

# Linux Magazine DVD

## Using the Installer

The installer is designed to take away the pain of system installations. Each modular component will either perform its task and move on to the next or provide an error screen and a chance to try alternative actions. This means that in the majority of cases, you will not see the installer but just a series of questions when configuring your computer system.

As Debian GNU/Linux is designed for all levels of experience, you may prefer the old style where you control each step. In this case you will need to add the boot parameter

```
DEBCONF_PRIORITY=medium
```

To cope with any screen device, the installer display is character based rather than using a temperamental graphical user interface. Instead of selecting options with a click of the mouse, you can use the TAB or RIGHT ARROW keys to move forward and the LEFT ARROW key or SHIFT-TAB to move back. Selecting an option is via the UP ARROW or the DOWN ARROW, with the SPACEBAR used to check any check boxes. The ENTER or RETURN key activates the choice.

After you have installed the base system, you will be asked to configure some options such as your time zone and the creation of the root and users' passwords.

The system will now use the DVD as its source for the other packages that you want to install. Debian is not like the familiar RPM-based distributions. It favors the .deb packaging system which has strong dependency tracking and good cooperation between packages and system integration. To install a package at a later date, you just need to run the following command:

```
apt-get install packagename
```

When first adding packages to your system you can chose the simple installation option which uses the "Tasksel" program. For those who feel more adventurous, you can the advanced package installation which will use "dselect".

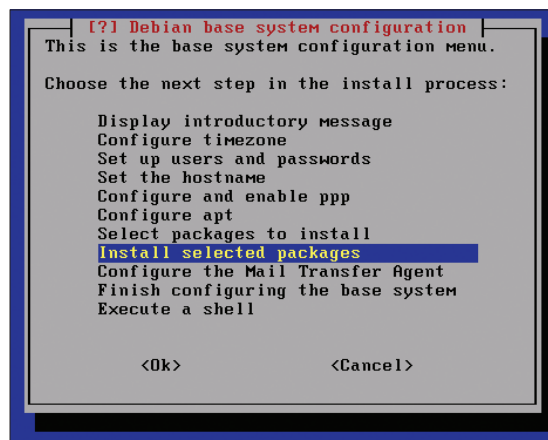


Figure 1: The Debian installer main menu screen.

Debian GNU/Linux is about to go through a version change. The current stable version has been around for a long time and is about to be superseded. "Sarge" is the code name for the testing version and we expect any day for it to be officially named as the new stable version with the current stable stream "Woody" being retired.

One of the delays has been the project's decision to include the new "Debian Installer". The installer is intended as a replacement for the aging boot floppy system, that although has provided sterling service, is now looking somewhat aged. This new installer is the path for future Debian distributions, providing a more modular and easy to use system. This system will also allow greater extensibility for whatever the future may bring. With this in mind we have taken the latest Debian DVD build made with the new jigdo (Jigsaw Download) tool to give you the future early.

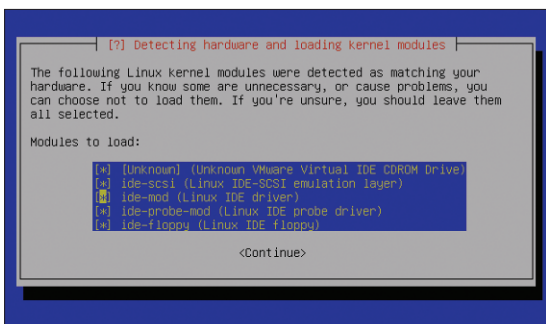


Figure 2: The Debian installer detecting your hardware.

## Why run Debian?

Most people who chose Debian GNU/Linux agree that the apt-get package system is far superior to rivals, whether that is RPM, urpmi, yum or apt4rpm. Beyond that lie other more meaningful reasons. Debian does not seek to be constantly releasing new versions to increase sales. In fact, Debian is run by volunteers who form a community. The GPL is at the heart of the Debian community and this granting of freedom is the real reason why Debian users are so passionate about their OS.

Debian also takes the issue of security very strongly to heart. An example can be seen each month by looking at how many security notices Debian announces compared to other distributions. This open form of information ensures that you are in a position to maintain the security of your computer at all times.

The apparent slow change in versions also ensures that the system has the stability you require. This does not stop you from running applications with some 12,000 packages available on the Debian mirrors for a range of processor architectures.

## Great software on the DVD

The Linux Magazine Debian GNU/Linux DVD contains hundreds of applications to cater for whatever task you want to perform. For desktop environments and window managers we have a large choice from the popular KDE or GNOME options to the more unusual Blackbox and Sawfish.

If you want to try some office work on your new Debian system, you can start off with either OpenOffice 1.1.0, KOffice or the GNOME office applications such as Gnumeric and Abiword. GnuCash will keep your money organized and for the old school text only users there is always Emacs or Vim to master.

The program development side is not forgotten in the mass of applications supplied on the DVD. GCC supplies a host of language compilers, alongside Perl and Python. KDevelop and Anjuta provide fully integrated development environments.

You can run your own servers such as the ever popular Apache web server and Samba to share data and information with any MS Windows computers you have attached to a local network, as well as increase your security with GnuPG and the Shorewall firewall.

Of course, these days, a modern system needs to be Internet ready and aware. Debian GNU/Linux provides numerous ways to browse and explore the Web. These range from the ubiquitous Mozilla and Nautilus to text only applications such as Lynx and Links. Knode or Pan can be used as newsgroup

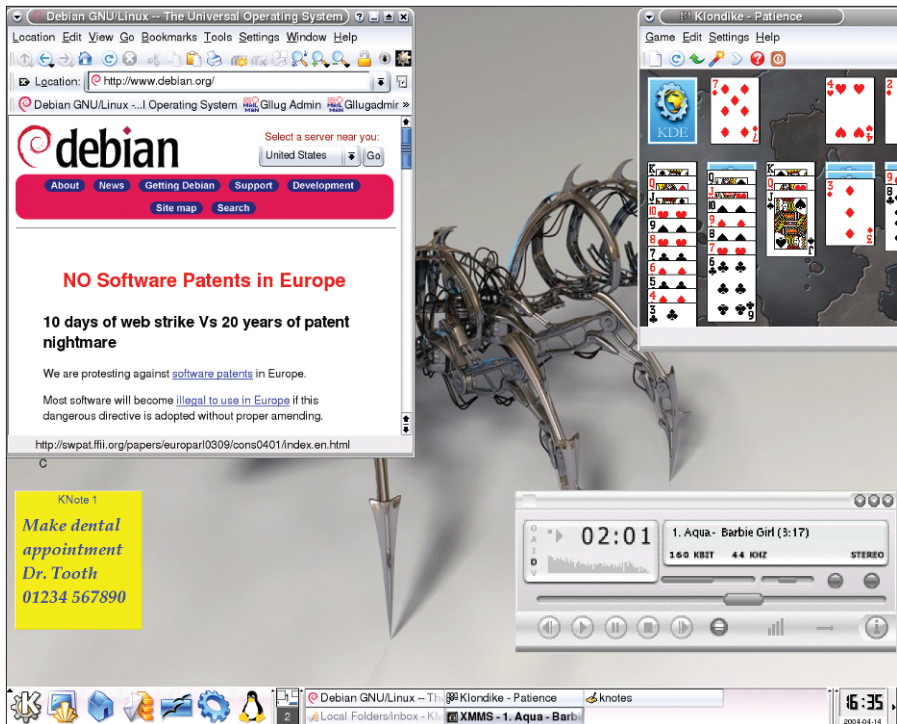


Figure 3: Running KDE with XMMMS, KNotes, Konqueror and Klondike.

readers and ftp transfer agents abound. Email clients, Newsfeed viewers and instant messengers are also included.

That's not to forget all the multimedia applications, games, productivity tools, documentation and file utilities that are also included on the DVD.

The DVD disc is full of all the tools and utilities that you would expect from a modern Linux distribution plus many, many more. All of which are easily installed onto the system from over 4.3 GBytes of compressed files, ensuring that your tastes are catered for.

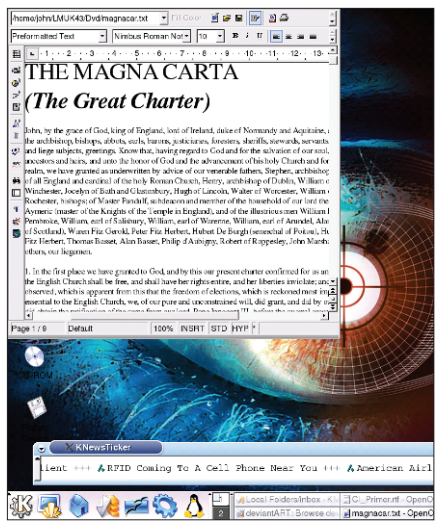


Figure 4: Receive the news while you work with OpenOffice and Knewsticker.

## Installer components

- **main-menu** Controls which components are used for the installation
- **languagechooser** Choose your language for installation messages
- **countrychooser** Choose where you are in the world
- **ddetect** Finds hard disks attached to the computer
- **pcmcia** Configure PCMCIA devices for laptop networking
- **kbd-chooser** Choose your keyboard model
- **netcfg** Configure the network connections
- **iso-scan** Finds ISO filesystems on the computer
- **choose-mirror** Lets you choose the installation files location
- **cdrom-detect** Finds CD-ROM devices attached to the computer
- **anna** Installs packages from the chosen mirror
- **partman** The Debian preferred partitioning tool
- **autopartkit** Automatically partitions a whole hard disk if required
- **partitioner** Allows the partitioning of hard disks
- **partconf** Creates filesystems on your hard disk partitions
- **base-installer** Installs the basic system so Debian will run when rebooted
- **kernel-chooser** If more than one kernel exists, gives you the choice
- **bootloader-installer** Installs a boot loader so Debian will start without installation media
- **baseconfig** Configure the system after booting for the first time
- **shell** Execute a shell from the second console
- **bugreporter** Save problems to a floppy to report to Debian developer team