

# The PCLinuxOS magazine

Volume 217

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*Happy Valentine's Day*

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## The PCLinuxOS magazine

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

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

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# From The Chief Editor's Desk

Can we just be done with winter now? I mean ... right now?

[Hoisting the white flag]. We surrender!

About a week after the New Year, we got hit with round #1 of the arctic fronts. That one dumped about 10" (25.4 cm) of snow on us here where I live in the Kansas City area. Meemaw, by contrast, barely got any.

Living in the U.S. Midwest, it seems impossible for it to snow unless it lays down a nice, thick layer of ice first. That way, when the snow plow comes down the streets, they scrape away all of the snow (which you can get a little traction in), leaving the layer of ice (which you cannot get any traction on). This winter storm was no exception. We got about ¼" (0.64 cm) of ice underneath the 10" of snow. And, as if that wasn't enough, we were hit with temperatures well below freezing. No. That isn't quite correct. We were hit with sub-zero temperatures. Like -5° F. That's degrees Fahrenheit folks, not Celsius. For those that find the temperature conversions challenging, that converts to -21° C.

About six days later, we got hit with another 3"+ (7.6 cm) of additional snow. This additional snow didn't come with any additional ice. Of course not. The damage had already been done by round #1.



*Digging out after round #1*

And then it stuck around. And continued to stick around. Like forever (it seemed). It hardly had a chance to get above freezing (32° F) to have any snow melt before the next arctic blast plunged southward.

That arctic blast reached all of the lower 48 states, coating Texstar's abode (Spring, TX, just outside of Houston) in an ultra-rare coating of snow. They received about 6" (~15.3 cm) of the frozen liquid sunshine. Down around Mobile,

AL (where bones113 lives), they received their share of snow with a 6" coating. Just outside of Lafayette, LA (where astronaut lives), they appear to have received another 8"-10" of the white fluffy fun stuff. In fact, you can see pictures in [this](#) forum thread from myself, Texstar, and astronaut.

Of course, the kids loved it! It delayed their return to school from their Christmas break by a week. But now, they have four "snow days" to

make up between now and the end of the school year.

I don't \*hate\* winter. In fact, I usually look forward to it. But what I do hate are the arctic cold blasts. If I wanted to live where the temperatures got stupid cold, I'd move there. I don't need it to come to me uninvited. I don't mind if it gets cold, but there is a limit. Temperatures in the 20s and 30s (Fahrenheit, folks) are okay. Even snow is okay. But I start to protest when the temperatures get below the middle 20s. And, I'd prefer to have a "break" between winter storms, to allow the "old snow" to melt off before getting more.

We're FINALLY getting some warmer temperatures as I'm writing this, with some pretty significant snow melt. Yay! I know we're not "out of the woods" for more snow this early into Winter, but I honestly wouldn't mind at least a few weeks break from the wintry precipitation.

\*\*\*\*\*

This month's cover [image](#), celebrating Valentine's Day, comes from Pixabay artist [Araxhs Official](#).

\*\*\*\*\*

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



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## Screenshot Showcase



*Posted by astronaut, January 3, 2025, running Openbox.*

# ICYMI: Six Security Vulnerabilities Found In rsync

by Paul Arnote (parnote)



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

According to an [article](#) from The Verge, a recent **Pew Research Center study** on digital decay found that **38 percent of web pages accessible in 2013 are not accessible today**. This happens because pages are taken down, URLs are changed, and entire websites vanish, as in the case of [dozens](#) of scientific journals and all the critical research they contained. This is especially acute for news: researchers at Northwestern University estimate we will lose [one-third](#) of local news sites by 2025, and the digital-first properties that have risen and fallen are nearly impossible to count.

**Laser-plasma accelerators could revolutionize scientific research by providing compact,**

**efficient particle acceleration**, according to an [article](#) from SciTechDaily. In laser-plasma acceleration, a laser shoots intense light pulses into a gas. The pulse is so strong that it ionizes the gas and generates a plasma – a mixture of electrons and ions. As the laser pulse forces the lighter electrons out of the way more quickly than the heavier ions, an electrically positively charged “bubble” forms behind it. If some electrons are injected into this bubble, the strength of the electromagnetic field can virtually catapult them forward.

**Anyone who has spent any amount of time on the internet in the past 15 years or so will fondly recall a website called Quora.** It sought to answer all of those befuddling questions that plague a lot of us. You might also be aware that Quora is no longer even a shadow of its former self. If you’re curious about the decline of

Quora, you’re going to love the [article](#) on Slate that details its decline.



According to an [article](#) from Hacker News, as **many as six security vulnerabilities have been disclosed in the popular Rsync file-synchronization tool for Unix systems**, some of which could be exploited to execute arbitrary code on a client. Simon Scannell, Pedro Gallegos, and Jasiel Spelman from Google Cloud Vulnerability Research have been credited with discovering and reporting the first five flaws. Security researcher Aleksei Gorban has been acknowledged for the symbolic-link race condition flaw. “Attackers can take control of a malicious server and read/write arbitrary files of any connected client,” the CERT Coordination Center (CERT/CC) [said](#) in an advisory. “Sensitive data, such as SSH keys, can be extracted, and malicious code can be executed by overwriting files such as `~/bashrc` or `~/popt`.” (Never fear ... Texstar’s on it! Rsync has been updated in the PCLinuxOS repository.)

**Scientists have discovered a massive black hole in the early universe that appears to be**



**“napping” after stuffing itself with too much food**, according to an [article](#) from SciTechDaily. Similar to a bear hibernating after feasting on salmon, this black hole seems to have overeaten and entered a dormant state within its host galaxy. An international team of astronomers, led by the University of Cambridge, detected this ancient black hole using the James Webb Space Telescope. It dates back to just 800 million years after the Big Bang. Weighing in at an incredible 400 million times the mass of our Sun, this black hole ranks among the largest ever observed during that period of the universe’s development. It is so massive that it accounts for approximately 40% of its host galaxy’s entire mass — a stark contrast to black holes in the modern universe, which typically comprise only about 0.1% of their galaxy’s mass. However, despite its gigantic size, this black hole is eating, or accreting, the gas it needs to grow at a very low rate – about 100 times below its theoretical maximum limit – making it essentially dormant.

**For three decades, a tiny text file has kept the internet from chaos**, according to an [article](#) from The Verge. This text file has no particular legal or technical authority, and it’s not even particularly complicated. It represents a handshake deal between some of the earliest pioneers of the internet to respect each other’s wishes and build the internet in a way that benefitted everybody. It’s a mini constitution for the internet, written in code. It’s called robots.txt and is usually located at `yourwebsite.com/robots.txt`. That file allows anyone who runs a website — big or small, cooking blog or multinational corporation — to tell the web

who’s allowed in and who isn’t. Which search engines can index your site? What archival projects can grab a version of your page and save it? Can competitors keep tabs on your pages for their own files? You get to decide and declare that to the web. Now, AI is breaking that informal contract.



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

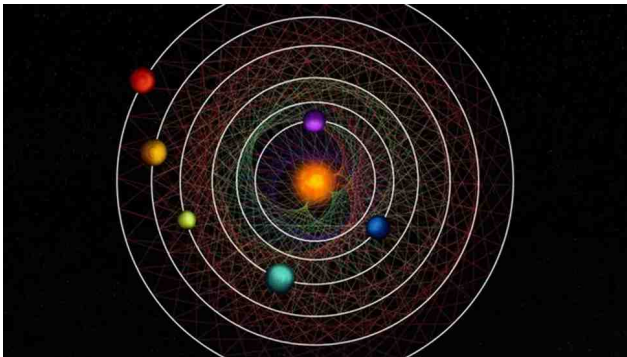
Sleep has an enormous impact on our health and wellbeing, and this [article](#) from NPR **tries to dispel six of the many myths surrounding sleep**. It helps our brains function, protects against heart disease and supports our immune system. And without it, we would die. Although for something so important, we aren’t formally taught how to do it right, says Rebecca Robbins, a sleep scientist at the Brigham and Women’s Hospital and an assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. “In America, you learn about nutrition or sex ed in school, but never about sleep.” It may be why only a third of Americans get the recommended amount of sleep each night, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. To help educate the public about healthy sleep, she and

her colleagues identified popular myths about sleep and debunked them in a 2019 paper published in the journal *Sleep Health*. They looked at statements such as “many adults need only 5 or less hours of sleep” and “it does not matter what time of day you sleep.” And they found that these claims had “a limited or questionable evidence base.” (P.S. ... we were never “wired” to sleep eight contiguous hours, either. The invention of the light bulb was the biggest culprit that changed our sleep patterns. Until recent history, humans got their sleep in what is called segmented sleep. Check out this DuckDuckGo [search](#) to further explore this topic.)

**The field of dentistry is lagging on adopting evidence-based care** and, as such, is rife with overdiagnoses and overtreatments that may align more with the economic pressures of keeping a dental practice afloat than what care patients actually need, according to an [article](#) from ArsTechnica. At least, that’s according to a trio of health and dental researchers from Brazil and the United Kingdom, led by epidemiologist and dentist Paulo Nadanovsky, of the University of the State of Rio de Janeiro. In a [viewpoint](#) published in May 2024 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*, the researchers point out that many common — nearly unquestioned — practices in dentistry aren’t backed up by solid data. That includes the typical recommendation that everyone should get a dental check-up every six months. The researchers note that two large clinical trials failed to find a benefit of six-month check-ups compared with longer intervals that were up to two years.

### How do you know if a USB cable is hiding malicious hacker hardware? Are your USB cables sending your data to hackers?

According to an [article](#) from PCWorld, we expect USB-C cables to perform a specific task: transferring either data or files between devices. We give little more thought to the matter, but malicious USB-C cables can do much more than what we expect. These cables hide malicious hardware that can intercept data, eavesdrop on phone calls and messages, or, in the worst cases, take complete control of your PC or cellphone. The first of these appeared in 2008, but back then they were very rare and expensive — which meant the average user was largely safeguarded. Since then, their availability has increased 100-fold and now with both specialist spy retailers selling them as “spy cables” as well as unscrupulous sellers passing them off as legitimate products, it’s all too easy to buy one by accident and get hacked.



CC BY-NC-SA 4.0, Thibaut Roger/NCCR PlanetsS

**Late last year, astronomers discovered a fascinating star system only 100 light-years away from us.** Its six sub-Neptune planets circle very close to their host star in mathematically

perfect orbits, piquing the interest of scientists searching for alien technology, or technosignatures, which they argue would offer compelling evidence of advanced life beyond Earth, according to an [article](#) from LiveScience. To be clear, no such evidence was found in the system, dubbed HD 110067. However, the researchers say they're not done looking yet. HD 11067 remains an interesting target for similar observations in the future.

Americans are famous for many things, and probably just as infamous for many, many more. **One of the more infamous things about Americans is how unhealthy the American diet is.** An [article](#) from the New Yorker takes a look at “why is the American diet so deadly?” A scientist tried to discredit the theory that ultra-processed foods are killing us. Instead, he overturned his own understanding of obesity.

Chances are high that someone you know is affected by Alzheimer’s, either directly as a patient, or as a caregiver to an Alzheimer’s patient. You might even have a family member suffering from Alzheimer’s. It is the dominant form of dementia, representing 60 to 70 percent of all dementia cases. With the number of Alzheimer’s cases expected to triple to afflict 153 million patients worldwide by the year 2050, **researchers are working quickly to determine what other factors may be playing a role** in the development of the insidious disease, according to an [article](#) from UnDark. While most of the latest research has focused on stopping or reversing the buildup of amyloid beta plaques in the brain, it may not be the solitary cause of the disease. Different and

independent research teams across the globe are seeing data that seem to also implicate the body’s own immune system and a herpes virus as contributors to the development of Alzheimer’s.



**The Linux Foundation announced on January 9, 2025 a fund to support and organize open projects to build Chromium-based browsers,** according to an [article](#) from TechRepublic. The Supporters of Chromium-Based Browsers now accepts new members. “With the launch of the Supporters of Chromium-Based Browsers, we are taking another step forward in empowering the open source community,” said Jim Zemlin, executive director of the Linux Foundation, in a [press release](#). “This project will provide much-needed funding and development support for open development of projects within the Chromium ecosystem.” Many browsers,

including Arc, Microsoft Edge, and Opera, use Google's Chromium as their underlying infrastructure. Interested potential partners can [apply](#) with the Linux Foundation. The purpose of the Supporters of Chromium-Based Browsers group is to "provide a neutral space where industry leaders, academia, developers, and the broader open source community can work together to support projects within the Chromium ecosystem," the Linux Foundation wrote. As such, the group will "remove barriers to innovation, expand adoption, and ensure that projects within the Chromium ecosystem receive the resources they need to thrive." Google, Meta, Microsoft, and Opera have endorsed the Supporters of Chromium-Based Browsers. The initiative will be a "neutral space" for "industry leaders, academia, developers, and the broader open source community," the Linux Foundation said.

**A huge black hole myth has been busted: they don't suck anything in.** Many of us look at black holes as cosmic vacuum cleaners: sucking in everything in their vicinity. But it turns out they don't suck at all, according to an [article](#) from BigThink. Black holes are the densest objects in the Universe, with at least several Suns worth of mass collected in a region that's so small, even objects moving at the speed of light can't escape from it. Although these objects exert a tremendous gravitational force, they don't "suck matter in" any differently than neutron stars, white dwarfs, stars, or planets do: they just gravitate normally.

According to an [article](#) published in the New York Times, **some 4.5 billion years ago, the**

**dwarf planet Pluto was suddenly joined by a companion.** For a very brief period — perhaps only hours — they danced as if arm in arm before gently separating, a grande do-si-do that resulted in Pluto and its quintet of moons orbiting the sun together today. Astronomers have long wondered how Charon, the largest of those moons, came to orbit Pluto. A paper published January 6, 2025 in the journal [Nature Geoscience](#) described a possible sequence of events that may resolve the question.



**Following the recent KDE Plasma 6.3 Beta, there's been a lot of bug fixing happening ahead of the stable release due out next month for this open-source desktop,** according to an [article](#) from Phoronix. KDE developer Nate Graham is out with his newest weekly blog post summarizing all of the interesting Plasma developments taking place. This week has been

particularly heavy with bug fixing, Graham notes: *"We're barely a week into the Plasma 6.3 beta period, and Plasma's contributors are already fixing record amounts of bugs! The number of 15-minute bugs has dropped to the low 20s, and there's only one VHI priority bug left. But that's not all; they hammered on a ton more bugs as well, and did quite a bit of UI polishing!"* KDE developers this week added several new search providers for use from KRunner like Docker Hub, the Mozilla Developer Network, and Nix packages. There have also been a number of UI improvements for Plasma 6.3. The KWin compositor is also now smarter around its scale factor handling, Night Light now following ICC profiles, a few performance optimizations, and a lot of bug fixing.

According to an [article](#) from The Register, **Microsoft eggheads say AI can never be made secure – after testing Redmond's own products.** If you want a picture of the future, imagine your infosec team stamping on software forever. Microsoft brainiacs who probed the security of more than 100 of the software giant's own generative AI products came away with a sobering message: The models amplify existing security risks and create new ones. The 26 authors offered the observation that "the work of securing AI systems will never be complete" in a pre-print [paper](#) titled: Lessons from red-teaming 100 generative AI products. That's the final lesson of eight offered in the paper, though it's not entirely apocalyptic. The authors, Azure CTO Mark Russinovich among them, argue that with further work, the cost of attacking AI systems can be raised – as has already happened



for other IT security risks through defense-in-depth tactics and security-by-design principles. And in that respect it's perhaps all not too surprising – is any non-trivial computer system ever totally utterly secure? Some say yes, some say no.

**As news still sinks in of an exploit methodology that can seemingly steal sensitive data using the sign-in-with-Google authentication process, and users of Chrome are warned not to click twice as new attack methodology is confirmed, another threat has been disclosed that Google users need to take note of**, according to an [article](#) from Forbes. Although two-factor authentication bypassing, credential-stealing, attacks are nothing new, security researchers have called this latest ongoing perpetual hacking campaign a “new extreme.” Here’s what you need to know.



NASA/ESA

Andromeda is the closest large galaxy to the Milky Way. And it is getting closer, as the two will merge in several billion years. It has been an object of study for centuries, but we have never seen it like this, according to an [article](#)

from IFL Science. **The Hubble Space Telescope has just finished a campaign of observations that lasted for more than 10 years, creating the deepest observations of this galaxy ever.** The galaxy is so large that 600 separate fields of view had to be assembled in an extraordinary mosaic with 2.5 billion pixels. Hubble was able to resolve about 200 million stars, all hotter than our Sun. A large number, but still a tiny fraction of the galaxy’s total stellar population. Andromeda is estimated to have 1 trillion stars. Still, this drop in the ocean tells us a lot about the galaxy. “With Hubble, we can get into enormous detail about what’s happening on a holistic scale across the entire disk of the galaxy. You can’t do that with any other large galaxy,” principal investigator Ben Williams of the University of Washington said in a [statement](#). The work has revealed that Andromeda is a lot more chaotic than expected. Similar to what recently retired Gaia did for the Milky Way, Hubble spotted the hallmarks of a past collision: the presence of a large stellar population, coherent streams of stars, etc.

**Scientists, who recently discovered that metal lumps on the dark seabed make oxygen**, have announced plans to study the deepest parts of

Earth's oceans in order to understand the strange phenomenon, according to an [article](#) from the BBC. Their mission could “change the way we look at the possibility of life on other planets too,” the researchers say. The initial discovery confounded marine scientists. It was previously accepted that oxygen could only be produced in sunlight by plants — in a process called photosynthesis. If oxygen — a vital component of life — is made in the dark by metal lumps, the researchers believe that process could be happening on other planets, creating oxygen-rich environments where life could thrive. Lead researcher Prof. Andrew Sweetman explained: “We are already in conversation with experts at NASA who believe dark oxygen could reshape our understanding of how life might be sustained on other planets without direct sunlight.

**Giant isopods of the genus Bathynomus, which can grow over 30 cm in length, are commonly known in Vietnam as bọ Biel, or “sea bugs,”** according to an [article](#) from SciTechDaily. For the first time, a species from this genus has been identified in Vietnamese waters and named *Bathynomus vaderi*. The species name *vaderi* was inspired by the shape

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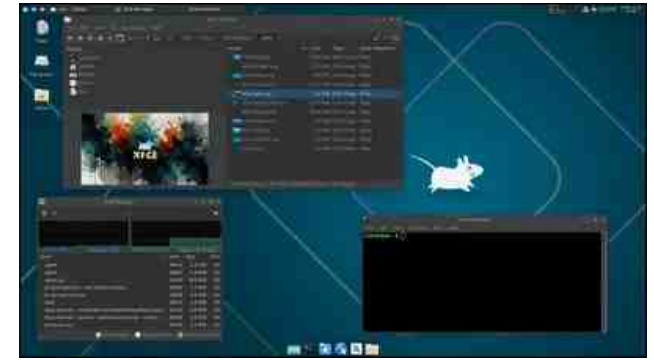
of its head, which closely resembles the iconic helmet of Darth Vader, the legendary Sith Lord from Star Wars. *Bathynomus vaderi* is part of the “supergiant” group of isopods, reaching up to 32.5 cm in length and weighing more than a kilogram. Currently, this species has been found only near Vietnam’s Spratly Islands. However, ongoing research may reveal its presence in other areas of the South China Sea. Giant isopods like *Bathynomus vaderi* have become an expensive delicacy in Vietnam. Until 2017, local fishermen only sold them as a bycatch product for low prices, but in recent years the media has drawn public attention to this unusual seafood. Some go as far as claiming it’s more delicious than lobster, the “king of seafood”.



**Night has fallen for the star-tracking European Space Agency (ESA) spacecraft, Gaia.** The mission, which has been mapping the Milky Way for the last 12 years, shut down science operations on January 15, 2025, according to an [article](#) from Space.com. The close of the mission's data-collecting phase was necessitated by Gaia running low on cold gas

propellant it uses to spin. The top-hat-shaped craft has been using around 12 grams of this propellant a day since it launched from Europe's Spaceport in French Guiana atop a Soyuz-Fregat rocket on Dec. 19, 2013. However, even though Gaia may be closing its eyes to the cosmos, this is far from the end of the spacecraft's influence on space science. “In my mind, the Gaia mission is not ending — just the taking of data,” Kareem El-Badry, a Harvard and Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics (CfA) researcher and frequent Gaia data user, told Space.com. “I expect Gaia's best results are still to come. That includes in the areas I am most interested in — binary stars and black holes.”

**Moderna has been awarded approximately \$590 million from the federal government to help speed up the development of an mRNA-based bird flu vaccine,** alongside other influenza vaccines, health officials announced on January 17, 2025, according to an [article](#) from ABC News. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) said in a press release that the funding will allow the pharmaceutical company to accelerate the development of an H5N1 mRNA influenza vaccine “that is well-matched to strains currently circulating in cows and birds, and expands the clinical data supporting the use of mRNA vaccines that may be needed if other influenza strains emerge with pandemic potential.” Moderna said the funding will support the expansion of clinical studies “for up to five additional subtypes of pandemic influenza.”



**After almost two years of work, the Xfce team is happy to announce the release of Xfce 4.20!**

Since Xfce 4.18, a lot of major development has happened. The Xfce team added many nice new features, did a gazillion bug fixes, and did various minor improvements. Finally, all that was released for your pleasure. The major focus during this development cycle was the preparation of the codebase to be ready for Wayland. This means that the Xfce team now has experimental Wayland support for most components. You can check out all of the improvements and changes [here](#).

**Google says it has begun requiring users to turn on JavaScript, the widely used programming language to make web pages interactive, in order to use Google Search,** according to an [article](#) from TechCrunch. In an email to TechCrunch, a company spokesperson claimed that the change is intended to “better protect” Google Search against malicious activity, such as bots and spam, and to improve the overall Google Search experience for users. The spokesperson noted that, without JavaScript, many Google Search features won't

work properly and that the quality of search results tends to be degraded.

**Tourists of time all know one rule: never change the past.** Whether it's preventing your own conception or handing the blueprints to a time machine to a younger version of yourself, generating a paradoxical sequence of [events](#) is a big no-no that cancels out the possibility of time travel. Vanderbilt University physicist Lorenzo Gavassino isn't so sure this is as big an obstacle as time-traveler pessimists have made out, according to an [article](#) from ScienceAlert. In a recent examination of the finer details on entropy, space, and time, he's found we can murder all the grandparents we want. The 'grandfather paradox' is a self-contradictory situation; traveling back in time and killing your grandfather as a child would prevent your birth. Which means you now don't exist, so how can you go back and kill him? It's possible you've already done it, in fact, and, well, conveniently forgotten all about it.



Image by [Cliff Hang](#) from [Pixabay](#)

**A hack and data breach at location data broker Gravy Analytics is threatening the privacy of millions of people around the**

**world** whose smartphone apps unwittingly revealed their location data collected by the data giant, according to an [article](#) from TechCrunch. The full scale of the data breach isn't yet known, but the alleged hacker has already published a large sample of location data from top consumer phone apps — including fitness and health, dating, and transit apps, as well as popular games. The data represents tens of millions of location data points of where people have been, live, work, and travel between. News of the breach broke in the second weekend of January after a hacker posted screenshots of location data on a closed-access Russian language cybercrime forum, claiming they had stolen several terabytes of consumers' data from Gravy Analytics.

**For scientists, our earliest ancestor wasn't Adam or Eve but Luca. Luca didn't look anything like us – it was a single-celled bacterium-like organism,** according to an [article](#) from The Guardian. A recent study by a team of scientists based in the UK has delivered rather shocking news about this illustrious forebear. Despite having lived almost as far back as seems possible, Luca was surprisingly similar to modern bacteria – and what's more, it apparently lived in a thriving community of other organisms that have left no trace on Earth today. Luca – short for the last universal common ancestor, the progenitor of all known life on Earth – seems to have been born 4.2bn years ago. Back then, our planet was no Eden but something of a hell on Earth: a seething mass of volcanoes pummeled by giant meteorites, and having recovered from a cosmic collision that blasted the world apart and created

the moon from some of the fragments. There is good reason why the geological aeon before 4bn years ago is called the Hadean, after the Greek god of the underworld Hades.

**The James Webb Space Telescope has been awe-inspiring since its 2021 launch, delivering breathtaking views of distant galaxies and offering insights into the early universe. But another groundbreaking telescope is about to join the fray, bringing a fresh perspective and tackling challenges Webb wasn't designed to address,** according to an [article](#) from JasonDeegan.com. The Vera C. Rubin Observatory, perched high in Chile's Andes mountains, promises to revolutionize how we see and understand the universe. Located 2,700 meters above sea level on Cerro Pachón, the Vera C. Rubin Observatory boasts a 3.2-gigapixel camera — the most advanced of its kind. After 25 years of planning and development, this technological marvel is ready to start scanning the skies in February 2025. Unlike Webb, which focuses on the infrared spectrum to peer deep into space and time, Rubin is designed for a different mission: continuously mapping vast sections of the night sky. Rubin's three-mirror design enables it to observe enormous swathes of the cosmos, revisiting each section every three days. This rapid cadence will allow it to monitor the movement and brightness of objects like asteroids, stars, and galaxies, making it invaluable for tracking dynamic phenomena and potential threats to Earth.



# PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner



## Taco Beef Bake with Cheddar Biscuit Topping

Serves: 6

### INGREDIENTS:

1 lb lean (at least 80%) ground beef  
1 package (1.25 oz) Old taco seasoning mix  
1 cup Thick and Chunky salsa  
2 cups frozen corn  
2 cups Bisquick™ mix  
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese (4 oz)  
2/3 cup milk

### DIRECTIONS:

Heat oven to 425°F. In a 10-inch skillet, cook beef over medium-high heat 5 to 7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until thoroughly cooked; drain.

Stir taco seasoning mix, salsa, and corn into beef. Heat to boiling, stirring occasionally. Pour into an ungreased 8-inch square pan or 8-inch square (2-quart) glass baking dish.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, stir Bisquick mix, cheese, and milk until soft dough forms.

Drop dough by 12 spoonfuls onto beef mixture.

Bake uncovered for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the topping is golden brown.



### NUTRITION:

Calories: 460    Carbs: 44g    Sodium: 1370mg  
Fiber: 2g        Protein: 23g



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Available in the following desktops:

KDE LXQt Xfce

MATE Trinity

Enlightenment



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## Screenshot Showcase



*Posted by mutse, January 14, 2025, running Mate.*



# Wiki Pick: How To Change Program Icon

by Dave Marshall

While these instructions are applicable to PCLinuxOS Debian Edition KDE, they should work for the "Classic" RPM KDE version, and may work similarly for other desktop environments.

In PCLinuxOS Debian Edition KDE, the PCManFM file manager uses the same icon as KDE's Dolphin file manager. That can be confusing. Of course, there are many other reasons why you might want to change a program icon.

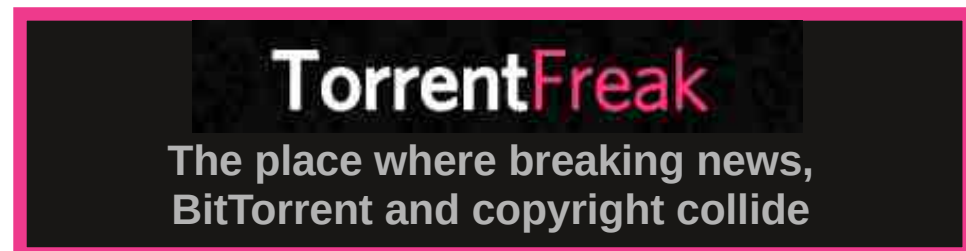


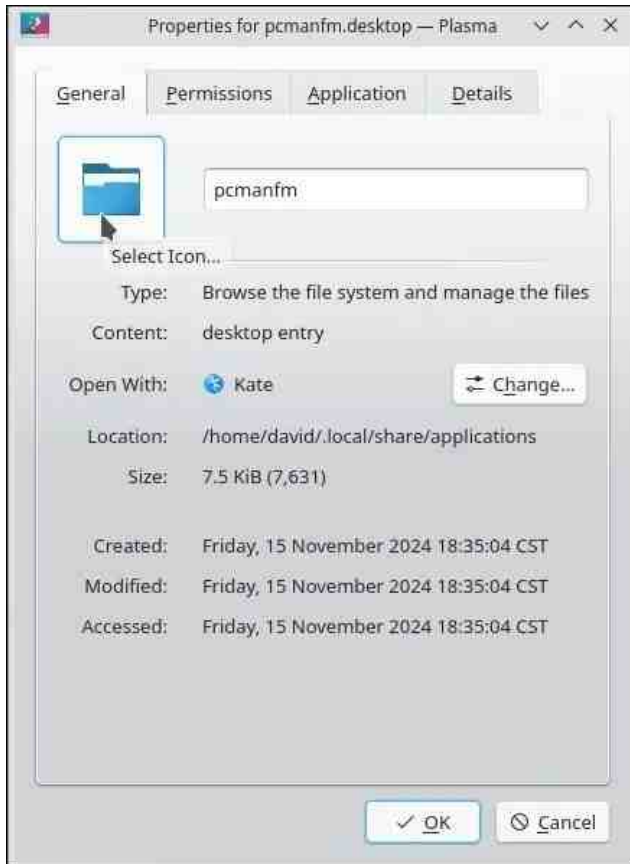
1. Click the Application Menu on the Taskbar.



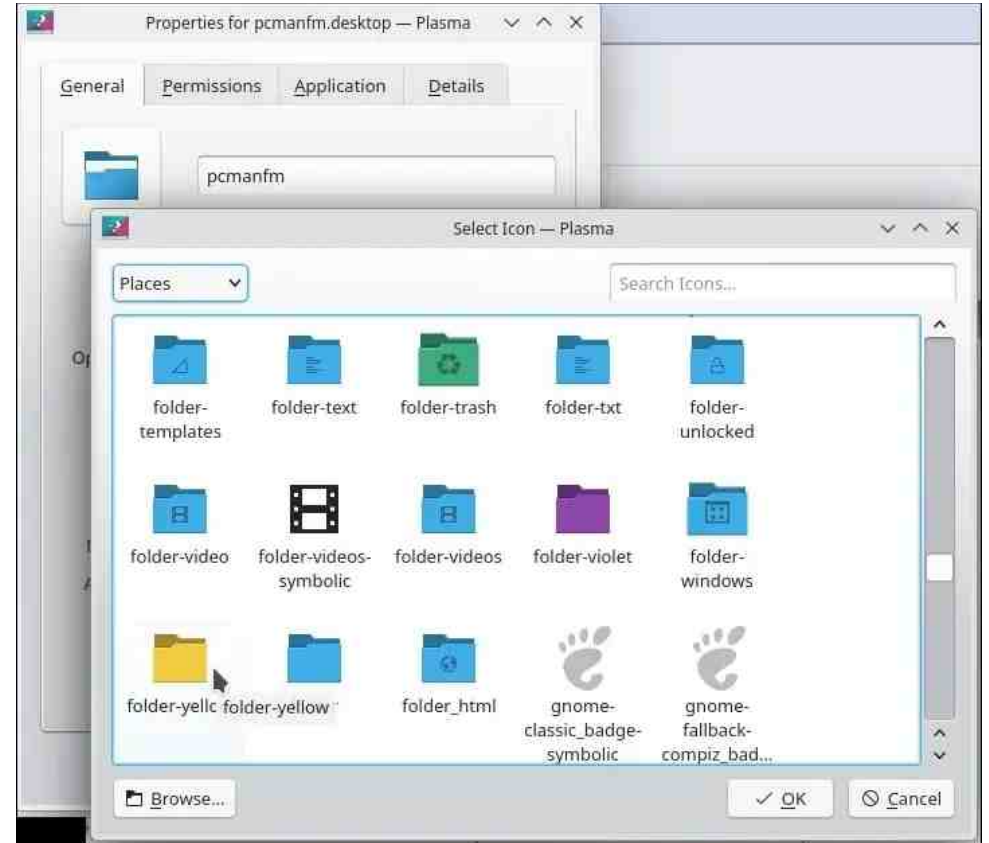
2. Go to the Program for which you want to change the icon.

3. Right-click the program and select Edit Application.





4. On the Properties Dialog, click the icon to open the Plasma Select Icon applet.



5. Scroll through the options to find what you want. For PCManFM, I found folder-yellow in the Places category. Use the drop-down menu at the upper left to select the category.



6. Click the icon that you want and click the OK button at the bottom right.

It is possible that a future KDE or program update will cause the icon to change back to the default. If that happens, simply change it again.

You can view the original wiki article [here](#).

# Inkscape Tutorial: Create A Decorative Border

by Meemaw

I was looking at tutorials, and found this simple [tutorial](#) for making a decorative border. This one uses the Division item from the Paths menu, and can be done really quickly, depending on how detailed you want it.

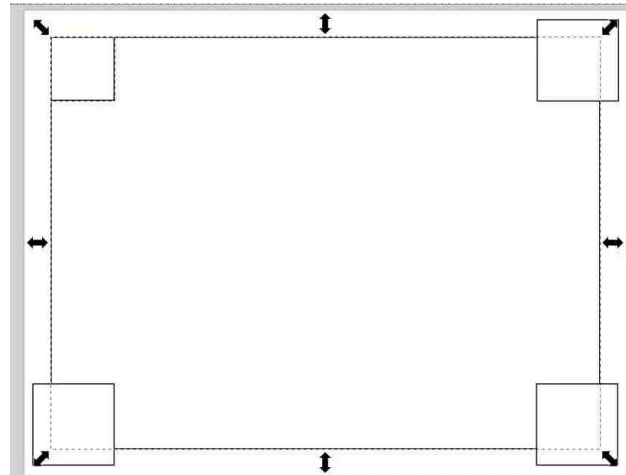
Opening Inkscape, start a new drawing. I generally use US Letter size paper, with a Landscape orientation, but you should use what works for you. I made several of these, most of them the same size and one a little smaller.

Start by drawing a rectangle on your page. I made my rectangle an inch smaller than the paper all around, because we're going to spread it out with the Paths tool.

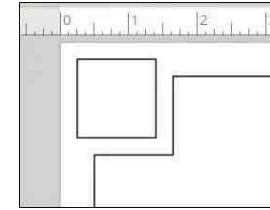


Draw a square at each corner that overlaps each corner of the first rectangle. Try to make sure that your squares are positioned in the same way on each corner so when you do the next step, each corner will look alike. I used **Align & Distribute** to make sure that everything was aligned well.

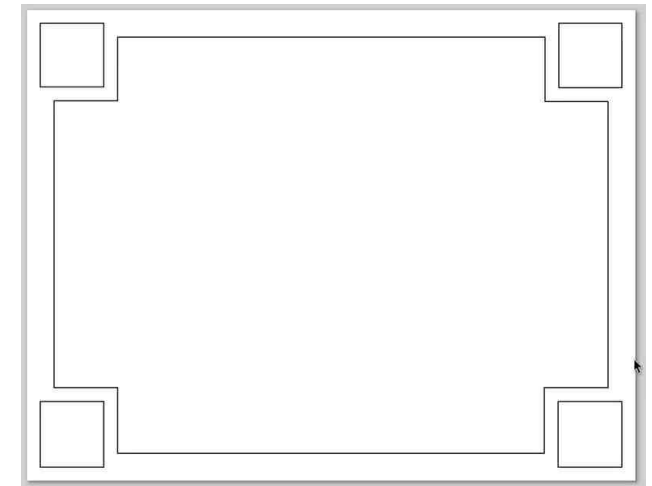
Choose the large rectangle, and one of your corner rectangles, then choose **Paths > Division**. Now, instead of a square over the corner of the rectangle, you'll see a smaller square in the corner.



Deselect the items by clicking off the page, then do the same with each of the other corners. Deselect again, then select one of the corners. You can now move it out from the original rectangle, and the rectangle will be changed as well.

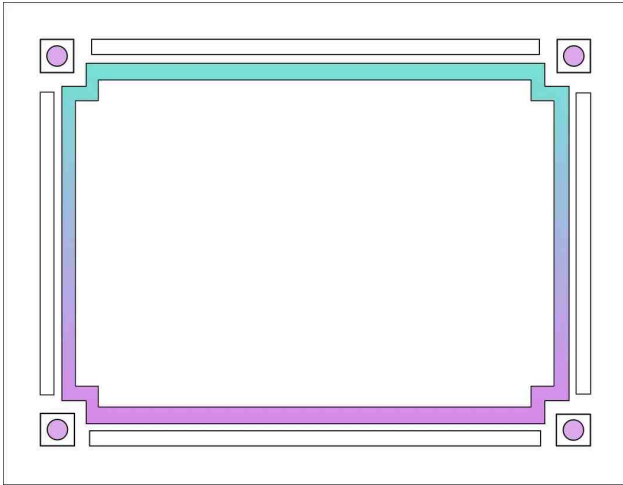


When you finish, you'll have four squares and your rectangle will have its corners cut out.

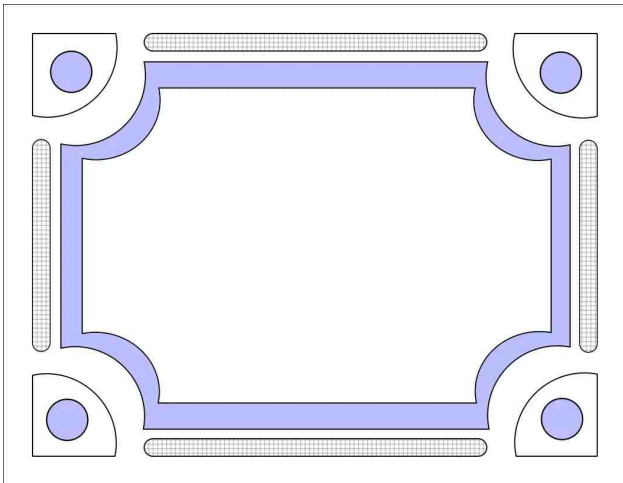


Many things can be done from here. In one of my creations, I added a long rectangle to each side, outside the original rectangle. I then duplicated the original rectangle, resized it smaller, and aligned everything. I also added a circle on each corner, and added a fill gradient between the two lines and a fill color to each circle (next page, top left).



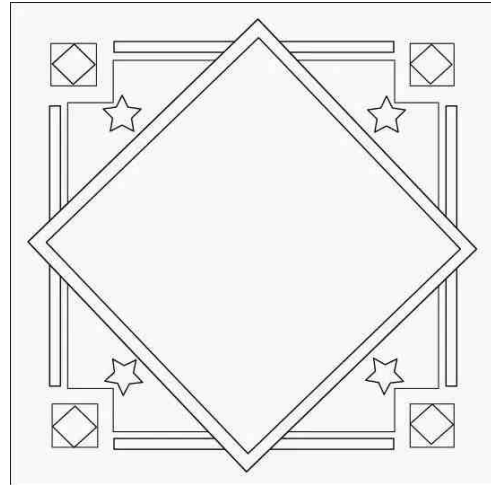


On the second one, I used a circle in the corners. Bear in mind that whatever you use is how your corner item will turn out. It also makes a difference how far you cover your original rectangle, as it will affect the shape of your corner item.



I also did one that's more square, in case your project is square. You'll find that you can add

nearly anything to this project, even a pattern fill on some of your items, so it will truly be your creation.



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Tweet

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## Screenshot Showcase



Posted by supahglue, January 3, 2025, running KDE.



# Repo Review: QOwnNotes

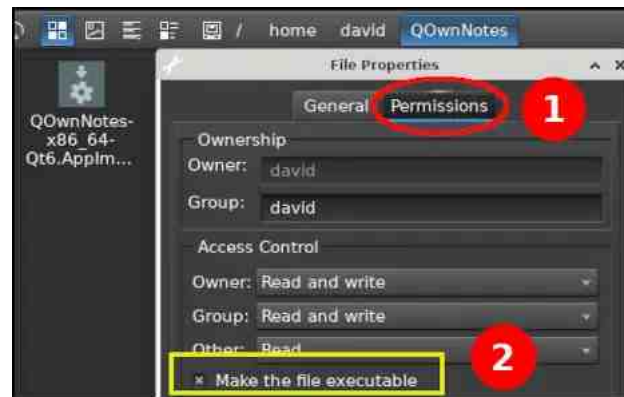
by David Pardue (kalwisti)

During the holidays, I switched one of my desktop machines from KDE Darkstar to LXQt for a change of pace. I previously ran LXQt for about eighteen months and enjoyed the experience. (Forum member daniel has just released an updated ISO, [Community LXQt 2025.01](#), in case you are interested in trying this new PCLinuxOS remaster.) I have been happy using [Zim Desktop Wiki](#), but I read favorable comments about a native Qt application called QOwnNotes and decided to test it for this month's article.

The program's name, although a bit uninspiring, summarizes its philosophy: “**Q**” is because of its Qt framework; “**Own**” because it will always allow you to maintain ownership of your notes; “**Notes**” because it is a note-taking app.

QOwnNotes offers numerous features: it is made for the desktop, designed to have a small footprint while being fast and efficient. It allows you to tag, track, sort, and share your notes. It is highly customizable (I will further discuss that in a moment). The program is cross-platform, with versions available for Linux (Flatpak, AppImage, Snap), FreeBSD, macOS, and Windows. QOwnNotes is written in C++ and Qt. Its developer is [Patrizio Bekerle](#), a software engineer who graduated from the Graz University of Technology (Austria). His personal

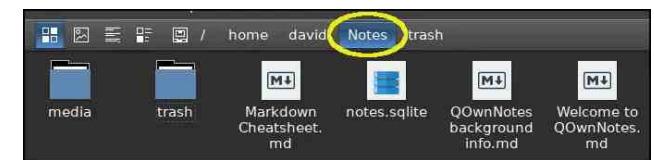
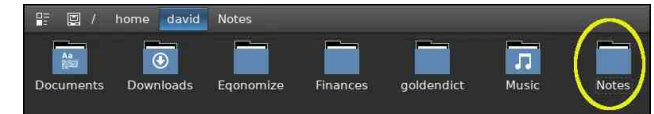
interests include KDE, NixOS, Buddhism, bouldering and a low-fat raw vegan (LFRV) diet which he has followed since 2011. He has created a [food website](#) with LFRV recipes in German and English.



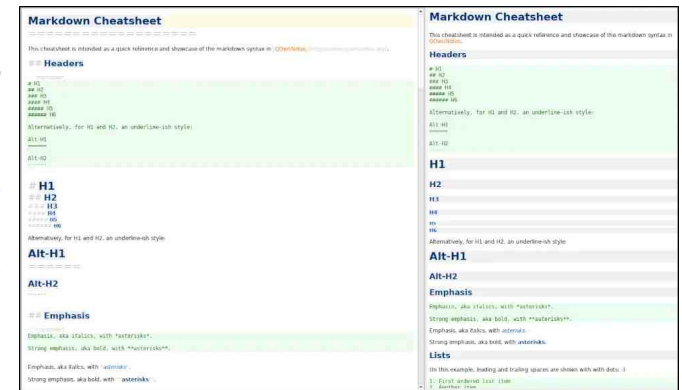
Although QOwnNotes is in the PCLinuxOS repositories, the version there (18.05.7) is rather old, so I opted to try the AppImage of ver. 25.1.3 (a modest download of 47.9 MB). (The application has just been updated to ver. 25.1.4 as I am writing this review.) After downloading the Qt6 release of the AppImage and changing its file permissions to executable, it worked fine on both my LXQt system and my Xfce system.

The notes that QOwnNotes creates are plain-text files — in markdown [.md] format — stored into folders on your system. Since the notes are plain text, there is no risk of vendor lock-in.

Your files are stored locally within a normal folder structure, and you control/determine that structure (although the default is “Notes” in your /home directory).



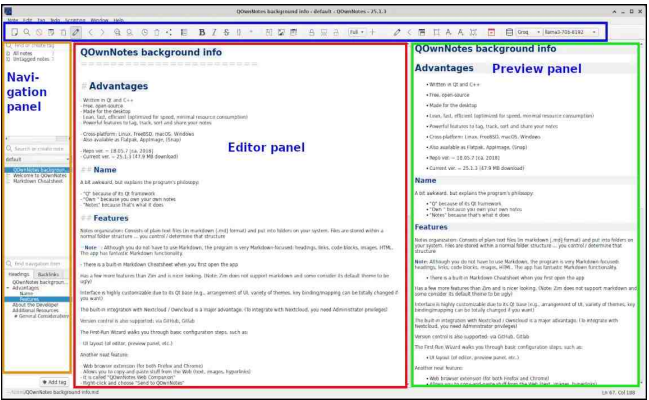
If you are not familiar with Markdown, don't worry. Markdown conventions are straightforward, and QOwnNotes incorporates a built-in Markdown Cheatsheet when you first open the app.



Another nice touch is the first-run wizard which assists you with basic configuration steps such as choosing the location where you wish to store

your notes, the layout of the editor, preview panel, etc.

QOwnNote's default UI displays a Navigation panel (on the left, outlined in orange), an Editor panel (in the center, outlined in red) and a Preview panel (on the right, outlined in green). A toolbar (outlined in blue) is placed at the top of the UI:



However, QOwnNotes' interface is highly customizable due to its Qt base. The panels can float or stack (fully dockable), program fonts can be changed, there are more than 60 languages available as well as a variety of themes (32), and the key bindings can be totally remapped to suit your taste.

A major attraction of QOwnNotes is built-in integration with Nextcloud and/or ownCloud. This syncing is optional, but if you choose to use it, it allows you to share and back up your notes with these cloud services. Version control is supported via GitHub or GitLab. Optional encryption of your notes (AES 256-bit) is also built into the program.

You can sort your notes alphabetically or by date (under the **Note** menu > choose **Sort by**). If you are a vim user, you can enable the program's vim-mode. QOwnNotes has a built-in table editor and the toolbar has icons which apply point-and-click markdown to selected text in the Editor panel (boldface, italic, etc.). The screenshot below shows an image that I inserted from my Downloads folder, a block quote, a table, and a sample code block:



QOwnNotes can import notes from Evernote, Joplin, or text files (such as from Zim). It has the capability of exporting files as PDF, HTML or Markdown [.md]. The app includes a Portable mode which allows users to carry QOwnNotes around on a USB flash drive.

I should mention one promising feature that I was unable to get working: the web browser extension. QOwnNotes offers a browser extension (for both Firefox and Chrome) that is called "QOwnNotes Web Companion." After installing it, this extension allows you to copy and paste information from the web — such as text, images, and hyperlinks — and send it directly to QOwnNotes. However, despite repeated efforts I could not get it to work, even after following the [installation tips](#) and disabling

my other Firefox extensions (uBlock Origin, Privacy Badger). Guessing that the problem might be caused due to the AppImage format, I also experimented with installing the program's older version (18.05.7) from the PCLinuxOS repositories, but the extension still failed.

In conclusion, if you are searching for a versatile note-taking app, there is much to recommend QOwnNotes — especially if you are an LXQt or KDE user. It has a few more features than Zim, is powerful yet light on system resources, customizable and stores your notes locally as plain-text markdown files (unless you choose to upload them to Nextcloud). QOwnNotes works nicely out of the box without requiring much configuration; nothing gets in the way of you composing your notes, and you typically do not have to wade through documentation to figure out how the program works.

**Additional Resources**

The "Getting Started" section of QOwnNote's website explains basic concepts and offers helpful tips.

Awesome Open Source [Brian McGonagill]. "QOwnNotes — Open Source, Self Hosted, Powerful, Efficient, Note-Taking Stored as Plain Text Files!" YouTube, 16 Dec. 2023. (26 min., 40 sec.). He demonstrates how to set up the Nextcloud integration/support and sync from minute 8:51 until 15:50.

The Linux Cast [Matt Weber]. "The Best Notes App for Linux?" YouTube, 11 Feb. 2024. (26 min., 25 sec.).



# Install An Epson Printer On PCLinuxOS

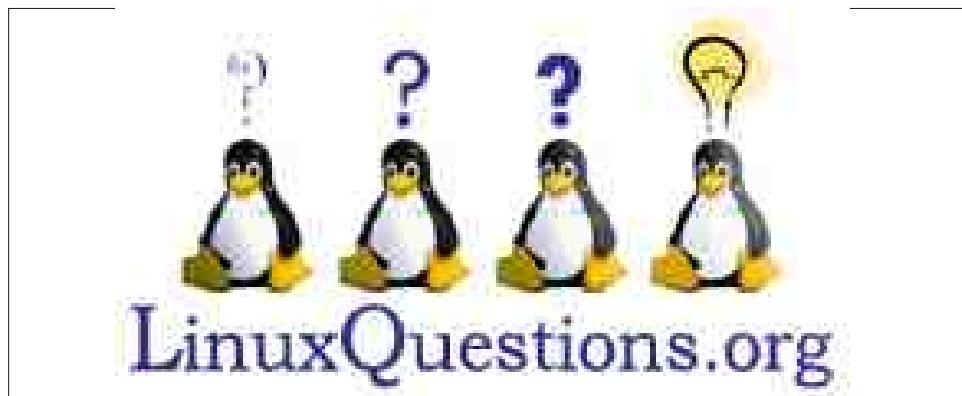
by Ramchu

Epson printers are dependent on LSB (Linux Standard Base), so the first thing that one needs to do is open the Synaptic Package Manager and Search for LSB. Once the list of LSB packages from the search has populated, install the packages from the below image marked by a green box. You should also install task-printing-epson from Synaptic.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	lib64glibc_lsb	x86_64
<input type="checkbox"/>	libbs2b-utils	x86_64
<input type="checkbox"/>	libdeflate-utils	x86_64
<input type="checkbox"/>	libproxy-utils	x86_64
<input type="checkbox"/>	libsmbios-utils	x86_64
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	lsb-core-lib64	x86_64
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	lsb-core-noarch	x86_64
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	lsb-lib64	x86_64
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	lsb-noarch	x86_64
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	lsb-release	x86_64

Now that you have the LSB dependencies taken care of, you will now need to download the driver(s).

Open your web browser and go to the [EPSON Download Center](#).

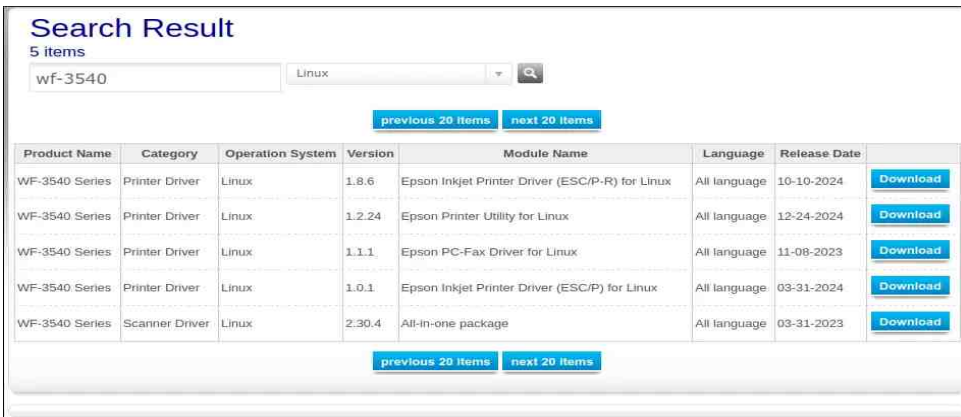


Once you are on the page you will see the below image which contains a search box.



In the search box, enter the model number of your Epson printer (Example: WF-3540). Then make sure that it says Linux under the label Operating System, then click the search icon just to the right of where you entered the Epson model number.

In the Search result that comes up, you will see this:



Search Result

5 items

wf-3540 Linux

previous 20 items next 20 items

Product Name	Category	Operation System	Version	Module Name	Language	Release Date	
WF-3540 Series	Printer Driver	Linux	1.8.6	Epson Inkjet Printer Driver (ESC/P-R) for Linux	All language	10-10-2024	<a href="#">Download</a>
WF-3540 Series	Printer Driver	Linux	1.2.24	Epson Printer Utility for Linux	All language	12-24-2024	<a href="#">Download</a>
WF-3540 Series	Printer Driver	Linux	1.1.1	Epson PC-Fax Driver for Linux	All language	11-08-2023	<a href="#">Download</a>
WF-3540 Series	Printer Driver	Linux	1.0.1	Epson Inkjet Printer Driver (ESC/P) for Linux	All language	03-31-2024	<a href="#">Download</a>
WF-3540 Series	Scanner Driver	Linux	2.30.4	All-in-one package	All language	03-31-2023	<a href="#">Download</a>

previous 20 items next 20 items

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Select the driver that you want to download and click the blue download button on the right. That will open a new tab in your browser, and you should see an accept button that will need to be clicked on, as in the image below.

Download Printer Driver Epson Inkjet Printer Driver (ESC/P-R) for Linux

Product name	Artisan 1430, Artisan 630, Artisan 700, Artisan 710, Artisan 720, Artisan 730, Artisan 800, Artisan 810, Artisan 830, Artisan 837, E-150, E-200, E-300, E-330, E-330S, E-340, E-350, E-360 Series, E-370 Series, E-500, E-520, E-530, E-530P, E-530S, E-600, E-700, E-720, E-800, E-810, E-820, E-830 Series <a href="#">More ...</a>
Language	All language
OS	Linux
Country/Region	All country
Version	Ver. 1.8.6(10-2024)

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Once the Accept button is clicked on, a popup box will appear. Click the link where it says Package Download Page.

File name	File size	
escpr_j.pdf	911.55 KB	<input type="button" value="Download"/>
escpr_e.pdf	949.86 KB	<input type="button" value="Download"/>

Information

Linux Printer Driver Download

>> [Package Download Page](#)

>> [Manual](#)

You will be taken to a page for you to select the Distribution type. Here you want to select the [rpm] 64bit (x86\_64) section and click the Download button and save the driver.

Distribution	Architecture	
[ deb ] <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ubuntu</li><li>• Linux Mint</li><li>• Debian GNU/Linux</li></ul> etc...	64bit(x86_64)	<input type="button" value="Download"/>
[ rpm ] <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fedora</li><li>• openSUSE</li><li>• CentOS(Red Hat Enterprise Linux)</li></ul> etc...	64bit(x86_64)	<input type="button" value="Download"/>

Now that you have the driver, open your file manager, go to where you saved the driver and rename it, from ending in .rpm to .rpm. (Example: `epson-inkjet-printer-escpr-1.8.6-1.x86_64.rpm` to: `epson-inkjet-printer-escpr-1.8.6-1.x86_64.rpm`)

**Now you are ready to install the driver.** Open a terminal, type `su -` at a command prompt, and press the **Enter** key on your keyboard. Type in your **root password**, then press Enter. Type `rpm -i <path to the driver>epson-inkjet-printer-escpr-x.x.xx.x86_64.rpm`, and press **Enter** again.

Example:

```
bash - Konsole
New Tab Split View Copy Paste Find
[ramchu@localhost ~]$ su -
Password:
[ramchu@localhost ~]$ rpm -i /home/ramchu/rpm/epson-inkjet-printer-escpr-1.8.6-1.x86_64.rpm
Stopping CUPS printing system: [ OK ]
Starting CUPS printing system: [ OK ]
Re-enabling disabled print queues:
[ramchu@localhost ~]$
```



Your Epson driver is now installed.

Now go into Configure Your Computer > Hardware > Setup the Printer(s), and set up your Epson printer.

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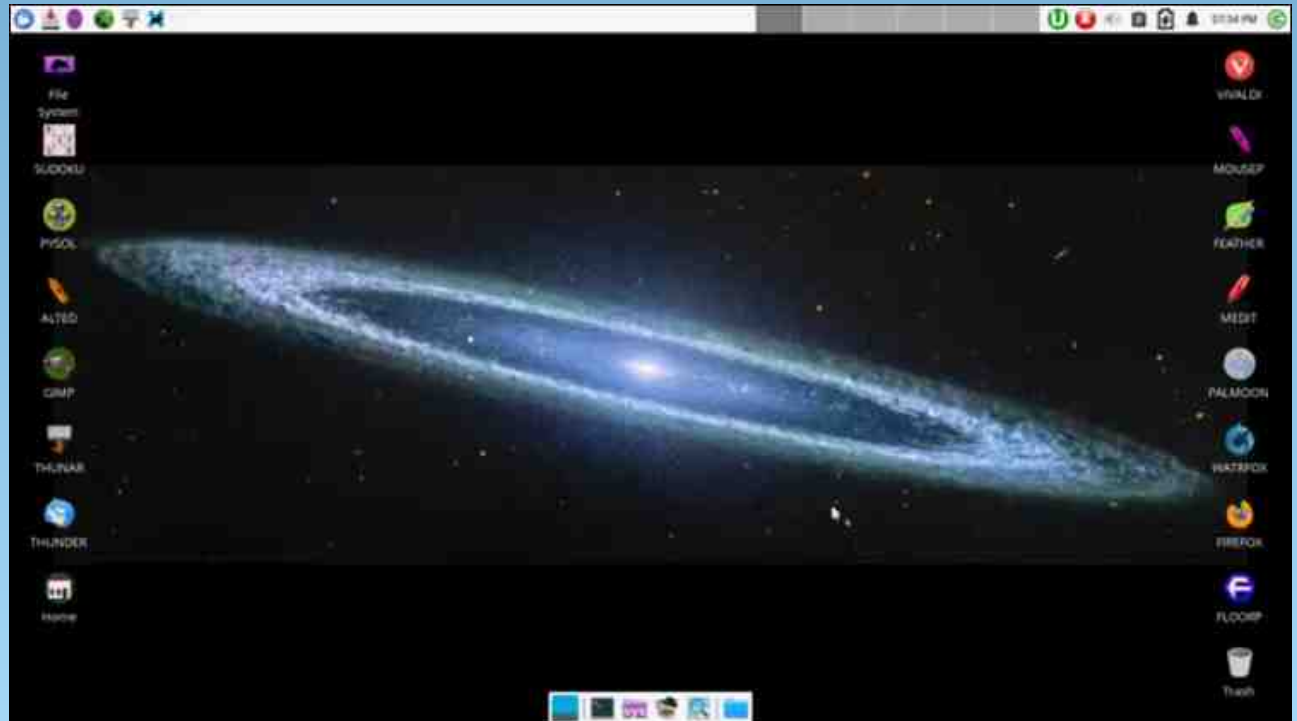


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# Screenshot Showcase



*Posted by DrMop, January 3, 2025, running Xfce.*



# Could A New Style Calculator Be In Your Future?

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

I'm old enough to remember when handheld calculators first came to market en masse. It was in the early 1970s, and a handheld calculator was a must-have item on many people's Christmas list. I know my mom's Christmas list had a handheld calculator on it.



Early TI Handheld Calculator

Back then, they were quite expensive. They had a rather dim and small red LED display, and really (mostly) had the basic functions of adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing numbers. And that is about all they did. Even with that basic functionality, they cost around \$100 (U.S.).

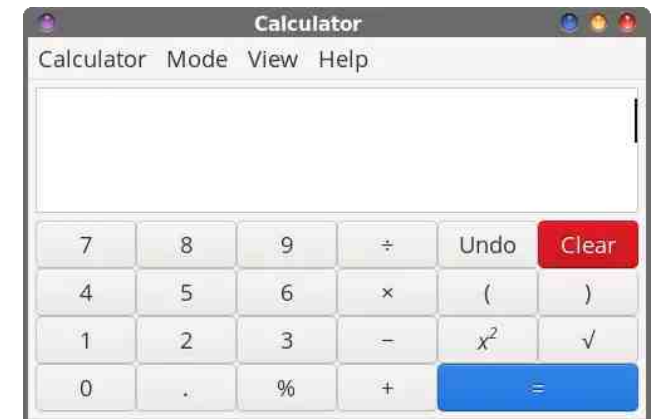
My dad worked for SCM (Smith-Corona Marchant) repairing SCM's adding machines. Those were heavy beasts, with some of them weighing in at 30 pounds (13.61 kg) or more. Some of the more "advanced" models had "pixie tube" displays, instead of the mechanical number wheel that was more common on the larger machines. Others had a paper ribbon tape, kind of like today's cash register receipts.

But when the handheld calculators hit the market, it was a real game changer. They ran on an assortment of batteries (usually, 9V or AA batteries), and really weren't capable of much more than crunching basic numbers with basic math functions.

Fast forward to today, and the dim red LED display has been largely replaced with a high contrast LCD display that not only is way easier to read, but also less taxing on battery life. Basic handheld calculators still largely did what their counterparts did in the 1970s, but it's extremely common to be able to walk into any dollar store and buy one for \$1 (U.S.) ... sometimes less.

The layout of the handheld calculator really hasn't changed much since it was introduced over 50 years ago. Sure, as they gained more functionality, additional keys were introduced to access that increased functionality, but the basic layout has pretty much remained the same. In many ways, it's a testament to a well-designed user interface that has withstood the test of time.

When the personal computer gained popularity, one of the things that was available was a calculator program. Now, your computer could stand in for one of the handheld calculators, at least while you were using your computer. Do you want to guess how their user interfaces were designed? Yep. They copied the successful layout of the handheld calculator.

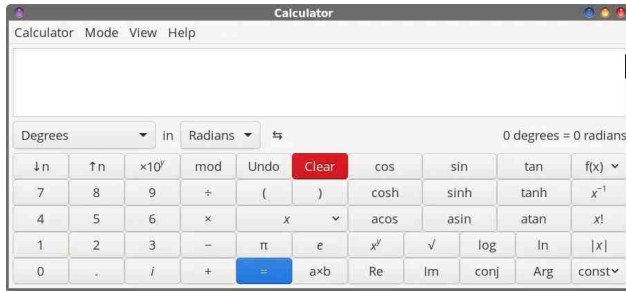


Mate Calculator in the Basic mode

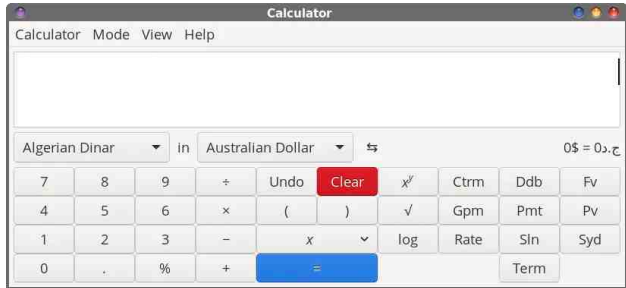




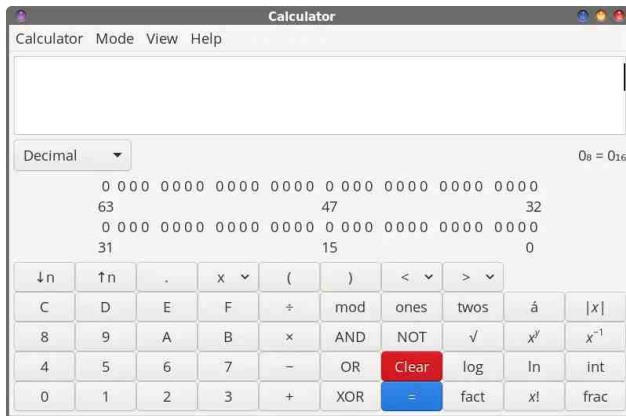
## Could A New Style Calculator Be In Your Future?



Mate Calculator in the Advanced mode



Mate Calculator in the Financial mode



Mate Calculator in the Programming mode

On my Xfce installation, I use Mate Calculator. It fulfills my needs perfectly. As you can see, the layout pretty much resembles the layout on a corresponding handheld calculator. Other desktop environments have similar calculator

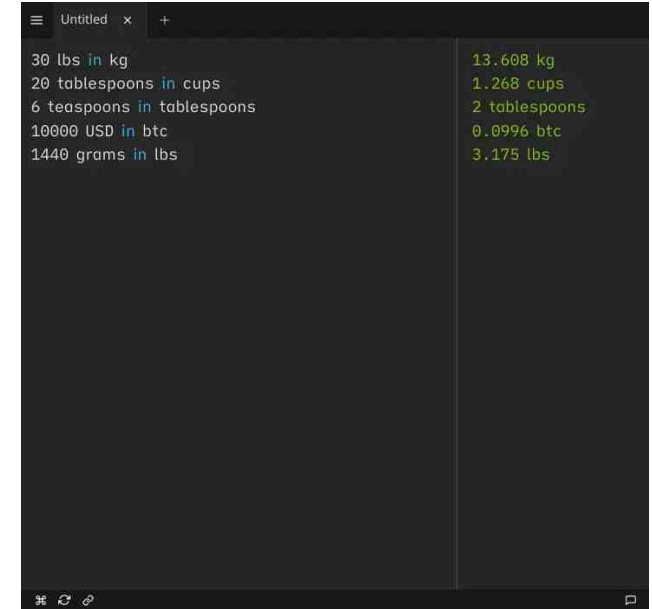
tools that use a similar layout. If you're unsure of which one to use, perform a search in Synaptic, and install whichever one best meets your needs. With just a cursory glance, I counted over a half dozen different ones listed in Synaptic.

So, you might have wondered what prompted this “walk down memory lane.”

I stumbled across a Popular Science [article](#) from October 2022 that discussed a “new” type of calculator program for your computer. These new calculators don't look anything like what you might be accustomed to. Instead, they more resemble a text editor. You'll see what I mean as we get into covering these new types of calculator programs. But, at this point, suffice it to say that they have completely abandoned the

time-honored, tried-and-true traditional handheld calculator user interface.

### Parsify



Parsify

Before I get too much into describing how to use Parsify, note that it currently is NOT in the PCLinuxOS repository (as of the time when I'm writing this article). However, it is available as an AppImage, which you can download from [here](#). If you need to review how to install and run an AppImage, I'll refer you to the [article](#) we ran in the April 2023 issue of The PCLinuxOS Magazine.

Also, with the “free” version of Parsify, you can only have five items/calculations on a sheet. If you pay approximately \$30 (U.S. ... the actual price is €30) to register/license the program, this



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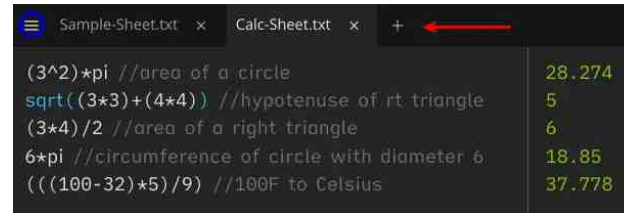
limitation is removed. However, you can open as many sheets as you want, with each sheet restricted to five items/calculations with the free version.

As you can see from the image above, Parsify does NOT look like any calculator program you've ever seen or used before. The Parsify window is rather sparse looking, with few elements to distract you. Plus, the window is divided into a left and right pane. You enter your calculation in the left pane, and get the results in the right pane.

At a glance, it's not immediately apparent (nor intuitive) to know what to enter to make the program perform its "magic." Thankfully, there is a whole user [manual](#) for Parsify online. Reading the user manual, you'll quickly get a good feel for how to use this new form of a calculator. Don't worry. It's a quick and easy read.

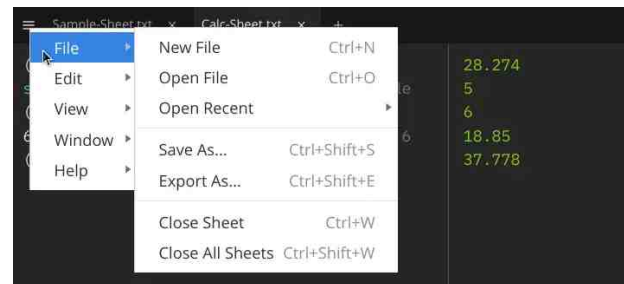
In the image above, I converted 30 lbs. to Kg, 20 tablespoons to cups, 6 teaspoons to tablespoons, \$10,000 (U.S.) to Bitcoin, and 1440 grams to pounds. As you can see, you can

freely mix and match your calculations to your heart's content.



There's a few things to talk about in this image. First, you add a new sheet by clicking on the "+" symbol pointed to by the **red** arrow. The "hamburger" at the upper left of the window (highlighted by the **blue** circle) brings up the menu (image below).

Also, note how I've inserted "comments" into the calculation sheet. Simply type a space after your defined calculation, followed by // and the text you want to display. It will not affect the results. Instead, it may help "jog your memory" should you decide to reopen a saved sheet. Plus, the comments make it clear for anyone else who comes along and uses the sheets that I saved as to what I was trying to accomplish.



Using the menu, you can choose to save a sheet. In the images above, I have one sheet saved that I call Sample-Sheet, and another one saved that I call Calc-Sheet. Both are saved as plain text files

by default, which means they can be viewed (without the results) in a plain text editor. Of course, you can also open previous sheets that you've already saved. Feel free to explore the rest of the menu items on your own, as you find the need.

### NumPad

If you're reluctant to install and run an AppImage because it isn't in the official PCLinuxOS repository, I get it. The "mantra" for as long as I can remember has been to not run/use/install programs from outside of the official PCLinuxOS repository. Of course, keep in mind that this "mantra" was prevalent long before AppImages and Flatpaks ever came along.

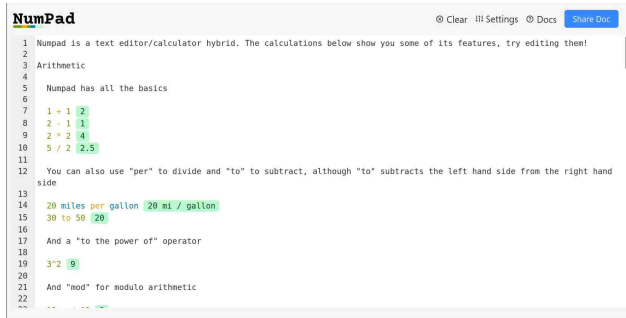
Ultimately, you have to decide what course of action is correct and appropriate for you. I have not met with any problems running/using/installing AppImages and Flatpaks on my computer. Although I prefer AppImages for a number of reasons, the use of AppImages and Flatpaks on my PCLinuxOS installation has expanded my choices for software packages that I find useful. Oftentimes, these are niche programs, and I can run them without asking for them to be put into the official repository.

Fortunately, there is another choice for those who want to avoid installing something from outside of the official PCLinuxOS repository, but who still want to explore this new style of calculator. It is a web-based app, called [NumPad](#).

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The **PCLinuxOS** magazine




```
NumPad
© Clear ⌵ Settings ⌵ Docs Share Doc
1 NumPad is a text editor/calculator hybrid. The calculations below show you some of its features, try editing them!
2
3 Arithmetic
4
5 NumPad has all the basics
6
7 1 + 1 2
8 2 - 1 1
9 2 * 2 4
10 5 / 2 2.5
11
12 You can also use "per" to divide and "to" to subtract, although "to" subtracts the left hand side from the right hand
    side
13
14 20 miles per gallon 20 mi / gallon
15 30 to 50 20
16
17 And a "to the power of" operator
18
19 3^2 9
20
21 And "mod" for modulo arithmetic
22
... ..
```

When you open NumPad in your favorite browser, the directions for using it are preloaded into the NumPad window. Read through them to get a feel for how to use this new style of calculator. Once you get to the bottom of the NumPad window, find a blank line and type your own calculation. Of course, once you have an understanding of how NumPad works, you can select all of the text and delete it (or just hit the “Clear” button at the upper right of the window), and then you’ll have your blank line at the top of the NumPad window.

NumPad pretty much operates exactly the way that Parsify does, so pretty much all that I described about how Parsify works, also works the same way in NumPad. There’s little to be gained by repeating it here. Instead, just go back and read the section about Parsify, and take a look at the formulas I used in the screenshots.

One thing that NumPad is better at than Parsify is that it will convert between temperature scales, whereas with Parsify, you had better know the formula (and how to write it to preserve/honor the proper order of operations). As you can see in the third and fourth lines from the bottom, NumPad will automagically make



```
NumPad
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143
144 4811 in hex 0x124b
145 482 in decimal 482
146 51889 in hexadecimal 0xcab1
147 0xcab1 in binary 0b1100101010110001
148 64 in octal 06100
149
150 Text editing
151
152 NumPad uses Codemirror and its default plugins for text editing. So it has support for multiple cursors, which you can
    place in the document with cmd/ctrl+click. It also has the following keyboard shortcuts:
153
154 *D highlight next instance of selected text
155 *L left-indent current line
156 *R right-indent current line
157 *K delete current line
158 *F toggle up document search
159
160 30°F in Celsius -1.1111111111111111 Celsius
161 60°F in Celsius 20 Celsius
162 145/12 12.083333333333333
163 0169 in hex 0xa9
164
```

the temperature conversions without you having to know the long, drawn out formula.

Of course, you cannot define custom calculations with NumPad, other than formatting the actual formula, with all of its variables predefined, for calculation. With Parsify, you have the ability to define custom calculations, albeit only in the full-featured, paid version of the program. Parsify also has custom plugins, but again, those are only available in the full-featured, paid version of the program.

## Summary

I seriously doubt that I’ll be giving up my tried-and-true handheld calculator formatted layout any time soon. It’s too ingrained in my mind at this point. I grew up with handheld calculators from the time they emerged, and in my mind, it’s an efficient way of interfacing with the numbers.

Of course, it helps to know how to preserve and honor the rules that govern proper order of operations, so that you get the correct answer.

And, let’s not underestimate the power of your favorite, popular search engines to perform calculations and conversions for you. I do know that both Google and DuckDuckGo are quite capable of quickly providing those calculations and conversions. A quick trial-and-error also shows that Bing and StartPage also perform similarly. I suspect that most of the popular search engines are capable of performing any calculations and conversions you might need. I’m probably as “guilty” as the next guy for using the search engines in this manner.

I do have to take exception to the PopSci article’s assertion that the calculator metaphor is misplaced and outdated on your computer. When you look at a calculator, you not only immediately know its purpose, but it’s quickly evident *how* to get the results you need. That simply is NOT the case with these “new” calculators. Over time, and with repeated use, I suspect that the use of these new calculators will become as easy to use as the “old-fashioned” calculators. But for someone who has never seen this new format for a calculator, it isn’t apparent or intuitive on how to use it.

Still, this “new” style of calculator will definitely have a place in my arsenal of tools that I can call on at a moment’s notice.



# Good Words, Good Deeds, Good News

compiled by Meemaw

## Dolphin Stampede



Tourists off the coast of Dana Point in Southern California were amazed to see close to 5,000 dolphins swimming beside the boat they were on, and jumping and diving in and out of the water. Californians call it a Dolphin Stampede. Social media users were quick to post about it. One tour company said Dana Point has been known as the dolphin and whale watching capital of the world since 2019. Observers saw a group of about 400 dolphins on one stampede in 2022.

From the article: *“According to the Visit Laguna Beach [website](#), dolphins are friendly, social creatures that travel in pods and frequently get close to boats.*

*“Perhaps one of the most breathtaking scenes to experience on the water is a dolphin stampede,” the website says. “This occurs when hundreds, even thousands of dolphins suddenly begin leaping in and out of the water at an astonishing speed in one direction, as if they are sprinting towards or away from something.”*

*The site says that why dolphins stampede is still a mystery, adding, “The leaping behavior is referred to as ‘porpoising’ and it allows the dolphins to travel at their fastest speed, as there is less resistance through air than through water.”*

## Neighbors Help After House Fire



A Michigan family had the tragedy of a house fire on Christmas Day. The family of six woke

up to the fire, but all managed to get out of the house, which was a total loss. The two dogs made it out as well, fortunately.

Volunteers with the local Victims Services Unit came in to help the family. The fire chief thanked them for coming in on Christmas to help the family. The children’s grandmother set up a GoFundMe for the family. By December 28th, it had already raised over \$19,000.

*“We are beyond grateful for the outpouring of love and support from family, friends, and the community during this devastating time,” she wrote on the fundraising page.*

*“We know that the road ahead will be long, but with your help, Kayla, Jeremy, and their children will be able to take the first steps toward healing and rebuilding their lives,” she added.*

## Man Finds Childhood Christmas Present

Tim was remodeling his childhood home and removed a medicine cabinet from the bathroom, intending to put new sheetrock up. He glanced into the hole to make sure there was nothing there, and found a box, wrapped in gift paper. When he got the box out, he noticed that his name was written on the wrapping paper.



His mother doesn't remember buying the gift, but he believes it was bought in about 1978. He said his parents used to hide the Christmas presents in the attic, and he thinks the present fell down inside the wall from the attic.

### Man Reunited With Lost Dog



Casey lost his house in the LA fires, and thought he had lost his dog, too. He lived in the Palisades area, one of many that were evacuated, and his dog ran away when they were all evacuating the area. He had been searching for the dog, Oreo, for several days after they were allowed back in, and thought he had died in the fire. Oreo had been sleeping under some of the rubble in the neighborhood, and crawled out from under it to run to Casey.

*"You're alive! You're alive!" Colvin shouted as he cuddled the dog. He then ran into the street and began dancing while carrying the dog on his shoulder.*

### Lost Dog Found With Drone



Kate's dog Charlie went missing on December 30th and Kate was very worried. She thought Charlie, a two-year-old Bernese mountain dog,

had been chasing another animal when he disappeared.

She and her family made flyers to help spread the word and get people searching, but he wasn't found. Then they called companies named Dog Gone Pet Recovery and SmithicAir. SmithicAir used a drone that had thermal technology, and found Charlie in a ditch not far from the house. He had been hit by a car and broken a leg, so he was sitting there quietly. They took him to surgery to fix his femur, and he's recovering.

*Kate recalled, "The moment he was walking to us, we both just started ugly crying and had our arms out. It was just the best feeling ever."*

*She also thanked the helpers who used technology in the search that had a happy ending.*

*"They came out in the bitter cold for hours to help find him (with no leads at all even where to look) it's truly a miracle," she said.*

 **FREE SOFTWARE  
FOUNDATION**

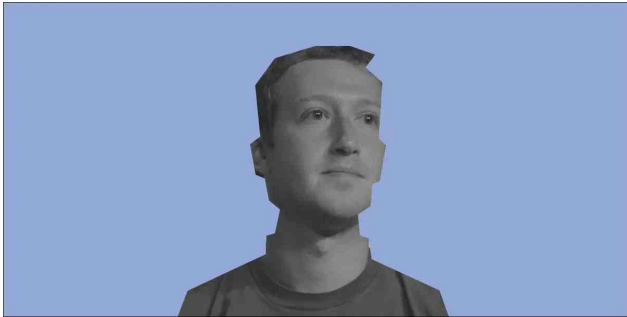
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# Mad at Meta? Don't Let Them Collect & Monetize Your Personal Data

by [Lena Cohen](#)  
[Electronic Frontier Foundation](#)  
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If you're fed up with Meta right now, you're not alone. Google searches for deleting Facebook and Instagram [spiked last week](#) after Meta announced its latest policy changes. These changes, seemingly [designed to appease](#) the incoming Trump administration, included [loosening Meta's hate speech policy](#) to allow for the targeting of LGBTQ+ people and immigrants.

If these changes—or [Meta's long history of anti-competitive, censorial, and invasive practices](#)—make you want to cut ties with the company, it's sadly not as simple as deleting your Facebook account or spending less time on Instagram. Meta tracks your activity across millions of websites and apps, regardless of whether you use its platforms, and it profits from that data through targeted ads. If you want to limit Meta's

ability to collect and profit from your personal data, here's what you need to know.

## Meta's Business Model Relies On Your Personal Data

You might think of Meta as a social media company, but its primary business is [surveillance advertising](#). Meta's [business model](#) relies on collecting as much information as possible about people in order to sell highly-targeted ads. That's why Meta is [one](#) of the main companies tracking you across the internet—monitoring your activity far beyond its own platforms. When Apple introduced changes to make tracking harder on iPhones, [Meta lost billions](#) in revenue, demonstrating just how valuable your personal data is to its business.

## How Meta Harvests Your Personal Data

Meta's tracking tools are embedded in [millions](#) of [websites](#) and [apps](#), so you can't escape the company's surveillance just by avoiding or deleting Facebook and Instagram. Meta's tracking pixel, found on [30%](#) of the world's most popular websites, monitors people's behavior across the web and can expose sensitive information, including [financial](#) and [mental health](#) data. A 2022 investigation by The Markup found that a third of the top U.S.

hospitals had sent sensitive patient information to Meta through its tracking pixel.

Meta's surveillance isn't limited to your online activity. The company also [encourages businesses](#) to send them data about your offline purchases and interactions. Even deleting your Facebook and Instagram accounts won't stop Meta from harvesting your personal data. Meta in 2018 admitted to [collecting information](#) about non-users, including their contact details and browsing history.

## Take These Steps to Limit How Meta Profits From Your Personal Data

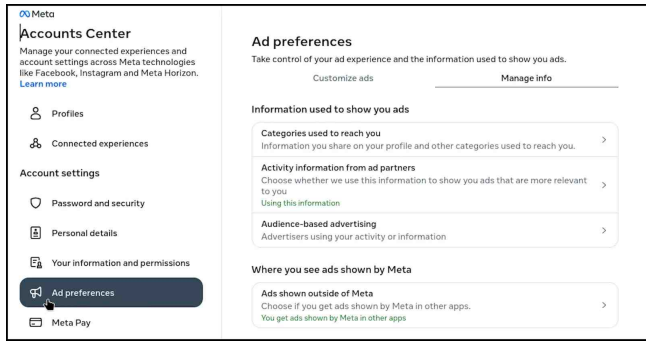
Although Meta's surveillance systems are pervasive, there are ways to limit how Meta collects and uses your personal data.

### Update Your Meta Account Settings

Open your Instagram or Facebook app and navigate to the [Accounts Center](#) page.

- You'll find a link to [Accounts Center](#) on the [Settings](#) pages of both apps. If you have trouble finding [Accounts Center](#), check Meta's help pages for [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

# Mad at Meta? Don't Let Them Collect & Monetize Your Personal Data



- If you use a web browser instead of Meta's apps, visit [accountscenter.facebook.com](https://accountscenter.facebook.com) or [accountscenter.instagram.com](https://accountscenter.instagram.com).

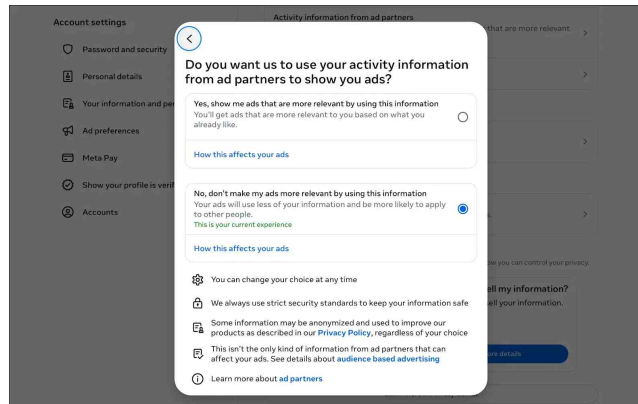
If your Facebook and Instagram accounts are linked on your **Accounts Center** page, you only have to update the following settings once. If not, you'll have to update them separately for Facebook and Instagram. Once you find your way to the **Accounts Center**, the directions below are the same for both platforms.

Meta makes it harder than it should be to find and update these settings. The following steps are accurate at the time of publication, but Meta often changes their settings and adds additional steps. The exact language below may not match what Meta displays in your region, but you should have a setting controlling each of the following permissions.

Once you're on the "Accounts Center" page, make the following changes:

- 1) Stop Meta from targeting ads based on data it collects about you on other apps and websites:

Click the **Ad preferences** option under Accounts Center, then select the **Manage Info** tab (this tab may be called **Ad settings** depending on your location). Click the **Activity information from ad partners** option, then **Review Setting**. Select the option for **No, don't make my ads more relevant by using this information** and click the "Confirm" button when prompted.



- 2) Stop Meta from using your data (from Facebook and Instagram) to help advertisers target you on other apps.

Meta's **ad network** connects advertisers with other apps through **privacy-invasive ad auctions**—generating more money and data for Meta in the process.

Back on the **Ad preferences** page, click the **Manage info** tab again (called **Ad settings** depending on your location), then select the **Ads shown outside of Meta** setting, select **Not allowed** and then click the "X" button to close the pop-up.

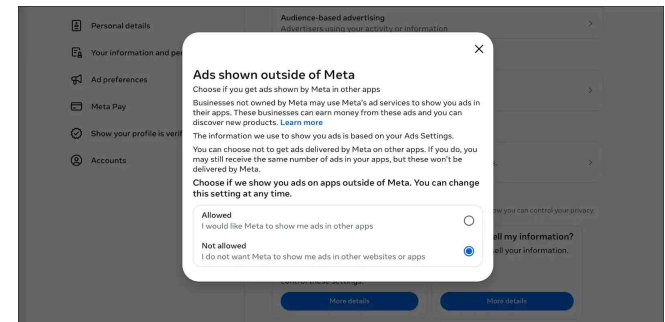


Depending on your location, this setting will be called **Ads from ad partners** on the **Manage info** tab (top, right).

- 3) Disconnect the data that other companies share with Meta about you from your account:

From the **Accounts Center** screen, click the **Your information and permissions** option, followed by **Your activity off Meta technologies**, then **Manage future activity**. On this screen, choose the option to **Disconnect future activity**, followed by the **Continue** button, then confirm one more time by clicking the **Disconnect future activity** button. **Note:** This may take up to 48 hours to take effect.

**Note:** This will also clear previous activity, which might log you out of apps and websites you've signed into through Facebook.



While these settings limit how Meta uses your data, they won't necessarily stop the company from collecting it and potentially using it for other purposes.



## Mad at Meta? Don't Let Them Collect & Monetize Your Personal Data

### Install Privacy Badger to Block Meta's Trackers

[Privacy Badger](#) is a free browser extension by EFF that blocks trackers—like Meta's pixel—from loading on websites you visit. It also

replaces embedded Facebook posts, Like buttons, and Share buttons with [click-to-activate](#) placeholders, blocking another way that Meta tracks you. The next version of Privacy Badger (coming next week) will extend this protection to embedded Instagram and Threads posts, which also send your data to Meta.

Visit [privacybadger.org](https://privacybadger.org) to install Privacy Badger on your web browser. Currently, Firefox on Android is the only mobile browser that supports Privacy Badger.

### Limit Meta's Tracking on Your Phone

Take these additional steps on your mobile device:

- **Disable your phone's advertising ID** to make it harder for Meta to track what you do across apps. Follow EFF's instructions for doing this on your [iPhone](#) or [Android](#) device.
- **Turn off location access for Meta's apps.** Meta doesn't need to know where you are all the time to function, and you can safely disable location access without affecting how the Facebook and Instagram apps work. Review this setting using EFF's guides for your [iPhone](#) or [Android](#) device.

### The Real Solution: Strong Privacy Legislation

Stopping a company you distrust from profiting off your personal data shouldn't require tinkering with hidden settings and installing

browser extensions. Instead, your data should be private by default. That's why we need strong federal privacy [legislation](#) that puts you — not Meta — in control of your information.

Without strong privacy legislation, Meta will [keep finding ways](#) to bypass your privacy protections and monetize your personal data. Privacy is about more than safeguarding your sensitive information—it's about having the power to prevent companies like Meta from exploiting your personal data for profit.



## Screenshot Showcase



*Posted by The CrankyZombie, January 9, 2025, running KDE.*



# PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner Bonus



## Old Fashioned Potato Candy

Yields: 2 pounds

A mashed potato contributes to the uniquely delicious flavor in this sinfully rich old-fashioned potato candy, and hidden inside is pure creamy peanut butter. Don't worry, it doesn't taste like mashed potatoes.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 medium potato
- 2 tablespoons real butter
- Pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla
- 2 pounds powdered sugar,  
more for rolling out candy
- 1 jar creamy peanut butter,  
16 ounces, (may not use all)

### DIRECTIONS:

Peel and slice the potato. Cook in a small pan of water until it is very tender. Drain off the water.

Place the potato in the mixing bowl of a stand mixer, or mix by hand with a wooden spoon.



Add the butter, vanilla, and salt. Using a potato masher, mash the potato until it is free of all lumps.

Add the powdered sugar, about 2 cups at a time, while mixing on low speed and using the whisk attachment. Continue adding the sugar until the candy mixture becomes thick and pliable yet just slightly sticky.

Lay a piece of wax or parchment paper on a countertop and sift powdered sugar heavily on the paper. Place one-third of the candy mixture on the paper and form it into a ball. Sift additional powdered sugar on top of the formed ball.

Place a piece of wax or parchment paper over the top of the ball and slightly flatten the ball with the palm of your hand. Using a rolling pin, roll the candy out to no more than 1/4" in thickness, rolling it into a rectangular shape. Remove the top piece of paper.

Place a large, heaping spoonful of peanut butter onto the candy. Spread it out, stopping about 1/4" from the edges of the candy.

Using a sharp metal spatula, knife, or bench scraper, roll the candy into a roll, working from left to right. Place the roll onto a cookie sheet lined with foil, wax, or parchment paper.

Roll the remaining two rolls and place on the cookie sheet. Transfer to a freezer for 10 minutes until very cold before slicing.

Slice candy into 3/4" slices, discarding or eating the end pieces. Store in an airtight container.

**NOTES:**

DO NOT use leftover mashed potatoes for this recipe. They will have added salt, pepper, butter, etc. You need to use freshly cooked mashed potatoes with no added ingredients.

It's easy to get carried away with the peanut butter when making this candy. Try not to use more than 1/2 cup of peanut butter per roll, the first time you make this candy. If the peanut butter oozes out of the candy, you will know to use less the next time you make the candy.

This candy is very rich! Although it's not required, most people prefer to eat this rich candy cold!

It's extremely important to mash out all of the lumps in the candy before adding the powdered sugar.

Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 10 days. That is, if they last that long before you eat them.

For a treat, coat each piece of potato candy in melted chocolate and chill before eating.

**NUTRITION:**

Serving size: 2 pieces

Calories: 110    Carbs:23g    Sodium: 20mg

Fiber: 0g    Protein: 1g



# Screenshot Showcase



*Posted by tbs, January 3, 2025, running KDE.*

# PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

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

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

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

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

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



## SCRAPPLER RULES:

- 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.
- Red letters are scored double points. Green letters are scored triple points.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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
- Optionally, a time limit of 60 minutes should apply to the game, averaging to 12 minutes per letter tile set.
- Have fun! It's only a game!



Triple Word



Double Word



Download Puzzle Solutions Here

Possible score 236, average score 165.



# February 2025 Word Find

## Valentine's Day Decorations

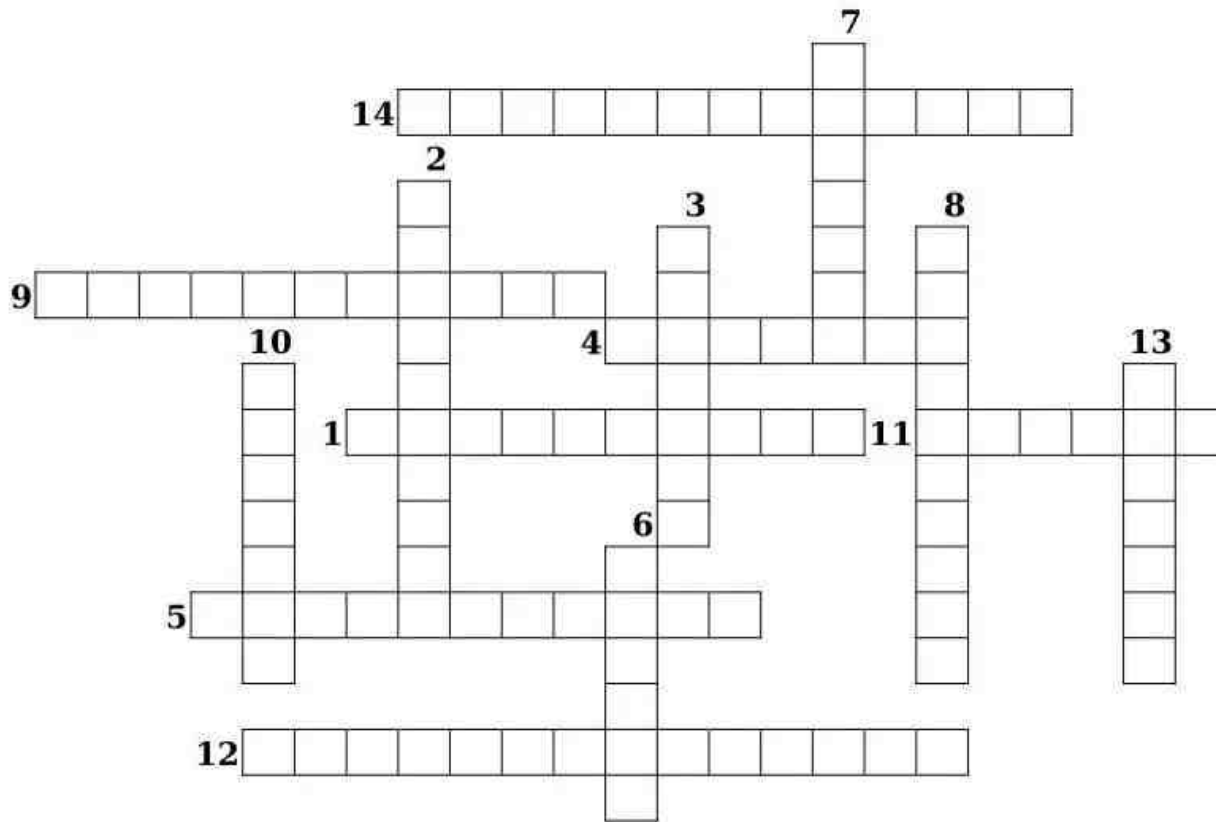
W B G H S N O O L L A B K N I P D N A D E R X M Z U T M F K  
W S X O Q R Z K S P A R K L I N G T A B L E R U N N E R S S Q  
R P J V W N J D N E S T T L Q L I P R W B W N H M S E W W Q  
O K C T P M B B R W W H N F T M T L E E V A V A J E F T Q B  
S I U A P E T W H E O Z P F R N C T I Z R L I N H N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

- |                     |                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| BALLOON ARCH        | BOUQUET                  |
| CANDLE HOLDER       | CANDLES                  |
| CANDY HEART DISPLAY | CUPCAKE TOWER            |
| CUPID CUTOUTS       | CUPID FIGURINES          |
| DOILIES             | FLOATING CANDLES         |
| HANGING LANTERNS    | HEART GARLAND            |
| LOVE LETTERS        | PAPER LANTERNS           |
| HEART WREATH        | PHOTO BOOTH              |
| ROSE PETALS         | SEQUIN TABLECLOTH        |
|                     | FLORAL ARCHWAYS          |
|                     | FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS      |
|                     | HEART-SHAPED DECORATIONS |
|                     | HEART-SHAPED PILLOWS     |
|                     | KISSES AND HUGS SIGNAGE  |
|                     | RED AND PINK BALLOONS    |
|                     | SPARKLING TABLE RUNNERS  |

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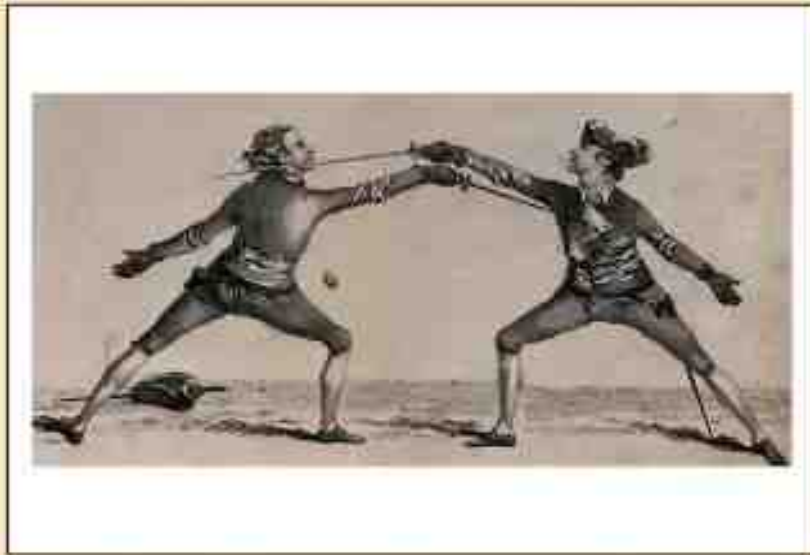
# February 2025 Crossword Valentine's Day Decorations



1. A vending machine or modern kiosk that contains an automated camera and film processor.
2. A sweet sugar wafer in the distinctive shape for Valentine's Day.
3. A flexible bag designed to be inflated with hot air or with a gas, such as helium.
4. Blooms or blossoms.
5. A ring, circlet or heart-shaped arrangement of flowers, boughs, or leaves hung as a decoration.
6. A solid mass of tallow, wax, or other fatty substance with an axially embedded wick that is burned to provide light.
7. A small cake baked in a paper container, often with icing on top.
8. Modified leaves that form an inner whorl surrounding the reproductive parts of flowers.
9. A soft furnishing that runs across a table, either vertically or horizontally, to decorate or protect it.
10. Small ornamental mats, usually of lace or linen.
11. A cloth case stuffed with something soft, such as down, feathers, or foam rubber, used to cushion the head, or decorate a space.
12. A light inside a container that has a handle for holding it or suspending it from something.
13. A small cluster or arrangement of flowers.
14. A small ceramic statue in the form of Cupid.

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# Mixed-Up-Meme Scrambler



What the losing fencer did.....

VIPTO



FILOO



BLOGON



NISSIT



" \_\_\_ " THE " \_\_\_ "

[Download Puzzle Solutions Here](#)

# More Screenshot Showcase



*Posted by francesco bat, January 3, 2025, running IceWM.*



*Posted by Meemaw, January 11, 2025, running Xfce.*



*Posted by parnote, January 11, 2025, running Xfce.*



*Posted by swarfendor437, January 9, 2025, running KDE.*