

Free Software

Contents

Introduction	3
Linux	4
Live CD	4
Ubuntu	4
Kali	4
Tails	5
Office Suites	6
LibreOffice	6
Instant Messaging	7
Pidgin	7
Gajim	7
Graphics	8
Inkscape	8
The GIMP	8
Audio-Video	9
Ardour	9
Audacity	9
Kdenlive	9
VLC	10
mpv	10
Games	11
Frets On Fire	11
Liberal Crime Squad	11
Tremulous	11
Wikipedia list of Open Source Games	11
Kracking/Serials	12
BitTorrent	13
Nicotine+	13
qBittorrent	13
Transmission	13

Introduction

Today in the computer world much of the software industry is controlled by large businesses like Adobe Systems and Microsoft, that hold virtual monopolies over their products. This allows them to charge ludicrous prices for their products. For example: a copy of Adobe Photoshop CS3 costs around \$650 and the Home & Student version of Microsoft Office starts at \$149.95 (the Professional version costs \$500!). These prices make it so regular people have to pay through the nose just to buy basic software. Fortunately there exists a lot of open source software that you can get for free and is just as good as the overpriced mainstream software. From Linux to LibreOffice there exist many free (or at least very cheap) alternatives to expensive software.

Linux

As we are fighting to break free from corpgov, we should be freeing our computer systems from huge corporate giants like Microsoft and Adobe as well. Linux and BSD are free as in, "Take one; you can have it for no price," but much more importantly it is free as in liberty do with it as you see fit. The fact that the code is open to review makes it possible to trust that the software isn't spying on you or doing anything you don't want.

Live CD

A good way to start off is to play around with a Live CD, where you boot straight from the disk instead of the hard drive. Once you get used to it and can tell that your computer parts all work with the distro and version you want, and after you've backed up the things you need on your hard drive, install it. It feels very liberating to wipe Microsoft off of your disk, but it might be useful to have for some programs. You can either keep it on a different partition on your hard drive, or use a program like QEMU or VirtualBox to emulate Windows within Linux.

- QEMU - bellard.org/qemu/
- VirtualBox - virtualbox.org/

Ubuntu

ubuntu.com/)

Ubuntu is considered by many to be the easiest Linux distribution to use, with lots of tutorials available to get anything working like it should. You can download the CD and burn it yourself or have them sent to you for free, usually within a month.

Ubuntu now has a very excellent windows installer which does away with the need to burn a installation disk and will create an Ubuntu install alongside your windows installation until such time as you want to wipe windows for good.

As far as preparing yourself; try going down the open source software and Firefox/online document/email route as far as you feel comfortable then when you swap you will hardly notice the difference!

Kali

Test your knowledge of networks and systems with this Linux distribution designed specifically for penetration testers and hackers. Formerly BackTrack Linux. kali.org

Tails

Tails is a specific Linux distribution that routes all your traffic through Tor. It is designed to help maintain anonymity, and it clears any record of itself upon exit. You can also configure it to have persistent storage, and keep specific files for future use. tails.boum.org/

Office Suites

LibreOffice

LibreOffice is a full function, multi-platform office suite that is basically the open source alternative to Microsoft Office. It includes a word processor and desktop publisher ("Writer") , a calculator ("Calc"), a presentation program ("Impress"), a database ("Base"), a vector graphics editor ("Draw") and a mathematical formula editor ("Math"). In short, it does pretty much what Microsoft Word, Publisher, Excel, PowerPoint, Access and Equation Editor all do, but it's free to download and use, supports the OpenDocument standard for data interchange, has no licensing hassles, and is compatible with standard Microsoft Office file formats. It is available for Windows, Mac OS, and Linux.

- LibreOffice Homepage: libreoffice.org/
- Wikipedia article on LibreOffice: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LibreOffice

Instant Messaging

Pidgin

Originally called Gaim, Pidgin is an instant messaging client that is compatible with many of the mainstream clients (AIM, MSN, etc.). This allows you to have all of your messaging accounts available in one program. Pidgin is easy to use, and open-source as well.

- pidgin.im/

Gajim

Gajim is a client for the XMPP network that uses GTK. It supports OMEMO encryption, and most XMPP standards. Available for Windows, Linux, macOS, and BSD.

Graphics

Inkscape

An Open Source vector graphics editor, with capabilities similar to Illustrator, CorelDraw, or Xara X, using the W3C standard Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG) file format. Available in Windows, Mac and Linux.

- Inkscape Homepage: inkscape.org/
- Inkscape Wikipedia page: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inkscape

The GIMP

GIMP or GNU Image Manipulation Program is basically the open source version of Adobe Photoshop. It has many of the same features as Photoshop and other popular image editing tools. These features include: Color support, selection and masking tools, paths, effects, scripts, and filters. One of the advantages over Photoshop is that GIMP does not take up the whole computer screen while you use it, all its windows can be shrunk down to make them more manageable. Also there are many communities and forums for GIMP users. These communities give tutorials and allow artists to communicate and display their art on the internet.

- gimp.org

Audio-Video

Ardour

Ardour is a digital audio workstation. Its capabilities include: multichannel recording, non-linear, non-destructive region based editing with unlimited undo/redo, full automation support, a mixer whose capabilities rival high end hardware consoles, lots of plugins to warp, shift and shape your music, and controllable from hardware control surfaces at the same time as it syncs to timecode.

- ardour.org/

Audacity

Audacity is a free-to-download software that allows you to record sound on your computer. You are able to choose between your computer's direct input, microphone input, phoneline, and stereo mix. Not only is Audacity good for recording your own music (as it allows an unlimited number of tracks per file [however, adding too many tracks slows down the program and makes it glitch-y]), the stereo-mix record function allows you to record whatever is playing through your speakers. This means that you can easily rip music from live-stream web-radio, music players, Purevolume, MySpace, etc.

It comes with some basic built in studio effects, like a hard-to-control reverb and delay patch, a quality fader function, phaser, flange, tempo/pitch controls, right v. left pan control, and volume control.

The interface is very basic and easy to use, and allows you to manually affect and change any bit of any track you're working with.

- audacity.sourceforge.net

Kdenlive

A free editor from KDE.

- Homepage: kdenlive.org
- Wikipedia article: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kdenlive

VLC

VLC is a media player that supports almost all multimedia formats. It also allows you to easily create a music stream, which offers a great way to start up a Pirate Radio station!

- videolan.org

mpv

MPV is a media player which supports many media formats utilizing ffmpeg. It is heavily customizable, and has many options. It appeals to advanced users.

Games

Frets On Fire

Frets on Fire is an open source clone of the *Guitar Hero* games for the computer. To play you hold your keyboard like it is a Keytar (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keytar>) , using keys F1-F5 as the frets and pressing enter to strum. The game features three songs by Finnish guitarist Tommi Inkila, a tutorial, three levels of difficulty, a song editor which allows you to create tracks for other songs, and competition against other users online. Another feature is the ability to download different themes and songs for Frets on Fire off of fan communities and forums.

- fretsonfire.sourceforge.net/

Liberal Crime Squad

A text-based role playing simulation based on the story of the Symbianese Liberation Army You control a single revolutionary determined to change America in to a liberal state. Recruit, kidnap, infiltrate, and coerce your way into the nations eye and work against the stream to create your own country. Do not try at home.

- Download the latest version here: jonathansfox.com/lcs/lcs_win32_3.18.0.zip
- Explanation of gameplay here: lcs.wikidot.com

Tremulous

Tremulous is a free and open source first person shooter game. It is multiplayer and can run on almost any halfway decent computer. The game has two teams, humans, using traditional weapons, and the much more original aliens. It is a 100mb download, and installed takes up exactly 99mb. Therefore it is portable. It runs on Window\$ or Linux, and an unofficial Mac version exists.

- Home: tremulous.net
- Mac Version: apple.com/downloads/macosx/games/action_adventure/tremulous.html

Wikipedia list of Open Source Games

For some of these games, only the game engine is open-source software, and the game content is not open content, and is under a different license.

- en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alphabetical_list_of_open_source_games

Kracking/Serials

Warning: If you search the web there are plenty of keygens and software cracks. But be aware that a high percentage of these programs or cracks include some form of nasty malware. We still recommend trying to get a free open source piece of software that meets your needs and won't require a hard disk format or worst case even a reflash of the bios for the worst malware.

BitTorrent

The bittorrent protocol allows for easy downloading of large files as well as aiding you with the dissemination of your own stuff. Using torrents, you can find anything (free!) from the latest movies and games to applications and operating systems. The bittorrent protocol uses your upstream bandwidth to reshare as you are downloading.

Warning: Be sure to use a VPN if you live in a country where copyright law is protected. Mullvad is a good provider.

- Mullvad: mullvad.net/

Nicotine+

Nicotine+ is a free, open-source P2P client that utilizes the Soulseek network. While it does not support BitTorrent, it's on this list because it has similar tenets to BitTorrent.

- nicotine-plus.org/

qBittorrent

One of the best torrent clients available, this torrent manager is extremely lightweight and easy to use. It makes torrent creation very easy and torrent downloading even easier. It also lets you pick and choose which files in a torrent you want to download.

- qbittorrent.org/

Transmission

Transmission is one of the most popular torrent clients. It's simple and easy to use.

- transmissionbt.com/



Free Software

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