

Letters to the editor

Write access

■ CDs from the Debian DVD

I was wondering if there is a place where assistance is available with burning ISOs from the #43 / June Debian 'sarge' DVD? *K.T, by email*

LM For Debian, there is a tool called Jigdo, available from <http://www.tldp.org/HOWTO/Debian-Jigdo/>.

Jigdo is able to create disc images from a template. You can download the Debian CD templates from <http://gluck.debian.org/cdimage/testing/cd/jigdo-area/i386/>.

When you run Jigdo it asks for a source to download the files and you can also enter a local source. In this case, the DVD. From this, the Jigdo tool downloads only the files for the CDs not found on the DVD such as those which have been updated or patched.

■ Slow Start to the day

I rarely have to power off my Linux computer. Every time I restart the computer it runs through a check on the hard disks because they have not been tested by the fsck program. How often does this check need to be completed and is it changeable?

Alice Brown, Middleton, UK

LM As computer filesystems are a complex, they can occasionally develop errors. These errors are most likely to occur due to power losses and hardware failure. The filesystem on your hard disk is tested for correctness and validity with the fsck command which you have running on boot time. This is the usual method, ensuring that the hardware is fine and, if not, giving you the chance to fix it before you start to use it and overwrite data that you otherwise need.

If you create a file called `/etc/fastboot`, then the test is not run upon booting.

The other method depends on setting the correct flag within the filesystem superblock, so `e2fsck` assumes the system was unmounted correctly and does not need testing.

The utility `tune2fs` can be used to adjust the time between filesystem checks with the `-c` switch, indicating the number of times the system can be mounted, and the `-i` switch to indicate the time between checking. In the latter case, the default is in days, but you can specify weeks (w) and months (m).

You can, of course, use `fsck` at any time to test a filesystem. The filesystem needs to be unmounted for the tool to work and should you ever find a problem then `debugfs` might just save your system.

■ Little Black Book

I have changed Linux distributions. Before I did so, I exported my KMail addressbook as a CVS file. Under my new system I start kaddressbook and import the CSV file. After setting up all the headings, I am unable to save the file. There is no Save As option. Rather than attempt to type in all of my addressbook details from the CSV file, is there a quicker way?

C. March, by email

LM After an email conversation, we eventually realized that Mr March's new addressbook could not be written as the `~/ .kde/share/apps/kabc/lock/` directory had a lock file inside it. We removed the file and he successfully saved his addressbook in the order he wanted it.

■ Spam or not to Spam

I have been unable to send email to some friends, yet others receive email fine. Even replying to their emails sends my messages into a blackhole. I am using Kmail and Mandrake 10 from your DVD.

Mike Carr, Portsmouth, UK

LM We have received numerous letters similar to the above. Investigating a little



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further we found emails to some ISP's appeared to disappear.

The first thing to check is if you have been blocked by a black list. Here you can type in your IP address to tools such as the Multi-RBL check found at <http://rbls.org/>.

If this shows you are not black listed, you can then start to ask particular ISP's about their spam filters. When BT Openworld changed to BT Yahoo they introduced a new spam filter that, while stopping some spam, treats many genuine emails as spam.

Some other large ISP providers appear to have their entire IP ranges blocked by BT Yahoo. As a result, the emails end in the bulk spam bucket. Your only alternative is to get the recipients of your mail to check the bulk spam bucket regularly. ■

Name	
3y.spam.mrs.kithrup.com	http://3y.spam.mrs.kithrup.com
bl.csma.biz	http://bl.csma.biz
bl.redhatgate.com	http://bl.redhatgate.com
blackhole.compu.net	http://blackhole.compu.net
blackholes.five-ten-sg.com	http://blackholes.five-ten-sg.com
blackholes.intersil.net	http://blackholes.intersil.net
blackholes.mail-abuse.org	http://www.mail-abuse.org
blackholes.wirehub.net	http://basic.wirehub.net
blacklist.spamg.org	http://blacklist.spamg.org
block.blars.org	http://block.blars.org
blocktest.relays.osirusoft.com	http://blocktest.relays.osirusoft.com
cb.labuseat.org	http://cb.labuseat.org

Figure 1: A clean bill of health (green) from the spam Black lists.