

## [How To Get Text from an Image Only PDF File Using Linux](#)



How to use free software in Linux to convert image-only PDF files to text.

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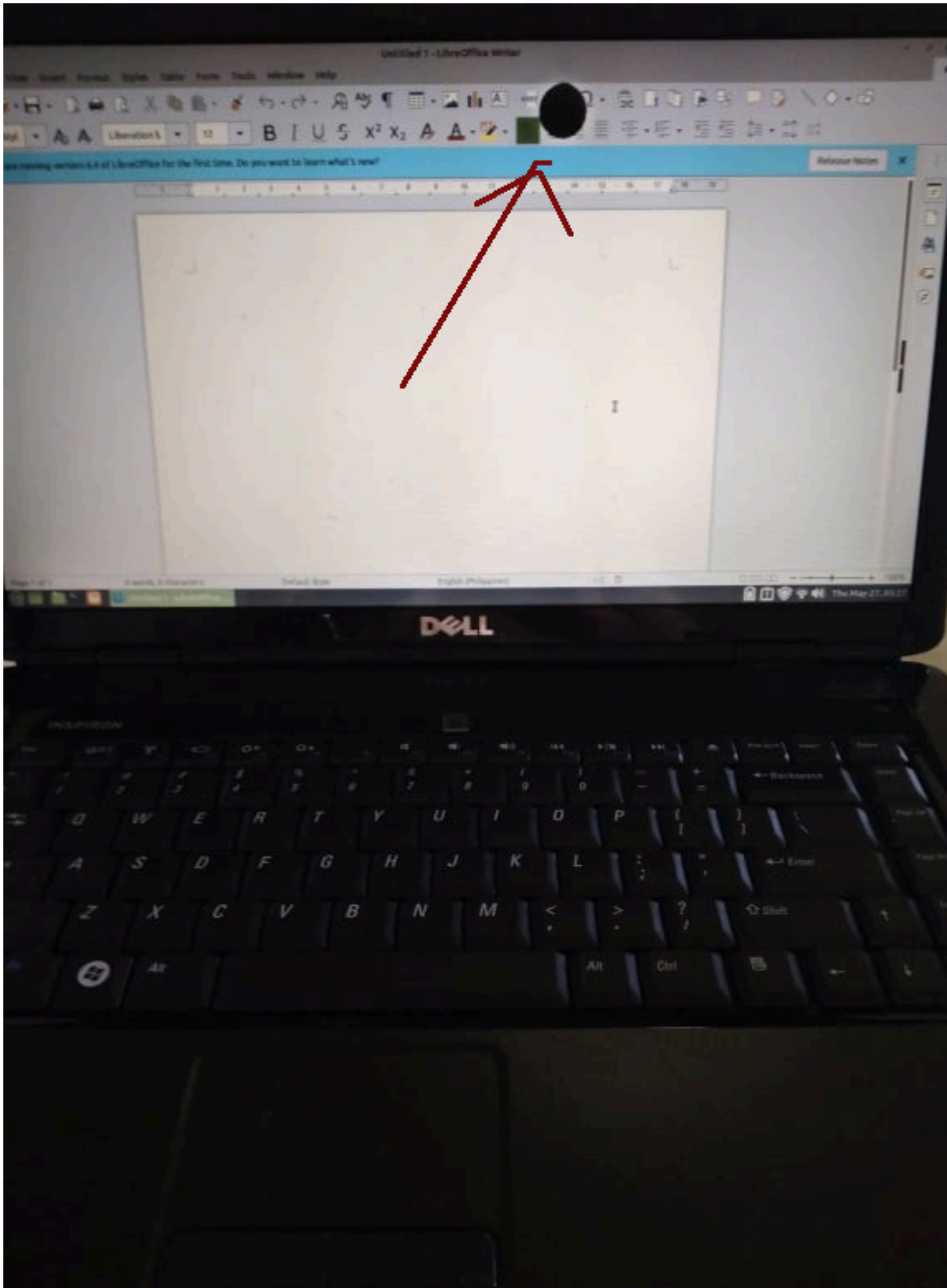
## [Hardware Upgrade from a Dell Inspiron 1545 to a Dell Latitude 7480](#)



It's been a while since I posted anything related to PC on this website. I love to share useful information and I think some visitors to this website will appreciate this.

For a little more than two years I had been using a Dell Inspiron 1545 laptop to update this website. It has a Pentium CPU, 4 gigabytes of DDR2 RAM. Some websites such as Facebook loaded very very slowly on it. At the time of this post, a Dell Inspiron 1545 is 11 years old!

A few months ago the monitor developed a black spot as you see in the photo below.



I had been using a much more powerful desktop PC to do my work. It has an Intel i5 CPU and 8 gigabytes of DDR3 RAM with two HDDs one of which is an SSD. I stopped using it for my PC work when the monitor for it also developed bad pixels. I now use it only to view YouTubes and videos on a 52 inch Smart TV connected by an HDMI cable. It's not easy to use it to do PC work with such a large screen.

It was time to get a new laptop. I considered buying an Apple MacBook Pro

with an M1 ARM processor, but because of the expense and the fact the M1 is still relatively new which means a lot of software is not yet written for it, I opted to stay with a machine I could continue to use my favorite software on a Linux OS. My favorite distros are Linux Mint and Fedora.

I found a fantastic deal on eBay: A Dell Latitude 7480 with an Intel i7 CPU and 16 gigabytes of DDR4 RAM. And for only \$399.00! And though this model is already 4 years old, the laptop was *not used* before! I can tell because there was no dust anywhere, and the battery is in pristine condition. It holds a charge for hours. The keyboard is great! The performance is great! You can find it here:



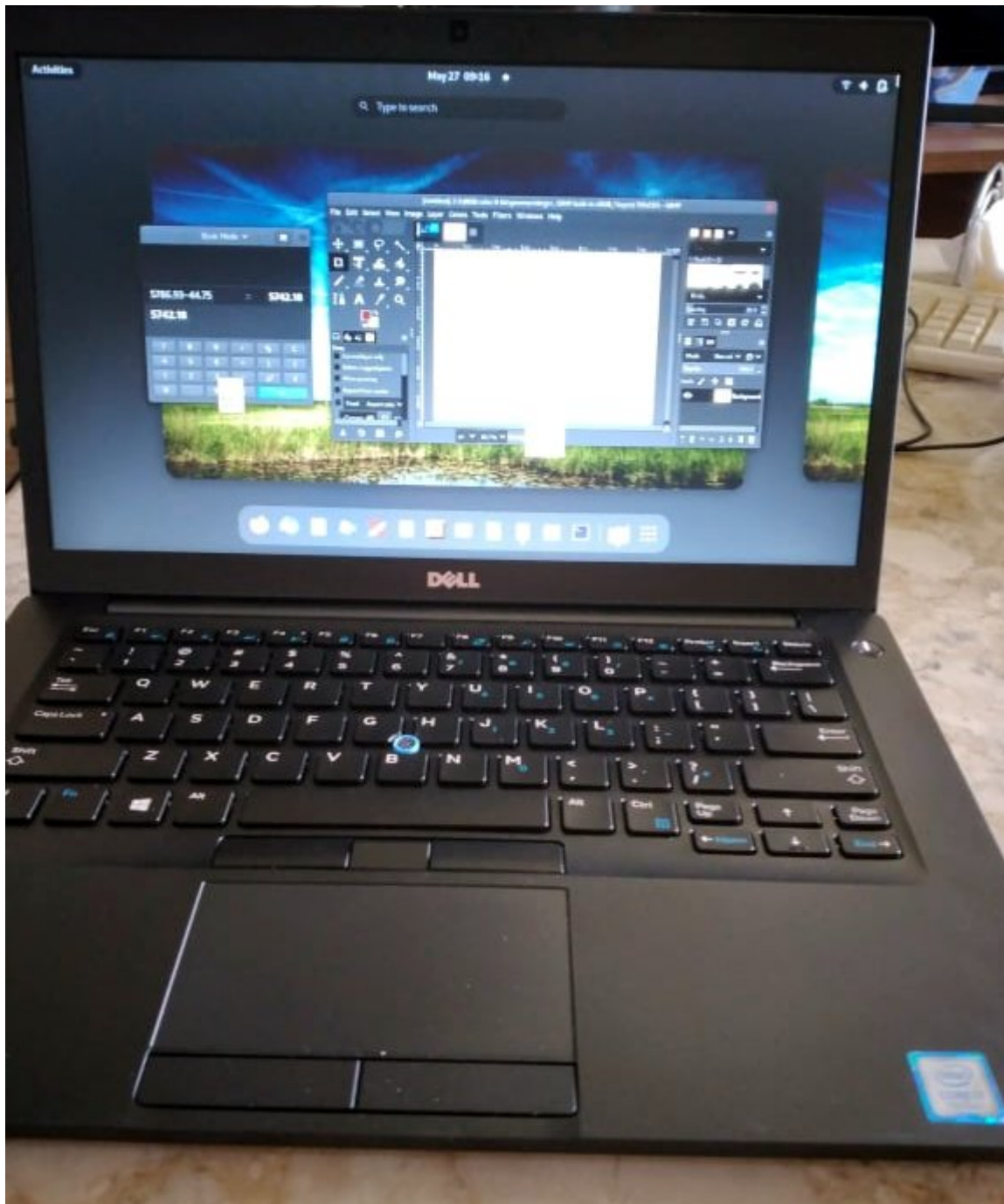
[Click the image to see it on Ebay](#)

This is a significant upgrade from the old Dell Inspiron! And the new laptop is much lighter, less than half the weight of the old Dell laptop.

I didn't want to buy a laptop with Windows 10 but since it came with Windows, I decided not to get rid of the Windows installation altogether but install Linux with a dual boot. I did this because someday in the future I may give it to somebody else who may prefer Windows to Linux.

Windows 10 made it easy for me to shrink the Windows partition with its Disk Management tool to make room for Linux. I shrunk the Windows partition to a little less than half what it was and then installed Fedora 34 Linux from a DVD drive connected to a USB port and used automatic partitioning. It was so

easy and the installation went without a hitch!



My Dell Latitude 7480 with Fedora 34 Workstation and Gnome 4.0 Desktop

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## [Computer Jokes](#)



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## **Computer Jokes**

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It has come to our attention that a few copies of the Georgia edition of Windows 10 may have accidentally been shipped outside Georgia. If you have one of the Georgia editions you may need some help understanding the commands.

The Georgia edition may be recognized by looking at the opening screen.

It reads WINDERS 10 with a background picture of the General Lee super imposed on a Confederate flag. It is shipped with a Daisy Duke screen saver.

Also note:

- Recycle Bin is labeled Outhouse
- My Computer is called This Infernal Contraption
- Dialup Networking is called Good Ol' Boys
- Control Panel is known as the Dern Dashboard
- Hard Drive is referred to as 4 wheel drive
- Floppies are them little ole plastic disc thangs.

Other features:

- Instead of an error message you get a winder covered with a garbage bag and duct tape.
- OK = ats aww-right

- cancel = hail no
- reset = awa shoot
- yes = shore
- no = Naaaa
- find = hunt-fer it
- go to = over yonder
- back = back yonder
- help = hep me out here
- stop = ternit off
- start = crank it up
- settings = sittins
- programs = stuff that does stuff
- documents = stuff I done done

Also note that winders 10 does not recognize capital letters or punctuation marks.

Some programs that are exclusive to winders 10:

- tiperiter.....A word processor
- colering book.....a graphics program
- addin mershene.....calculator
- scratch paper .....notepad
- jupe-box .....CD Player
- inner-net.....Microsoft Explorer
- pichers.....A graphics viewer
- IRS.....M/S accounting software
- IRS2.....M/S accounting software with hidden files
- coon dog.....American kennel club records
- fishin.....Bass Anglers Sportsman Society records.
- NRA.....National Rifle Association
- shot gun .....Remington Arms price list
- riffel.....Winchester price list
- pisstel.....Smith & Wesson price list
- truck.....Ford & Chevrolet dealers in GA. by zip code
- house.....Nearest Mobil home repair service by zip code
- car .....same as truck, just need two lists in Texas
- cuzzins.....family history usually a 3 meg file
- tax records.....usually an empty file
- shells.....ammunition inventory, another 3 meg file
- bud.....list of Budwiser dealers by zip code
- racin.....NASCAR racing schedule includes list of TV stations that carry the race car n' truck
- Parts.....nearest Junk yard by zip code
- doc .....veterinarians by zip code

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Some of you are not particularly adept in the use of the computer, so I thought it well to pass along some hints on how to use your computer efficiently with the Internet.

Remember that the information with which you are dealing is in the form of electrons. Electrons are very small (so small that it takes two full professors of physics and a graduate student just to see one), but they are real entities with mass and weight and which occupy space. This can be used to your advantage.

For example, electrons have mass and weight and therefore are subject to the laws of gravity. So if you are downloading a file from the net, the process can be made faster by having your computer, hard disk, and modem BELOW

your telephone jack so gravity can speed the process. On the other hand, when you upload a file to the net, hold your computer, hard drive, and modem ABOVE your telephone jack, thus combining uploading with a brisk cardiovascular workout. If your phone jack is at floor level, have it raised or your downloading will always be slow.

You will note that when uploading, the weight of your hard disk becomes a real factor. You can reduce the weight of your hard disk in two ways. First, remove all unnecessary files and store them on a separate storage device. Secondly, change the typeface and size of all retained files to 3 point Times Condensed. Considerably less space and hence, fewer electrons and less weight will be on your hard drive.

The Internet is complex and delicate and easily thrown out of balance. Therefore, it is important to balance carefully your downloads and uploads so that they are roughly equal. (The Internet can compensate for small imbalances.) If you have just downloaded an 8 megabyte program you should immediately upload an 8 megabyte transmittal. The easiest way to do this is to create (by cut and paste) an 8 megabyte file of gibberish which you can transmit to a friend or news group chosen at random. (For all you AOLers, just click the FORWARD button when you receive a FWD: and make sure that it goes out to your entire recipient list, those generally take up about 8 MB as well.

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The group of women reported that computers should be referred to as "HE" because:

1. In order to get their attention you have to turn them on.
2. They have a lot of data but are still clueless.
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It's really not too difficult to fix your own hard drive, if the problem is a head crash, or the infamous Seagate "traction" problem, if you know what to do.

You will require #4/0 steel wool, Varsol, WD-40, a few hand tools, and about 45 minutes.

First, you need a clean room, so make sure the garage door is closed before you begin. Move those old lawnmower parts off the bench.

Disassemble the sealed unit and carefully wash all parts with Varsol. Bend the read/write heads out of the way and then disassemble the platter stack.

VERY CAREFULLY buff the platter surfaces with the #4/0 steel wool. This will remove any existing data, level out any surface defects, and help to redistribute the magnetic media and fill in those pesky "bad sectors" that most drives have.

Reassemble the platter stack, and using a .015" feeler gauge, bend the read/write head back to the platter surface, using the feeler gauge to set the gap. This is a slightly higher gap than the factory uses, but it reduces the chance of head collisions with any flotsam you neglected to remove.



Give the head and platters a good shot of WD-40 and reassemble the unit. If your drive has a filter, replace it with a clean section of gauze pad.

All that's left is to low level and DOS format the drive, and you're back in business.

I haven't tried this yet myself, but my friend's wife's sister-in-law's husband knows a technician who does it all the time.

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The Shiftkey FAQ – Version 0.001  
by Alan Meiss

Unleash the Power of Shift!

Q. My shift keys have little arrows on them. Does that mean the \*real\* shift keys are located above them, and these keys are just little signs to point them out?

A. Nope, they're the Real McCoy. The little arrows mean "up", as in "look up at the screen". Your keyboard is telling you to learn to touch type and quit staring at your fingers.

Q. What happens if I press both shift keys?

A. Even bigger letters may show up on your screen. You should not use this feature, however, because these letters are also brighter, and may cause Screen Burn-In, which would be particularly embarrassing if you were typing something naughty at the time. You might consider obtaining the author's Shift Key Burn-In Protector program for only \$139.95. Or you might not, it's your computer, but don't say I didn't warn you.

q. my religion prohibits the use of shift keys. how can i type capital letters and punctuation

A. Discuss alternatives to the shift key with your spiritual advisor. Perhaps your deity would not be angered by repeated use of the Caps Lock key, or maybe you can retain a consultant to depress the shift for you. You might also consider replacing punctuation marks that require the use of shift keys with lower case expressions; replace ? with "huh" and ! with "zowie".

Q> I PRESSED SHIFT AND IT'S STUCK DOWN NOW>

A. Do small children with a fondness for peanut butter use your keyboard frequently? If so, you may want to clean it off for more reliable operation. First, disconnect your keyboard by gripping each of its ends firmly and pulling as hard as you can. Next, immerse the keyboard in warm water and scrub thoroughly with your favorite lemon-scented detergent and lots of steel wool. Finally, you need to dry the keyboard. Either dry it to touch with a handheld blow-dryer, or place it in the dryer for not less than 60 minutes. Be sure to clean the lint screen when you are finished.

Q. Why are there are no "shift" keys on my keyboard, but there are two keys labeled "hif"?

A. Again, you may want to consider cleaning your keyboard, and washing your hands more frequently for that matter.

Q. Are there shift keys on my Macintosh?

A. Yes, although instead of the notation "shift", the key may be labeled with an excited Mac face, something like :0 . Press this key to use shift, and be thankful you're using a friendly Mac instead of a mean old PC with all them confusin' words 'n stuff on it.

Q. I'm sick of pushing the shift key every single time I want big letters. Is there any other way to do this?

A. This is the Modern Age of Convenience, and you may be able to activate the shift key merely with the power of your voice! Check to see whether your computer is equipped with speech-recognition equipment by saying the word

"shift" very clearly and slowly into its speaker. Then watch the keyboard closely to see if the Shift key moves down. Note that you may have to repeat this action several times to "train" the computer to recognize your voice before the feature works reliably.

Q. There are two shift keys, which should I use?

A. Avoid unnecessary wear on either shift key by alternating between the two. Keep track of your usage of each key so that you press them in equal amounts. Your keyboard may be equipped with a small notepad; you should use this to make little tally marks in two columns for each time you shift. Remember, it's better to go to a little trouble than wind up with a broken shift key.

Q. Why are the shift keys bigger than the other keys?

A. They aren't. This is simply an optical illusion. Just as the moon appears much larger when it is close to the horizon, your shift keys look larger because of their proximity to other keys. To verify this, go out in a large field at night with your keyboard, place it in an upright position, and view it from a distance of 200 yards. Sure enough, the keys all look the same size!

Q. If I press the shift key at the wrong time, or too many times, will my computer explode?

A. No. Well, generally no. Not unless you are using a NEC laptop. Or vt100 terminal emulation. But even then, hardly ever. Really, don't worry about it. Forget I mentioned it. Just type softly. Move along, next question.

Q. No matter what I do, the shift key just doesn't seem to work. What's wrong?

A. Have you ever considered that the problem may not be your keyboard, the problem may be YOU? Perhaps God Himself has suspended the operation of these keys to send you a Message that you have strayed from the path of righteousness. Use this as an opportunity to reflect on your life. Before rushing blindly ahead with a lot of shifting, consult the spiritual advisor of your choice for help in dealing with any unresolved issues in your relationship with the Almighty.

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1. In the beginning GOD created the Bit and the Byte. And from those he created the Word.

2. And there were two Bytes in the Word; and nothing else existed. And God separated the One from the Zero; and he saw it was Good.
3. And God said – Let the Data be; And so it happened. And God said – Let the Data go to their proper places. And he created floppy disks and hard disks and compact disks.
4. And God said – Let the computers be, so there would be a place to put floppy disks and hard disks and compact disks. Thus God created computers and called them hardware.
5. And there was no Software yet. But God created programs; small and big...And told them – Go and multiply yourselves and fill all the Memory.
6. And God said -I will create the Programmer; And the Programmer will make new programs and govern over the computers and programs and Data.
7. And God created the Programmer; and put him at Data Center; And God showed the Programmer the Catalog Tree and said You can use all the volumes and sub-volumes but DO NOT USE Windows.
8. And God said – It is not Good for the programmer to be alone. He took a bone from the Programmer's body and created a creature that would look up at the Programmer; and admire the Programmer; and love the things the Programmer does; And God called the creature: the User.
9. And the Programmer and the User were left under the naked DOS and it was Good.
10. But Bill was smarter than all the other creatures of God. And Bill said to the User – Did God really tell you not to run any programs?
11. And the User answered – God told us that we can use every program and every piece of Data but told us not to run Windows or we will die.
12. And Bill said to the User – How can you talk about something you did not even try. The moment you run Windows you will become equal to God. You will be able to create anything you like by a simple click of your mouse.
13. And the User saw that the fruits of the Windows were nicer and easier to use. And the User saw that any knowledge was useless since Windows could replace it.
14. So the User installed the Windows on his computer; and said to the Programmer that it was good.

15. And the Programmer immediately started to look for new drivers. And God asked him – What are you looking for? And the Programmer answered: "I am looking for new drivers because I can not find them in the DOS". And God said : " Who told you need drivers? Did you run Windows?" And the Programmer said : " It was Bill who told us to!"

16. And God said to Bill – Because of what you did you will be hated by all the creatures. And the User will always be unhappy with you. And you will always sell Windows.

17. And God said to the User – Because of what you did, the Windows will disappoint you and eat up all your Resources; and you will have to use lousy programs; and you will always rely on the Programmers help.

18. And God said to the Programmer – Because you listened to the User you will never be happy. All your programs will have errors and you will have to fix them and fix them to the end of time.

19. And God threw them out of the Data Center and locked the door and secured it with a password.

## 20. GENERAL PROTECTION FAULT

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Warning: There's a new virus on the loose that's worse than anything I've seen before! It gets in through the power line, riding on the powerline 60 Hz subcarrier. It works by changing the serial port pinouts, and by reversing the direction one's disks spin. Over 300,000 systems have been hit by it here in Murphy, West Dakota alone! And that's just in the last 12 minutes.

It attacks DOS, Unix, TOPS-20, Apple-II, VMS, MVS, Multics, Mac, RSX-11, ITS, TRS-80, and VHS systems.

To prevent the spread of the worm:

- 1) Don't use the power line.
- 2) Don't use batteries either, since there are rumors that this virus has invaded most major battery plants and is infecting the positive poles of the batteries. (You might try hooking up just the negative pole.)
- 3) Don't upload or download files.
- 4) Don't store files on floppy disks or hard disks.
- 5) Don't read messages. Not even this one!
- 6) Don't use serial ports, modems, or phone lines.

- 7) Don't use keyboards, screens, or printers.
- 8) Don't use switches, CPUs, memories, microprocessors, or mainframes.
- 9) Don't use electric lights, electric or gas heat or air conditioning, running water, writing, fire, clothing or the wheel.

I'm sure if we are all careful to follow these 9 easy steps, this virus can be eradicated, and the precious electronic fluids of our computers can be kept pure.

-RTM III

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- pichers.....A graphics viewer
- IRS.....M/S accounting software
- IRS2.....M/S accounting software with hidden files
- coon dog.....American kennel club records
- fishin.....Bass Anglers Sportsman Society records.
- NRA.....National Rifle Association
- shot gun .....Remington Arms price list
- riffel.....Winchester price list
- pisstel.....Smith & Wesson price list
- truck.....Ford & Chevrolet dealers in GA. by zip code
- house.....Nearest Mobil home repair service by zip code
- car .....same as truck, just need two lists in Texas
- cuzzins.....family history usually a 3 meg file
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- shells.....ammunition inventory, another 3 meg file
- bud.....list of Budwiser dealers by zip code
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by Alan Meiss

Unleash the Power of Shift!

Q. My shift keys have little arrows on them. Does that mean the \*real\* shift keys are located above them, and these keys are just little signs to point them out?

A. Nope, they're the Real McCoy. The little arrows mean "up", as in "look up at the screen". Your keyboard is telling you to learn to touch type and quit staring at your fingers.

Q. What happens if I press both shift keys?

A. Even bigger letters may show up on your screen. You should not use this feature, however, because these letters are also brighter, and may cause Screen Burn-In, which would be particularly embarrassing if you were typing something naughty at the time. You might consider obtaining the author's Shift Key Burn-In Protector program for only \$139.95. Or you might not, it's your computer, but don't say I didn't warn you.

q. my religion prohibits the use of shift keys. how can i type capital letters and punctuation

A. Discuss alternatives to the shift key with your spiritual advisor. Perhaps

your deity would not be angered by repeated use of the Caps Lock key, or maybe

you can retain a consultant to depress the shift for you. You might also consider replacing punctuation marks that require the use of shift keys with lower case expressions; replace ? with "huh" and ! with "zowie".

Q> I PRESSED SHIFT AND IT'S STUCK DOWN NOW>

A. Do small children with a fondness for peanut butter use your keyboard frequently? If so, you may want to clean it off for more reliable operation. First, disconnect your keyboard by gripping each of its ends firmly and pulling

as hard as you can. Next, immerse the keyboard in warm water and scrub thoroughly with your favorite lemon-scented detergent and lots of steel wool. Finally, you need to dry the keyboard. Either dry it to touch with a handheld blow-dryer, or place it in the dryer for not less than 60 minutes. Be sure to clean the lint screen when you are finished.

Q. Why are there are no "shift" keys on my keyboard, but there are two keys labeled "hif"?

A. Again, you may want to consider cleaning your keyboard, and washing your hands more frequently for that matter.

Q. Are there shift keys on my Macintosh?

A. Yes, although instead of the notation "shift", the key may be labeled with an excited Mac face, something like :0 . Press this key to use shift, and be thankful you're using a friendly Mac instead of a mean old PC with all them confusin' words 'n stuff on it.

Q. I'm sick of pushing the shift key every single time I want big letters. Is there any other way to do this?

A. This is the Modern Age of Convenience, and you may be able to activate the shift key merely with the power of your voice! Check to see whether your computer is equipped with speech-recognition equipment by saying the word "shift" very clearly and slowly into its speaker. Then watch the keyboard closely to see if the Shift key moves down. Note that you may have to repeat this action several times to "train" the computer to recognize your voice before the feature works reliably.

Q. There are two shift keys, which should I use?

A. Avoid unnecessary wear on either shift key by alternating between the two. Keep track of your usage of each key so that you press them in equal amounts. Your keyboard may be equipped with a small notepad; you should use this to make little tally marks in two columns for each time you shift. Remember, it's better to go to a little trouble than wind up with a broken shift key.

Q. Why are the shift keys bigger than the other keys?

A. They aren't. This is simply an optical illusion. Just as the moon appears much larger when it is close to the horizon, your shift keys look larger because of their proximity to other keys. To verify this, go out in a large field at night with your keyboard, place it in an upright position, and view it from a distance of 200 yards. Sure enough, the keys all look the same size!

Q. If I press the shift key at the wrong time, or too many times, will my computer explode?

A. No. Well, generally no. Not unless you are using a NEC laptop. Or vt100 terminal emulation. But even then, hardly ever. Really, don't worry about it. Forget I mentioned it. Just type softly. Move along, next question.

Q. No matter what I do, the shift key just doesn't seem to work. What's wrong?

A. Have you ever considered that the problem may not be your keyboard, the problem may be YOU? Perhaps God Himself has suspended the operation of these keys to send you a Message that you have strayed from the path of righteousness. Use this as an opportunity to reflect on your life. Before rushing blindly ahead with a lot of shifting, consult the spiritual advisor of your choice for help in dealing with any unresolved issues in your relationship with the Almighty.

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1. In the beginning GOD created the Bit and the Byte. And from those he created the Word.

2. And there were two Bytes in the Word; and nothing else existed. And God separated the One from the Zero; and he saw it was Good.

3. And God said – Let the Data be; And so it happened. And God said – Let the Data go to their proper places. And he created floppy disks and hard disks and compact disks.

4. And God said – Let the computers be, so there would be a place to put floppy disks and hard disks and compact disks. Thus God created computers and called them hardware.

5. And there was no Software yet. But God created programs; small and big...And told them – Go and multiply yourselves and fill all the Memory.

6. And God said -I will create the Programmer; And the Programmer will make

new

programs and govern over the computers and programs and Data.

7. And God created the Programmer; and put him at Data Center; And God showed the Programmer the Catalog Tree and said You can use all the volumes and sub-volumes but DO NOT USE Windows.

8. And God said – It is not Good for the programmer to be alone. He took a bone from the Programmer's body and created a creature that would look up at the Programmer; and admire the Programmer; and love the things the Programmer does; And God called the creature: the User.

9. And the Programmer and the User were left under the naked DOS and it was Good.

10. But Bill was smarter than all the other creatures of God. And Bill said to the User – Did God really tell you not to run any programs?

11. And the User answered – God told us that we can use every program and every piece of Data but told us not to run Windows or we will die.

12. And Bill said to the User – How can you talk about something you did not even try. The moment you run Windows you will become equal to God. You will be able to create anything you like by a simple click of your mouse.

13. And the User saw that the fruits of the Windows were nicer and easier to use. And the User saw that any knowledge was useless since Windows could replace it.

14. So the User installed the Windows on his computer; and said to the Programmer that it was good.

15. And the Programmer immediately started to look for new drivers. And God asked him – What are you looking for? And the Programmer answered: "I am looking for new drivers because I can not find them in the DOS". And God said : " Who told you need drivers? Did you run Windows?" And the Programmer said : " It was Bill who told us to!"

16. And God said to Bill – Because of what you did you will be hated by all the creatures. And the User will always be unhappy with you. And you will always sell Windows.

17. And God said to the User – Because of what you did, the Windows will disappoint you and eat up all your Resources; and you will have to use lousy programs; and you will always rely on the Programmers help.

18. And God said to the Programmer – Because you listened to the User you will never be happy. All your programs will have errors and you will have to fix them and fix them to the end of time.

19. And God threw them out of the Data Center and locked the door and secured it with a password.

## 20. GENERAL PROTECTION FAULT

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Warning: There's a new virus on the loose that's worse than anything I've seen before! It gets in through the power line, riding on the powerline 60 Hz subcarrier. It works by changing the serial port pinouts, and by reversing the direction one's disks spin. Over 300,000 systems have been hit by it here in Murphy, West Dakota alone! And that's just in the last 12 minutes.

It attacks DOS, Unix, TOPS-20, Apple-II, VMS, MVS, Multics, Mac, RSX-11, ITS, TRS-80, and VHS systems.

To prevent the spread of the worm:

- 1) Don't use the power line.
- 2) Don't use batteries either, since there are rumors that this virus has invaded most major battery plants and is infecting the positive poles of the batteries. (You might try hooking up just the negative pole.)
- 3) Don't upload or download files.
- 4) Don't store files on floppy disks or hard disks.
- 5) Don't read messages. Not even this one!
- 6) Don't use serial ports, modems, or phone lines.
- 7) Don't use keyboards, screens, or printers.
- 8) Don't use switches, CPUs, memories, microprocessors, or mainframes.
- 9) Don't use electric lights, electric or gas heat or air conditioning, running water, writing, fire, clothing or the wheel.

I'm sure if we are all careful to follow these 9 easy steps, this virus can be eradicated, and the precious electronic fluids of our computers can be kept pure.

–RTM III

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# How to Install Elementary Pantheon Desktop on Fedora



## My Pantheon Desktop on Fedora

Updated January 18, 2018. I first wrote this article for Fedora 25 but it works for later versions of Fedora as well. I'm currently using Fedora 27.

I read on a blog that the Pantheon Desktop was available for Fedora, and that it was a simple GUI that imitated the Mac OS interface. This is what I did to install it:

1. After logging into root with Terminal, I used gedit to create a file in /etc/yum.repos.d and named the file decathorpe-elementary-stable.repo

```
sudo gedit /etc/yum.repos.d/decathorpe-elementary-stable.repo
```

2. I copied the following code into the file and saved it.

```
[decathorpe-elementary-stable]
name=Copr repo for elementary-stable owned by decathorpe
baseurl=https://copr-be.cloud.fedoraproject.org/results/decathorpe/elementary-stable/fedora-$releasever-$basearch/
type=rpm-md
skip_if_unavailable=True
gpgcheck=1
gpgkey=https://copr-be.cloud.fedoraproject.org/results/decathorpe/elementary-stable/pubkey.gpg
repo_gpgcheck=0
enabled=1
enabled_metadata=1
```

3. I ran the command in root:

```
# dnf install -y pantheon-session pantheon-desktop
```

After that I rebooted the PC and was able to log into Pantheon from the login

screen.

I figured out how to add more apps to the bottom dock from the application menu in the upper left hand corner. Just find the app you want to add, right click on it, and left click on the Add to Dock option. I also removed the apps in the dock I didn't want by just right clicking on the app and un-checking the Keep in Dock option.

However I did not like the default black background in open applications such as LibreOffice Writer and Bluefish. A tweak program to add different themes is available for Ubuntu, but not yet for Fedora. But by serendipity I found a command on

<https://elementaryos.stackexchange.com/questions/45/how-can-i-add-more-themes-on-elementary-tweaks> that fixed my problem! Now open application backgrounds are white with black fonts!

```
$ gsettings set org.gnome.desktop.interface gtk-theme "CoolestThemeOnEarth"
```

Later I learned that running `gnome-tweak-tool` can also change the default theme. Just run `gnome-tweak-tool` (you may need to install it first) and then go to Appearance and change the GTK+ dropdown box to the color scheme that suits you.

The cool thing about Pantheon is that there is no clutter. The bottom dock is always visible when no applications are open or when they are in smaller windows, but when an application is open in full screen, the dock with its icons disappears. It reappears again by moving the mouse to the bottom of the screen.

And if I open another application from the applications menu, it will add the icon of the new running application to the dock! I really think this is cool! It's better, in my opinion, than adding the open app icon to yet another menu bar as is done in Gnome. But it seems I can only open up one instance of Terminal at a time. This used to be the default in Gnome but I was able to change it with a tweak program. I still cannot figure out how to do that at the time of this post, but I don't mind the default.

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## [Upgrade to Fedora Linux 21](#)



I had been using Fedora version 20 for most of year 2014. Fedora 21 was a welcome change for a few reasons.

1. I didn't need to install the Nvidia video card driver. In Fedora 20 without this driver, the GPU fan would spin at top speed and was really noisy. With the driver the spinning would slow down just moments before the login screen would pop up. But with Fedora 21, the GPU fan slows down in a few seconds just after Linux starts to boot.
2. I'm finally satisfied using the default Gnome 3 Desktop GUI. But it involved some tweaking.
  - I had to manually install with Yum dconf-editor and gnome-tweak-tool
  - I used dconf-editor application to change org.gnome.nautilus.preferences key and set the option to check the "sort-directories-first" The default mixed the directories with files – something I don't like.
  - I used the gnome-tweak-tool application to enlarge certain screen fonts to make it easier for me to read. And I used this tool to add startup applications I like such as calc and Deluge.
3. Using the default Gnome 3 Desktop gui gives me notification of updates. In Fedora 20 I used Mate Desktop which for some reason did not give me notification of updates. I had to update manually about once a week.
4. The system seems to be faster. The Mint menu in the Mate Desktop gui was so slow to load.

[More things you may need to do to set up Fedora 21](#)

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## [Move from Linux Mint 16 to Fedora 20](#)



Fedora 20 with Mate DE and Mint Menu

For those of you who have been following my Linux posts, you know that I have been a Fedora user since February of 2005 with Fedora Core 3. I tried Ubuntu from time to time but always had problems. However in the middle of last year 2013 I moved to Ubuntu based Linux Mint 15 preferring it over Fedora 19. For some reason I couldn't figure out the Fedora 19 installer correctly. When it did install Fedora 19, my files on my user account were inaccessible. I didn't get the home partition correct. I tried Linux Mint 15 instead and it installed without a hitch.

Linux Mint 15 worked very well for me. But after I upgraded to version 16, suddenly I had problems. I couldn't install any 32 bit apps on my 64 bit system! They worked fine on Linux 15! Specifically those apps were Wine and Skype. Without Wine I cannot run two Windows programs I need that have no Linux counterpart. I could live without Skype on my PC because I can use it on my Google Android tablet, but I wanted Wine back. The Linux Mint application installer (apt-get) kept giving me error messages of unmet dependencies. None of the advice on the Linux Mint forum about how to fix the problem worked. And I couldn't even get Acrobat Reader on Linux Mint 16! It aborted in a error message

The Fedora Linux 20 installer worked well, and all my favorite applications are now back including Acrobat Reader! Fedora always seemed more complete, more polished, and more stable.

I tried to use the Mate DE in Fedora 18, but it was buggy. This version of Mate works well now and I could even install the useful Mint Menu in it as you can see from the photograph. I had to use a camera to take the screenshot showing the Mint Menu because the screenshot application does not work with the menu open.

### **Move to Gnome 3 from Mate!**

**Update on Feb. 2, 2014:** The Mate desktop environment GUI stopped loading for some reason. I logged into the standard Gnome 3, began to use it and started to like it! When Gnome 3 first came out I absolutely hated it. Either the

Gnome developers improved it, or perhaps because I've been also using a Google Android tablet for the past half year, I now understand better the reasoning behind the now Gnome interface. I think its simpler and cleaner looking than Mate having no Desktop icons or complicated menus. And I can switch between open windows faster than I could before. I feel comfortable with it and can actually do some real work using it.

---

## [Fixing LDXE Shutdown Menu after Upgrading from Fedora 17 to 18](#)

Following instructions from [https://fedoraproject.org/wiki/Upgrading\\_Fedora\\_using\\_yum](https://fedoraproject.org/wiki/Upgrading_Fedora_using_yum)

I used yum to update from Fedora 17 to 18

```
su -c 'yum update yum'
su -c 'yum clean all'
su -c 'yum --releasever=18 --disableplugin=presto distro-sync'
su -c 'rpm --rebuilddb'
```

But afterward my LDXE Desktop was slower to start and displayed an error message:

```
Error initializing authority: Error calling StartServiceByName for
org.freedesktop.PolicyKit1:
GDBus.Error:org.freedesktop.DBus.Error.TimedOut:
```

Moreover, the shutdown menu showed only Logout and Cancel. It was missing the first 4 menu items including Shutdown and Reboot.

I fixed it by re-installing Policy kit...

```
# yum reinstall polkit\* upower
# reboot
```

...thanks to advice from <http://www.mail-archive.com/test@lists.fedoraproject.org/msg20483.html>

This may not be an LDXE problem, but a Fedora upgrade via Yum problem.

I just learned now it is indeed a bug when using Yum to update from Fedora 17 to 18. Ref:

[https://bugzilla.redhat.com/show\\_bug.cgi?format=multiple&id=841451](https://bugzilla.redhat.com/show_bug.cgi?format=multiple&id=841451)

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# [Helping friends migrate from Windows to Linux](#)

- [Linux for Beginners](#)
- [Why I switched from Windows to Linux](#)
- [Linux compared to Windows](#)
- [Is Linux for you?](#)
- [Can Linux get infected by viruses?](#)
- [Things I like about Linux](#)
- [Command line work in Linux](#)

On January 5th and the 16th, I transformed 2 messed up Windows XP PCs into fast and stable Linux machines. On the first one, I installed Fedora 16, and the second, the latest Linus Mint 14 "Nadia." In both cases I backed up the friend's documents to another media, installed Linux, and restored all the documents and Desktop files to the newly created home user partition.



My Fedora 18 KDE desktop screen with cool widgets: An analog clock , a weather widget, slideshow of photos in my Pictures album, world time display, and a calculator.

A local friend's Windows XP PC became unstable to the point it would not boot up anymore. The Windows XP Logo would appear but a few seconds later the boot process halted with a black screen. Is the problem system file corruption? Or is it hardware failure?

To test for hardware failure, I took a Fedora Linux Live CD, put it in the CD Rom drive, and booted up my friend's machine with it. It booted fine. I showed my friend there was nothing wrong with the hardware of his PC. Mozilla Firefox worked well. He was able to log into his Facebook account and browse through it without the PC hanging up as it did before. We saw that the Linux file manager was able to read all his documents on the Windows NTFS partition.

I told him, "You have two choices: You can buy a new PC with Windows and I'll restore your documents to it. Or you can let me install Linux on your PC and I'll teach you how to use it to view and edit your documents. As you already see, you have no problem in accessing the Internet in Linux. Mozilla Firefox in Linux looks and works just the same as it does in Windows. There may be some of your favorite Windows applications we can run using Wine, and I can show you good and easy to use Linux applications to replace those Windows applications that do not run well well in Wine."

My friend was desperate to use his PC again because he wanted to use it to print out his New Year cards. “Let’s go for installing Linux for now,” he replied, “If I can’t use it to do all I need to do, I’ll buy a new PC.”

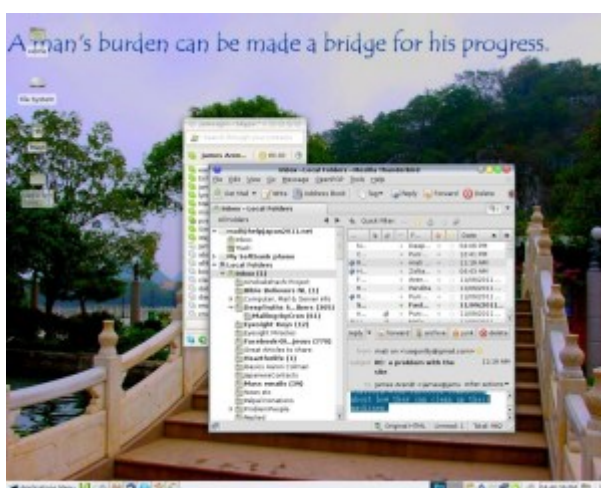
To make a long story short, he is happy with his new Linux system. He can do all he did in Windows, even make business cards using Glabels. He can use the Internet without fear of getting zapped by viruses or accidentally installing malware. His PC is now faster without the need of an antivirus program to slow it down, and he has the option to choose from 30,000 plus applications, including educational teaching aids.

The same is true with the second friend who lives in Kyushu – too far for me to visit at this time. He sent me his broken Window XP PC with all the CDs that came with it including the Windows XP installation CD. But because his son scratched off the Windows Product Key label from the side of the PC case, I could not do a repair of his Windows XP installation. I told him that a reformat of his hard disk and installing Linux in it was the only way to fix it.

It worked! He’s happy with his new Linux Mint 14 system and can do everything he did before so far except using Itunes. Over the phone and sending him files via email, we were able to even install his Canon printer driver! It’s a first for me to help a person convert over to using Linux without my physical presence with the person.

---

## [Move to Fedora 18 Beta from Linux Mint Debian](#)



Well, I’m back again to my beloved Fedora Linux. Fedora 18 Beta was not easy to install but is working fine after a few hours of tweaking. I started with LXDE as my default desktop environment. LXDE is lacking in some graphic configuration settings, but after logging into Gnome 3 I was able to configure things I could not configure in LXDE. A few days later I installed

KDE and now consider it the easiest Linux desktop environment to configure as well as the prettiest with the most eye candy.



My KDE Desktop as it looks like on December 21, 2012.

## Why I left Fedora 17

- Ibus for Japanese input was slow to start.
- Bluefish could not do Find and Replace. It would find what I entered but not replace them with what I wanted.

These have been fixed in Fedora 18!

## Why I left Linux Mint Debian

- Wine and Windows applications in Wine loaded exceedingly slow, maybe 5 seconds or more. Wine and Windows applications in Wine in Fedora loads much faster, less than a second! I only run a couple Windows programs with Wine. I need these programs because there is no comparable Linux application for them.
- PulseAudio Server seemed to be buggy. Music and sounds would always start scratchy.

I wasn't able to install Fedora 18 beta from a DVD, The installation ended in error message of, "Error checking storage configuration." I had to do a clean install of Fedora 17 and then up upgrade from the command line:

```
su -c 'yum update yum'
su -c 'yum clean all'
su -c 'rpm --import https://fedoraproject.org/static/DE7F38BD.txt'
su -c 'yum --releasever=18 --disableplugin=presto distro-sync'
```

**Note:** If you use RPMFusion, you should also import its key for Fedora 18 before you upgrade or you will end up with an error message.

## Preferred Desktop Environment

I switched to the KDE Desktop from Dec. 13 and like it better than ever. I think KDE is the easiest of all the desktop environments to tweak. Apparently Linus Torvalds agrees with me because he too switched to KDE from XFCE.

I never liked XFCE and used LXDE which I recommend for PCs with low resources.

I loved Gnome 2 but the Gnome developers thought they knew better than the users and gave us the hard to use Gnome 3.

Mate Desktop which is supposed to be a replacement for Gnome 2 still seems



buggy. If any of you Mate Desktop users recommend it and had success in configuring it to what you like, please tell write your comments about it below. Thank you.

**March 28 UPDATE:** I'm sorry to say though it's been weeks since Fedora 18 has been released, I'm still finding issues with it. Sometimes the default audio device is not found during startup. I've never had this problem with previous versions before. It occurs randomly. A reboot often fixes this problem. Once I had a yum update problem and it took me days to figure out how to fix it. KDE Desktop now locks up after startup so I am back to LXDE (which I like because it's fast). So unless you are a geek and like to figure out technical problems, you might give Fedora 18 a pass. The latest Linux Mint (not the Debian spin) seems promising.

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## [Move from Fedora 17 to Linux Mint Debian](#)



My desktop screen using LXDE with Linux Mint Debian

I may be leaving Fedora Linux for good this time. Fedora 17's added "features" were not a plus for me. Moreover, things that worked fine before became quirky. For example, switching to Japanese input using Ibus required me to press Ctrl + Space 3 or 4 times to make it work. Linux Mint Debian works instantly and gives me the added feature of merely pressing the Hankaku key (on Japanese keyboards).

All the apps I used in Fedora work fine. Wine takes a bit longer to load and the display font was incorrect immediately after installation, but after running from Terminal:

```
sudo apt-get install ttf-liberation
```

Wine works great! The Windows text to voice application, Text Aloud works fine, and it recognizes AT&T Natural Voices!

The default Mate Desktop Environment loaded unusually slow so I installed LXDE and am using it instead. Though LXDE has a few less features than Mate, it's more responsive. And it has one feature Mate doesn't have: LXDE aligns desktop icons automatically next to each other after deleting an icon.

Though I could install Dansguardian in Fedora 17, I couldn't figure out how to get it to filter. The tutorial I wrote on <http://linux.jamesjpn.com/how-to/dansguardian-install.html> didn't work for Fedora 17. Using a tutorial on <http://www.howtoforge.com/dansguardian-content-filtering-with-transparent-proxy-on-ubuntu-9.10-karmic> works on Linux Mint Debian! There was only one command that I had to modify on that tutorial. It was:

```
sudo update-rc.d tproxy enable 5
```

rather than just

```
sudo update-rc.d tproxy
```

---

## [Linux: How to make audio CDs from YouTube videos](#)

This morning I was asked if I could extract the audio tracks of certain Youtube videos and make a compilation of them on an audio CD in order to listen to them using a CD player. "I don't know how or if it's even possible," I replied. "Come on!" she said, "I know you can figure it out if you tried." And so I was faced with another technical challenge. But thanks to the ease of looking up information from the Internet, in only minutes I learned I have all the tools I needed on my Fedora 17 Linux PC.

You might wonder, "Why would anybody want to do *that*?" In her case, it was to be able to listen to some guy's seminar without using a PC. He was just standing there talking. What he had to say was much more important than watching him say it.

First we must download the Youtube. I use a Mozilla Firefox add on called "Flash Video Downloader Youtube Downloader". It gives me a choice of what

format to download with. In this case I downloaded in .flv format. The file downloaded to Downloads of my home directory.

First open Terminal and enter the following commands based on the name of the files you downloaded:

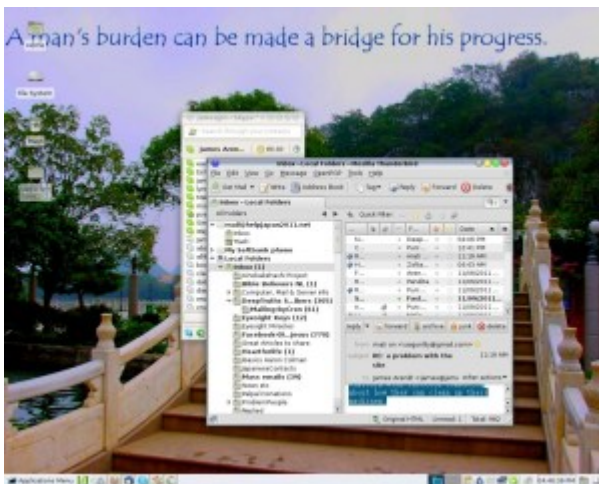
- `$ ffmpeg` (This is to make sure you have ffmpeg on your system: If you get a command not found message, install ffmpeg)
- `$ cd Downloads`
- `$ ffmpeg -i nameoffile.flv -vn -acodec copy yourfile.m4a`
- `$ ffmpeg -i nameoffile.m4a yourfile.wav`

Now the file is in wav format, perfect to make audio CDs out of. Just use your favorite CD Burner application to make an audio CD out of it. I use K3b.

If you are a Windows or a Mac user, I'm sure you can get the tools you need for this job, but it they may not be freeware.

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## [BTRFS Blues and Backup Basics](#)



Grsync - the best backup tool for Linux

This post is aimed at Linux users, and especially at techies.

When Fedora 16 went gold on Nov. 8, 2011, I immediately installed it and used the new BTRFS for my /home partition. I read that BTRFS may become the default file system in Fedora and was under the assumption that BTRFS now had a good file system tool to fix errors. It turned out that I created an accident waiting to happen!

About a week later I learned that the file system checker program, btrfsck, was still in development, It could only identify file system errors not fix them. I thought to immediately reformat /home back to ext4 and start again, but I decided to wait. I had my fingers crossed that /home would survive till the time btrfsck would be perfected. No such fortune. /dev/sda1 that holds /home crashed yesterday, 97 days later.

Because I realized from early on I was running a risk of losing the data in /home partition to file system corruption. I made frequent backups of /home to a second internal HDD on my PC which is formatted in ext4. And I made a second backup to an external USB drive.

I tried in vain to fix the bad block on /dev/sda1 by downloading and running Fedora 17 Alpha thinking that may have a perfected btrfsck tool to fix the BTRFS partition. But I found that btrfsck still can't fix errors. It turns out that btrfsck won't even be ready for Fedora 17 and was pushed back to Fedora 18! Though I like keep up with bleeding edge Linux technology, I decided to wait for at least another year or more to try out BTRFS again.

You may wonder how much data I lost considering I lost my entire working /home partition – a first for me. I like to make regular backups of the entire /home partition to a second internal drive on my PC, and the last backup was fortunately only 10 days before the crash. I use Grsync to backup files. It's an excellent backup tool because it synchronizes the target partition to the source. It copies only the newer files to the target partition, and deletes any old files on the target partition that no longer exist on the source partition.

So what did I lose between backups? No essential data whatsoever. Only 10 days of email (all of which I read and replied to), 3 files on one of my static websites which I was able to restore from the server, and 2 files of material to post on a website I am making for friends – material they can resend me.

Some of my friends have had total data loss when their hard disk failed. An investment of the purchase of an external USB HDD and regular backups to it can save you from this fate!

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## [How to secure Grub 2 in Fedora Linux](#)



This is an technical article that only Linux users would understand and appreciate.

I like to secure the Grub boot loader to make it harder for anybody but me to get root access to my PC by either a cold startup, or rebooting the system. Grub version 1 had a password option. It was easily implemented by editing the grub.conf configuration file and adding the password option data. But in Fedora 16, Grub version 2 has replaced Grub 1, and Grub 2 doesn't seem to have a password option. At least I haven't figured it out yet. Moreover, Grub 2 makes it even more apparent how to get root access because it gives a system recovery option for each kernel version!

I learned by chance that changing the default Grub time out to 0 in Grub 2 prevents the Grub startup screen from showing even when purposely trying to show it by hitting the ESC key! Grub 1 did show the Grub options screen when hitting ESC just before booting the kernel even though its time out was set to 0, but Grub 2 does not show the Grub options when its time out is set to 0 no matter how many times I hit the ESC key, and even after repeated attempts!

Disclaimer: Do this at your own risk! Fedora does not recommend it because you have no option to use the previous kernel if a kernel update fails! However you can still use the recovery option from the installation DVD – if you know what you're doing.

To change the default time out in Grub 2, from Terminal log in as a super user with the su command, and with your favorite editor load the /etc/default/grub file. I used Leafpad:

```
# leafpad /etc/default/grub
```

The first line has: GRUB\_TIMEOUT=10

I changed the 10 to zero: GRUB\_TIMEOUT=0

Next save the file, exit the editor and run the following command:

```
# grub2-mkconfig -o /boot/grub2/grub.cfg
```

Next time you boot your PC, you should not see the Grub screen again. Though you don't have recovery options from the startup screen anymore, you can still use your Fedora installation disk for system recovery if you need to.

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## [Using mencoder to convert a .VOB file to a .flv file](#)

I've been working for a Japanese NPO, Leap High 28. Today I was asked by the NPO Chairperson, Yoko Ishikawa to upload a DVD file to Help Japan 2011, a website we made together to raise support for the March 11, 2011 earthquake and tsunami victims. This is the code I used to convert the file to .flv on a laptop with the Ubuntu 11.10 Linux. Note the you need to have mencoder installed.

```
mencoder VTS_03_1.VOB -of lavf -ovc lavc -lavcopts
vcodec=flv:vbitrate=150 -ofps 25 -oac mp3lame -lameopts abr:br=32 -
srate 22050 -vf scale=720 -o unitedearth.flv
```

After creating the flv file, I uploaded it to the server using FTP. I also created a starting .jpg image of the same name as the .flv from one of the frames of the video, and uploaded it in the same folder.

I also installed a handy WordPress plugin, FLV Embed to display the video.

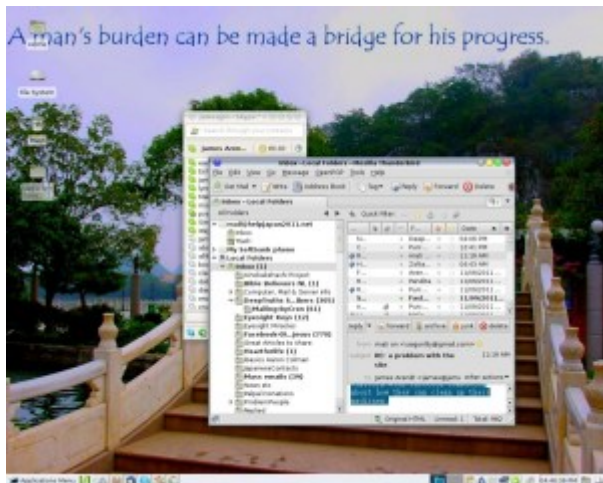
On the page to post the video, in the HTML editor I added the following:

```
[flv:/wp-content/uploads/unitedearth.flv 480 368]
```

Click this link to see the result! Audio in Japanese only.

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## [Fedora 16 review](#)



**November 9:** After getting sick of Gnome 3 on Fedora 15, I tried Linux Mint Debian for a while because it has the Gnome 2 desktop environment, my favourite to date. Linux Mint Debian ran very well but because there were certain tweaks to the system I wanted to implement but could not (but can in Fedora), I decided to go back to Fedora 14, the last Fedora with Gnome 2. The creator of Linux, Linus Torvalds, preferred Gnome 2 over 3 as well. He also uses Fedora as his Linux distribution of choice. Since the advent of Gnome 3 in Fedora 15, Linus ditched it for the Xfce environment instead. I figure if Xfce is good enough for Linus, it's good enough for me. So when Fedora 16 went gold yesterday, I immediately downloaded it, installed it, and installed the Xfce desktop environment.



James Japan's Xfce desktop with Fedora 16

Fedora 16 with the Xfce desktop environment is like driving a new car with a more powerful engine but with different dashboard. I'm getting used to it. Xfce does seem to be more tweak-able than Gnome 2 was. I can see certain features that Gnome 2 didn't have. But I still miss the cool Gnome 2 applets. Won't somebody please bring them back?

**March 14, 2012 update:** I tried to install Compiz in LXDE but couldn't make it work. All icons on panels would disappear every time I ran fusion-icon. I wondered how it would work on KDE Plasma Desktop Environment. Compiz works great! Here's what my desktop looks like now:



Kde Plasma James Japan Desktop

KDE Plasma has 4 different appearances

1. Desktop Icons (Plain desktop with icons on it)
2. Photos Activity (Shows random photos in the Picture folder)
3. Desktop (Makes the Desktop folder a window with the option of wallpaper)

#### 4. Search and Launch (Shows all the installed applications)

Besides this it has a pop-up application menu that is overall better than either LXDE or XFCE, and way better than Gnome 3! All in all KDE Plasma seems to be for me the most user friendly, intuitive, easy to use and tweak-able Linux desktop environment.

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## [Back to Linux Mint Debian](#)

I had been using Fedora 15 for about 5 weeks since it came out at the beginning of June, but now again I switched back to Linux Mint Debian. Gnome 3 IMHO was too radical a departure from how I was used to operating. KDE4 was slow at times. Neither LXDE or XFCE seemed to support a Favorite Applications menu. Only Gnome 2 could make me happy again using my PC, and I figured Linux Mint Debian with its speed and power was my best bet. I knew it would continue to have Gnome 2 as its default desktop environment.

### **Linux Mint Debian improvements over Fedora 15**

- Gnome 2 is the default desktop environment!!! (You long time Gnome users know how I feel. :-))
- Much faster boot up.
- System feels more responsive and quicker.
- All the apps I need without having to install more repositories. Skype, Google Earth, and Virtual Box installed from the command line using default repositories!
- All needed multimedia codecs were installed by default
- Flashplayer and its plug in for Mozilla Firefox was installed by default.
- Because Linux Mint Debian is a rolling distribution, I should never have to do another clean Linux installation on this PC as long as I stick with this distro!

The only major quirks I've come across so far is that I can't get LibreOffice to do a spell check. The language modules don't load. Neither does Mozilla Firefox do a spell check either! I'm using Google Chrome to make this post because the spell checker works. I'm sure I'll either figure out the spell checker problem sooner or later, or soon an update will fix it.

**July 22 update:** After much searching I found a fix for the LibreOffice spell checker problem by using Synaptic to download and install myspell-en-us This added the Hunspell SpellChecker module to LibreOffice. I also fixed the Firefox spell checker problem by right clicking on an open space in a form in Firefox, and clicking on Add Dictionaries.