

Dr. Linux

# Speed learning

Not many Linux users were in right at the start of large-scale projects such as KDE. The select few may be able to detect the new features in the latest version, but for newbies this task is far more difficult.

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always use the same standard programs. How can I get KDE to launch these when I log on?

**Dr. Linux:** One approach is to use links in the KDE autostart directory. Although you may not find a shortcut on your desktop, the Konqueror file manager knows the way.

Launch Konqueror by clicking on the icon for your home directory, for example. The *Go to* item will take you to *Autostart*. When you select *autostart*, Konqueror will open the folder. As the address line reveals, the folder is located in your home directory below *.kde/Autostart/*. You can create any program shortcuts you require in this folder.

To do so, hold down the left mouse button and drag the required program icon into the autostart folder and drop the icon. When prompted, select *Make link* (see Figure 1). You can drag any program icons you need from the control bar, the K menu or the desktop and drop them in the autostart folder.

The icon may be missing for some programs in the K menu. However, you can use the “empty space” where the pro-

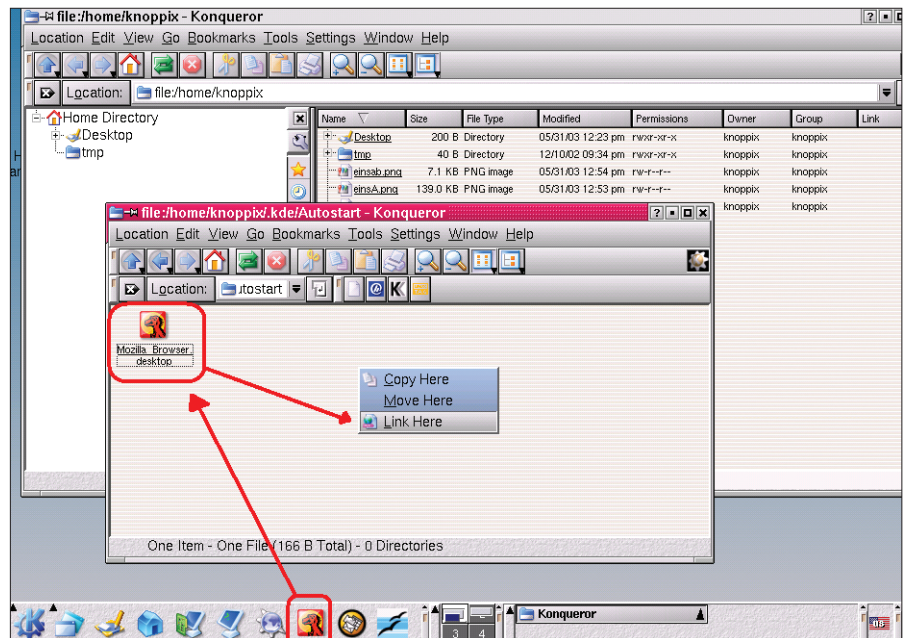


Figure 1: To automatically launch Mozilla each time you log on, drag the program icon from the control bar to the autostart folder and create a link

gram icon would normally be just like an icon. That is, you can drag the blank space where the icon should be to the autostart folder and create a link. This will then display a template icon.

As easy as that; any programs with links in the autostart folder will automatically launch next time you launch KDE. Don't be surprised if some of them are actually quicker than KDE.

## Terms of Session

When I log off, KDE keeps offering to save the current “session”. What does this session management feature actually do?

**Dr. Linux:** *Session Management* is one of the *KDE components* in the control center. Although this might provoke spontaneous yawns, the function is nowhere near as boring as it sounds. The *On Login* item (see Figure 2) allows you to choose between *Restore previous session*, *Restore manually saved session* and *Launch new session*.

If you select the first option, KDE will save any windows you have open and restore this state the next time you log

on. This tends only to work with KDE programs and not at all if you use the [Ctrl] + [Alt] + [Backspace] shortcut to quit KDE. *Restore manually saved session* will load the session file you explicitly saved previously, either using a small window displayed when you log off, or via the *Save session* item in the K menu (see Figure 3). If you do not want programs that are currently open to appear next time you log on, you should select *Launch new session*.

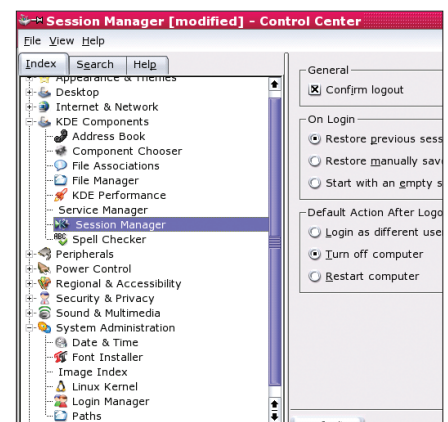


Figure 2: The KDE Control Center defines the standard session management behavior

## Dr. Linux

Complicated organisms, which is just what Linux systems are, have some little complaints all of their own. Dr. Linux observes the patients in the Linux newsgroups, issues prescriptions here for the latest problems and proposes alternative healing methods.

## Something Missing

Icons are missing for several K menu entries. How can I insert the icons into the menu?

**Dr. Linux:** Superficial blemishes are easy to resolve using the KDE menu editor, which amongst other things, allows you to add program icons at a later stage. Some systems provide access to the editor via the *Preferences / Menu Editor* entry in the K menu and others use *System / Menu Editor*. If your distribution chooses a completely different approach to configuring the K menu, you can simply right click on the menu button in the control bar. Clicking on a template icon in the Menu Editor will open a window where you can select a program icon. Use the window to assign an appropriate icon to your program (see Figures 4 and 5).

If your program does not have its own icon, you can choose one from the wide range of icons available in the window.

## Window Cleaner

I like working with a lot of open windows. If I need to access my CD drive or printer on the desktop, it is a nuisance to have to close all these windows first. Is there a simpler way of doing this?

**Dr. Linux:** Yes. You can use the *Show Desktop* button in the control panel to tidy up a desktop cluttered with windows. This will hide all the windows on the desktop and reinstate them at the click of a button. Some distributions like SuSE do not include this practical button in the control bar by default. To

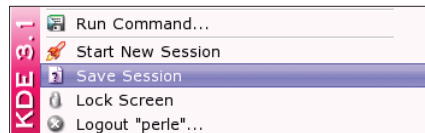


Figure 3: The *Save Session* item in the K menu allows you to save your current session data

add the button, right click on the control bar and select *Add/Special button/Desktop Access*.

## On the Desktop

It is hard for me, as a Linux newbie, to remember such a large number of commands for the command line. Does it have to be that complicated?

**Dr. Linux:** The current KDE version provides a number of commands in the *Konsole* menu that should facilitate using the command line (see Figure 7). After launching *Konsole* you can do the following in the *Edit* menu:

- search backward and forward through a list of commands (*Find in History...*, *Find Next*, *Find Previous*).
- Save commands and their output to a text file (*Save History As...*)
- Clear the command history in a single window (*Clear History*) or in all open console windows (*Clear All Histories*). The *Settings* menu allows you to define shortcuts for *Konsole* menu commands and, a particularly useful feature, for toggling between various command windows. Some shortcuts are pre-defined: [Shift]-[left arrow] or [right arrow] will step through

the command windows or “sessions” in KDE terminology. Double clicking on any of the buttons in a session will allow you to name them. If you then save a session as described in the “Terms of Session” section above, and restore the session when you log back on, the active *Konsole* sessions will actually be restored.

If you often need to enter lengthy paths in the shell, you will probably appreciate the bookmark facility. Just try it to find out: use *cd* to change to a

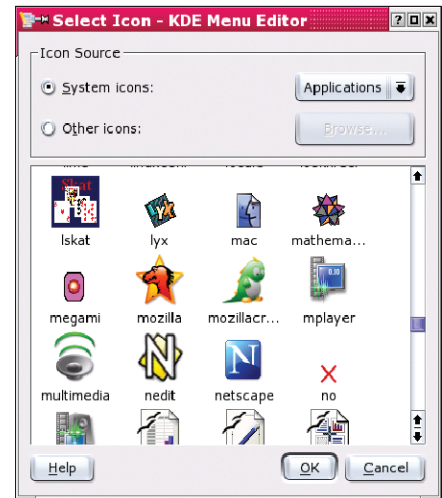


Figure 5: The selection window provides a wide range of program icons

directory and then select *Bookmarks / Add Bookmark*. The next time you select the bookmark, you will automatically end up in the required directory.

## A Kool Duo

I often use *Konqueror* as a GUI file manager, but occasionally I need to launch a shell command in the current directory. What is the best way to do this?

**Dr. Linux:** Use the *Run command* entry in the *Tools* menu or the shortcut [Ctrl-E] to run an arbitrary shell command in the current directory. *Konqueror* will display the output from the command in a separate window. Incidentally, this also works the other way round: If you drag a file or a directory from *Konqueror* to *Konsole*,

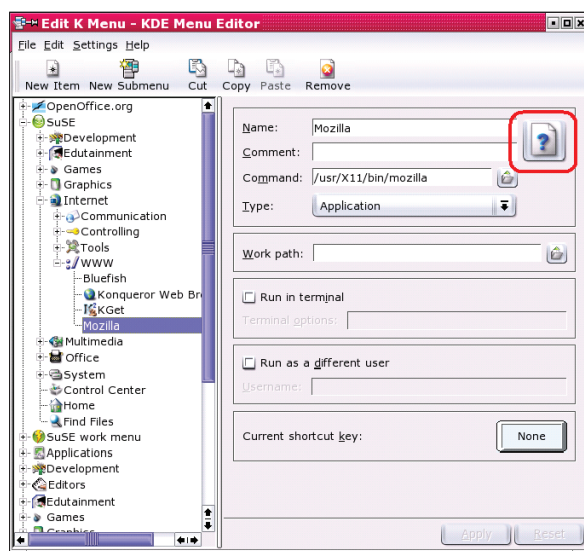


Figure 4: The *Mozilla* entry is shown as a template in the KDE Menu Editor. You can click on the template to assign an icon

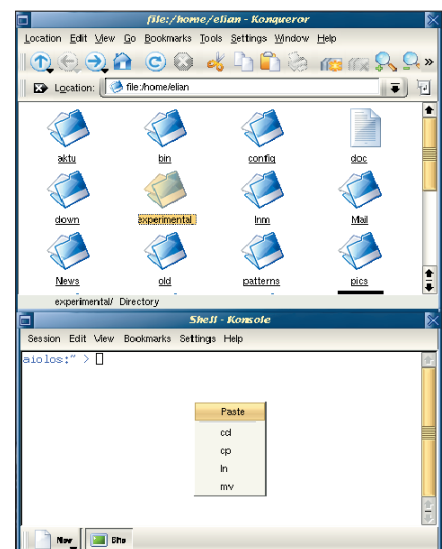


Figure 6: Dragging a file from *Konqueror* to *Konsole* allows you to run a selection of various shell commands

you can either insert the filename including the complete path, or use `cd` to change to the directory, copy or move the file or create a link (see Figure 6).

### Something New

When ever I launch Kate, the last text file I edited automatically loads. That is a nuisance. How can I get Kate to simply display an empty page. I already tried the `/Components/Session Management` setting `Launch new session`, but it does not work.

**Dr. Linux:** You will need to use the program's configuration options, and not the Session Manager to specify whether the program displays an empty page, or the last document you opened, when launched. By default, Kate displays the last page to be edited. To change this default, select `Settings / Configure Kate` in the menu. Open the `General Options` tab and remove the checkmark in the `Reopen files below Startup`. This will display an empty page every time you launch Kate.

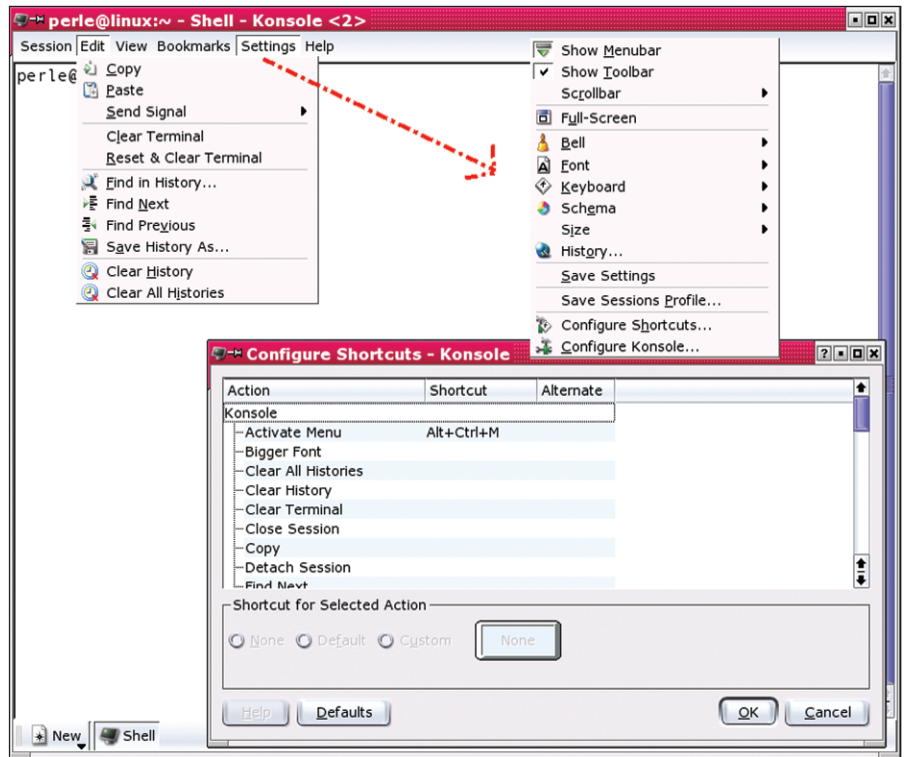


Figure 7: The enhanced KDE Konsole with the Edit menu and its history functions on the left, the Settings menu on the right, and the shortcut dialog box at the bottom

# SELLING OUT FAST!



For more information see:  
[www.linux-magazine.com/Backissues](http://www.linux-magazine.com/Backissues)