Happy April Fools Day

Table Of Contents

Welcome From The Chief Editor

This month, I start an article series aimed at creating and using a HTPC (Home Theater Personal Computer). This alone is challenging enough for most users. So, not being someone who always chooses the easy way, I decided to challenge myself and see if I could make my HTPC for a cost less than one month's bill to Xfinity/Comcast. I reveal my results in this month's inaugural article in the series.

We are also starting a new monthly column, called Tip Top Tips. We will take one tip per month from the PCLinuxOS forum's Tips & Tricks section, and feature it in the magazine. I've written a few of these up already, and in every one, we've expanded upon the original post. So, if you have an idea for a Tip and/or Trick, post it in the Tips & Tricks section of the PCLinuxOS forum. Your tip just might be chosen for the magazine's monthly Tip Top Tips column. The column's inaugural tip comes from – who else – Texstar.

Other posts in the Tips & Tricks section of the forum quickly transform themselves into full blown articles, such as Meemaw's article this month on disposable email accounts. Her article was inspired by a post in the Tips & Tricks section of the PCLinuxOS forum, from forum member Phil.

For sure, you're going to want to check back with us next month. Preparations are already underway to celebrate the 100th "regular" issue of The PCLinuxOS Magazine, which occurs with the May 2015 issue. This should make our 100th issue a definite "can't miss" issue.

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

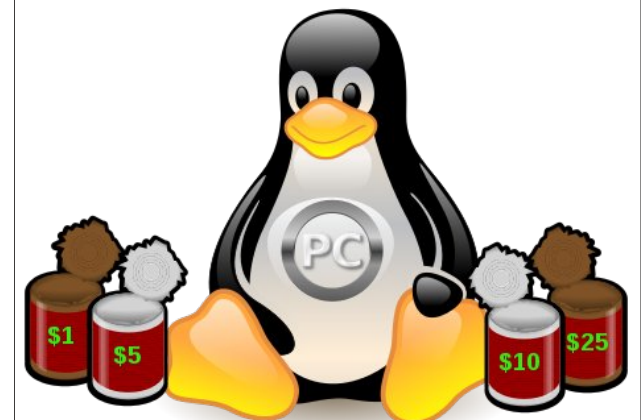First time down the slide at the park, and not too sure about it.

HTPC: The Equipment & Getting Started

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Ever since I built my desktop system three years ago, I've wanted to build a HTPC. If you're not sure what that acronym stands for, it's a Home Theater PC. HTPC can have different meanings for different people. For our use in these articles, HTPC will mean a PC that can stream content to a connected television, usually from an online source. What we're not talking about is a media server. A media server is a computer that users rip their DVDs to, and then play their movies on a connected television, or over a network on connected devices.

I toyed with building a system from scratch, as I did when I built my desktop system. I also toyed with adapting a computer to use as a HTPC. I briefly vacillated between a desktop system or repurposing a notebook. Because you're pretty much stuck with the components that come with a notebook computer, the desktop form factor won out fairly quickly. The thoughts of repurposing a notebook quickly fell by the wayside for that one reason.

Then, I read this post in the PCLinuxOS forum on January 1, 2015. It talked about cutting the cord with cable, and how much money you could save. I use Comcast as my cable TV, internet and home phone provider. The only other ISP choice in my area is AT&T's slower and more archaic DSL service. I absolutely refuse to patronize AT&T. I'm also fully aware of Comcast's reputation. For me, it boils down to making a choice between the lesser of two evils.

I finally decided to stop thinking about building an HTPC, and just act … do something. So I set myself a challenge of seeing if I could build myself a HTPC for a cost less than one month's current cable bill. Once I made the decision, I sat back and waited for the the "right" sales to filter through my email Inbox. After all, I wasn't in a hurry. It had already been three years since I first started thinking about building a HTPC, so a few extra weeks wasn't going to hurt anything. I get the daily Shell Shocker Deals emails from Newegg, and I didn't have to wait long.

The first piece was a refurbished HP DC5800 small form factor desktop PC. It has an Intel Pentium Dual Core processor, running at 2.0 GHz. It also has 2GB RAM, a DVD-CDRW drive, and a 160GB hard drive. The computer also had a gigabit ethernet card, which was important, since everything was going to be streamed from online sources. Not too bad for the $75 (U.S.) price, purchased from Newegg. I do plan to add another 2GB of RAM to the computer. I waited for the computer to arrive before purchasing any other components, just to be sure of what I needed to purchase next.

The next thing I purchased was a new video card. This one is a Gigabyte GT610, with a nVidia chipset and 1GB video RAM. Since this was for my HTPC and I was going to be hooking it up to the HDTV in my living room, I needed to add an HDMI port. For $45 from Newegg, this filled the bill perfectly. Plus, I wanted a video card without a fan. I prefer video cards with the big honkin' heat sinks, over the ones with a fan. In my experiences, the fans always tend
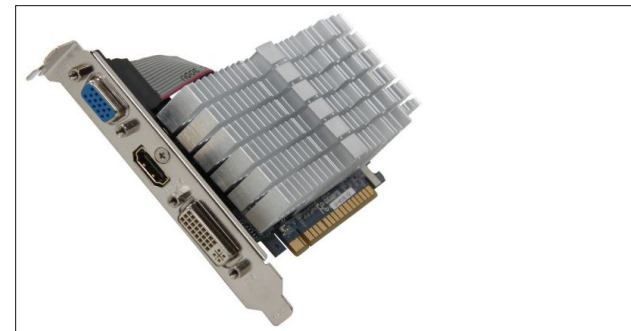
to die before anything else, taking the video card out of action (by being destroyed by the intense heat that is generated). Plus, fanless video cards are much quieter than their counterparts with fans.

In my opinion, the video card is probably the absolute most important part of a HTPC, since there is so much emphasis on being able to produce high quality video output. You don't have to spend hundreds of dollars on a top line video card, although it certainly wouldn't hurt if you have that capability. However, there are quality video cards that fit even into modest budgets, such as the one I used here.

I also purchased the Logitech MK270 wireless USB mouse and keyboard combo from Amazon, for $21. Even though the refurbished computer came with a

keyboard and mouse, they were of the corded variety, and I didn't want to be tethered by a short cord. I also didn't want to stretch a cord across the room – not a good idea with a 19 month old toddler running everywhere in the house. Also, mom and I aren't necessarily the most graceful beings on the planet. The wireless keyboard and mouse allow me to sit anywhere in the living room or dining room and control the computer. Plus, there is a bit of a "coolness" factor. My best friend was present when I hooked it up to the computer, and he thought it was cool.

Note: I had also purchased – and planned to use – a Bluetooth keyboard and mouse. I bought a $4 Bluetooth dongle, a $15 mini Bluetooth keyboard, and a $7.50 Bluetooth mouse. I initially had some difficulties getting the Bluetooth dongle properly set up (duh … don't forget to reboot so the Bluetooth service can be started), so I went ahead and ordered the USB wireless keyboard and mouse combo above.

I'm glad I went the route of the USB wireless keyboard and mouse. After I finally rebooted and gained control of the Bluetooth dongle, I discovered that the Bluetooth mouse and keyboard gave very lackluster performance. The Bluetooth mouse movements weren't fluid – at all – and the mouse cursor moved across the screen as if it were in the midst of a grand mal seizure. The USB wireless keyboard and mouse performed much better, and was much smoother.

I'm not counting the purchase of the Bluetooth accessories in my build costs, since those items will be "repurposed" on other devices. In fact, my wife has already repurposed the Bluetooth keyboard for use with her tablet.

The old adage K.I.S.S. (Keep It Super Simple … yes, I changed it up a little bit. I figure any of you reading this aren't stupid, so we won't call you stupid.) really has some deep and profound meaning.

In setting it up, I ran CAT5 ethernet cable (a 25 foot length that I already had) from my router, through the basement, and up through the floor behind the TV, where the computer was located. (The small hole where the baseboard and floor meet will never be seen … I promise!) I opted to not use a wireless internet connection, since a wired connection is not only more reliable, but also faster than wireless. I also already had the HDMI cable, which saved me additional expense.

The computer came pre-installed with an OEM version of Windows 7 Home. Even though I had no intentions of keeping Windows installed on the computer, I tried to do the activation – just for fun. As with everything else related to Windows, the activation failed. Had I kept Windows 7 installed on the computer, I would have had to buy a full retail copy/version of Windows 7, greatly increasing my costs. After that fiasco, I went ahead and installed Ika's community Xfce remaster of PCLinuxOS (my wife and I use Xfce on our other computers, so the familiarity is already there). Installation took less than 20 minutes to complete, including custom disk partitioning. When it was finished, I had a fully functional copy of PCLinuxOS installed on the computer.

As is typical for a PCLinuxOS installation, all of my hardware was properly recognized and set up. This included the display via my HDTV's HDMI port. I only had to "turn on" the HDMI sound by selecting the proper output in the Xfce mixer application.

Of course, as any user should do right after installing, I updated my installation via Synaptic. I then tailored my panels to the way I like them. I installed Popcorn Time, which allows me to stream from torrents. Also at the heart of my new HTPC is Kodi, which used to be called XBMC, installed from the PCLinuxOS repository, via Synaptic. Between Popcorn Time and Kodi, my HTPC gives me access
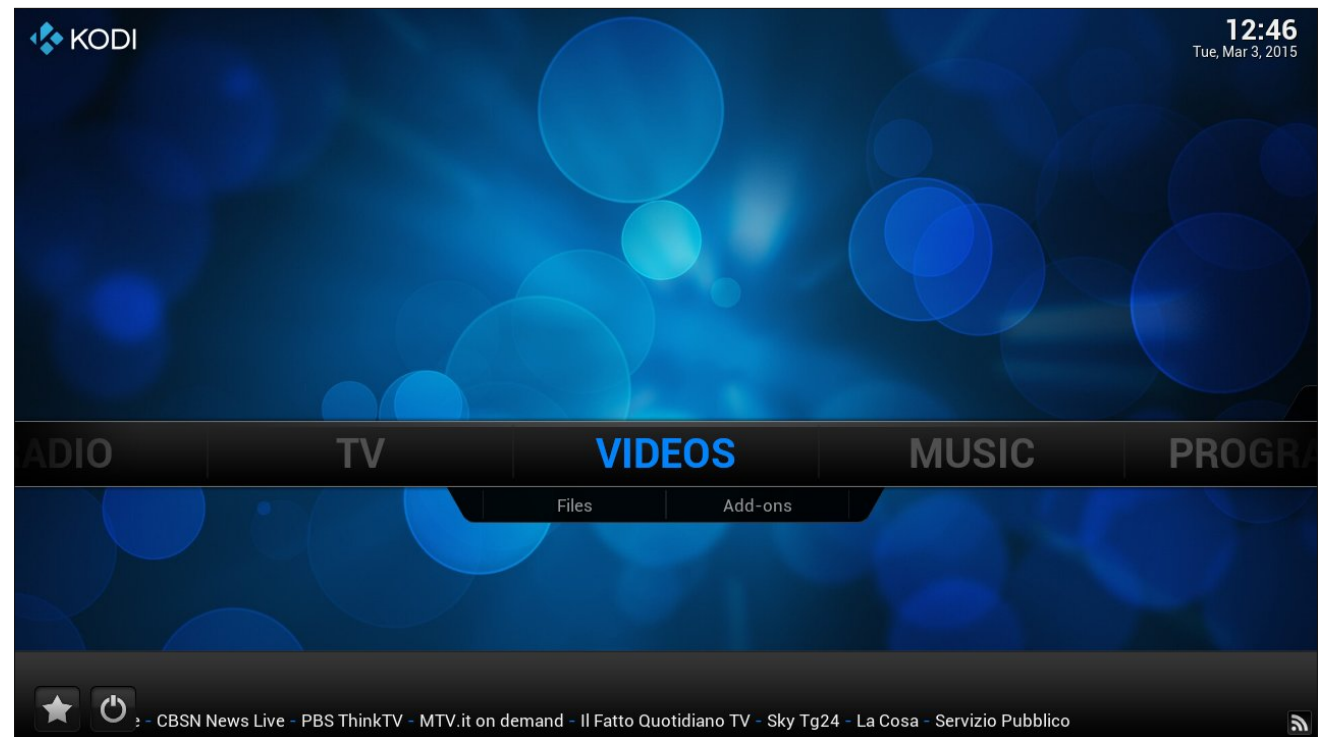
Screenshot of KODI, from my HTPC hooked up to my HDTV.

to movies and TV shows from around the world – on MY schedule, on demand.
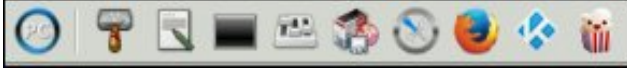
I also put launchers for Popcorn Time and Kodi on my Xfce top panel, giving me one-click access to those programs. You can see those launchers, complete with their icons, at the far right side of the screenshot above. Popcorn Time is on the end, and Kodi is the second icon from the right.

A Little More About MY Setup

Everyone's setup is going to be slightly different, depending on what "other" equipment they have – such as TV, audio receiver, home theater equipment, etc. Over the years, I have cobbled together a "home theater system" that works for us, one piece at a time. The only thing that is an absolute "must have" is a modern HDTV, with HDMI inputs. The rest of it is just icing on the cake … gravy on the potatoes … a large dollop of whipped cream on the pumpkin pie … you get the idea.

TV: I have a 42 inch Vizio 120Hz flat screen LCD HDTV, model number VL-420M. This TV has four HDMI inputs, 4 component video inputs, audio input jacks, audio output jacks, and antenna/cable inputs. The audio output jacks allow me to "pipe" the sound out to my audio receiver, regardless of the input source. This saves on a LOT of very complicated wiring that would be involved if I had to pipe the sound out to my audio receiver from each individual device.

Audio Receiver: I have an older (approximately 20 years old) Sony STR-D665 audio receiver that is marked "Audio/Video Control Center With Digital Delayed Surround Sound" prominently in the upper left corner. Despite its age, it does have 5.1 Dolby Pro Logic Surround Sound. I run a set of audio cables (standard RCA Phono plugs) from the TV to the audio inputs of the receiver that are marked "Video." The digital delayed surround sound is a treat, since I can emulate a music hall, a live concert and a few other scenarios. I can also adjust the delay between the front and rear channels, providing a tailored, more life like surround sound experience.

Speakers: Yes, I have set up a surround sound system in my living room. I've had it set up ever since I moved into my house. My front channel speakers are my standard stereo speakers,

Pioneer S-H253B-K bookshelf speakers. My center and rear channel speakers are some inexpensive JBL speakers designed specifically for that purpose – to provide center and rear channel sound in a surround sound system. While I know that it's

typically not a good idea to mix components in a surround sound system (especially speakers), it can be done well IF you do your homework. The only thing that I'm lacking is a good quality subwoofer. For me, my combination just flat out works. Everyone who has ever heard my surround sound system is astonished, as they feel/hear the sound coming at them from all directions.

The Answer Is In The Results

So … how did I do, you ask? Well, given that my current cable bill is somewhere around $190 U.S. a month (that includes cable TV, internet and home phone), I'd say I did pretty OK. My goal was to build a HTPC for less than one month's cable bill. All together, I came in at just under $150 U.S. for the entire build. Of course, helping that along is that I was already in possession of the network ethernet cable and the HDMI cable, so I didn't need to buy those.

How well does it work, you ask? Just one word … AWESOME! We have already watched several movies through it. Some have been streamed via Popcorn Time, while others have been streamed via Kodi. Both "services" work exceptionally well, and both deserve a place on any user's HTPC. Some users may claim that it's redundant to have both Popcorn Time and Kodi installed on a HTPC. However, in the short time that I've had my HTPC up

and running, I've already found instances where a movie wasn't available on one service, but is available on the other … and vice versa. Just view it as having a greater number of choices. After all, Linux is ALL about having choices.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Ah, yes … we need a road map. This first article covers (as you just read) the equipment you will need to set up a HTPC, as well as some considerations you will need to make along the way.

The second article in this series about HTPCs will be all about Popcorn Time. We'll include not only information on how to use it, but considerations and tasks you will need to keep in mind when installing it. By far, Popcorn Time is the easiest to set up and run, so we'll be able to cover it in its entirety with just one article.

The remaining articles are planned to cover Kodi. I can't say yet how many articles that will take (they aren't written yet), but it will be at least two, and probably more. Kodi is the most complex program of the two to write about. It seeks to become a complete multimedia program that covers music, video, TV, pictures, radio and just about anything else you might be able to even remotely relate to your definition of multimedia. It even has its own built in file manager.

Summary

Indeed, it is possible to cut the cord, either partially or completely, with your cable provider. For me, I doubt that it's going to be a complete separation, since I rely on them for my internet connection and my home phone. I also need access to "live" broadcast TV, and my HTPC won't be able to reliably cover that need – for reasons that I will illuminate as we go through this article series.

But, in the end, I should be able to shave a sizeable chunk off of my cable bill. I'll certainly be able to drop all of my pay cable channels (currently HBO, Cinemax, Showtime and Starz). With my HTPC, I simply don't need them any more. A lot of movies show up on either Popcorn Time or Kodi, long before they appear on the pay cable channels. There is only one HBO original show – from all of those pay channels – that we like to watch, and I've discovered I can access it reliably through my HTPC.

When you consider what a trip to the movies costs, it'll set you back an easy $40 U.S. Let's see … $10 (minimum) price for each of two adults ($20), plus another $20 at the concession stand just for a soda pop and popcorn (yes, they are THAT overpriced). Yep. That's $40. We haven't been to a movie theater in the 19-20 months since our son was born. I'm a firm believer in NOT taking a baby to the movies and spoiling the movie experience of every other movie goer in the theater. Since many first run movies are available on both services, I'll be saving in many more ways than just on my cable bill.

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DEFENDING YOUR RIGHTS IN THE DIGITAL WORLD

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by zen-subz, March 15, 2015, running MATE.

Inkscape Tutorial: More Tools

by Meemaw

I had already thought that we needed to cover more of the tools in this wonderful program, but suddenly, here is an update which has even more tools! The toolbar on the left has one more item now, and some of the tools we already have contain more features. Now we have even more to explore.

The newest version of Inkscape is version 0.91 and is available in Synaptic. Some of the tools have been enhanced with extra features. Let's explore.

Improved Import

Many of us import images to work with in Inkscape. The old Import window asked only whether we wanted to Link or Embed the imported image. Now the window is bigger and asks more questions:
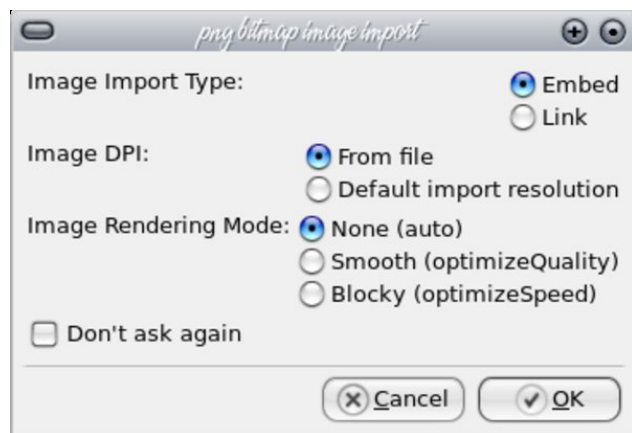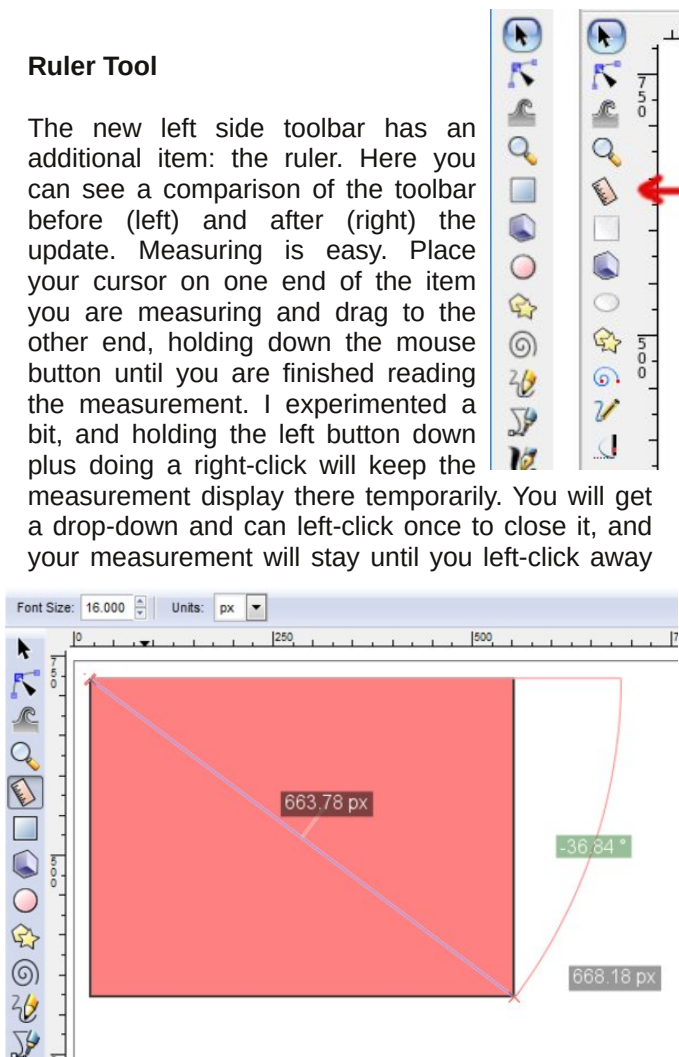
We are still asked whether we want to Link or Embed the image, but now we are also asked about the DPI (resolution) and Rendering Mode. It will use the resolution in the object you are importing, or the default resolution from your preferences (under Bitmaps). Also, you can choose how something is imported by changing the Rendering Mode to optimize quality or speed. So far, I have kept the defaults shown above.

Ruler Tool

The new left side toolbar has an additional item: the ruler. Here you can see a comparison of the toolbar before (left) and after (right) the update. Measuring is easy. Place your cursor on one end of the item you are measuring and drag to the other end, holding down the mouse button until you are finished reading the measurement. I experimented a bit, and holding the left button down plus doing a right-click will keep the measurement display there temporarily. You will get a drop-down and can left-click once to close it, and your measurement will stay until you left-click away from it. This is handy if you need to measure diagonally, since the top and left rulers don't do that. It will also give you an angle measurement. Notice at the top of the drawing you can change the size of the displayed text and also the unit of measure.

When I was thinking about what to cover in this article (since Inkscape has so much), I was already going to cover the **Tweak** tool. It hasn't had any additions this time, but it already has several features that make it fun to use.

When you click on the Tweak tool, the upper bar looks like this (below), and each item does something different.

We used the Tweak tool a couple of months ago to do our feathered background. However, the bar above has more than just the two modes we used. Some are self-explanatory, but going from left to right, the modes are as follows (items in parentheses occur if you hold down the <Shift> key):

Move objects in any direction - if you move the area under the tool to the right, your objects will all move that direction

Move objects towards (or away from) the cursor - if you place your cursor over the selected objects, they will all move towards (or away from) your cursor.

Move objects in random directions - we used this one in our feathered background to move the duplicates around a bit

Shrink (or enlarge) objects - you can make many duplicates, then select some and resize them smaller (or larger)

Rotate objects clockwise (counter-clockwise) - You can rotate things as little or as much as you wish.

Duplicate objects (or delete objects) - This is an alternative for the Duplicate command **<CTRL> + D**. Holding the Shift key down will delete some of the selected objects. **Caution!** If your Force setting is higher, you can create bunches of duplicates pretty fast. I left my Force setting higher while I was using this tool, and ended up with 358 duplicates in about two seconds!

Push parts of paths in any direction - Generally, when I am moving parts of paths, I am concentrating on a certain path, but depending on your creation, you might be able to do several at once.

Shrink or inset (grow or outset) parts of paths

Attract parts of paths toward (or away from) cursor

Roughen parts of paths

Paint the tool's color upon selected objects

Jitter the colors of selected objects - Jittering colors changes them just a bit, so if you have several objects that are the same color, you can use this jitter tool and end up with several shades of the same color. If your Force setting is up, it's possible that several blue objects could end up a bit closer to purple.

Blur objects more (less)

Looking at the Tweak tool bar, the first two settings are **Width** and **Force**. They are fairly self-explanatory, with Width being how big an area you want to affect, and Force being how much of an effect you want to make. As an example, if you want to use the third tool (move objects in random directions), your Width should be big enough to cover the majority of the objects you want to move. Your Force needs to be set depending on how much you want to move your objects, using a small setting for minimal movement and a larger setting for more movement. Also, remember that the Tweak tool will **only** affect objects that have first been selected with the Select tool.

As you move your cursor over your object(s), the tweak tool will carry out the desired operation, but you will have to practice with this tool a bit to get your desired result. Remember, you can always undo it if you don't like the result.

Gradients

The gradient tool works the same way, but here is where a new feature has been added. When you create an object, and click on the gradient button in the properties window, you now get an open window which will list the gradients you have used in your drawing (plus how many times it has been used). This is nice because you can choose a particular gradient you have already created and won't have to create it again (right, top).
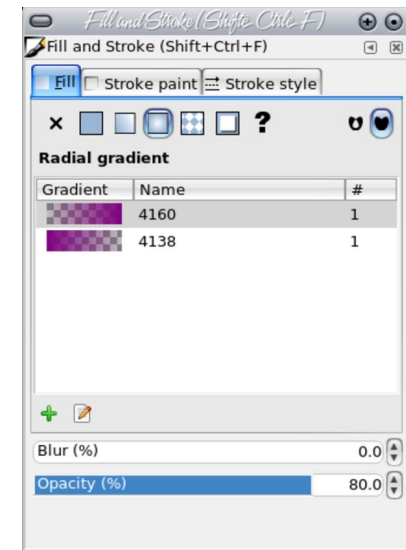
Align & Distribute Plus?

Another new feature is in the Align and Distribute tool. We have always used the first two tools, Align and Distribute, but I don't remember the Rearrange tool. With it, you can do a few more things to make your work easier. Actually, the rearrange tool has items that the old Align and Distribute tool window had elsewhere. You can see the difference between them shown below with the newer one on the right:
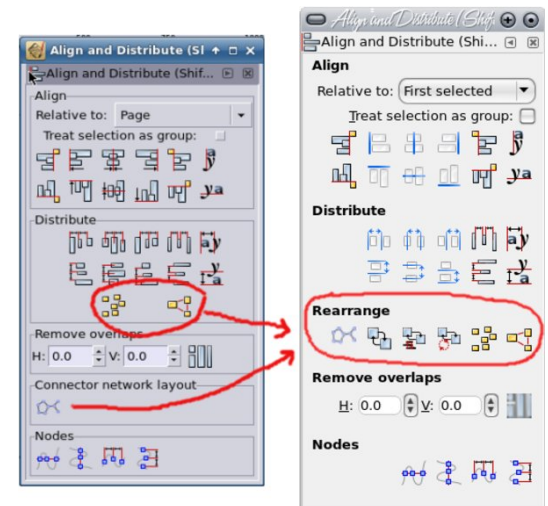
As you can see, there are three additions to the window and they are grouped under the section "Rearrange".

From left to right, the buttons are:

Nicely arrange selected connector network: This will "auto-arrange" the items you have connected. I started with the array on the left with connectors running from bottom left to bottom right (Orange, blue, gray, red, blue, purple, blue, purple, gray). When I selected the group and push this button, they changed to the arrangement on the right. This is not to say you will like the way that Inkscape arranges them, but it will be different. Remember, **Undo** is still **<CTRL> + Z**.

Exchange positions of selected objects - selection order: This is a neat tool you can use while arranging things the way you want them in your drawing. A few months ago, I was doing an image with text and realized that two of the text boxes had been placed wrong. With this tool, I could have selected them both and clicked this button, which would have interchanged the two text boxes without any effort on my part. As you see here, I exchanged the gray and orange boxes.
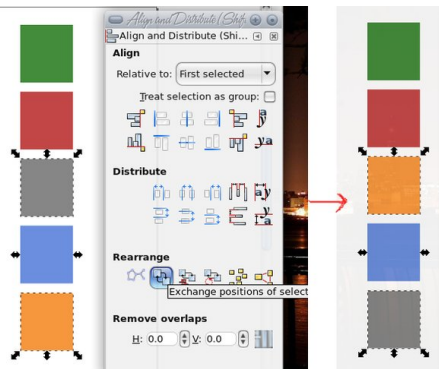
Exchange positions of selected objects - stacking order: This will exchange the positions of your objects while retaining the order in which they are "stacked". Whatever object is at the bottom will remain there.
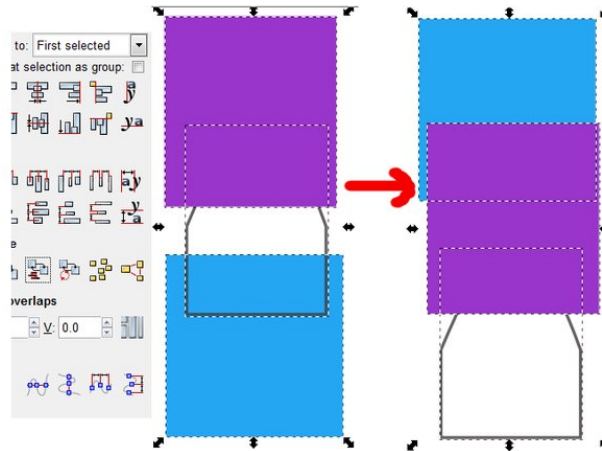
Exchange positions of selected objects - clockwise rotate: If you choose more than two objects and click this button, the objects will be moved in a clockwise direction. In the series below, I chose all eight objects, and you can see how the colors move around.
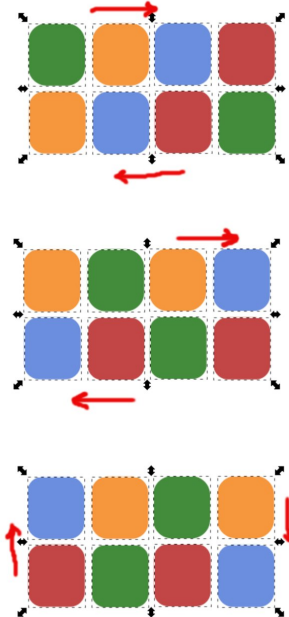
Randomize centers in both directions: This will move your objects so the centers are at random distances. The result may not be what you want, but you can undo it and try again, or not use it at all (right, top).

Unclump objects: try to equalize edge-to-edge distances: This will try to move your objects apart a bit, but possibly still overlapping.

With the ability to exchange and rearrange things, your design should be easier to manage.

Edit Menu Addition

There is another new tool from the edit menu, and it will be really useful if you need to change something in multiple objects. Let's do color first. Select an item of the color you want to change, then choose **Edit > Select Same > Fill Color**. Each item of the same color as the one you chose will be selected. Now you can change the color of all of them at once. (I changed all the green squares to purple.) The menu item **Select Same** also has four other options: **Fill and Stroke**, **Stroke Color**, **Stroke Style** and **Object Type**. This should make your work easier.
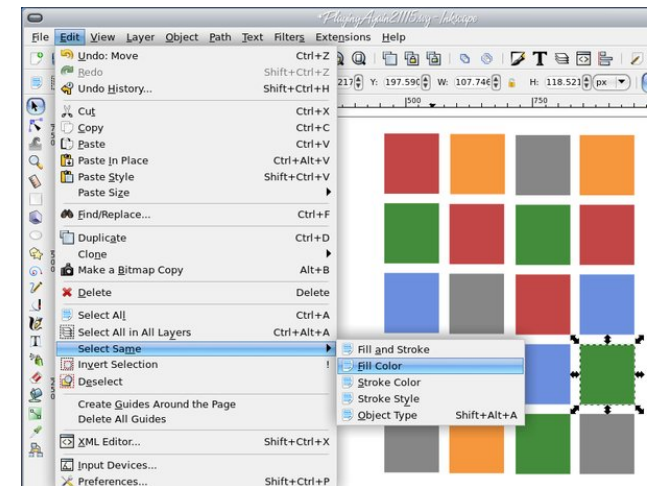
While we didn't actually complete a project, I hope you have a better understanding of the new tools present in Inkscape and how they will make your artwork easier to do. I always look forward to seeing any of your projects, and I hope you have enjoyed creating them.
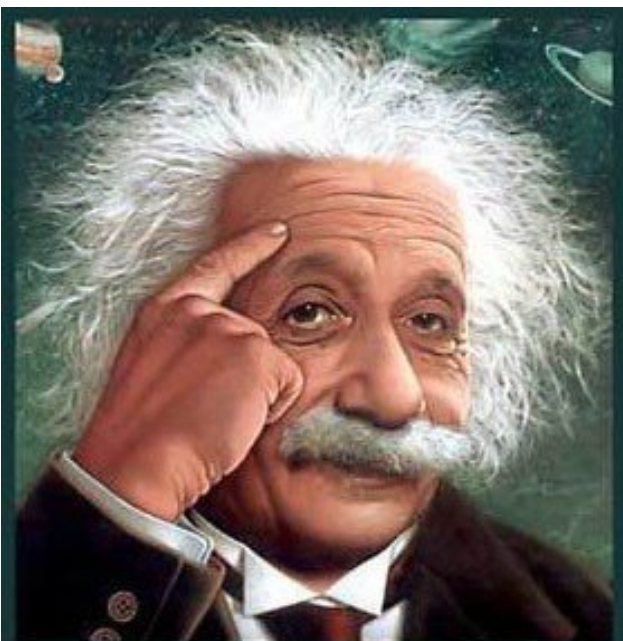
It's easier than $E=mc^2$
It's elemental
It's light years ahead
It's a wise choice
It's Radically Simple
It's ...

PCLinuxOS
Radically Simple
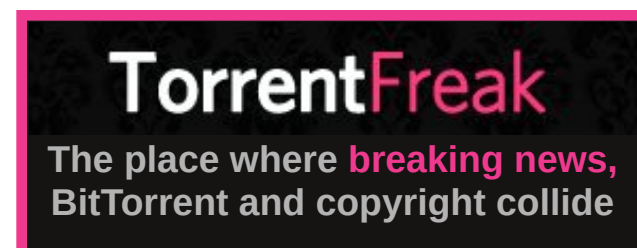
Screenshot Showcase

Posted by Hertz, March 15, 2015, running LXDE.

ms_meme's Nook: Mystic Meme
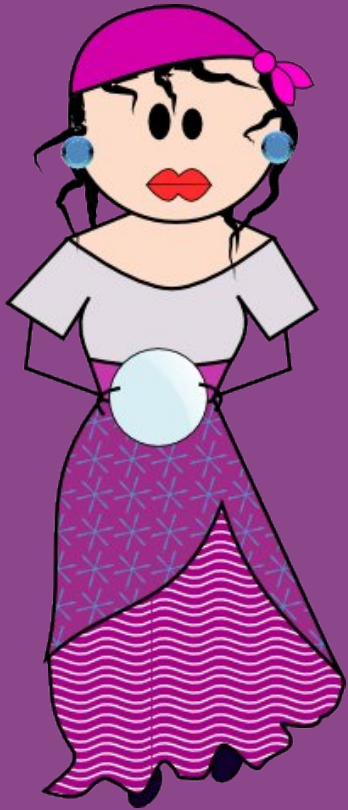
Where the internet flows there is a mystic rose
She'll set your soul aflame meme is her name
Her dark flashing eyes will seem to hypnotize
Your heart will miss a beat if ever you should meet

Once 'neath Houston skies meme met a man so wise
He set her soul aflame Texstar was his name
He had her in a trance Oh what a great romance
PCLOS is now her paradise

On her uke she plays PCLOS praise
You will all agree meme plays on key
She'll strum a tune so fair you'll hear her everywhere
You will rejoice at the lure of her voice

If you want to be like mystic_meme
Join the forum do it was made for you
You will find delights log in day and nights
With PCLOS you'll be Windows free

MP3   OGG

PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner
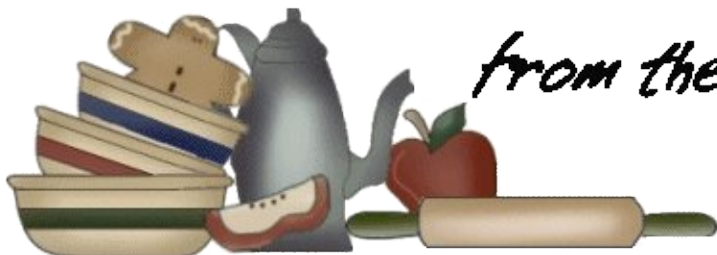
from the kitchen of youcantoo

Sausage and Egg Stuffed Sourdough Breakfast Rolls

Ingredients

12 sourdough dinner rolls
6 lg eggs
1/3 C + 1 tbsp heavy whipping cream
6 oz. pork breakfast sausage
2 oz. or 1/2 C sharp cheddar cheese, grated
2 green onions, chopped
1/4 tsp kosher salt
a few grinds black pepper

Instructions

Cut a small, deep circle in the tops of the rolls being careful not to pierce the bottom. Remove the cut circle and any more needed bread with your fingers until the roll looks like a mini bread bowl.

Brown the sausage until slightly crisp and drain off any fat. Set aside until lightly cooled as to not curdle the egg. Combine the eggs and heavy cream, whisking until well combined and smooth. Add the cheese, onion, salt, pepper, and sausage.

With a measuring spoon or cookie scoop, evenly distribute the egg mixture between the cut rolls until it is all used. Cover the rolls with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least an hour, up to overnight.

Remove from fridge and bake in a preheated oven at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until a knife inserted into the middle of the roll comes out clean and the egg is set.

Guard Your Privacy With Disposable Email

By Meemaw

It happens all the time. You go to a new site to shop or look for information, and you are asked to register and give them an email address. Invariably, the next thing that happens is that your Inbox (and/or Spam folder) is filled with unwanted email. Oh, how we wish we could figure out a solution!

Forum Member Phil submitted the following tip in the Tips & Tricks section of the forum.

"You want something and you need to provide an email addy, which will provide a key to whatever. Use this, and receive messages for one hour. Then bin it.

https://www.guerrillamail.com/

Guerrilla Mail gives you a disposable email address. There is no need to register, simply visit Guerrilla Mail and a random address will be given. You can also choose your own address.

You can give your email address to whoever you do not trust. You can view the email on Guerrilla Mail, click on any confirmation link, then delete it. Any future spam sent to the disposable email will be zapped by Guerrilla Mail, never reaching your mailbox, keeping your mailbox safe and clean."

This is an important subject for our tech-savvy members (and even for those less-savvy), so I did a little more investigation. Googling 'disposable email', I see that Google says there are over 13,400,000 results. The following providers are just a few of them.

Mailinator - This one is a little different, because you decide on the address when you need it. You just put "@mailinator" after whatever name you think up, without first going to the mailinator site and doing anything. If I am registering on a new site and it asks for an email, I can just think of something like m33mqw for my email address, and combine it with the @mailinator to make "m33mqw@mailinator.com". After I register on the new site with that email, I can go to Mailinator and put in that email address, and if I received any spam emails, they will be there.
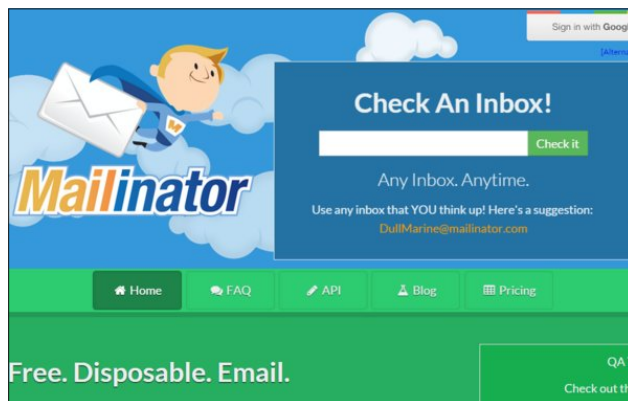
AirMail (right, top) On this site is a button that says "Get my temporary address". Once you click it, an address pops up in the box (for example, xhsdss@tryalert.com) and you can begin using it. The window also changes to the Inbox for that address, and you get a message that welcomes you to AirMail, explaining how it works. Your email address and inbox only last for 24 hours after you close the browser window.

10 Minute Mail Like the others, you click on a link and get an email address you can provide at that site you want to use. The email address expires after
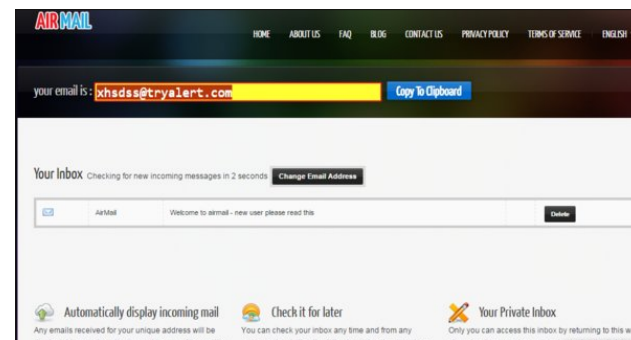
10 minutes, but you can click a link that says "Give me 10 more minutes!" Unlike the others, you can reply to emails that you get. However, since you are probably just getting spam, you won't need to reply.

YOPMail stands for Your Own Protection Mail. Anywhere you sign up, you can give your email address as <address-you-thought-up>@yopmail.com and any spam or junk emails will be sent to that address. You can go check your inbox later, at your leisure. You can go to YOPmail and put in a name for your email inbox, then sign up on that new site, OR you can just give the address at the new site first (like Mailinator). If you can't think

of anything, you can always click the random email address generator and have a name generated. With YOPMail, messages are kept for eight days, then deleted.
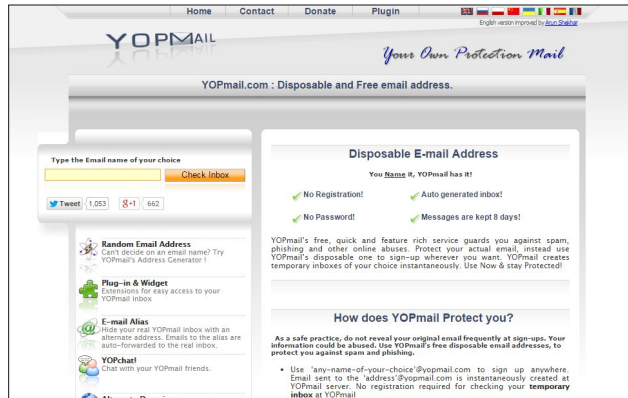
**FakeInbox** The Home Page for this site is really easy: One button says "Create random email address" and one has a box where you can enter your random email address in order to check your inbox. The generated address lasts for 60 minutes, and you can click a button that says "Give me 60 full minutes again" or one that says "Delete email address". The only thing that seems to be missing from this one is any kind of explanation (how long does the inbox exist? Can you check it next week, or does the whole thing disappear after an hour?) However, it's pretty easy to do.
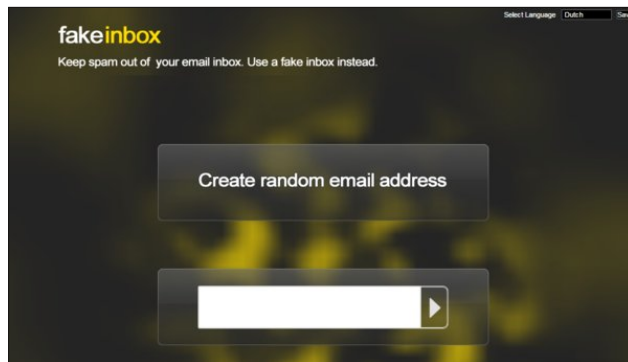
Dispostable This one has a very basic Home Page. You are told to pick a name and add "@dispostable" on the end. In addition, you are given a random email address, just in case you can't decide. Give it out on your new site and that's it. Dispostable deletes emails after three days.
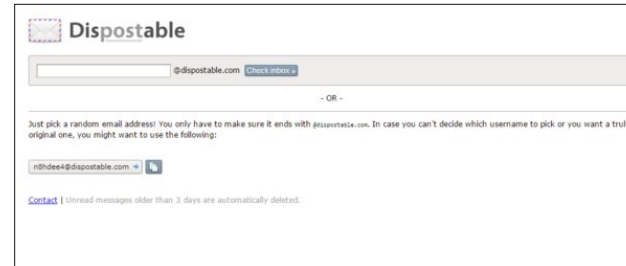
**TempMail** starts you out with an inbox and a random email listed at the top for you to use.
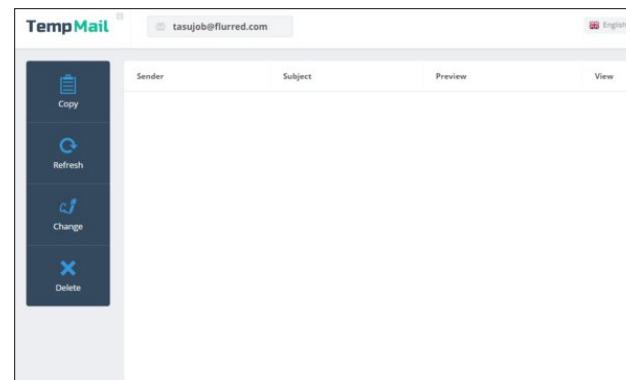
It is at this site that I found a FAQ page with nice, concise reasons for using disposable email. I'm sure each site has them, but some are more easily found. From their site:

What is the difference of disposable mail from the usual email?
- It does not require registration;
- It is completely anonymous;
- Your personal details, address, IP address are removed after the period of mailbox use is over.
- Messages are delivered instantaneously;

- E-mail address is generated automatically. You do not have to manually pick up a free host name.
- Mailbox is fully protected from spam, hacking and exploits.

ThrowAwayMail is very simple to use, too. The inbox and random address are already there for you to use. If you decide you want a different email address, you can click on "Generate new email address" and one will be generated.
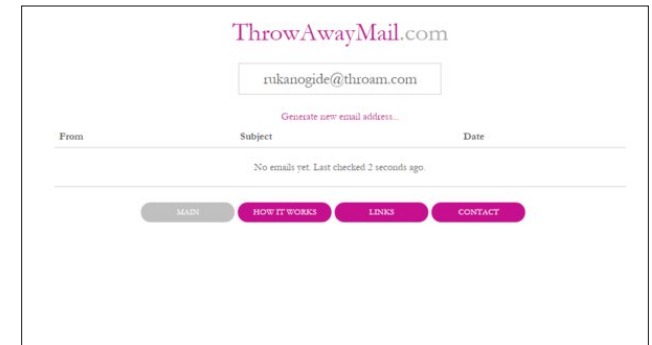
Summary

When I think of all the spam I get, having a disposable email for those questionable sites (that just have to have an email address) makes really good sense. This helps maintain more anonymity, and keeps my actual email inbox from being swamped with junk. Many thanks to Forum Member Phil for posting this item. I know everyone appreciated it!

Of course, there are many more sites offering disposable email accounts. We've barely only scratched the surface with the ones mentioned here. Perform an internet search for "disposable email" and give some of the other services a try, too. You'll do a big service to your privacy … as well as your Inbox.

Tip Top Tips

Make The Internet Suck Less With A Custom Hosts File

The inaugural tip for the Tip Top Tips column comes from Texstar.

Download this hosts file and copy it as root to your /etc folder, replacing the existing hosts file, and provided you have not changed your host name from localhost.

https://www.dropbox.com/s/j3tteyzca82qpux/hosts?dl=0

What it does ...

You can use a HOSTS file to block ads, banners, 3rd party Cookies, 3rd party page counters, web bugs, and even most hijackers. This is accomplished by blocking the connection(s) that supplies these little gems. The hosts file is loaded into memory (cache) at startup, so there is no need to turn on, adjust or change any settings. Now you don't have to track down and install adblock edge (or any other ad blocker) for all your browsers, unless you want to.

Source: http://winhelp2002.mvps.org/hosts.htm

*****

To sweeten the pot a bit, user jonjongx shared a longer, more complete hosts file that was over twice as big as the one that Texstar shared. If you're also a Windows user, jonjongx also shared a similar hosts file, specially tailored for Windows.

Did you notice that Texstar posted that you can replace your existing hosts file, provided you have not changed your host name from localhost? Yep. Several others noticed also. So, let's review what you need to do if you have changed your host name from localhost.

On my computer, my default hosts file looks like this:

```
# generated by drakconnect
127.0.0.1 localhost.localdomain localhost
```

Changing my host name in drakconnect to parnote-toshiba, it looks like this:

```
# generated by drakconnect
127.0.0.1 parnote-toshiba.localdomain parnote-toshiba
127.0.0.1 localhost
127.0.0.1 localhost.localdomain
```

So, let's take a look at the beginning part of the hosts file. The file you download will look like this:

```
1.  # This MVPS HOSTS file is a free download from:             #
2.  # http://winhelp2002.mvps.org/hosts.htm                     #
3.  #                                                           #
4.  # Notes: The Operating System does not read the "#" symbol  #
5.  # You can create your own notes, after the # symbol         #
6.  # This *must* be the first line: 127.0.0.1      localhost   #
7.  #                                                           #
8.  #***********************************************************#
9.  # ---------------- Updated: January-24-2015 --------------- #
10. #***********************************************************#
11. #                                                           #
12. # Disclaimer: this file is free to use for personal use     #
13. # only. Furthermore it is NOT permitted to copy any of the  #
14. # contents or host on any other site without permission or  #
15. # meeting the full criteria of the below license terms.     #
16. #                                                           #
17. # This work is licensed under the Creative Commons          #
18. # Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike License.             #
19. # http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/         #
20. #                                                           #
21. # Entries with comments are all searchable via Google.      #
22.
23.   127.0.0.1 localhost.localdomain localhost
24.
25.   ::1 localhost #[IPv6]
```

I've numbered the lines so that you can follow along much more easily. You can turn on line numbering in your favorite text editor, so that you can follow along more easily, as well. All the lines that start with # are comments. In fact, everything following a # is treated as a comment, as in line 25, where there's a comment at the end of the entry.

In line 23, you need to change the host name to match the host name you use on your computer. So, in my case, line 23 should read like this:

```
127.0.0.1 parnote-toshiba.localdomain parnote-toshiba
```

You will also need to change line 25 to read something similar to this:

```
::1 parnote-toshiba #[IPv6]
```

Again, make sure to use the host name that you used to name your computer. Attempting to edit or change the contents of a hosts file – which would be anything beyond the first 25 lines shown here, and beyond the editing shown here – is foolish and fits with a six letter word that starts with "s" and ends in "d" that rhymes with the word "squid." Unless you really know what you're doing, the rest of the file contents are best left alone. Also, wildcard characters, such as "*" and "?", are not allowed in a hosts file (which is why you see so many addresses that look remarkably similar). So, while you may be tempted to reduce the hosts file size with the use of wildcards, the results will disappoint you. My recommendation is to not even try.

Caveats

OK … such changes can't possibly come without some other things to be cautious about. Before downloading the hosts file and replacing your current hosts file, you will want to (as the root user) go into the /etc folder and rename your current hosts file to something like hosts.bak or hosts.orig. This is especially true if you already have a custom hosts file, as this newly downloaded hosts file will end up replacing your current hosts file. How to do this via a graphical file manager will vary, depending on which file manager and which desktop environment you're using. But, you can do this very easily from the command line, and it's the same for all desktop environments. If you downloaded your new hosts file to your Downloads directory, and called it hosts.txt, you can complete all the steps by entering the following at a command line prompt:

```
cd Downloads
tr -d '\15\32' < ./hosts.txt > ./hosts.new
su
<enter root password>
cd /etc
cp hosts hosts.bak
cp /home/<your-username>/Downloads/hosts.new /etc/hosts
(Answer "y" when asked if you want to overwrite the hosts file)
```

In case you didn't know, Windows/DOS and *nix computers write text files differently. Windows/DOS computers place a CR+LF (carriage return + line feed) at the end of every line, while *nix computers place only a LF at the end of every line. The first line switches to the Downloads directory in your /home folder. The second line removes the CR used at the end of every line in a Windows/DOS text file, leaving just a LF character at the end of every line, as *nix text files expect. If you don't perform this step on a hosts file that is formatted for Windows/DOS

(and the one at winhelp2002.mvps.org is formatted for Windows/DOS), it won't work correctly under *nix. Your *nix computer will see it as one long line, and the lines won't be properly parsed.

Removing the CR from the hosts.txt file also shaved over 15 KB from the hosts file size on my computer. This makes sense, since there are over 15,000 entries (lines) in the new hosts file. Each CR in the Windows/DOS text file counts as another byte. As you can see, these can add up, one byte per line. If you're not sure if a file is written in Windows/DOS text file format or *nix text file format, go ahead and run the command anyways. If no CR+LF is found at the end of each line, no changes will be made.

Updating your hosts file in this manner allows you to restore your previous hosts file, should you ever decide to do so. In that case, all you have to do is delete your hosts file and rename your hosts.bak file to hosts … all as the root user, mind you. Just that quickly, your previous hosts file is restored.

Also, keep in mind that the hosts file will be parsed for every web page you visit. A longer hosts file will take longer to parse than a shorter file (although, with today's fast, modern multi-core processors, the time difference may be barely perceptible). Thus, you may notice faster browsing with a shorter hosts file, compared to a longer hosts file. But compared to not blocking all those ads and other undesired elements on a web page, even a longer hosts file will display faster browsing than loading up/downloading all the junk on a lot of web pages. The tradeoff here with a shorter hosts file vs a longer hosts file is that a shorter hosts file is (more than likely) going to block less of the undesired garbage from being downloaded. This is going to be an especially important consideration if you are on a metered (limited) bandwidth internet plan, or if you are still using a dialup connection.

If you have Ghostery, AdBlock Plus or any other ad blocker installed, you might want to disable them in your browser(s). Otherwise, you won't really know if your new hosts file is doing its job. Of course, there is nothing to prevent you from using any of the browser add ons to block garbage on websites, in addition to your new hosts file. Some users view the use of both as an extra layer of protection.

The other problem you might encounter is that things you may not want to be blocked are being blocked. If you're brave (refer to my earlier warning about editing the meat of the hosts file), and if you know from where those items originate, you will have to comment out their originating address from the hosts file. Remember, a line that starts with "#" is treated as a comment, and the rest of that line is ignored. So, placing a "#" at the beginning of the line will eliminate the address that follows from being blocked. The other (and better) alternative is to find a less restrictive hosts file. You can perform an internet search for alternatives.
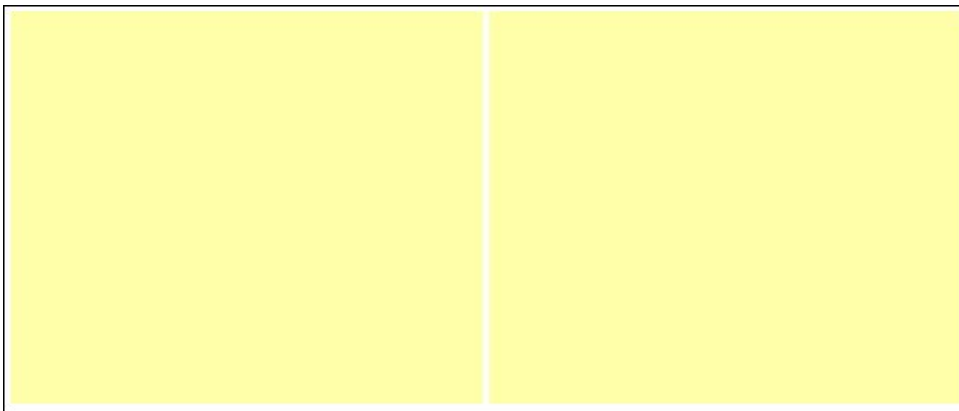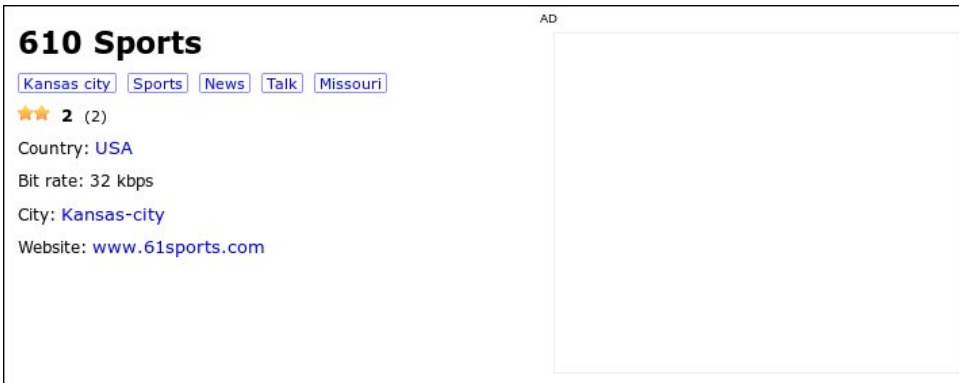
Finally, you will want to keep in mind that your hosts file will need to be updated periodically. At the minimum, you will want to update your hosts file every month. New PCLinuxOS user reelcat provided scripts that he uses to update his hosts file. He also provided some very important additional considerations, as well as some alternative hosts files that can be used. All you have to do is set up a crontab task to run the scripts on a regular basis, in the background without you having to do anything else.

Does It Work?

Yes, it does. It works quite well. Below are some screenshots from some web pages that I visited after switching to the use of a custom hosts file.

610 Sports

Kansas city   Sports   News   Talk   Missouri

⭐⭐ **2** (2)

Country: USA

Bit rate: 32 kbps

City: Kansas-city

Website: www.61sports.com

The top image was displayed when I visited the Digital Inspirations tech blog. The second image was displayed on YouTube, when it couldn't load the ad. The third image was displayed on the delicast streaming audio site, when it couldn't load the ad image (barely visible at the far right of image). The ads on another site I frequent is replaced by empty yellow boxes, in the fourth image. So, as you can see, the results you get may vary for each site you visit where the intrusive ads are blocked. Sometimes, as on the Digital Inspirations tech blog, they replace the ads with a plea for mercy. Sometimes, as on YouTube, you get the typical Firefox "can't connect" screen. And other times, you simply get nothing, as on the delicast site, or empty boxes, as in the fourth image.

Summary

Using a custom hosts file to make your web browsing less "intrusive" is an excellent idea. The added benefit is that it works on a systemwide basis. So, you can have as many web browsers installed as you want, and it will block all the garbage in every one of them … all without the installation of ad blockers in any

of them. I have Firefox, Chromium, Chrome and Midori installed (although I use Firefox the vast majority of the time). I did notice one thing when I launched Chrome that no ad blocker had ever successfully accomplished: the text banner ads in Gmail were gone – as in nowhere to be found, missing, not displayed. In Firefox, I had managed to successfully block the text banner ads in Gmail via AdBlock Plus, but I had never been able to block them in Chrome.

Using a custom hosts file will speed up your browsing. It will also save bandwidth, which is especially important when using metered (limited) internet services, or if you are unfortunate enough to still be using a dialup connection. It blocks the garbage so it is never even downloaded.

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by francesco bat, March 28, 2015, running KDE.

CafeTran: Powerful CAT Tool
For Any Translation Project

by Khadis

Did you know how translators spend their hours to translate and or localize documents, game transcript, or user interface of an application? They all use CAT tools. Some of them may work on online platform, but mostly, they emphasize on CAT tools.

CAT, or Computer Aided Translation, is an application that helps translators to translate any file format, from source language into target language. CAT is not an "automatic" translation tool nor dictionary, but it is a "memory" tool which will save the translation results as memory for the next similar translation projects. By using CAT tool, the same (or similar) translated phrases, sentences, or even paragraphs will be translated automatically. And it saves a lot more time than doing copy-paste.
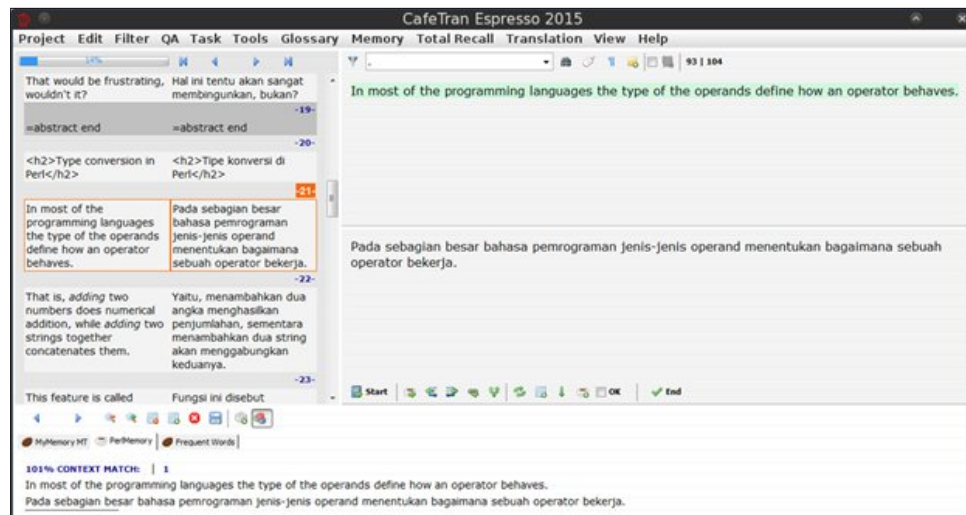
CT on my PCLinuxOS machine.

And for almost more than a year, I have relied on CafeTran as one of my weapons for voluntarily translating Perl tutorials and other paid translation projects. CafeTran, what is that?

CafeTran (or people called it CT) is a Java-based CAT tool application, which is packed with features, eye-friendly and simple to use with its own advanced translation engine supported by online translation systems and resources. It has some main features such as enable to handle lots of file formats, and it can run on Windows, Mac, and Linux.

CT Main Features

Cross-platform. CT is a professional Java-based cross-platform CAT tool, which enables us to run it on Mac, Windows, and Linux. This gives us benefits. While many other professional CAT tools only run on Windows, CT runs well on Linux and Mac. So, if we or our team have different machines with different operating systems, it would not be a problem.

Stand-alone. CT doesn't need other applications to work with (or to collaborate). Its installation takes no time and it is very light, since it consumes only few RAM capacities. It starts fast because there are not many modules to load. On Linux, it can be run directly from the folder where it is extracted.

Handles lots of popular file formats. As a professional CAT tool, CT handles lots of popular file formats to work with, including XLIFF, TTX, SDLXLIFF, SDLPPX, TXML and even TT files in Github without converting them first. Other formats, such as TXT files, HTML, Microsoft Office files (.docx, .xlsx, .pptx, .xml), OpenOffice formats (.odt, .odg, .odp, .ods), Transit files, MemoQ files, Deja Vu files, Wordfast files, AutoCAD .dxf files, RESX files, Adobe FrameMaker files, and Adobe InDesign files are also supported. If our documents contains formatting tags, CT can handle them easily. CT is also integrated with internet resources and machine translation, such as Google and Bing, to help translators find references.
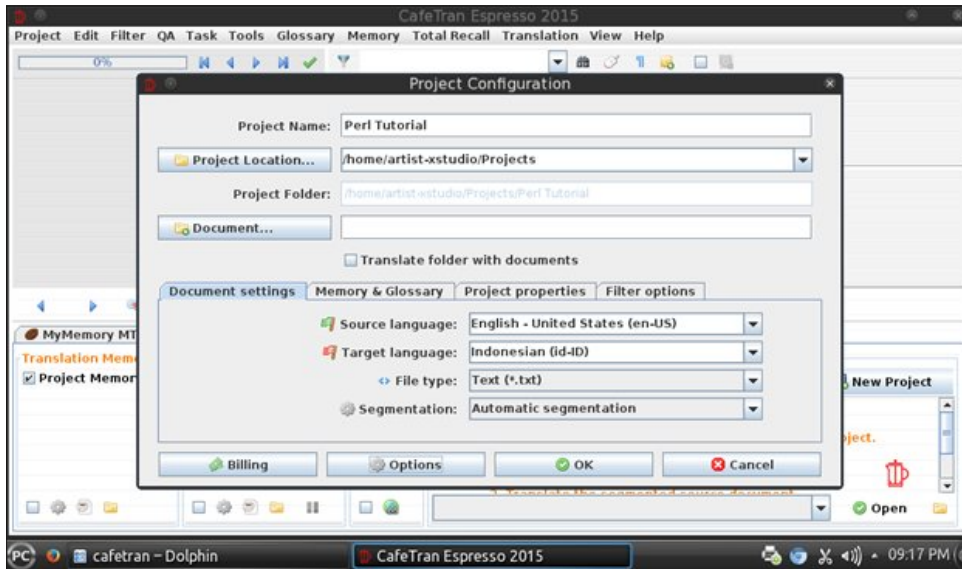
Auto-complete. The auto-text or auto-complete or auto-writer function (you might more familiar with text-expander, phrase-expander, or word-expander) enables us to prevent "Repetitive Strain Injury" caused by typing the same words, phrases, or sentences frequently. This feature also saves time and reduces typos by suggesting words or phrases on-the-fly based on the activated memories.
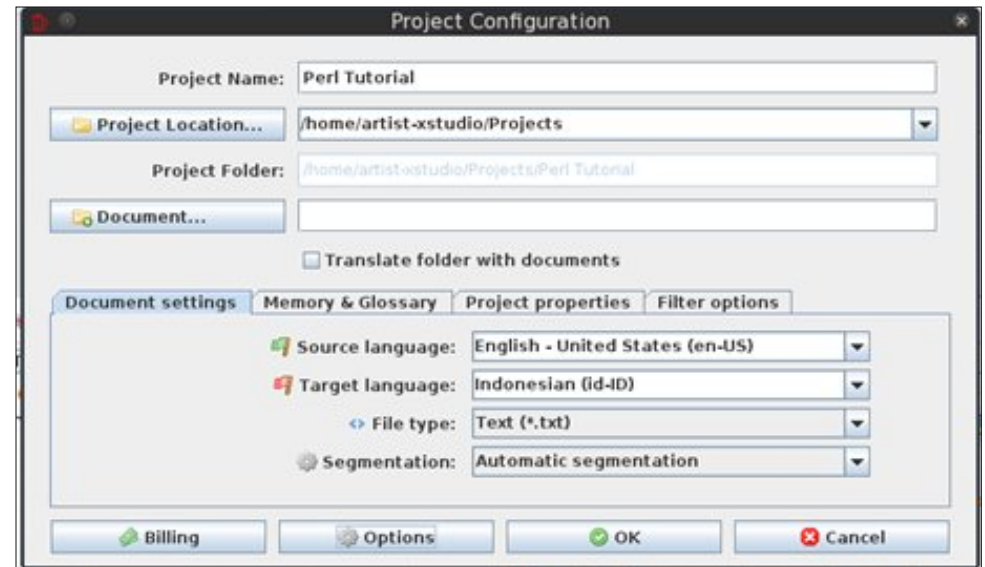
Project configuration.

Translation memories. Another benefit in using CT is the ease of creating translation memories from the existing translation and we can use as many as translation memories as we like and need. We can open the necessary memories by accessing **Memory – Open Memory** (shortcut: **Alt + Shift + O**).
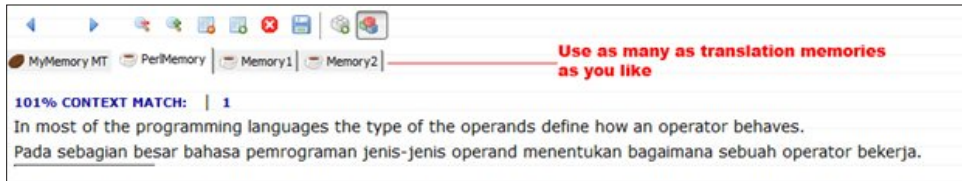
CT memories

Network memory server. Whenever you work in a team, you will really need this feature to collaborate with each other in building a solid translation team by sharing translation memories over the network.

GUI. Translators might not focus on how their CAT tool looks like, but CT provides an option to change the user interface theme and color. It might be useful to change our moods while translating. Not only can we change the appearance, but we can also switch the interface language. The supported interface languages are EN (English, especially US English), PL (Polish), and LV (Latvian). All these functions can be accessed from **View – Appearance**.

How to Use CafeTran

Professional translators may find no difficulties in migrating from another CAT tool to CT. For beginners, however, you can follow the tutorial in http://cafetranhelp.com/, or follow the simple steps below.

To create new project containing your need-to-translate documents, point your mouse to **New Project** section in the bottom right corner.


CT project manager

Then, in the new window, you will be asked to enter the project name, project location, and the location of original file(s) that will be translated. If you want to add more source documents to the current project, you can add your documents through **Project – Add document …** menu.

Here, you also need to decide the language pair (source and target language), choose the file type, segmentation mode, set the billing information, and even modify some parameters inside the **Options** menu (button). You can set the project properties too, specifying the name of client, translation subject, etc. Then, you hit **OK**, and the document will be ready to be translated. Just click **Start** button and start translating.

There, in your CT, you will see three areas under menu bar: the upper left area (for the source segment/document), the upper right area (for the translation), and the wide lower area (for the translation memories).
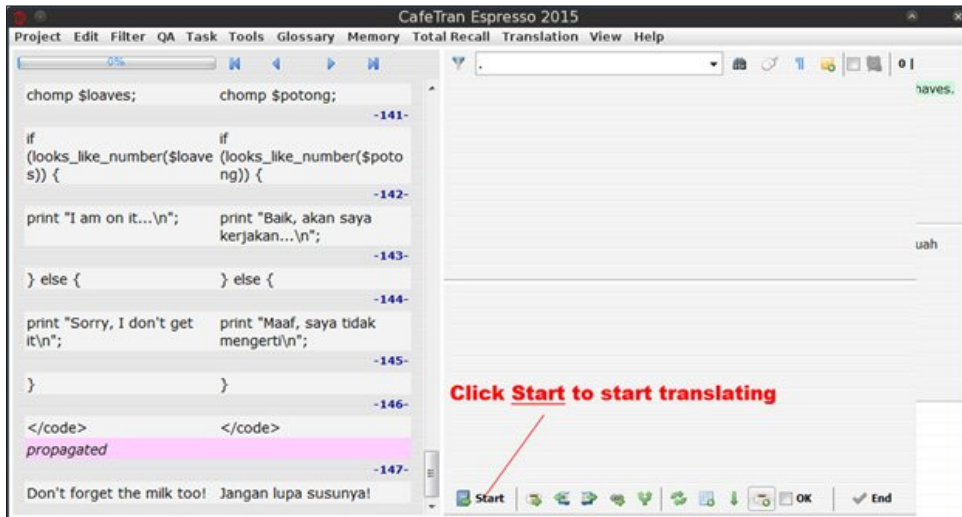
Start translating

Along your translation process, you can always monitor your translated and untranslated segments from the **Filter** menu. You can always switch from **All segments** view mode to **Translated segments** mode, or to **Untranslated segments** mode, or other necessary view modes.

Later, after you finish translating your document, you can export it back to the original format by pressing **Alt + End** button or access **Project – Export current document** menu. But, before you export and state the document as "final", don't forget to check the consistency of your translations first, through **QA – Check all** menu. This will ensure that your translation result is consistent and 'QC-passed'.

Can't Translate Your File?

A lot of popular files can be processed easily by CT. But I can't translate my PDF file, then what should I do? PDF is a popular file format too. Well, CT has a feature that works as an alternative clipboard workflow to translate unsupported formats. This workflow makes it possible to translate segments from external applications whose documents cannot be easily converted to some editable form. The best examples are PDF files which can only be edited by special software. CafeTran can communicate with the other software by means of the clipboard (see: http://cafetran.wikidot.com/using-the-clipboard-workflow).

In the Project Manager, press the **Translate through Clipboard** button. Type the Project name in the Project Info panel and press OK. Open as many translation memories as you wish to work with. If needed, open other resources from the

Library such as a glossary, online or image references etc. Start the translation pressing the Start button in the target segment box.

In the document's application, copy a part of text such as a sentence or a paragraph. There is no need to paste it in CT. The first segment of the text will appear in the source segment box and the queries will be made automatically. Type the translation of the current segment in the target segment box. Use the Next or Add segment actions to proceed with the translation. The Add segment action adds the current segment to the memory.

When the last segment is translated, the whole text is transferred back to the Clipboard automatically to be pasted in the document's application. Carry on with this Copy-Translate-Transfer cycle until you finish the translation of the whole document. Use the buttons in the target segment box or keyboard shortcuts to go to the next or previous segment. When the translation is finished, save the project and any updated memories and glossaries.

So, it is easy and in my case, I don't need any other third party applications, such as a PDF converter. The pictures below show you the translation "project" taken from clipboard and the screenshot of source document. Both of the pictures and the preview of source document are only for illustration. The original PDF document can be found here.
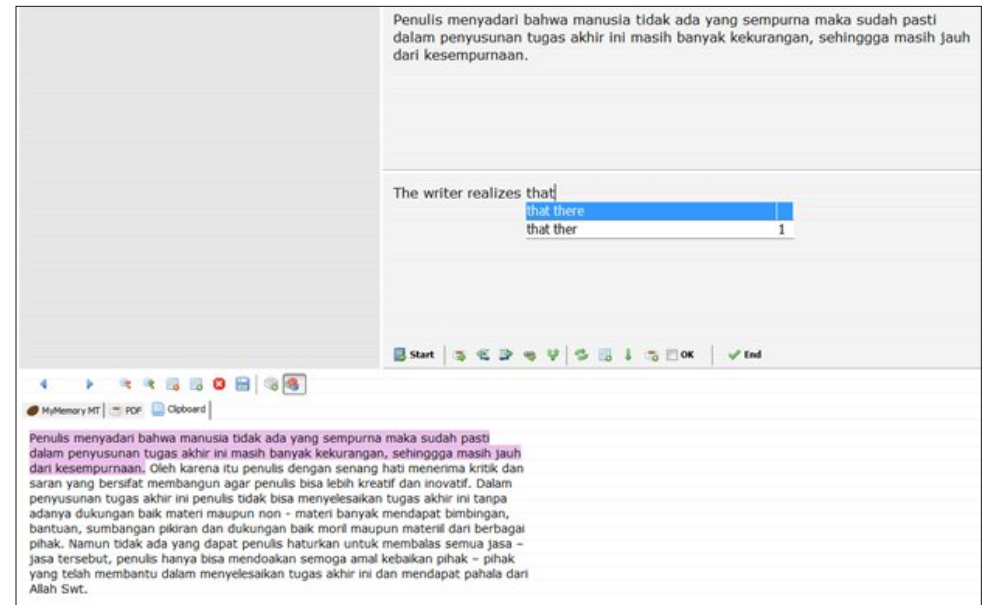
Segments from clipboard
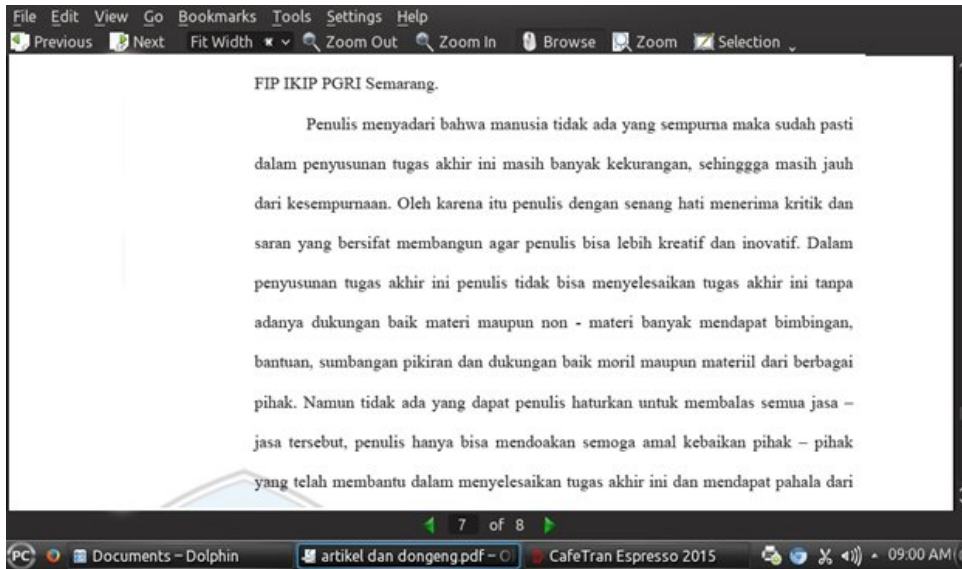
Original clipboard source

CafeTran vs. OmegaT and Lokalize or other open-source CAT tools

The price of CT is 140 Euro, and the license can be installed on two computers: e.g. in your PC and laptop for travelling. Us Linux users might not want to spend that much money for buying a modern CAT tool as we have OmegaT and or Lokalize. But I have tried to use OmegaT and Lokalize, but they don't have superior functions such as Network Memory Server, autocomplete capability, and they still unable to handle several file formats (handling any file format is important, because with this feature, we do not need to install different CAT tools for different file formats).

All in all, CT is a must-have CAT tool if you want to keep your translation process simple, fast, and consistent.

Application information

Download : http://www.cafetran.republika.pl/download.html
File size : + 9.5 MB
OS : Linux, Mac, Windows

PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight: Ye Fractious Falcon

As Told To Smileeb

Here is Ye Fractious Falcon

How old are you?

58 years, 5 months, 14 days, 16 hours, 20 minutes as of 11 Feb 2015 @ 1356 CDT

Married, single or what?

In my second marriage for 27 years (as of 23 Feb 2015). You might say I learned a lot in my first marriage.

Children, grandchildren?

Two children: My son (by my first wife) is coming up on his 35th birthday this year. My daughter (by my present and future wife) will be 28 this year.
No grandchildren as yet.

Retired or working and for how long and at what.

Retired? Retirement has killed too many of my friends, so to Almighty Heck with that!

Not to be too much of a downer, but I'm presently unemployed. My work career spans from June 1974 to early October of 2014. At that time I had been working at Michoud Assembly Facility as a contractor to NASA when I fell victim to a reduction-in-force layoff and found myself, after ten years of distinguished service and direct participation in 16 Space Shuttle missions, out of work.

I am a Multi-Craft Technician. If it concerns instrumentation, light mechanical, process controls, electronics, low voltage electrical, programmable controllers, HMI systems, or computers, I'm the man you need.

I'm almost ready to give up finding work, and just open a computer repair shop. It's gotta be better than hunting for a skilled labor job in the Deep South.

What is the area you live in like. Weather, Quietness, Scenery.

Like much of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Waveland has two kinds of weather: hot and wet, and cold and wet. Don't worry though, because if you don't like the weather just wait a minute and it will change.

Are you handy with your hands and have any hobbies.

I've worked with my hands most of my adult life. I was in the process of building a MendelMax 3D printer when the layoff came. When I go back to work, I'll buy the stepper motors and a few other fiddly bits I need and get it going.

Hobbies? Where do I begin? In no particular order, here are just a few of my main interests:
Bass Guitar - I've been playing bass guitar since I was 15. I started playing in high school to get in the Stage Band, so have had a lot of exposure to jazz, big band, and a lot of musical styles over the many years of my love affair with the instrument. After high school I've been in several bands, collaborated on a few internet musical projects, and even did some studio work on a couple of albums.

Gaming - In particular, old-school tabletop role-playing and wargames (historical, naval, and space battle simulations, mainly). If your ears perk up at the mention of Arduin, Traveller, Full Thrust, and the like, I'm your guy.

Computers - I've been poking around in the guts of computer equipment since the late seventies. I've always been fascinated by how they do the things they do. After doing it for a hobby for several decades, in 2003 I certified as a CompTIA A+ Certified Professional. Coincidentally, that was the first year I stopped dual-booting Windows and went Microsoft-free.

Ancient Egypt - I have been fascinated by ancient Egyptian art, hieroglyphics, and what we know (and continue to learn) about their history and culture at the dawn of civilization. Any kind of art exhibit, book, or website on ancient Egypt or Egyptology has special attraction for me.

Japan - When I was a kid in elementary school, I used to speak Okinawa-ben (the dialect of Japanese spoken on the island). Since leaving the island to come to the States (in 1968), I've learned more English and less Japanese as time goes by, but I never forgot how wonderful my time on Okinawa was.

Anime' - It was in Okinawa I learned to love Japanese 'toons! In its first release Astro Boy was

my introduction to anime'. For many years I followed what anime' made it to America, then, as DVD anime' started coming out I've rediscovered both anime' and my love for Japanese language, culture, and cuisine.

Reptiles - In particular, snakes are fascinating creatures to me. I won't bore you with the usual spiel about how they are misunderstood, etc., but it's true. I used to catch speckled king snakes, green snakes, and other non-venomous species when I was in junior high and high school, study and observe them for a few days, then let them go. Nowadays, I'm a huge fan of Al Coritz (otherwise known as Viperkeeper on youtube), and of his work with venomous serpents. (I'd be scared to keep a serpent in the house with our Calico attack cat.)

Science Fiction - In books, movies, comics, etc., etc., and especially etc., science fiction is my life (or is it that my life is science fiction?) Anyhow, if it involves flying saucers, bug-eyed monsters, cannibal plants from outer space, intelligent sharks, or even marionettes riding around in toy rockets, yeah, I'm an unabashed fan. Today's science fiction has consistently become tomorrow's science fact throughout my lifetime, and that trend will likely continue until I get abducted and returned to my home planet.

What is your education level?

I have an Associates of Arts degree with emphases in Mathematics and Computer Science. Life intervened before I could complete my Bachelors' Degree, and I've never stopped working long enough to go back to school.

Before becoming so educated, I did six years of active service in the U.S. Navy where I was a submarine reactor operator. The training I received was the equivalent of a Nuclear Engineering degree, but was classified, so does not count for college credit. Yay.

Do you like to travel, go camping?

I've traveled a lot in my life, first overseas to Okinawa, then to most of the fifty United States as a child, then to places I can't talk about during my tour in the U.S. Navy's submarine force.

Travel is cool. Seeing places you would not ordinarily see from you home is a neat experience, but I've been some places I'd rather not see again. On balance, I suppose it would depend where I was going.

Camping? I was a Boy Scout when I was in Okinawa, and learned the basic skills to be able to survive in the outdoors, thanks to a Scoutmaster who was a gung-ho Army Airborne Ranger, sir! Camping is fun, but I haven't done it in years.

What caused you to try Linux and join this forum?

I started with Linux out of my disgust for the direction I saw Microsoft going in late April of 1996. At that time, I didn't have high-speed internet (remember what a modem is? yeah...), so I bought a copy of the InfoMagic Linux Developer's Resource kit via mail order, and installed Red Hat 3.03 (kernel 1.2.13) on a home-built 386SX-25 with 4 Megabytes of RAM and a small hard drive. It ran painfully slowly, but it ran, and it gave me my first glimpse at an X window desktop.

I was hooked. To make a long story shorter, sometime in 2007, I discovered PCLinuxOS after burning through a double-dozen different distributions and releases, and I knew I was home. I joined the forums shortly after loading PCLinuxOS 2007 on a Dell Precision 220 Workstation and seeing how much faster and more stable it was than a certain German distribution that uses a chameleon for a mascot.

I've tried to be an active member to the limit of my time and meager talents, writing some tech articles for the magazine, and advocating for PCLinuxOS, and for freedom from systemd. The rest, as they say, is history.

If you want, send some pictures of you and area of interest.

Nah. What has been seen cannot be unseen. I wouldn't want to do that to the readers out there.

Thanks for the interview, and for your work on the magazine.

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

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

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by DeBaas, March 8, 2015, running KDE.

Game Zone: Forward To The Sky

by daiashi

About The Game

Forward to the Sky is a project created by talented artists. The project started in 2013 and has been continuing, updating the development progress in public. The game was greenlit with large support from both the anime community and people who enjoyed good 3D action platformer games.

Story

Once upon a time, there was a great tower in the sky. People were mining crystal with delight during the prosperous days. Until that disaster happened …. Time passed, the history had been forgotten. And now, it has emerged from the clouds again – the sky tower.

Game

Reveal the story of the sky tower! Forward To The Sky is a third person action adventure game in the sky tower ruin. You are going to collect all the crystal pieces to connect the story and everything will be revealed once Princess reaches the top level.

Feature

Using a puzzle platform, the game features a mixture of puzzles, action and adventure. It has a relaxing mood, bright art, adventurous but peaceful music, simple control and combat. This is a game everyone is able to finish and provides additional fun of difficulty to hardcore players. There are six unique levels to be explored. Battle the elements, run through the traps and play with interactive mechanisms to solve the puzzles. Find your path to discover the story in the sky.

System requirements:

Fully updated PCLinuxOS and Steam

Hardware:

Minimum:
OS: PCLinuxOS

Processor: 2.0 GHz Dual Core Processor

Memory: 4 GB RAM

Graphics: Shader Model 3.0, 256 MB VRAM

Hard Drive: 460 MB available space

About The Company

The are a small group of Anime/Game fans who make anime-inspired games. Join them in the discussions about their games and to participate in the progress of making them. You may not be making game, but you have the chance to participate in the progress. Your participation makes the development a very fun and enjoyable experience for them!

Some Gameplay Screenshots

The PCLinuxOS Magazine

Created with Scribus
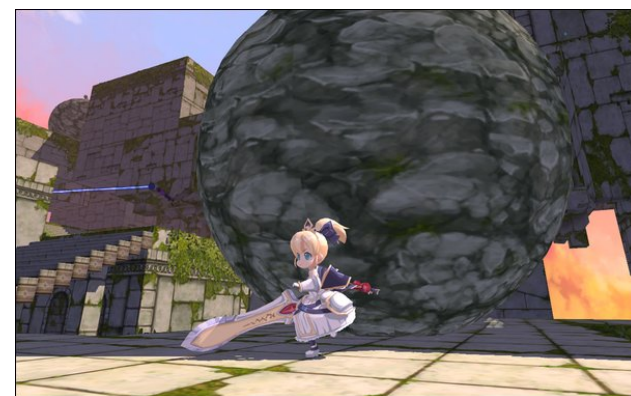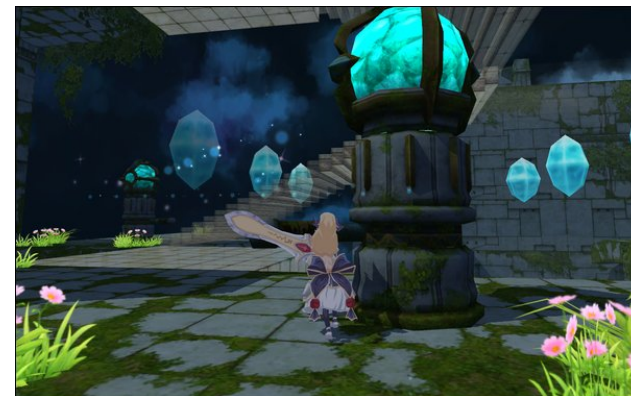
Getting It To Run

Install Steam (if you don't have it installed already), then start it. You will need to create a new account, if you do not already have one. Once you have Steam up and running, go to the store tab. Click on the Linux tab if you wish and search for Forward To The Sky. Click on and download the demo. If you have updated your system, including graphics drivers, you should be good to go.

http://store.steampowered.com/app/333250/
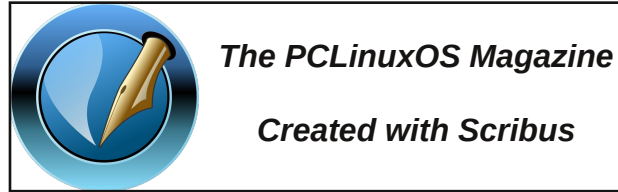
Screenshot Showcase
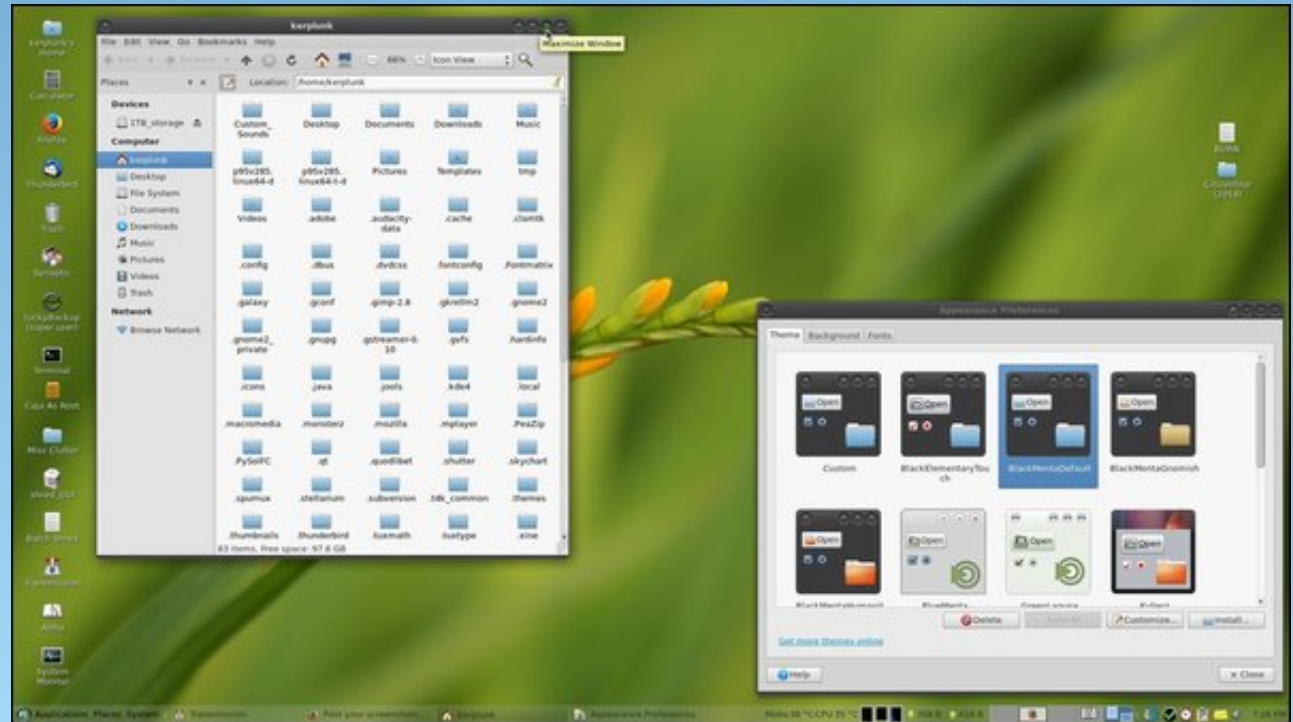
Posted by Linadian, March 14, 2015, running MATE.

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

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

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

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

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

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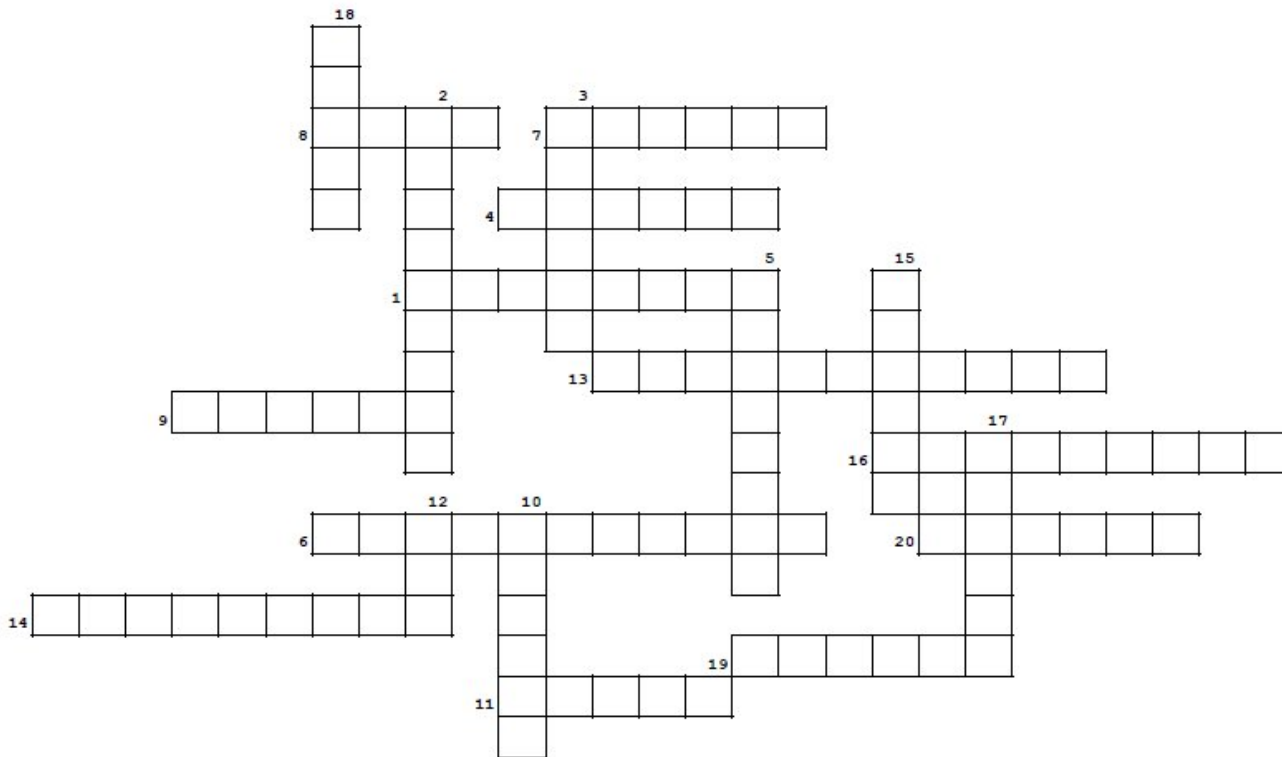7. Have fun! It's only a game!

Download Puzzle Solutions Here

B₃ D₂ A₁ I₁ R₁ E₁ Z₁₀

Z₁₀ I₁ O₁ E₁ D₂ F₄ R₁
Double Word

S₁ T₁ E₁ R₁ I₁ K₅ O₁

P₃ A₁ I₁ W₄ E₁ D₂ R₁
Triple Word

E₁ A₁ W₄ E₁ K₅ R₁ D₂
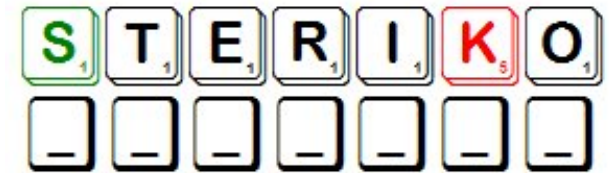
Possible score 299, average score 209.

PCLinuxOS Crossword Puzzle: April 2015
Tools

1. Noisy but makes faster cuts
2. Use this to smooth your wood
3. Scrapes your surface a bit to make it even
4. To hit the nail on the head!
5. Can tighten bolts
6. If you need a smaller mirror
7. Makes raising a heavy object easier
8. To hold an object immobile
9. Can cut weeds or long grass
10. Small fastener
11. Can carve decorative posts
12. Hand tool for chopping wood
13. Tells how long your board is
14. Helps give you a straight guide to cut or nail
15. To hold things steady or tight together (until the glue dries)
16. Can be used to feed hay to the animals
17. Applies spackle or sheetrock compound
18. Checks to make sure your walls are straight
19. A hole-digger's tool
20. Specialized drill to make decorative edges and patterns

Download Puzzle Solutions Here

Tools Word Find

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

Axe
Chalk Line
Chisel
Clamps
Drill
Drill Press
Glass Cutter
Grinder
Hammer
Lathe
Level
Pickaxe
Pitchfork
Planer
Pliers
Poker
Power Saw
Pulley
Putty Knife
Router
Sandpaper
Screwdriver
Shovel
Sickle
Square
Staple
Tape Measure
Trowel
Vise
Wrenches

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Inkscape Tutorial: Creating A City Map

by Khadis

As we know, it's now getting easier to create a design in Inkscape. Moreover, Inkscape is now equipped with a symbol library, which will make our designing process much easier and faster. This time, I want to show you how to use items in the symbol library to create a city map.

As usual, please open up your Inkscape and set the paper size as you want. I use landscape A4 and use cm (centimeter) as the unit. Please look at **Document Properties** (**Shift + Ctrl + D**) to ensure that the paper size meets your need.

Using the **Rectangle Tools** (**F4**), draw a rectangle of your preferred size and fill it with 60% gray color. Before we continue, it will be better if you have already had a concept of your city map.

Assuming that that you already have the concept, you are totally ready to continue drawing the map.

Concept

Drawing a city map is quite easy. We only need several modified rectangles (which I gave a light green color) and some circles with different sizes as the ground, buildings, lake, etc. I also put some shapes and built-in symbols taken from symbol library.

I started by drawing a rectangle and modified it a bit using **Path – Object to Path** (**Shift+Ctrl+C**) menu. You can duplicate (**Ctrl+D**) the rectangle as much as you want and modify them using **Edit Path by Nodes** (**F2**) tool. You might want to modify some of the rectangles into trapezoid or other "irregular" shapes, and it's OK to do so.

Next, zoom to one of rectangles and create a small circle above it. Convert it into path by using **Path – Object to Path** (**Shift+Ctrl+C**) and grab your **Edit Path by Nodes** (**F2**) tool. Add one or two more nodes, then click and drag them to create tree-like shape. Give it a dark green color, and duplicate it (**Ctrl+D**). Put the new (duplicated) shape randomly and you may change some of them to a different color, too. Do the same step to create the "lake" shape.
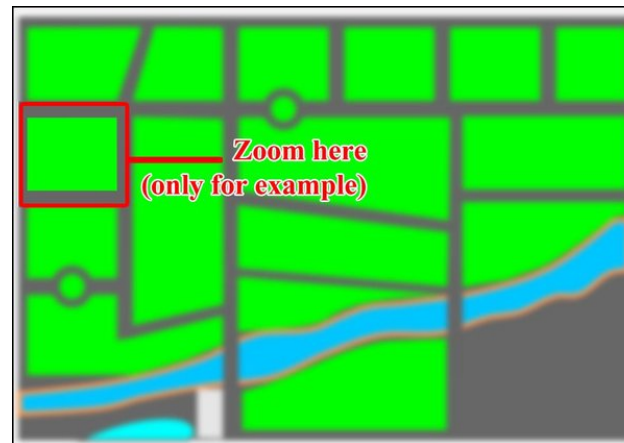
Zoom in to one of the rectangles
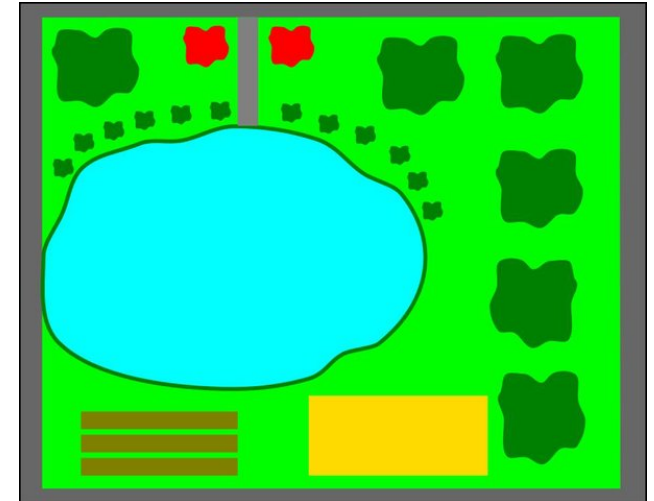
Draw circles, convert to path, and make small adjustments

For the other rectangles (or other land shapes), you can do the same steps.

Assuming that you have filled all the town parts with "pool," "lake," and "trees," let's access the symbol library by pressing the (**Shift+Ctrl+Y**) button. There, you will see some categories. Just point your mouse to the **United States National Park Service Map Symbols** category on the available drop-down menu.

Search the symbol(s) that you want to put into the map by clicking and dragging the symbol out of the box. Put somewhere on the map and adjust the size and the color (next page, top right).

You might want to put the symbol inside of a shape. So, create a shape, insert the symbol, and adjust the alignment using various options in **Align and Distribute** (**Shift+Ctrl+A**) box.

Symbol Library

Now, let's finish the road part. Zoom to the road part, then draw a white rectangle (no border) as the road separator. The size might be small enough, depends on the map size you want to create.

Road separator lines

Put this new rectangle accordingly. Open **Transform** (**Shift+Ctrl+M**) panel, then open the **Move** tab. There, you can see the movement direction—horizontal and vertical—and also the unit. I prefer to use centimeter.

Set the movement distance according to your need, whether it's horizontally or vertically. Example: Horizontal: 1.500 cm, vertical: 0.000 cm. It will move the object 1.500 cm horizontally from its original location. You can set the value into -1.500 cm to move the object in the reverse direction. Positive horizontal value will move the object to right horizontally, and the negative value will move the object to the left. And so does the vertical value. The positive value will move the object up, and the negative value will move the object down.
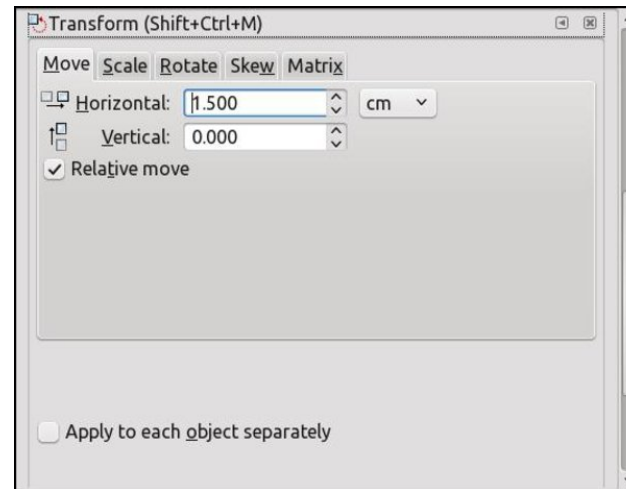
Transform panel

After you decide the movement direction and its distance, click on the new rectangle of road separator. Press **Ctrl+D** to duplicate it, and click **Apply** on the Transform panel. Repeat the steps until you reach the end of the road.

You can also put a river. I used the **Draw Freehand Lines** (**F6**) tool to create the river. Just click and drag this tool, click on the last point to start new line until you reach the first starting point to make this new object as a closed-curve that can be filled with color and stroke.

By using **Edit Path by Nodes** (**F2**) tool, you can modify the river shape. You can add or delete the

nodes and also change the curve model (smooth, symmetric, corner, etc.)

Fill the river with cyan as the fill color and light orange as the stroke or any other color combination that you think will be better.

What about the road that crossing the river? It's easy: just place a rectangle above the river with the same width and color as the road. Look at the picture below. At the first, I put a rectangle with the same width but in a different color. Then I changed the color so that it has the same color as the road.
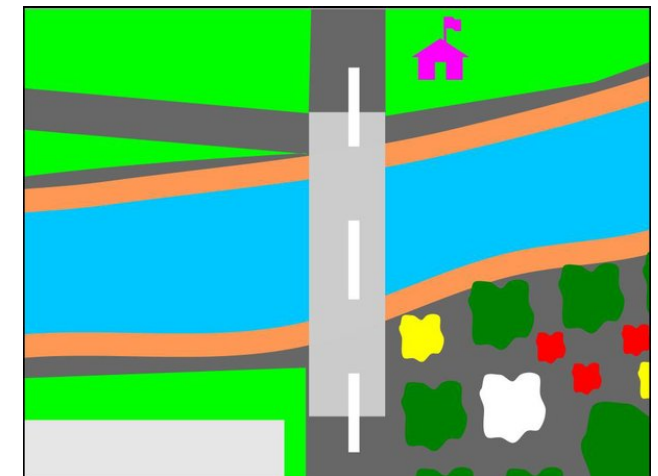

Before (above) and after (below) change

You can add text if you think that it's necessary.

Because it's impossible for me to show all the steps to create the whole map, I will assume that you have already understood how to make the objects to be put on other town parts. Just remember, I only use rectangles, circles, triangles, and Bezier lines. The rest (including the layout), later, will be totally depend on your imagination.

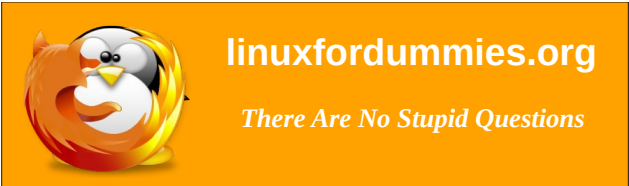Here is the example of my small work:

Screenshot Showcase
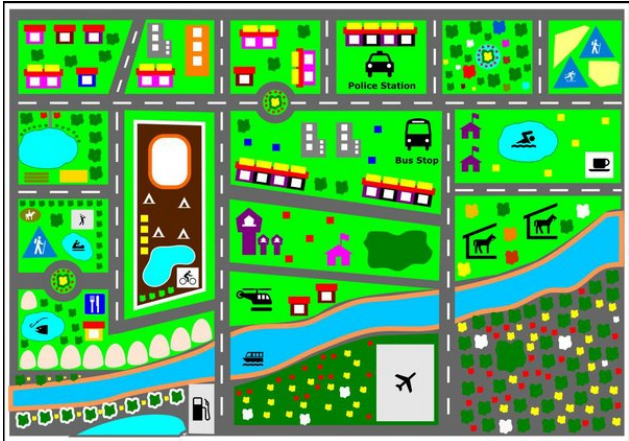
Want To Help?

Would you like to help with the PCLinuxOS Magazine? Opportunities abound. So get involved!

You can write articles, help edit articles, serve as a "technical advisor" to insure articles are correct, create artwork, or help with the magazine's layout.

Join us on our **Google Group mailing list.**

Testimonials

Greetings From A New User … reelcat

Hi everybody!

After a few years of only reading this forum, I decided to join in.

I've been a Linux user since 2002, when, after a year of experiments, I finally switched from MS Windows 2000 to Mandrake Linux. Since then, I never returned to Windows as the primary OS, although I keep a WinXP installed on VirtualBox, just for some corporate apps I have to use.

In 2007 I installed my first PCLinuxOS and found the rolling distro formula to be the most suitable for me. Since then, PCLinuxOS has been my primary OS. So, not a very long record of distro hopping. The reason is simple: this distro "just works" and works perfectly, and has everything I need. I'm not a geek and have no desire to edit cryptic config files to get anything working, (re)compile everything every second week or desperately struggle with drivers or software missing in the repository. Of course, when I need, I know how to use the command line.

Naturally, I keep trying some distros, but rather in VirtualBox or installing them on a separate partition. At this moment, I have KaOS Linux dual-booted and I'm getting acquainted with the new KDE 5 Plasma environment.

That is my short Linux story. I just want to say hi to everybody and express my appreciation to Texstar and the team, the community here and their outstanding work you do to keep this distro wonderful and appealing. I am really glad to join such a great company and I hope I will be able to contribute.

(56, retired military, enthusiast of meteorology, married almost 30 years, two kids, two cats, living in Warsaw, Poland).

Greetings From A New User … oscar123

About a month ago, I finally took the plunge and installed PCLinuxOS on both my own box and my wife's, for daily use. This was after some months of running the distro on a spare machine due to fears I'd had (raised by other Linux users) over PCLinuxOS being a rolling release and therefore being unreliable so I shouldn't waste my time with it. Well, that ghost is well and truly laid! Apart from a few trivial issues that I'm sure this forum will help me resolve, the journey so far has been great.

We've been a MS-free household for nearly a decade now, having gone over first to DR-DOS (with the Arachne web-browser) and then to Mandrake Linux which was a revelation. Since then, I've played with various other distros and quickly settled on one which served me well for years but needed frequent reinstalling to keep web-browsers etc up to date. My wife has been using another fixed-release distro that from a user's point of view worked similarly to the MS Windows she has to use at work, and although that too has worked well for years, maintaining and updating it has fallen to me - so you can see why PCLinuxOS's rolling release model increasingly appealed! The magazine is the icing on the cake.

Anyway, that's enough for now. I just wanted to say hi, and add a few words of appreciation here to express my thanks to Texstar and the team for all you/they do for regular computer users like my wife and myself. You've taken a lot of the difficulty out of Linux.

John

(62, medically-retired hospital porter, ex radio-ham and general electronics enthusiast, married nearly 30 years, no kids, one cat, living in the UK)

Honey Trap Rolling Release … Adi

Greetings from sunny California!

I would like to congratulate people developing this version of Linux, and also all the people answering various questions here. Believe me or not, I came to love PCLinuxOS precisely because of the quality support here. The answers from you guys helped me solve various problems in Mint, Ubuntu, and OpenSUSE. And the cherry on the cake is the rolling release model, this is the real honey-trap for guys like me ...

Looks like I had a good hunch to check out PCLinuxOS. In the past, I've seen this distro shooting up on Distrowatch and falling down; there was no good reason for the slip down. I am a hardware guy with some ties to all kind of programming to help in my hardware work.

Also, I fully embraced Linux for day to day work, and for home use. I even convinced my wife to dump Window$ and install Linux on her laptop. My choice is definitely Linux and free tools, and I see no need for Window$ stuff. I am forced to use it sometimes though...

As a newcomer to PCLinuxOS I still try to find my way around, especially re-learning to do things on another Linux flavor. The overall feeling is a very good one, looks like nothing is really wrong with PCLinuxOS. If there is a complaint I would have, it is not related to PCLinuxOS but to Linux in general. While it is wonderful to have endless choices for doing more or less the same thing, there is not one "default" option one can learn and use across various flavors. The lack of a "standard" choices for any action is in my opinion the single biggest brake holding Linux back against controlled operating systems.

Thank you guys for contributing to PCLinuxOS, you're doing a good work.

**Rotten Ronnie Makes The Switch …
RottenRonnie**

I was a confirmed WinDohs user until two of my laptops running Win7 began running slower and slower, so I decided it was time to try a lightweight Linux distro as an alternative, and PCLOS kept coming up again and again as a great place to start.

Right, sez I. I'll download it and try the LXDE desktop and see how I like it...

CPU and memory monitors showed it had an

incredibly small footprint on my older Centrino Dual with 1.5gb Ram, and although some hard coded buttons no longer worked, I was really impressed...

So here I am... Trying to learn BASH commands and pulling up 14 year old DOS commands when I should be typing ls -l instead. I'm loving it, and find that i need to work on my touch typing skills to get better at this.

Oh, I think I got my new job as a Tier 1 support clerk when I told my boss in the job interview that I ran PCLinuxOS, as he pointed over his shoulder at one of his stations and said "I'm running it as well." It also helped that we both love motorcycles.

Anyhow, I'm a total noob at this, and you will no doubt be astounded by my ignorance later on, but let me tell you, I really appreciate the support and guidance.

I'm running four boxes:

Windohs 8.1 (Virtual box with a few different OSs for staging purposes)

Windohs 7 & PCLinux LXDE dual booter (but I'm loving the PCLOS)

Windohs 7 Starter on an old Netbook (Acer Aspire One flavour)

AppleTv1 running Crystalbuntu (unmodified 720p)

Motorcycles, Dogs, Historical Fiction, Motorcycles and more...

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Cheers!

Hello PCLinuxOS World … kbran

I am a PCLinux convert coming from a long line of Ubuntu and ubuntu "clones". Well actually, my previous OS was openSUSE, but it had me pulling my hair out with system slowdowns reminiscent of WinXP.

I had heard that your rolling release offered a very stable KDE4 environment with no-fuss configuration so I decided to give it a shot. A couple of weeks in and I am very happy so far with how smooth it runs. I was pretty impressed too by how it was virtually almost fully configured and optimized out of the box. Every other distro makes it a huge pain to install fglrx drivers, which are necessary for my pathetic video card (thanks government employers). PCLinux had fglrx already installed and in use. I also like how PCLinux still uses good old sys init.d and grub and xorg with xorg.conf files.

I believe I will start recommending PCLinux to other people, especially those new to the Linux environment.

I am a web developer, mainframe programmer, and systems analyst living in Oklahoma.

New User … mr-mind

Hi, I think that I got this backwards; I posted in software first. I am in British Columbia, Canada. I start playing with computers in the late 80s 286/386/486 <DOS 5.0, Windows 3.0 vs Geoworks>, Commodore 64c era <LOL>. Other than a Timex Sinclair and a Commodore 'vic 20', my first computer with an HDD was an 'IBM Clone' 286/16 no math coprocessor <1 meg RAM in 256k chips> 64meg RLL HDD. Now I have this computer running PCLOS - Sony VAIO pcv w600g 1.5 Gig DDR pc 2700 <my slowest computer>, an "eMac <ppc not Intel running OSX 10.5.8>" a tower with an Opteron processor 146 <2GHz> with 3Gigs ddr2 RAM running as a dual boot LXLE/Kali, a tower with an Intel core-i5 @ 3GHz 12Gig DDR3 Ram running LXLE plus an old laptop and a tower <wife & children 'puters> also running LXLE. I tried installing Ubuntu, LXLE, & Kali on this Sony, but other than Windows XP, this is the only OS that would install <installer crashes with the other Linux versions>. I know enough about Linux to mess things up, so, I figured that I should consult people that know this Linux type to <hopefully> not mess things up too badly <LOL> when I 'tweak' it to do things that I want to do.

I should also mention that I am on the Aspergers scale <high functioning Autistic> and tend towards literal interpretation of instructions, e.g. to install a program listed in only the 'test' section in Synaptic Package Manager. I got told what to do, but it took me 15 minutes to figure out that <click [reload]> did not mean the screen where you add the word 'test' but the main Synaptic manager screen. So please be patient with me on this.

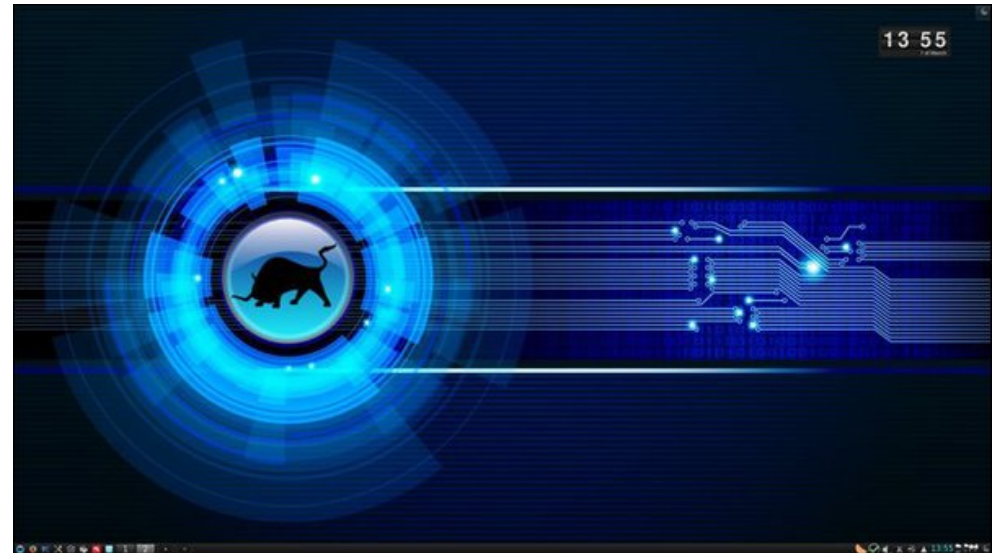## Disclaimer

More Screenshot Showcase

Posted by Ika, March 17, 2015, running Xfce.

Posted by JohnW_57, March 16, 2015, running Xfce.

Posted by Yankee, March 4, 2015, running LXDE.

Posted by Iuikki, March 1, 2015, running KDE.