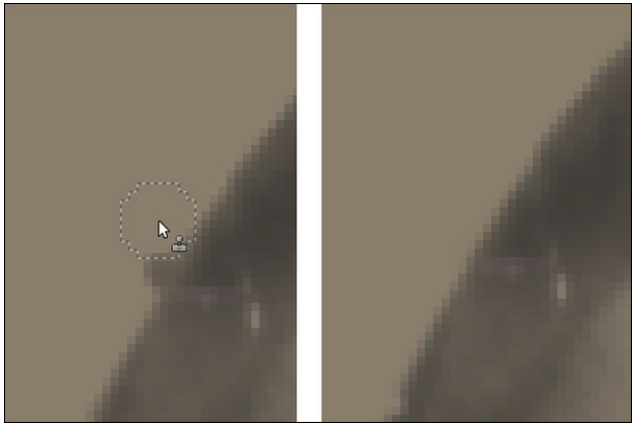
Also, in the clone tool properties, you can choose an area of the photo to use for your clone (we already knew that), but you can also choose a pattern to clone in. If you have some patterns you think would make a good background, try one and see. You might have to try a few before you find one you think will work best. Notice you can swipe quite a bit with your mouse and the selected area will be the only part affected (next page).

When you are finished with the background you want, choose **Select > None** to get back to the whole picture.

• *Magnify up to the pixel size for final tuning-up in important areas, such as around a face.*

I did some fine tuning around her cheek and her lips, then found this big lump on the sleeve of her blouse (center, top). For this, you need to zoom in close and make your brush small, like 10 pixels, and stroke very carefully.

• *Use 'Ctrl + Z' to quickly undo the last change(s) and use 'Ctrl + Y' to put them back. Alternating these commands lets you quickly evaluate which is the better of two views.*



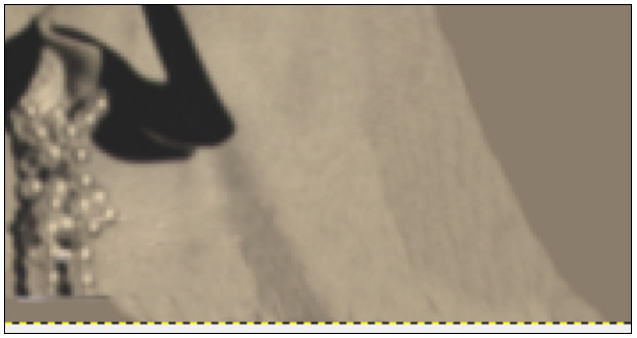
This is a tip you probably already know, but possibly haven't thought about. It's really easy to switch back & forth between one change and the previous one to see which looks better.

• *Stopping and starting frequently avoids having to undo too much at once, but sometimes it pays to start in the same position for each addition to keep the same reference point while extending the coverage.*

Sometimes I get into what I'm doing and draw several changes without stopping or even releasing the button on my mouse (it's easy to "color" with your mouse for several strokes), but if you are doing something more delicate, it will be better to use short strokes and release the mouse button, then look at what you have. If you've gone too far, then you won't lose as much progress when you undo something you don't like.

While I was at it, I cloned in the bottom right corner and completed the corner of the photo that had been torn, and fixed her blouse, using other areas of her blouse to match. Remember, if you are using the photo to choose the clone "material", you position your mouse over what you want to use, then hold down the <CTRL> key and click.

While I was doing that, I also cloned over the places in the photo that looked cracked.



Then I cropped the photo and saved it as a GIMP .xcf file.

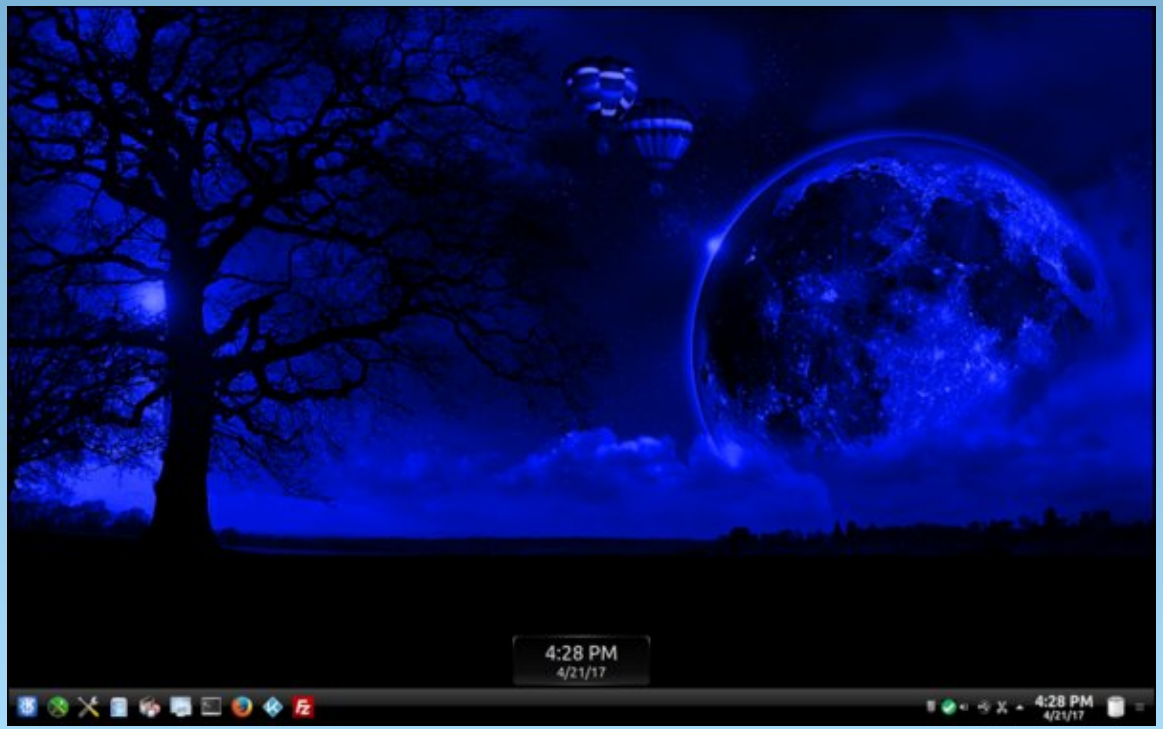
*• Run the blur tool over the cloned area, especially if it is sky/clouds, to remove unnecessary detail.*

I also felt that the edges of her face and hair seemed way too sharp, as if they had been cut out with scissors. (and of course, they had.) To remedy this, I used the Blur tool (looks like a water drop) along the edges (very lightly) to smooth out the places that were cut out in the first step.

After that, I exported it to a photo format.

I'll have to try it again. Just like with any project in GIMP, if you don't like your first attempt, you can always start over (as long as you are working on a copy of your original and not overwriting the original.) I didn't like the original background but saved a copy of the one I fixed, and I'm still considering the background on this one.

# Screenshot Showcase




*Posted by Ramchu, on April 21, 2017, running KDE.*

# Game Zone: The Talos Principle

**by Stephen Morrish (PendragonUK)**

**Introduction**

A beautiful world with puzzles to solve. You quickly discover that you are part of a much larger mystery. Will you find the clues as the story unfolds?

**Features**

- Overcome more than 120 immersive puzzles in a stunning world.
- Divert drones, manipulate laser beams and even replicate time to prove your worth - or to find a way out.
- Explore a story about humanity, technology and civilisation. Uncover clues, devise theories, and make up your own mind.
- Choose your own path through the game's non-linear world, solving puzzles your way.
- But remember: choices have consequences and somebody's always watching you.

**Who makes it**

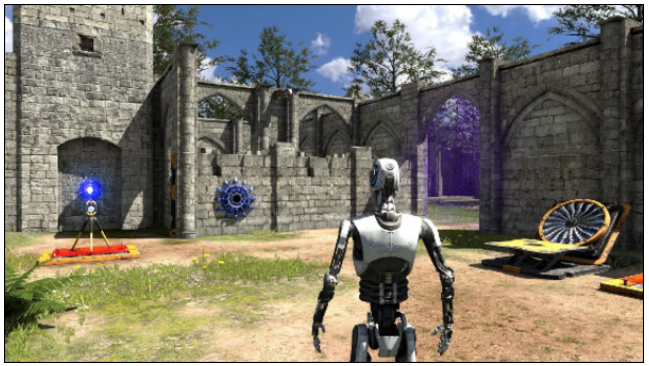
**Croteam Ltd.** is a video game developer based in Zagreb. The company is best known for the first-person shooter, Serious Sam. Starting development in the early nineties with a football (Soccer) game for the Amiga. Several years later gaining success with the Serious Sam games. The Talos Principle is the first departure from the Serious Sam franchise in recent years.

**About the game**

The game is a first-person single player puzzle game. There are a series of puzzles of increasing difficulty releasing keys and tokens that, once collected, allow you to progress further into the game. This on face value would be entertaining enough to recommend the game. However, there is a deeper mystery afoot. You quickly become aware of a subplot, a larger mystery to be solved. This gives what could have been a nice little puzzle game a story, one that you have to uncover.

You will be busy enough with lasers and force fields, but what will draw you in, are the terminals dotted around. There you will be greeted by a command line interface with questions and answers. These will expand the story, that is, if you can navigate through the question tree giving the correct answers.

There are QR codes painted on the walls, look at them to reveal the message. Out of curiosity, I picked up my phone and aimed the camera at the QR code. Much to my delight, the message appeared on my phone. Very clever, very clever indeed.



Each level is themed, ancient Greece with columns and statues. An Egyptian level with Pyramids and Hieroglyphs. All adding to the atmosphere of the game. This along with a god-like disembodied voice, giving instructions that are not always helpful, all add to the feeling of mystery.

**Pros**

Intriguing puzzles in a beautiful world full of mystery. It is beautiful and will show off your computer hardware to it's fullest. The developers are actively working on the game releasing updates and patches. In recent months this has included work on the new Vulkan API.

**Cons**

Some of the puzzles require a jump in logic. When you get stuck, you will be scouring the Internet for clues. System requirements mean that your computer will have to be reasonably modern to play.

**Conclusion**

You will be wowed by the beautiful graphics, stay for the intriguing puzzle and knocked out by the ending. You think you understand, everything is going well. You know nothing, it's not going well at all! This is one very clever game. Deep does not even come close to describe it. Possibly the most intelligent game written to date. So many games are little more than pulp fiction. This is a master class in the game maker's art. Yes, I said art, not too lofty a statement for work of this quality.

**Information**

Release on Windows, OSX and Linux simultaneously in 2014. Later released on Android and Sony Playstation 4.

**Linux PC system requirements**

**Minimum:**
Processor: Dual-core 2.2 GHz
Memory: 2 GB RAM
Graphics: nVidia GeForce 8600/9600GT 512MB VRAM, ATI/AMD Radeon HD2600/3600 512MB VRAM
Storage: 5 GB available space
Sound Card: OpenAL Compatible Sound Card
Additional Notes: OpenGL: 2.1 or higher

**Recommended:**
Processor: Quad-core 3.2 GHz
Memory: 4 GB RAM
Graphics: nVidia GeForce 480 GTX 1GB VRAM, ATI/AMD Radeon HD 5870 1GB VRAM
Storage: 8 GB available space
Sound Card: OpenAL Compatible Sound Card
Additional Notes: OpenGL: 2.1 or higher

**Where to get it**

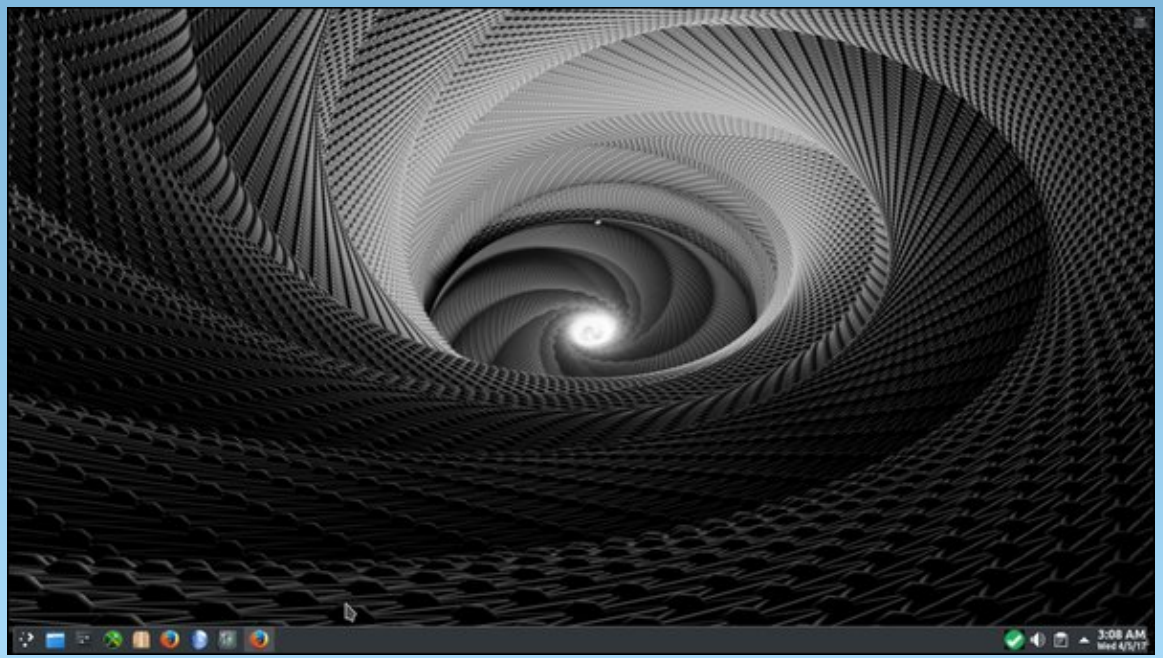
Steam http://store.steampowered.com/app/257510/

Cost at time of writing $39.99 USD / £29.99 GBP

Expansion, Road to Gehenna $14.99 USD / £10.99 GBP

It should be noted that this game can be very cheap during Steam's legendary sales.

# Screenshot Showcase



*Posted by pirate, on April 5, 2017, running KDE.*

# Creating A Kiosk Machine With PCLinuxOS And Xfce

**by Alessandro Ebersol (Agent Smith)**

Often one has the need to create a kiosk machine, to be accessed by the general public. Whether in a library, a classroom, or even within a company, setting up a machine on which the user is not able to change its configurations is a must.

**Kiosk, what is it?**

A machine kiosk, as defined by Wikipedia, "is a computer terminal with specialized hardware and software that provides access to information and applications for communication, trade, entertainment and education."

For us, it is a machine that will not have a fixed operator. That is, no one to take responsibility for its operation. Of course, because of this, its settings should be locked, so that the machine will be usable for the next user.

**How to do it with PCLinuxOS?**

In other times, the old KDE 3.5 had a very powerful tool for creating kiosks, the kiosk tool, but it was not very flexible, and it was not possible to change the default theme and other settings.

Now we will use the Xfce environment, which has a kiosk plugin, but we will use the Xfce DE without touching the kiosk plugin, only settings and attributes.

**Ingredients**

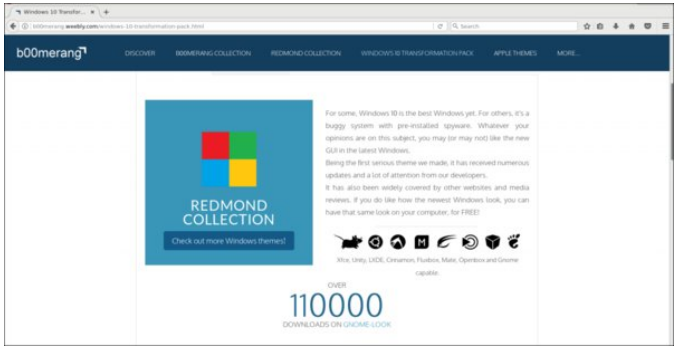
We will use only Xfce, which you can install with apt-get install task-xfce, the Whisker Menu Plugin and the cursor-theme-win8.

Now, to illustrate the process, let's say we will install this computer in a public access area, such as a library, and its users will be people without any prior experience with Linux. Now, to not scare potential users, let's make this computer look like Windows 10.

**Transforming Xfce into Windows 10**

There is a site http://b00merang.weebly.com/ with various graphic themes for many desktops, and there are themes of Windows 10 (decorations), as well as the GTK theme (Murrine engine has to be installed). On the B00merang site, go the link http://b00merang.weebly.com/windows-10-transformation-pack.html

You will see a page like this:




Scroll down the page to get to where we want.

The Win 10 icons https://github.com/B00merang-Project/Windows-10-Icons/archive/master.zip

And GTK theme Windows 10 Light Theme

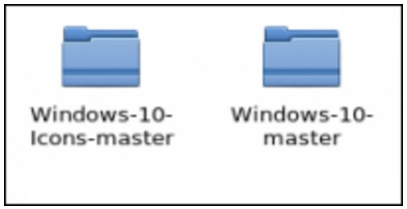
Available at this link https://github.com/B00merang-Project /Windows-10/archive/master.zip

Now, with these files downloaded to your PCLinuxOS Xfce, install the theme cursor-theme-win8, via Synaptic or apt-get install.

**The Change**

in the Downloads folder, two ZIP files should be:

Unzip the files. The unzipped folders should look like this (next page):



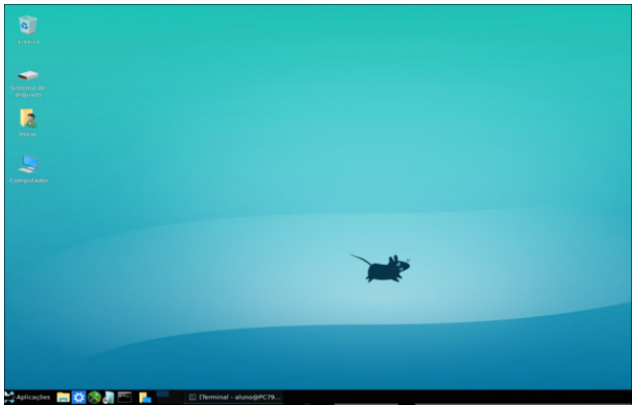

Now, the Windows-10-master folder should be copied to the .themes folder in / home user (if it is non-existent, create this folder).

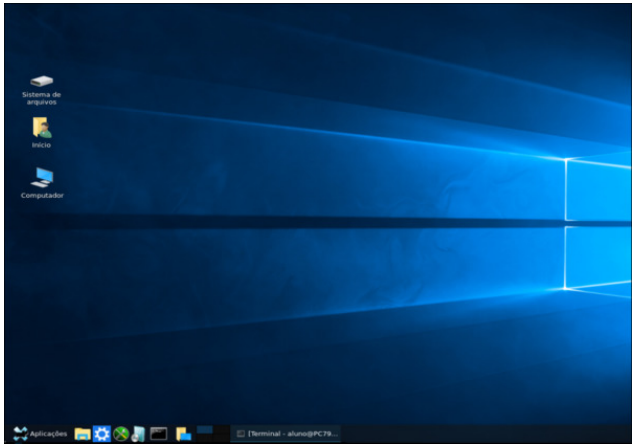
The Windows-Icons-10-master folder is copied to the .icons folder in / home user, just like the GTK theme folder, as above.

In the Xfce graphics settings, now, will show the Windows-10-master theme and the Windows10 icon theme. Change your settings to them.

Now, your screen looks like this (center, top):

But we need to improve it. In the panel settings, adjust the size to 36 pixels, and the Alpha to 55%. The theme that has been downloaded already comes with a wallpaper of Windows 10, so choose it. Now, your desktop will look like this (center, right):





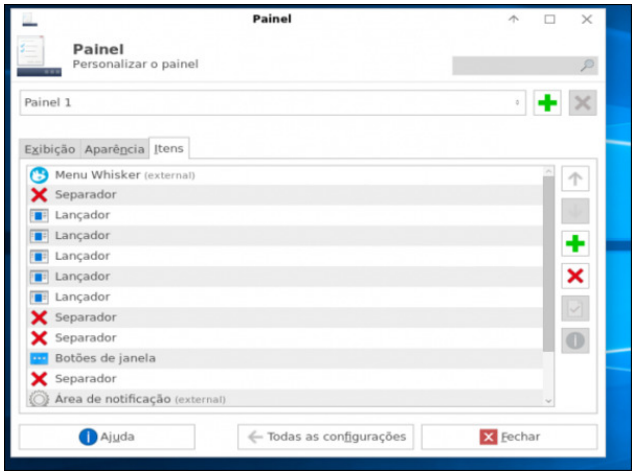
But the applications menu is not cool. Therefore, we will use the Whisker Menu, and remove the Xfce applications menu.

The setting looks like this (top, right):

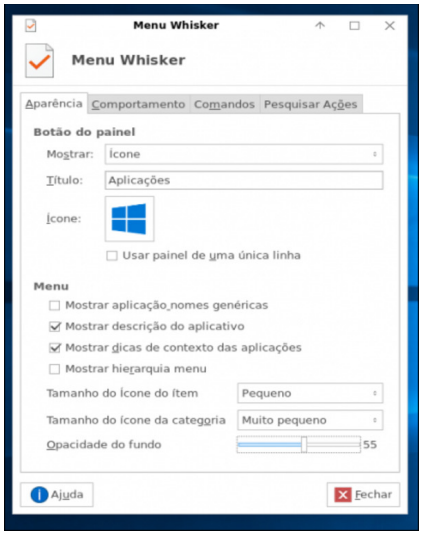
Set the window buttons, and, in the button's appearance, deselect the "Show captions of the buttons" and display plain buttons.

Let's configure the Whisker menu now. We change its icon, for the Start Here of Win 10 icon theme and adjust the opacity to 55%, just like the bottom panel.

In the Behavior tab, select Change category with mouse passover, place search input next to the

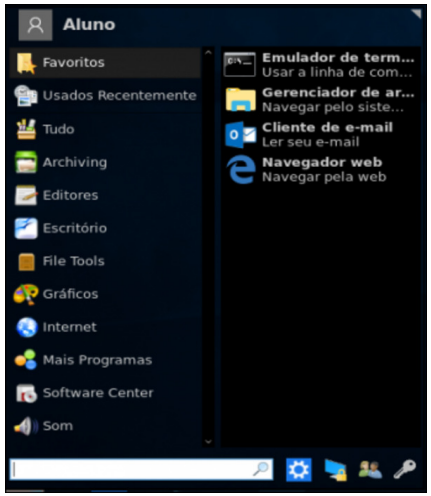



panel button, place command next to the search input and place categories next the panel button.




With these settings, the appearance of the application menu looks like this (next page, top left):

Let's set up the application launch bar, which stands to the right of the Whisker menu. After adding as many applications as needed, the appearance of the bar looks like this (next page, lower left):



Well, now, our kiosk machine has the appearance of Windows 10, but there is still the plymouth theme (splash screen) and the GDM theme.

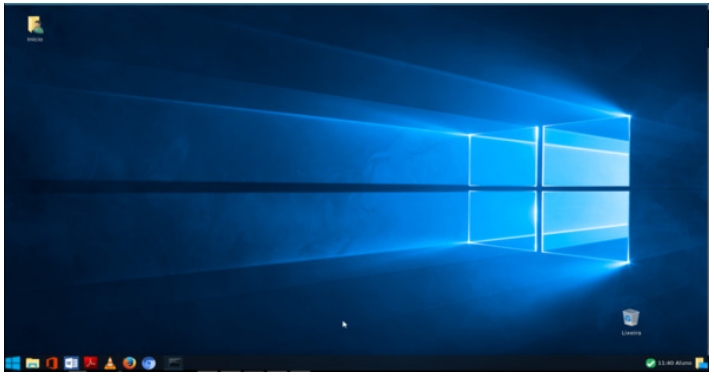
The plymouth theme can be downloaded from this link: https://www.gnome-look.org/p/1009178/

GDM theme can be downloaded from this link: http://b00merang.weebly.com/uploads/1/6/8/1/16813022/win10_v0.2.zip

Since tinkering with Plymouth themes and GDM themes is beyond the scope of this article, I assume you have the knowledge to change the themes of Plymouth and GDM, if not, it's not difficult to figure out.

Now, the desktop looks like this (center, top):

Okay, now, this beautiful setting, how do we do to make it persistent? So, no users can change it? We will see below.



**Locking the desktop settings**

To lock the settings, we will use the chattr command. This command modifies the attributes of files / directories.
Use: **chattr [option] [attribute] [file / directory]**

**Options:**
- -R recursively change attributes of directories and their content
- V should be detailed and print the version of the program
- -f suppress most error messages

**Attributes:**
- A – It modifies the time of access to file (only in kernel 2.2)
- a – Append only, file can only be recorded in incremental mode, that is, content can be added only at the end of the file and it can not be removed or renamed.
- c – Allows compression in a transparent manner of specified files.
- d – attribute set is not candidate for backup when the dump(8) program is run.
- i – immutable. Immutable files can not be modified, stored, removed, renamed. Even the root user with maximum power can not change them.
- s – it is called Secure Erase when deleted the file is reset with no possibility of recovery.
- S – attribute set is modified, the changes are written synchronously on the disk; this is equivalent to the 'sync' mount option applied to a subset of the files.
- u – attribute set is deleted, its contents are saved. This allows the user to ask for its undeletion.

So let's start setting up and lock these settings.

We do not want users to access the settings easily, so let's get the settings out of sight.

First in the Whisker-Menu. Access /home/~/.config/xfce4/panel/ the whiskermenu-17.rc file in your installation. Your computer may have the file named slightly differently, but it will always be whiskermenu-xx.rc

Open with mousepad (text editor) and reset the lines:

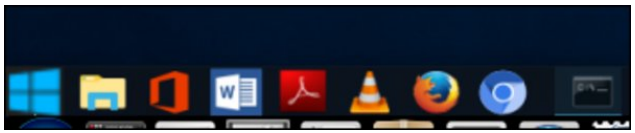
favorites =
recent=

In the line **show-command-settings = true** change the setting to false.

Exit the text editor, open a terminal, su to root and make chattr + i whiskermenu-17.rc (in this case, in your case, you must make chattr + i whiskermenu-xx.rc).

Voila, the Whisker Menu configuration is locked.

Now, let's lock the launchers.



In this beautiful launch bar, there are the folders launcher-11/ launcher-24/ launcher-13/ launcher-16/ launcher-12/ launcher-15/ launcher-23/

Of course, these names are relative to the installation I'm working on. Yours will be different, but always in the format launcher-xx /

Open a terminal, su to root and make chattr + i-11 launcher / and so on, until all the folders with the launchers are immutable.

Now our launch bar is locked.

To check if everything went right, do lsattr in the terminal, and the answer should be as follows:
----i--------e-- ./launcher-13
----i--------e-- ./launcher-11
----i--------e-- ./launcher-23
----i--------e-- ./whiskermenu-17.rc
----i--------e-- ./launcher-24
----i--------e-- ./launcher-12
----i--------e-- ./launcher-16
----i--------e-- ./launcher-15

In other words, they are all set with the immutable attribute, locked.

Now, let's lock the Thunar settings and remove the menus. Why remove the menus? Because some users will not be tempted to fumble around at the Thunar menus.

Go to /home/~/.config/xfce4/xfconf/xfce-perchannel-xml/ and edit the file thunar.xml. Look for the line **<property name = "last-menubar-visible" type = "bool" value = "true "/>** and change it to false.

Save the file and return to the .config folder /xfce4/xfconf/xfce-perchannel-xml/.
Open a terminal in this folder and, as root, execute chattr + i *. *

Thus, all the settings will be locked.

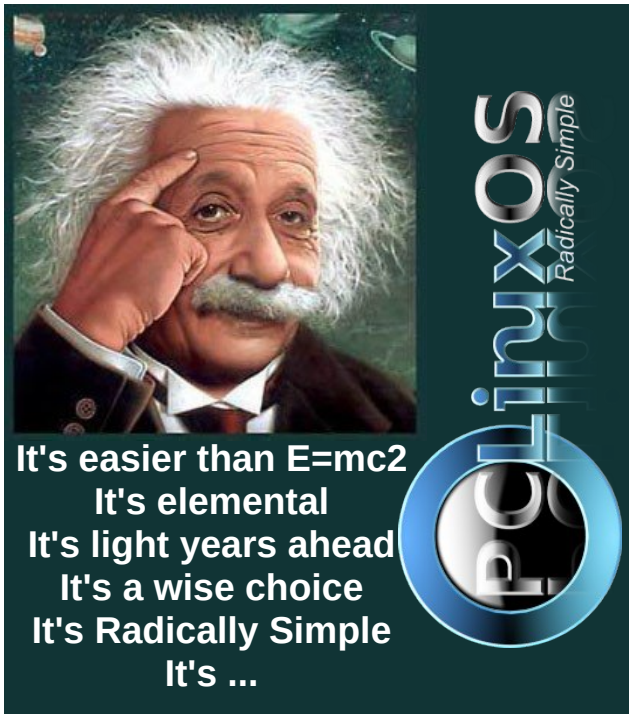
But there's a catch. Even with the settings locked, you still can change the settings, because when the configuration files are in Read Only attribute, the Xfce DE creates new configuration files in XML format.

To prevent this from happening, we lock the folder /xfce-perchannel-xml/, making it immutable, with the command (as root) chattr + i xfce-perchannel-xml /

So, now the Xfce DE cannot create new settings, and they can not be changed.

Regarding the desktop area, it is at the administrator's discretion whether to lock it, so it will not be filled with files, in an unpleasant visual pollution, or leave it unlocked. If you want to lock the desktop, do chattr + i Desktop/ and it's done.

This configuration has been running on multiple machines since January this year, and there were no problems whatsoever with the machines. They continue working perfectly, without users messing up the settings.

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# ms_meme's Nook: PCLinuxOS

On the net we mingle voices are bilingual
Gives my heart a tingle underneath the stars
Singing fun to you I'm bringing
Forums are a springing see our avatars

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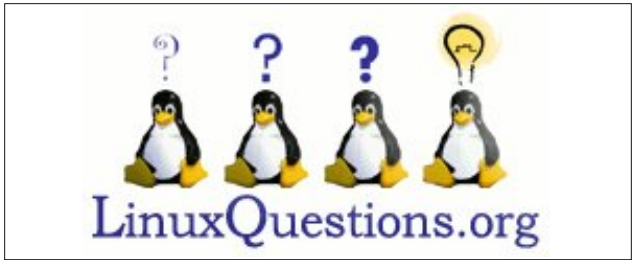
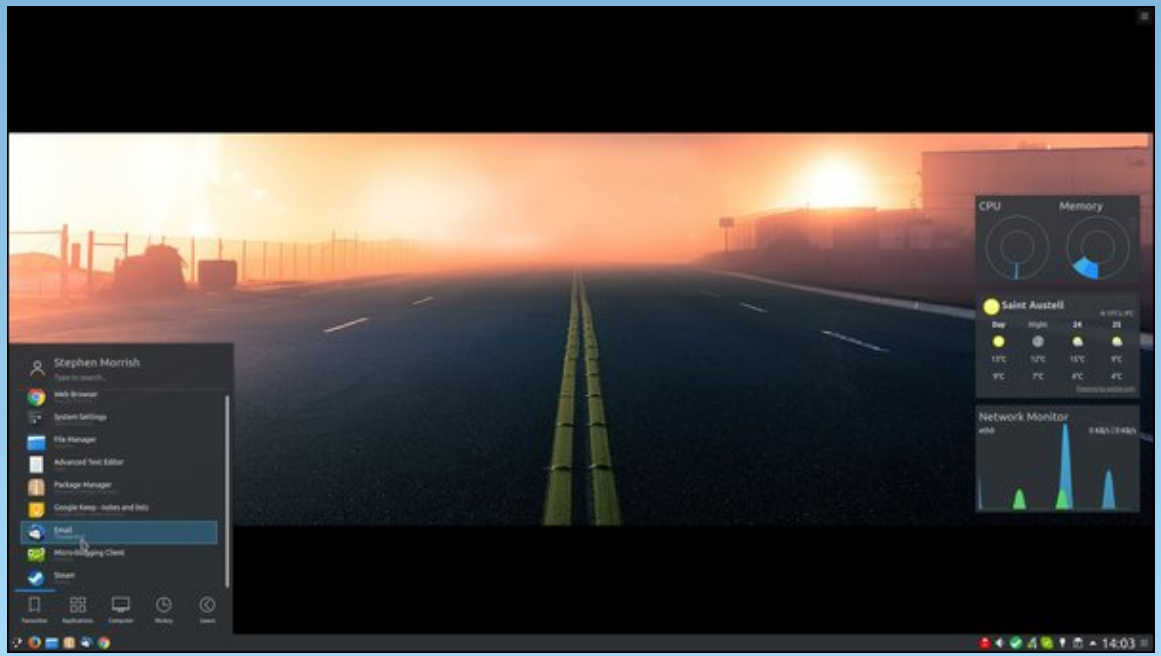


# Screenshot Showcase




*Posted by PendragonUK, on April 23, 2017, running KDE.*

# Tip Top Tips: Add Images From PCLOS-Cloud To The Forum

*Editor's Note: Tip Top Tips is a monthly column in The PCLinuxOS Magazine. Each month, we will feature – and possibly even expand upon – one tip from the PCLinuxOS forum. The magazine will not accept independent tip submissions specifically intended for inclusion in the Tip Top Tips column. Rather, if you have a tip, share it in the PCLinuxOS forum's "Tips & Tricks" section. Your tip just may be selected for publication in The PCLinuxOS Magazine.*

This month's tip comes from PCLinuxOS forum member **DeBaas**.

Now you have registered yourself for pcloscloud.
Sharing your pictures to the/a forum is easy if you know how.
First, copy the share link from your pcloscloud.com website. For instance:

https://pcloscloud.com/index.php/s/4LYBmGFdceBNv3i

Then you have to add the image tags:

**[img]**https://pcloscloud.com/index.php/s/4LYBmGFdceBNv3i**[/img]**

But hey, that's not working you have to add /download on the link.

[img]https://pcloscloud.com/index.php/s/4LYBmGFdceBNv3i**/download**[/img]

Is the picture too big or small, or not fitting on the webpage? Insert the width option to img
[img **width=800**]https://pcloscloud.com/index.php/s/4LYBmGFdceBNv3i/download[/img]

The result:

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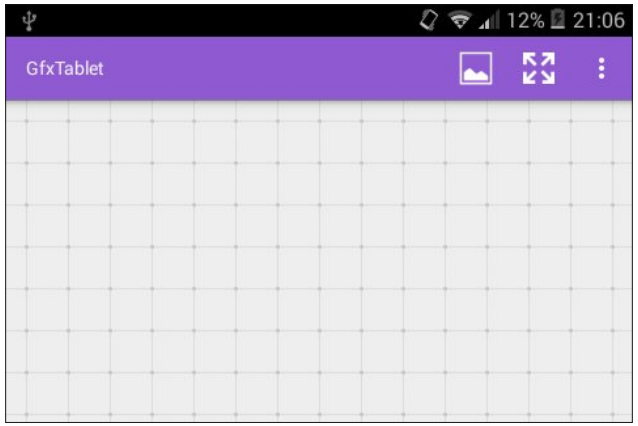
Visit Us On IRC
• Launch your favorite IRC Chat Client software (xchat, pidgin, kopete, etc.)
• Go to freenode.net
• Type "/join #pclosmag" (without the quotes)

# Repo Review: Android-Related Programs

**by CgBoy**

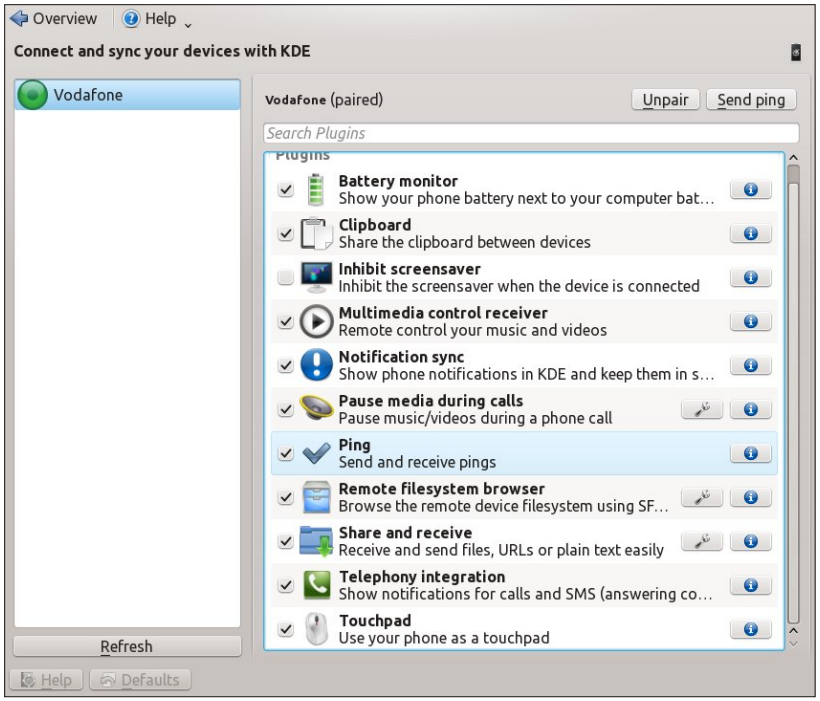
Most of us probably use smartphones. And most smartphones these days run Android. There are a few programs in the repo that make it easier to transfer files to an Android device, or even turn it into a graphics tablet! This month I'm reviewing those Android related programs that are in the repository. I have put these in the order in which I reviewed them.

**GfxTablet.** This is a program that allows you to use an Android device as a WiFi graphics tablet. All you have to do is install the GfxTablet program from the repository, then install the GfxTablet app from F-Droid or another app store (it isn't on Google Play, though). To start the program, just run "networktablet" in a terminal. Then enter your IP address into the app. Your Android device should now act like a graphics tablet!



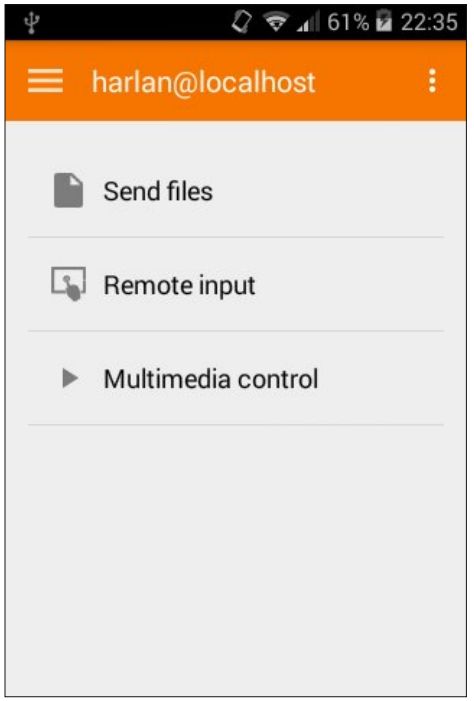

If your Android device supports it, GfxTablet can even use pressure sensitivity. In the Android app, you can also load in an image and use it for tracing. Unfortunately, the version of GfxTablet that we have in the repo is a bit old, so you also have to also use an older version of the app (version 1.3 or older) to get it to work. So what do you think of GfxTablet? I think it's a great program for people who would like to use a real graphics tablet, but can't afford one. However, it would only really work well with a good stylus, and a device with a large screen.

**KDE Connect.** KDE Connect makes using an Android device with Linux over WiFi a whole lot easier. You have to install the KDE Connect program from the repo, and then install the app from the Google Play Store. In the KDE Connect settings on the computer, most of the program's features are implemented as plugins, so you can enable or disable any one of them.



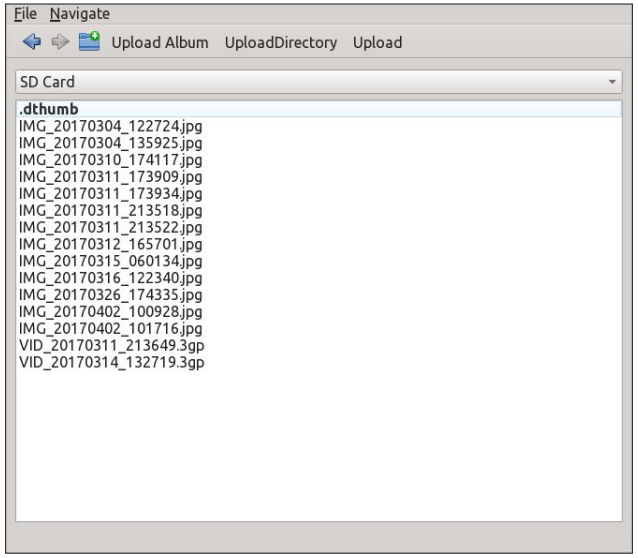

With KDE Connect, you can easily send data to and from your Android device, and even mount the device in the file manager (though for some reason it didn't work properly for me). KDE Connect also has the ability to check your device's battery status from your computer. It also automatically shares the clipboard data between the computer and the device. KDE Connect also allows an Android device to be used as a touchpad and virtual keyboard. If you're playing music or video on your computer, you can use KDE Connect on your device to control the media player. Also, it automatically syncs all notifications on your device with your computer. KDE Connect really has a lot of good features.

So, is KDE Connect any good? Definitely! I find it very useful for transferring files to my phone, without having to find a micro usb cable. Although I don't



really use most of the other features of KDE Connect, they're still nice to have. Unfortunately, like GfxTablet, the version of KDE Connect in the repo is a bit old, so it lacks a number of the features of the newer versions.

**Android File Transfer For Linux.** This is an MTP (Multimedia Transfer Protocol) client, which is quite useful if you have an Android device without a micro SD card. Newer versions of Android don't allow you to use your device's internal storage as a USB storage device. Instead, it is treated as a media device. So this program is basically a file manager for accessing your Android device's internal storage via MTP.




It works pretty well. You can also access the device's SD card, if it has one. I wish I'd known about this program before I wrote this article. I had great difficulty trying to access the internal storage of my phone using Dolphin. So, like I said, Android File Transfer For Linux allows you to easily access your Android device's internal storage. This is an awesome program! [Note to the editor: I'm not an expert on Android, so I may have gotten a few details wrong here.]

There is also a program in the repository called Raccoon, which is a Google Play Store desktop client, and allowed you to download apps from the Google Play store and then install them on as many devices as you like. But sadly, the version in the repo is too old, and not supported by Google Play anymore.

**Summary**

So, there are a few programs in the repository that make using an Android device with PCLinuxOS much easier. If you don't have a graphics tablet but would like to use one, just use GfxTablet. If you want to be able to easily transfer files over WiFi to an Android device, or use some other great features, there's KDE Connect. And finally, if you want to access your Android device's storage via MTP, just use Android File Transfer For Linux.

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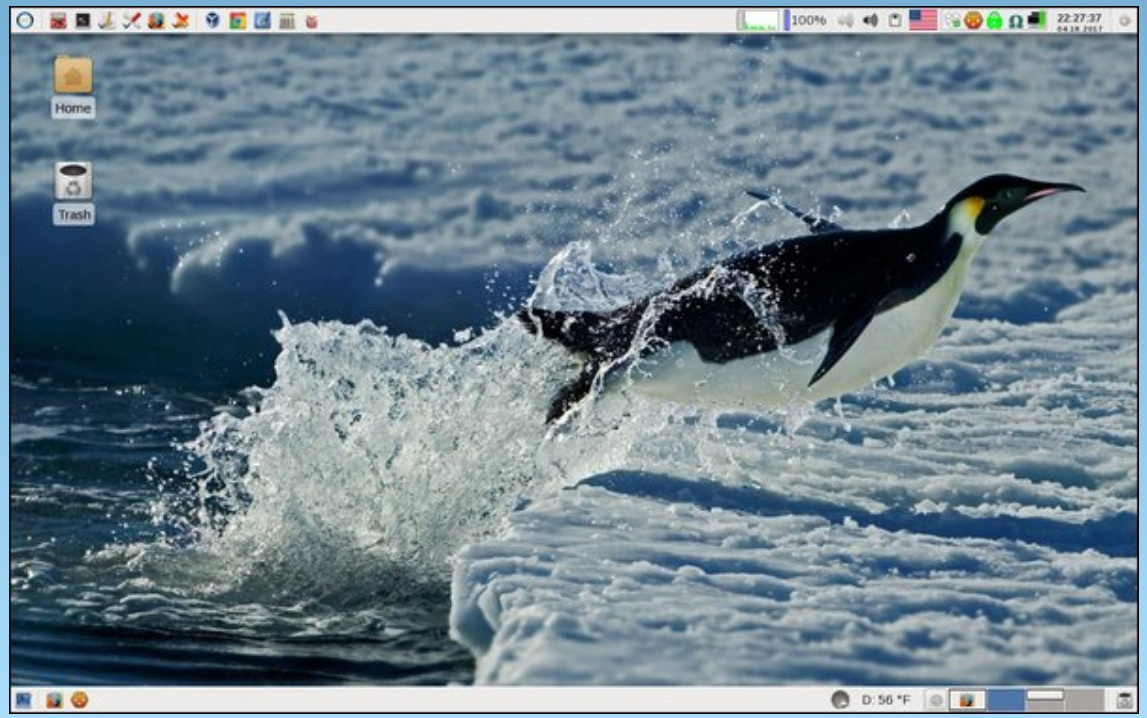
# Screenshot Showcase




*Posted by parnote, on April 19, 2017, running Xfce.*

# PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

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

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

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

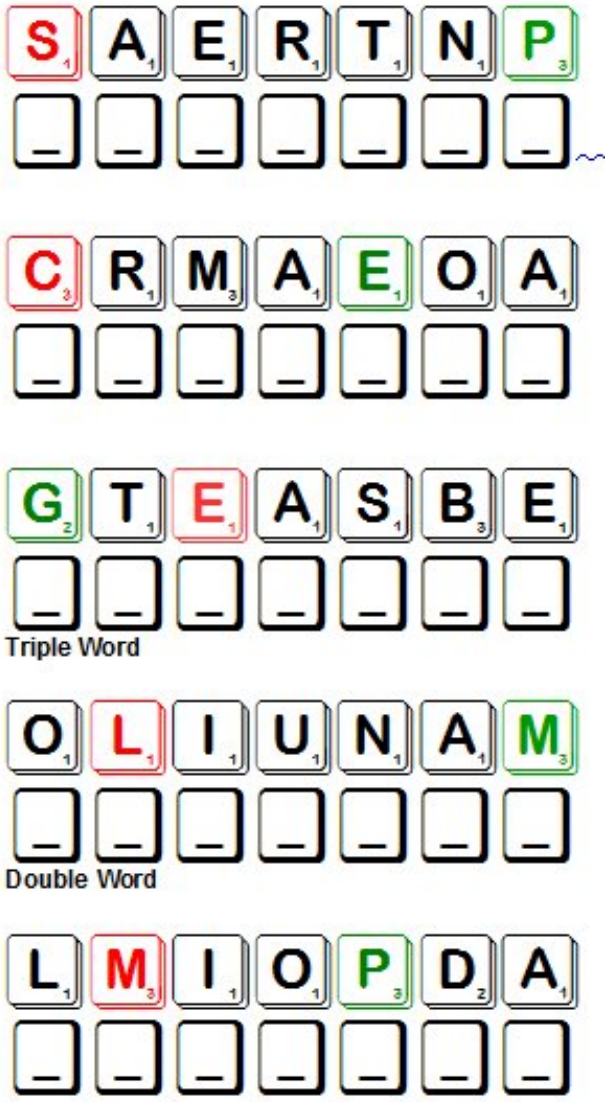
Each column must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same column of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same. Each row must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same row of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.

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

**SCRAPPLER RULES:**

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

**Download Puzzle Solutions Here**




**Possible score 215 average score 150.**

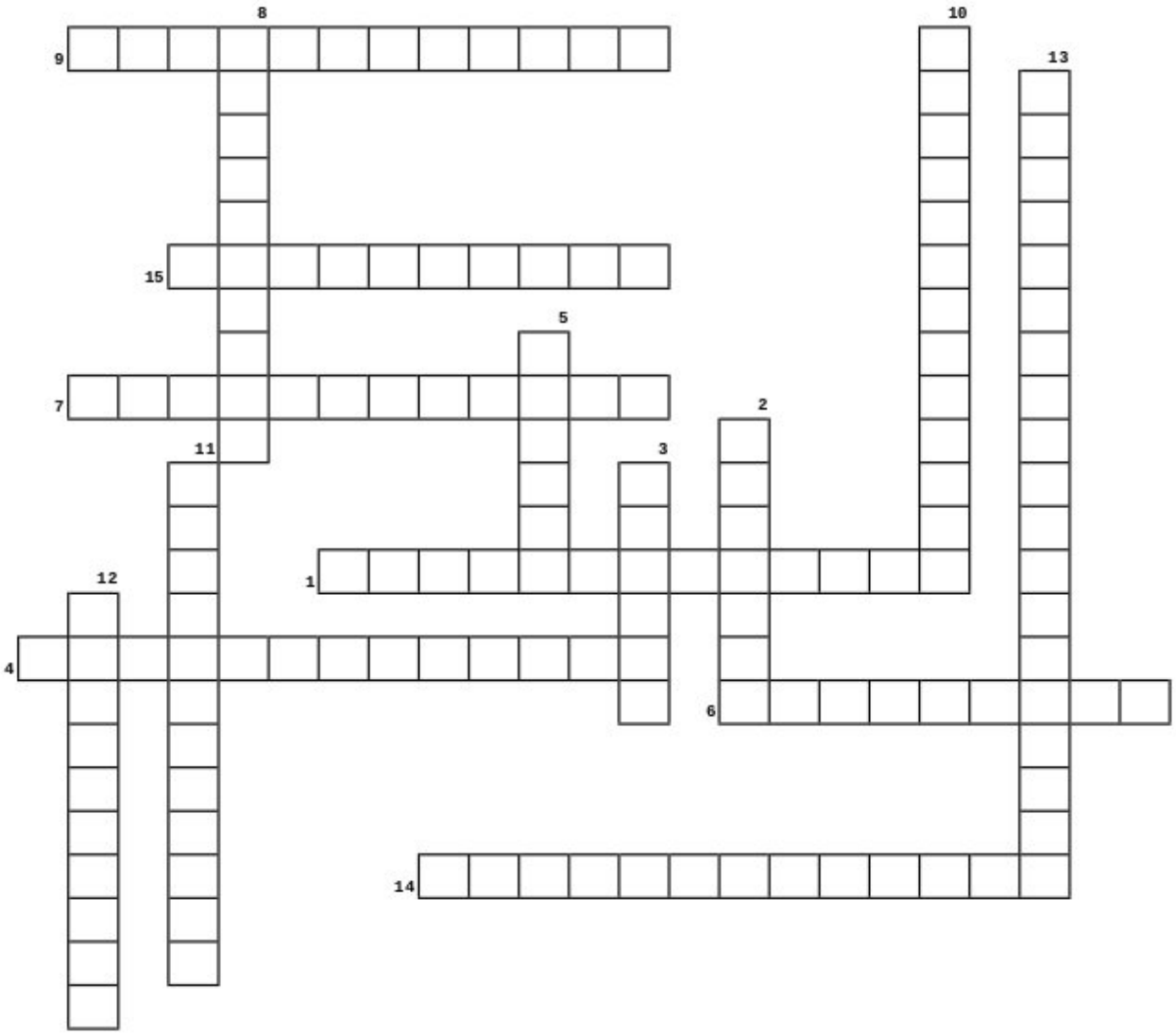
# PCLinuxOS Word Find: May 2017 Graduation

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

Academics
Alma mater
Alumni
Baccalaureate
Cap and Gown
Camera
Celebration
Ceremony
Commencement
Congratulations
Diploma
Education
Friendships
Graduate
Honor
Keepsake
Law school
Magna cum laude
Memories
Objective
Parents
Pictures
Pomp and circumstance
Postgraduate
Professors
Remembrance
Salutatorian
Stage
Summa cum laude
Teachers college
Tuition
University
Work

**Download Puzzle Solutions Here**

# Graduation Crossword



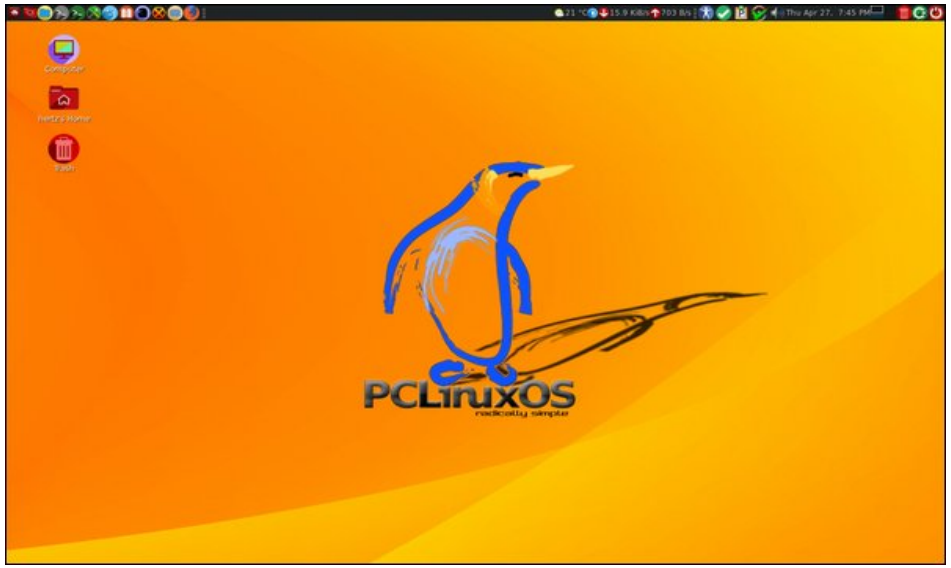
1. Translates to “with the highest distinction” and given to exemplary graduates.
2. The certificate you receive.
3. After we graduate, we are _____.
4. The graduate with the highest grade point average.
5. Used to take photos of the successful student.
6. Another name for the school from which you graduated.
7. Classes towards a higher degree.
8. Another type of college
9. The graduate with the second-highest grade point average.
10. Translates to “with great distinction” when given to graduates with high academics.
11. Another name for the graduation ceremony.
12. The graduate’s traditional costume for a graduation ceremony.
13. The traditional music that is played at graduation.
14. If you haven’t graduated yet, you are an _____.
15. Teachers

**Download Puzzle Solutions Here**

# More Screenshot Showcase

*Posted by Meemaw, on April 16, 2017, running Xfce.*

*Posted by jogurtmen, on April 5, 2017, running KDE.*




*Posted by Hertz, on April 27, 2017, running MATE.*

*Posted by francesco_bat, on April 21, 2017, running Openbox.*