

1 Welcome to the Install Event!

Welcome to the LinuxDays Install Event. This document is designed to help you understand where you can find everything you need. Please also pay attention to any announcements we make.

Material

You will need a variety of things for the installation. You can find power outlets and LAN cables on the table, ready to be used. For all the other material we have set up a supply desk. You can find the location of this desk on the blackboard. There, you can not only get the installation guides and the USB installers but also USB hubs, LAN adapters and keyboards if you need them. Whenever you need to get material, please go to that desk and ask for what you need. When you go for the first time you will have to present your **Legi or ID card** and leave it there as a deposit. You will get your Legi back as soon as you have returned all the material you got from us. This is so we can prevent the material from getting lost.

Staff

Our staff is easily recognizable by their blue T-Shirts with our logo on the front and a large penguin on the back. We distinguish three types of helpers:

- General Helpers: Those are either TheAlternative members or volunteers. They are here to help you with the installation in case any problems arise.
- Patrol: Those helpers can be recognized by their orange armbands. Their job is to schedule the General Helpers. It often happens that certain helpers have special skills which are needed in some particular case or other, so the Patrol will inform those helpers of a problem that needs their special attention. Please do not ask the Patrol for help with your installation. If, however, you have been waiting for a helper for a while, please refer to the Patrol and they will make sure someone will attend to you as soon as possible.
- Auxiliary Staff: Those helpers are marked with green armbands. Their job is to do all the non-technical work, such as preparing food or handing out supplies. Please do not ask them installation-related questions. They are, however, very happy to answer your questions about the events or TheAlternative.

Demolaptops

We have some laptops prepared in the auxiliary room with different Distributions and Desktop Environments on them. If you have any troubles deciding which Distro or Desktop Environment you want, please feel free to go over there and have a look at these laptops. The location of the auxiliary room can be found on the blackboard as well. There should be a staff member present near the demolaptops to answer any questions you might have.

Food

We have free sandwiches and drinks ready for you. The location of these can be found on the blackboard. During the installation, there will oftentimes be moments when you have to wait for your computer to do things. You can use these moments to take a break.

Have fun, and welcome to the wonderful world of Linux!

Questionnaire to find out your needs

This questionnaire acts as a summary of your equipment and preferences. Fill it in and we will hand you an install guide with instructions that specifically fit your setup. Also, this page will act as a situation overview for you and our staff, so make sure your answers are correct. If you are unsure, don't hesitate to ask a helper for advice.

Your name: _____

1. What Operating System are you currently using on your computer?

- Max OS X Windows 7 or earlier Windows 8/Windows 10
 Something else: _____

2. Which Linux distro do you want to install? We have provided you a summary of some popular ones on the next few pages.

- OpenSUSE Ubuntu
 Something else: _____

3. What Desktop Environment would you like to install? Try out our demo laptops and have a look at the next few pages if you're not sure.

- GNOME KDE Unity XFCE
 Something else: _____

4. Do you want to dualboot, i.e. keep your current system and install Linux alongside, or completely erase your old operating system, including the data on it?

It is unfortunately not possible to erase the current operating system and keep your files. If you want to do this, you need a backup of your files on an external hard drive.

- Dualboot Erase current operating system

5. Do you have EFI Boot or Legacy Boot?

Windows: Hit Windows + R and type diskmgmt.msc. Hit enter. In the new window, look for a partition that's labelled as EFI System Partition. If there is one, you have EFI, otherwise you have Legacy.

Mac OS X: You have EFI.

- EFI Boot Legacy Boot

6. Do you have an MBR partitioned disk or a GPT partitioned disk?

If you have Legacy boot (see above), you also have MBR partitioning.

Mac OS X: You have GPT.

Windows: Hit Windows + R and type diskmgmt.msc. Hit enter. In the new window, look for your main drive (the one that contains the C: partition) and right click it (the drive, not the partition). Select Properties. Click on the Volumes tab and find the entry Partition style. It should say one of Master Boot Record (MBR) or GUID Partition Table (GPT).

- GPT MBR

Ready to go!

Please bring the filled in questionnaire **as well as your Legi or identity card** to the Supply Desk and we will hand you your personalized install guide along with all the material necessary for the installation.

You can leave these lines blank. They are for helpers to note down any special features of your system for reference.

What distribution should I pick?

Linux is an operating system of choices, which can be overwhelming for beginners.

First, you need to pick your Linux distribution. This page gives you an overview of the various distributions and their advantages.

In order to help you with the choice of distribution, we have two resources ready for you:

- Below you find a quick overview of some distributions we picked out for you.
- To get a hands-on experience, you can try some distributions on our demo laptops in the auxiliary room.

Note that at this point, we have prepared guides for **Ubuntu and OpenSUSE**. If you want anything other than that, we will gladly help you find appropriate guides online.

If you want more information or advice, you can ask a helper. Note, though, that every helper might have a different opinion on the distributions.

Ubuntu is a beginner-friendly, popular distro, which requires nearly no configuration. It comes with the Unity desktop, which OS X users may find familiar. There are also official Ubuntu spinoffs with other desktop environments (DEs). Due to Ubuntu's popularity, it's easy to find help on the internet when you have a problem, which makes it a good choice for newcomers. Unlike most other distributions, which are maintained by independent communities, Ubuntu is developed by Canonical, a software company. Be warned that many have concerns with Canonical's controversial stance on the ideals of open source software, the rest of the FOSS community, and privacy practices.

Suggestions: Beginners

DEs: Unity, Xfce (with Xubuntu), KDE 5 (with Kubuntu), Gnome (with Ubuntu Gnome)

OpenSUSE is a unique distro that targets both experienced and new users. It offers a great compromise between configurability and ease of use, making all its features accessible without "dumbing down" the user. It is famous for its YaST system configuration tool, which you can use to do tweaks you would otherwise need the terminal for. This distribution is maintained by the openSUSE community, but is based on the commercial Suse Linux Enterprise Edition. This makes it a stable, well rounded distro.

Suggestions: For users wanting a sophisticated and user-friendly system.

DEs: KDE, Xfce, Gnome, LXDE

Note: OpenSUSE Leap is only for modern 64-bit computers.

Fedora is community maintained, yet corporately backed by Red Hat; similarly to openSUSE. Fedora is normally the first distro to introduce new features, which are eventually adopted by other distros. Many Linux developers (including Linus Torvalds himself) use Fedora. Fedora normally comes with the GNOME 3 desktop, but also offers "spins" with different DEs. The default software repositories (repos) only include free software, but you can enable the RPMFusion repos which contain the non-free software. It is the distribution installed on most ETH desktop computers.

Suggestions: experienced users and developers

DEs: Gnome 3 (default); KDE Plasma, Xfce, LXDE, MATE-Compiz, Cinnamon

Linux Mint is a Ubuntu-based distro, which focuses on preserving the traditional desktop (like Windows 7). Its community is a lot smaller than for example Ubuntu's, which makes it hard to find help when problems occur. Also, it is maintained by a rather small group of developers, which means it usually takes a while for them to react on user feedback.

Suggestions: Beginners

DEs: MATE, Cinnamon

Debian is a universal distro, which has been going strong for over 20 years. It is the most forked distro. Debian is rather lightweight, requiring you to pick your own components, but configures them automatically to a degree. It strictly follows its principles of free software, although it includes non-free software on non-free repositories. It has 3 branches: stable, unstable, and testing. Debian has a reputation of being very conservative about implementing new features in their stable release.

Suggestions: more experienced users who already know what they want

DEs: Gnome, KDE, Xfce, LXDE, MATE

Desktop Environment Flowchart

Apart from the distro, you also need to choose a Desktop Environment (DE) for your new Linux system.

Typically, a Linux distro ships with a given Desktop Environment. But most distros come in multiple versions, which offer different Desktop Environments but otherwise work the same. This lets you choose how your new Linux system will look. For Ubuntu, there is a special distro for each DE (e.g. Ubuntu with KDE is called Kubuntu, the XFCE flavour is called Xubuntu etc.). OpenSUSE however lets you pick your DE when installing. This flowchart is to help you decide what Desktop Environment you could pick. It is not mandatory, though. You can use any DE on pretty much any machine.

Again, to get a feel for each DE, test them in real life on our demo machines. They are located in the auxiliary room. It’s important that you feel good and comfortable in your daily use with your DE.

Distinction “slow” vs. “fast” computer:

- indicators for a slow machine:
 Processor (look for a sticker saying one of): AMD; Intel: Pentium, Core 2 Duo, Core M, Centrino, Atom
 RAM (“Arbeitsspeicher”): 1GB or less (2GB could still be considered slow)
- indicators for a fast machine: Intel i5/i7 or recent i3 processor, SSD, 4GB RAM or more

Of course you gain speed and resources for your programs when installing a minimal DE instead of a feature-rich DE even on a fast machine.

