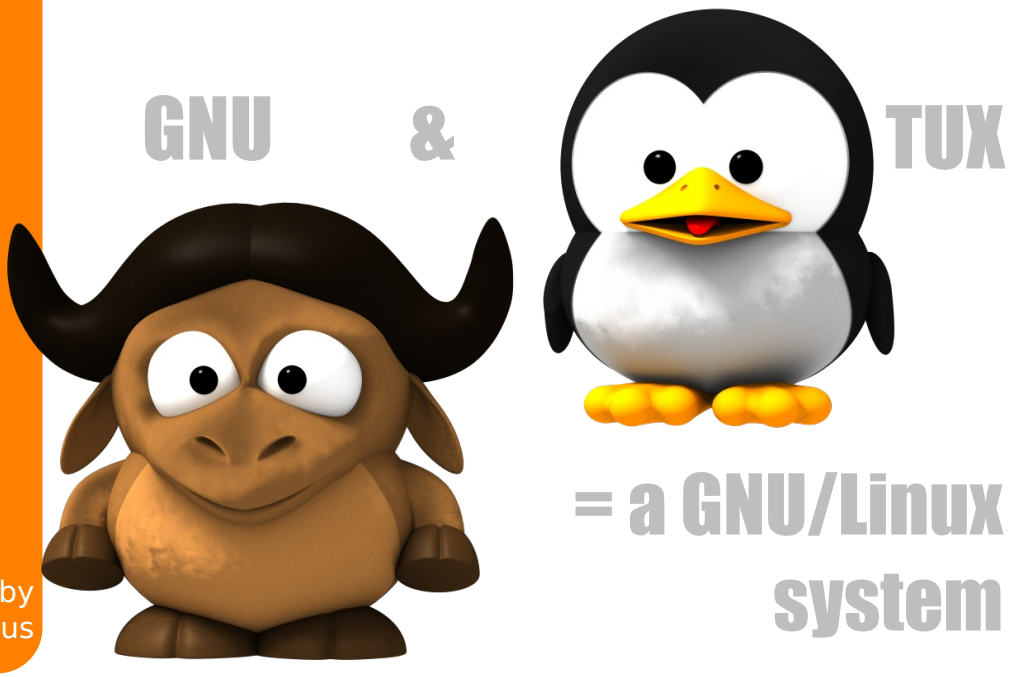
Discover Ubuntu !

ubuntu

Ubuntu 9.04, code name Jaunty Jackalope is avalaible for free download at http://www.ubuntu.com



Presented by
Aurélien Paulus

These illustrations are a mustery to you? This little guide is for you!

Preface

This document has been written in order to promote the Ubuntu distribution for the general public and to offer a quick and non-exhaustive panorama of the product. Ubuntu is an Open Source and free-of-charge operating system, capable of running on a large range of computers, from the oldest to the most recent ones. This document should be consider as a beginner's guide for those who would like to try the Ubuntu experience. It is brightened up with screenshots and briefly describes the main available software as well as their use. Obviously, the reference documents — far more complete than this one — remains those which are published on the official website: http://www.ubuntu.com/support.

Why a mini-guide?

As a computer expert and regular user of Ubuntu, I noticed that the operating system that I use daily increasing arouses interest from the people around me. More and more people are tempted by the idea to try out Ubuntu, or more generally Linux, in order to find a computer solution less restrictive, if not more efficient than those currently offered by the market leader. However, one does not enter the Linux world bound hand and foot. This is more often a personal approach accompanied by a learning period and the acquiring of new work methods. It is also the occasion to discover a rich and significant means of processing information stemming from an ideological thought process that the user community promotes and from which it develops its enthusiasm. Yet, today, we do not always have the time to take our time. The aim of this mini-guide is to rapidly introduce Ubuntu to the more curious among you, in all its simplicity!

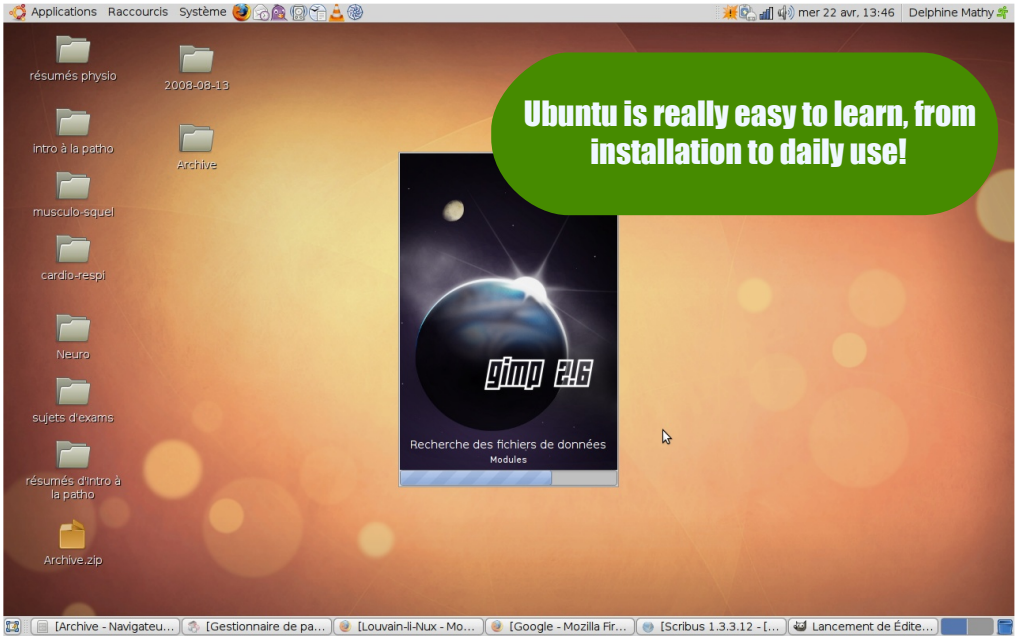
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Free document!

This document is the fruit of a personal initiative whose aim is to help out the Ubuntu community. Any suggestions or comments for its improvement are welcome. To contact the author, just send an e-mail to: aurelien [dot] paulus [at] gmail [dot] com

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Ubuntu, what's this?

Many of you without a doubt know about Ubuntu, as my readership is often already aware of issues concerning open-source software and are familiar with some of its leading products such as Firefox, Wordpress, Open Office, Audacity... which are often discussed on my blog (www.aurelienpaulus.net). This said, despite the undeniable popularity of Ubuntu, many people close to me in “real life” discover on my laptop computer — often with lots of interest — “Linux” as they still call it, or rather Ubuntu, without really knowing what it is all about. To put it simply, Ubuntu is not properly speaking Linux, although Ubuntu uses Linux. It's a Linux distribution; that is, a set of ready-to-use software applications that interact in a coherent ecosystem and meet several different objectives. Ubuntu's objectives follow three main lines of thought: zero cost, universal access and simplicity of use. This distribution is based on another one, Debian, that aims for unfailing stability of which Ubuntu intelligently takes advantage. There are loads of Linux distributions with each having various objectives from maximizing computer performances to be used as a server, as well as for use in a corporate or multimedia environment. Why is Ubuntu so successful? Why are so many people talking about Ubuntu and why do they cheerfully recommend using it from among many other solutions and free offers? Because it hits hard at the very essence of the reason of being of the computer: user and use. First of all, I believe that its zero cost, simplicity of use and complete ecosystem for traditional users play a major role in favor of Ubuntu. Secondly, it's a question of a high-quality distribution based on another distribution whose stability is unanimously recognized throughout the Linux world. Moreover, Ubuntu is developed by a real company, Canonical, that is committed to its quality. Ubuntu puts you in a computer environment that is inter-compatible, efficient and protected, impervious to viruses and attacks spread by the web. Finally, the Ubuntu project attracts a community of users thrilled by the product and ready to help everyone master Ubuntu and resolve any of the daily problems they may encounter, even for “dummies”, although I much rather prefer to use the term novice. In other words, Ubuntu is simple to use, easy to get the feel of and to manage. It is all in favor of the user, hey, isn't that you?

Linux, where and when?

In fact, we should say GNU/Linux (as illustrated on the first page), GNU being an environment consisting of a set of open-source software applications operating on Linux and often as well as on Mac OS X or Windows, such as OpenOffice for example. As for Linux, strictly speaking it is “only” a kernel, a program that acts as an intermediary between hardware and software. As such, we find Linux in all Linux distributions Linux. Linux is also found in the mobile device industry, of which the Asus (eeePC) and Acer (Aspire One) netbooks, certain portable telephones manufactured by Nokia and Google and even in brand-name computers such as Dell and IBM, which either supply devices 100% compatible with Linux, or with Linux pre-installed straight out (Ubuntu for Dell). Interesting question: why is Linux finally breaking into the marketplace? Likely because it's free, flexible (from a legal viewpoint) and more probably because over the past few years communities knew how to make this alternative trustworthy. Finally, as we are still living in a capitalistic society and therefore, when choosing between two products of equal quality, we abandon the one that costs more!

It's worth a look!

Why you risk being seduced by Ubuntu...

1. It's free!
Ubuntu is an Open Source system that is totally free! No one will ever ask you for fees or charges. Not now, not ever.
2. It works!
Once installed, Ubuntu immediately works and lets you get started working, use Internet and multimedia applications. No time lost with endless configurations and updates from left, right and center.
3. It's reliable!
Ubuntu is absolutely impervious to viruses and benefits from frequent security updates. Plenty of ways to increase savings (in both money and resources) without having to deal with “anti-thingamajig” software!
4. It's easy!
Using Ubuntu is child's play thanks to its succinct and user-friendly graphical interface.
5. It's fast!
As time and releases go by, Ubuntu starts up and runs software with the same quickness as at the very beginning. Who can top that?
6. It's free! (free like in freedom)
Ubuntu is free, open source, available at no charge and respects your privacy. But these are ideological issues... So, why wait any longer to try out such an opportunity?



Test-it for free:

•Request an official CD of Ubuntu (free shipping)
•Download the CD image and burn it at home to setup Ubuntu
•Or ask a friend or committed people for help!

Go to http://www.ubuntu.com/getubuntu

What about Jaunty Jackalope?

The most recent version of Ubuntu is the fruit of much work focusing on two main objectives: the notorious acceleration of the startup time and the standardization of software notifications.

Other than the usual improvements of “upstream” applications; that is, the entire software layer that is integrated in Ubuntu but which is not directly created and maintained by the distribution (for example, the word processor, graphical user interface, e-mail client, games, etc.), with each new version, Ubuntu offers many new features. This time, much thought was given to the way programs would interact with the user. Now, when a program sends a message that does not require a user action, a translucent bubble integrated with all your programs (instant messaging, wireless connections, etc.) will now appear in the upper right-hand corner of your screen. You will now be notified in a standardized way without being disturbed with your work or with what you are doing.

The second point at the heart of our attention is the startup time. The time your system takes to boot up when you switch on



your computer is greatly reduced. The idea is to encourage users to switch off their machine more often in order to reduce their power consumption by reducing the difficulty related to the startup time. This average time now fluctuates at around 20 seconds, depending on your machine obviously. You will easily become accustomed to this comfort and will become, without a doubt, intolerant of the slowness of other operating systems.



A multi-task system

In addition to being a stable and high-performance system, the management of resources on Ubuntu makes this system one that is capable of managing several tasks that are more or less heavy at the same time. For example, compress a video, play music and create a document simultaneously. You will quickly appreciate the responsiveness of your system!

A multi-user system



Ubuntu is a system that can really handle several users with each having different rights. A user that does not have an administrator password cannot install, remove or modify the configuration of your computer! You will always start your session just as you left it. The advanced rights management system also enables you to correctly and efficiently manage the parental control filters for your child.

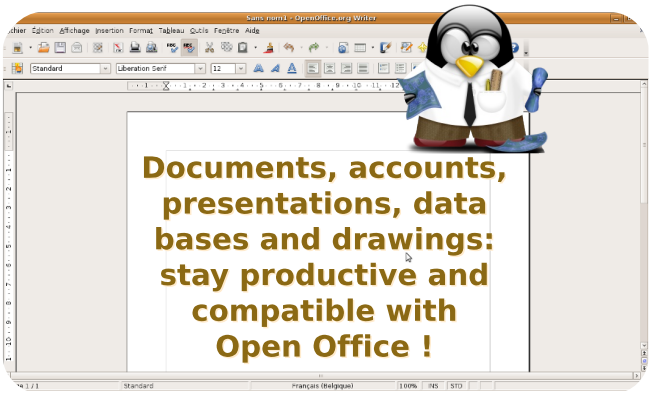


Work safely and efficiently

The big advantage of Ubuntu is that once installed, you can use it within the first minute. No need to worry about security: anti-virus and anti-spyware software become useless. Ubuntu is invulnerable to these attacks. Gone is the day when we wasted time updating each application separately: Ubuntu automatically checks for new features and security updates before asking you to install them all at once! Of course, during the download and installation of the updates, you can work without a problem. Better yet, you do not even have to restart your computer! In fact, you click on a button when it's necessary and then it's forgotten! You can concentrate on writing your report, on your next presentation or just simply on the film that you already watching.

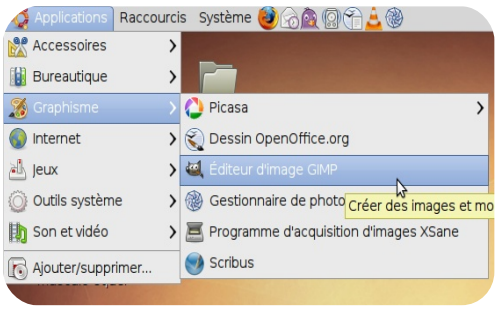
And that's not all. Freshly installed, Ubuntu offers powerful tools such as OpenOffice or Firefox and numerous other software applications that cover 90% of your needs and computer activities.

Finally, say goodbye to endless searches on the Net looking for an application that meets your needs and your configuration, not mentioning the risk of catching a virus or a pirate attack. With Ubuntu, hundreds of applications tested and recommended by the community are available and can be easily found in the menus (office, multimedia, games, accessories, education, etc.). Open the catalog, make your choice, validate and your new applications install themselves without you having to do anything. Even better, they organize themselves automatically in your menu under their respective heading! Who could ask for anything better?



Ingenious menus: find your software quickly!

Finished are the disorganized menus where you cannot find anything after a few weeks of use. All your applications are available within reach, in their corresponding category. This enables you to logically find your office suite and your organizer in the category “Office”, your browser, e-mail client and instant messaging in the category “Internet”, and so on.



Better still, your applications are no longer called “”Firefox”, “PowerPoint” or “Nero Burning Rom”,but “Firefox web browser”, “Open Office Presentation” and “Brasero disk burner”. What's more normal than naming the use of the application instead of its name — or rather the brand name that is behind it and which is not always easy to figure out what it does.

Ubuntu

And which Ubuntu will you choose? The distribution comes in different flavors and several formats that can be combined to satisfy anyone's tastes. For example, this document is based on Ubuntu 9.04 (Gnome) which is a short-term support version for the general public equipped with modern computers or purchased at the beginning of this millennium. However, there exists other versions designed for older computers or ultra-portables. Let's not forget educational derivatives or those designed for a server. Here is a brief panorama of Ubuntu variants so that you can choose the best platform for your needs.

Releases

Long Time Support releases

Support for security updates lasts 36 months. These versions are renewed every two years.

Short Time Support releases

Renewed every six months, and therefore richer in new features, these versions benefit from security updates for 18 months.

Beta releases

These versions appear before each stable version and are designed for test purposes by users and developers.

Graphical user interfaces

Gnome

A powerful graphical user interface, streamlined, simple and easy to use. The software is developed with the same logic. This is the default interface for Ubuntu.

KDE

Another graphical user interface that is more original and highly configurable, like a Swiss army knife (or a multi-purpose tool). KDE uses many other applications other than those used by Gnome.

XFCE

One last graphical user interface based on Gnome that is very light-weight and designed to bring older computers back to life. The range of applications is adapted for older machines, notably at the word processing level.

Platform

Desktopsl

This is the subject of this mini-guide: Ubuntu is the perfect companion at home, school, office or on the road; for work or for play!

Servers

Ubuntu also offers a product dedicated for servers that benefits from the well-recognized stability of Debian. This, for example, is the solution used by Wikipedia.

Mini notebooks

Ubuntu also takes on ultra-portables so that you can bring them with you wherever you go — a real nomad!

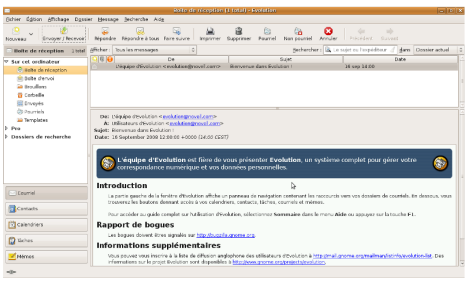
Ubuntu is pronounced "Oo-boon-too". It's a South African word difficult to translate into English. It means 'Humanity to others', or 'harmony in creation and sharing'. It can be translated by 'I am what I am because of who we all are'. Each version is designated by an animal and an adjective (currently: Jaunty Jackalope). Its code name is based on the release date, the first part designating the year, the second the month. Ubuntu 9.04 therefore was released in April 2009.

A true compatibility



Who still thinks that using Ubuntu means staying on the sidelines? Of course, sometimes there are some small problems with compatibility, but doesn't that also happen with Mac OS X or with the various versions of Microsoft Windows?

In any case, with Ubuntu you can work on Microsoft Office documents, chat with people on MSN, Yahoo!, and Google Talk networks (and many more), surf the Web, play music files, look at pictures and watch videos as with any other platform.



Chat on-line with Pidgin and connect yourself to any existing on-line network (Jabber, MSN, Yahoo!, IRC, AIM, ICQ, Google Talk, Bonjour...).

Consult your messages, manage your contacts, your tasks and your activities thanks to Evolution. This application will be your e-mail client and the ideal organizer for managing your professional projects and your electronic mail.

Do not worry about threats as, until further notice, your entire system is immune to viruses and spy-ware thanks to Linux and Ubuntu. When your receive a document attached to an e-mail, you can already start working on it. The same goes for what you download! It's sometimes disconcerting you go back to working under Windows. ;-)



Using Ubuntu doesn't mean you have to abandon all your favorite software. You can still use, for examples: Firefox, Openoffice, VLC, Audacity or even Flash, Skype, Google Earth and Picassa!

Surf and exchange in safety

Surf the Web with Mozilla Firefox. Be swift and fearless: the reputation of Firefox has nothing more to prove. Version 3.0 reaches lofty heights and crushes Internet Explorer in terms of rapidity, security and compliance with standards. Use an unlimited number of extensions to expand its functions, such as Foxmarks to synchronize your bookmarks between your various computers that also use Firefox, whether they are under Linux, Mac or Windows, at home or at the office!





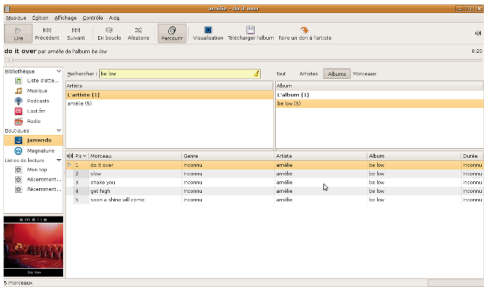
Enjoy thoroughly multimedia!



Manage your music

Manage your music just like before, or even better! Import your audio CDs and group your songs together in your music library. Then easily find them by artist, album, genre or title.

You can also access podcasts and free on-line music platforms; listen and download music as much as you like! Fantastic when you want to listen to something different!



Your pictures like never before

The first thing you do when you get back from vacation is to plug your camera into your PC. It's normal for Ubuntu to be as fast as you and import your photos into your photo library so that you can file them in your albums, add comments and view them on the spot with your friends and family or publish them on-line in a single clic if they live far away. It's really this simple; and with nothing to install! Isn't it great?

Simplified video

The Ubuntu video player is of unparalleled simplicity and is only equaled by its robustness. Stop looking for something else: Play, pause, fast forward and reverse, adjust the sound and display in full screen without going nuts!

A library for a thousand applications

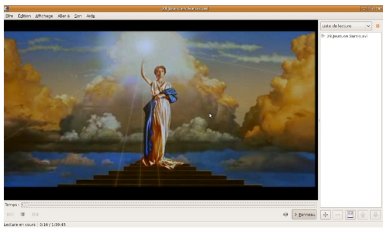
Contrary to other operating systems, Ubuntu uses “libraries” to decode each format such as mp3 and DivX. There are almost as many as libraries as there are formats to read. These libraries are used in common by all the applications that need to read one file or another that requires decoding or decompression.

The advantages? You save a lot of resources and disk space (no need to re-install a library each time you install an application or read a file). Better yet, no more confusion: your programs know how to read your files in function of the library and display the information as configured. You no longer need to install VLC for DivX files that cannot be read by your video player, Quick Time for MOV files or Windows Media Player for WMV files!

By installing a single additional library (to read AAC files, for example), all the programs installed on Ubuntu — or that will be installed in the future — will take advantage of the information.

And that's not all

Ubuntu has many other surprises in store, such as image digitizing software, an image graphics editor (Gimp), platform games and dozens of applications to install depending on your needs: video editing and 3D computer graphics (Blender), vectorial graphics (Inkscape), LaTeX word processing, document publication (Scribus), and emulation of Windows programs.



Say goodbye to drivers!

Real Plug & Play

On Ubuntu, everything really works as soon as it is plugged in. Mice, keyboards, printers, external hard drives, digital cameras, mp3 players, loudspeakers, monitors, projectors and USB flash drives: Plug in the device and it works in a second!*

No longer need to install drivers

Say good-bye to installing all kinds of software for your various devices (and good-bye mix-ups, menus overloaded with obscure brand names in English, untimely updates and resources wasted for switching on/off the computer). A simple example? All digital cameras can communicate with F-Spot, your image manager. Import, sort, and it's done!

Immortalize your projects!

No need to install anything. Ubuntu includes Brasero and you can stop getting burned by your disk-burning software: Brasero lets you burn your audio, video and data files on CDs and DVDs in no time at all!



*Even though the major weakness of Linux platforms is its handling of the latest devices (manufacturers are reluctant to supply the means), more and more efforts are being made in this matter. Actually, almost everything works as manufacturers are starting to guarantee Linux compatibility. At any time, you can consult a list of compatible hardware on the Ubuntu web site or look for the “Linux Compatible” logo with the Tux penguin mascot when purchasing.

For more information

One of the strong-points of Ubuntu is its documentation supplied by the users. Instead of complicated and dry user manuals, we prefer the opinions and sensible advice of other users willing to help. This assistance takesplace through forums, blogs, LUGs (Lunux User Groups) and various official works designed to accompany novice or advanced Ubuntu users.

For corporate use, sales support is also supplied by Canonical, the company that sponsors Ubuntu, or by many other approved suppliers.

For a more than interesting overview (non-exhaustive) of various sources of information:

Official resources

Le forum
http://www.ubuntu.com/support/community/webforums

La documentation
http://help.ubuntu.com

Simple comme Ubuntu (French)
http://framabook.org/ubuntu.html

How to use it?

The Ubuntu forum is the center of its technical assistance. There, you can look for problems similar to yours that other users have already encountered and their solutions. You can't find what you're looking for? Ask your question and describe your problem; someone will be happy to help you.

Receive all the necessary information by theme. You can also participate if you feel like it!

Download, read on-line or buy the complete and easy-to-use paper version of this user manual for Ubuntu. You will quickly become an expert!



Give your old computosaur a second life with Ubuntu!



You have a “downgraded” computer that is incapable of running Windows® Vista® and that sometimes has a hard time with newer applications on XP? You would like to continue using your hardware, but without compromising on the quality of the programs, system security and its responsiveness? So, try out Ubuntu! A version called “Alternate” lets you install it on an older machine equipped with a Pentium III and just 256 MB of RAM for example! With as little as 4 GB of hard drive memory, Ubuntu offers you its best. Surf the Web using the most recent version of Mozilla Firefox and work using Open Office without a problem. Use your WiFi network and take advantage of a 3D desktop! You cannot imagine the possibilities that you still have for your old PC! Better yet, if it's still too slow for you, you can use XFCE (see the graphical interface section above) and work with light-weight programs but which are still very useful.

No, don't even think about throwing away your old PCs. Schools, institutions, non-profit organizations, and families can generate savings and so reduce the digital divide.

Come to us, we welcome you!

Participate and discover!

Linux users often organize activities open to the public so that you can discover the world of Linux and often you will see Ubuntu. This includes conferences, informational meetings on various themes and demonstrations of state-of-the-art 3D modeling applications, for example. There are also many open-source trade shows and exhibitions where you can meet developers, major players and the representatives of the leading open-source software applications, just like at a car show or a students fair. “Install Parties” are also becoming more well-known. Their concept is simple: you bring your computer and the organizers install Ubuntu on it with you. They take advantage of your presence to show you how it works. These parties are very friendly and rather practical for learning, don't you think?

Sources

Information and illustrations on the following sites were used to edit this document:

- http://www.ubuntu-fr.org
- http://www.microsoft.com/fr
- http://www.framabook.org
- http://tux.crystalxp.net
- http://www.gnu.org/graphics/3dbabygnutux.html

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Aurélien Paulus
http://www.aurelienpaulus.net

Translated from French by MikeInTrets

Comparison of the system requirements*	Ubuntu	Microsoft® Windows® XP	Microsoft® Windows® Vista
Min. disk space >	4 GB	5 GB	20 GB
Recommended >	10 Go or more	20 GB or more	40 GB or more with 15 GB free space!)
Min.processor >	166 MHz	233 MHz	800 MHz
Recommended >	1.2 Ghz or more	300 Mhz or more	1 Ghz or more
Min. memory >	64 Mo	64 MB	512 MB
Recommended >	512 Mo ou +	512 MB or more	2 GB or more
Min. graphic card >	VGA card	VGA card	32 MB
recommended >	128 MB or more	64 MB or more	256 MB or more

You are never alone

When you have a problem on Mac or Windows, you often have to ask for help from a friend with strong computer skills who will then install ten new “anti-thingamajig” applications that you will have to keep up-to-date and of which you know nothing at all. Your problem may have disappeared temporarily, but you haven't learned a thing about its cause and at the detection of each new problem, you will remain dependent on the helpfulness of a nephew or computer-savvy friend and quickly risk becoming a ball and chain. With Ubuntu, you just have to ask your questions and describe your problem on one of the forums (http://ubuntuforums.org/index.php) and one of the experienced users will be happy to answer your question and explain the steps to follow to solve your problem.

LUGs

There exists many Linux User Groups that group together Linux users and sympathizers from all horizons in most cities and towns. Do a search for “LUG” and the town nearest you to quickly meet some of these people! They are committed to welcoming you and assisting you with your Linux experience (installation, help, discovering new programs, tutorials, conferences, etc.) and since Ubuntu is part of the Linux world, why not take advantage of getting help by meeting new people?

Moreover, if you are reading this document, there is a strong probability that you received it from a LUG member!



* This summary table is only partially complete: Ubuntu requirements allow it to run its software programs in addition to the operating system. For Windows, you have to add in the requirements for any software that you may install as time goes on. Ubuntu, therefore, is the hands-up winner!