Official User Guide
OS4 Opendesktop 13

XFCE edition

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Introduction to OS4 Opendesktop.

1. History

OS4 has been developed and maintained since 2005 by Roberto J. Dohnert and his staff at PC Opensystems LLC. It is a modern operating system with an interface inspired by elements of Amiga, BeOS and SGI Irix and a software selection / package management system based on Debian and Ubuntu. Stability, flexibility, and out-of-the-box usability have always been paramount concerns. It maintains a steady release cycle, stressing incremental improvements over radical change.

2. Purpose

The purpose of OS4 is 1). to deliver an unmatched combination of cutting-edge high-performance and rock-solid ease-of-use. 2). to deliver a desktop interface that is both unique and intuitive. 3). to bring a broad selection of software to the end user, without overwhelming them with options. 4). finally, to develop the ideal desktop operating system.

3. Getting help with OS4

OS4 has an active Facebook fan group and support through its website, http://www.os4online.com. Paid support is available through a subscription service.

4. Future plans

OS4 is marketed towards both the residential and business end-user. Incremental improvements to the design of its interface and the selection of software it offers has always been emphasized by PC / Opensystems. So any changes made will be thoroughly tested and included for the sole purpose of making the OS4 experience as seamless and transparent as possible.

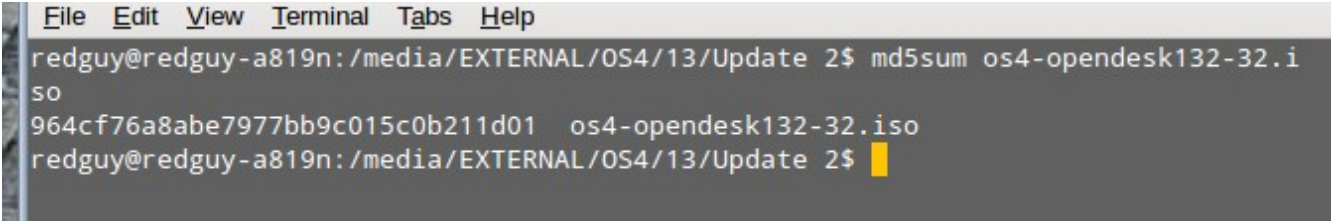Installing OS4 Opendesktop

1. Getting the software – mirrors

OS4 is available in 32 and 64 bit versions through two main software mirrors linked to http://www.0s4online.com :

http://www.ibiblio.org and http://www.sourceforge.net.

32 and 64 bit links are provided and md5sum downloads also, to verify the integrity of the ISO file after download.

2. Burning ISO to DVD

After the ISO has been downloaded, check its integrity using the md5sum command (in Linux) :

Or in Windows, get the program from http://www.etree.org/md5com.html . Place the md5sum.exe file in the same directory as the downloaded ISO file and run it. In both cases, compare the md5sum signature to the one on the website where the ISO was downloaded. Once the verified ISO is downloaded, burning it to DVD is the next step. If you're already using Linux, programs such as Brasero, Xfburn or K3B can be be used to do this. Burning images through the command-line in Linux is also possible (although anyone capable of doing this probably doesn't need to be reading this installation guide). Here's the syntax :

cdrecord -v -dao dev=1,0,0 os4opendesk132-32.iso . Replace the numbers after dev= with the appropriate device number for your disc drive.
To find that number, run : cdrecord -inq. Remember to run these commands as root.

If you're a Windows user making the first step to Linux through OS4 Opendesktop (you're starting in the right place :), then programs such as Roxio or Nero can burn image files (ISOs) to DVD. If you're using Windows 7 or 8, the operating system has integrated DVD recording – simply right-click on the image file and select Burn Image File. A common mistake for users new to burning image files is to write the image as a data file to the disk instead of burning the image to the disk. Once the OS4 ISO is burned, a simple file structure should be visible on the disk – directories named .disk, casper, install, isolinux, preseed and 3 files, md5sum.txt, README.diskdefines and ubuntu.

3. Using Unetbootin

Burning the image to the flash drive is a similar process – go to http://unetbootin.sourceforge.net/. Downloads are available for Windows, Linux and OSX.
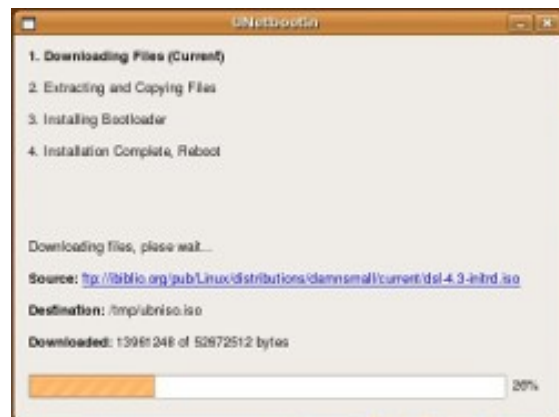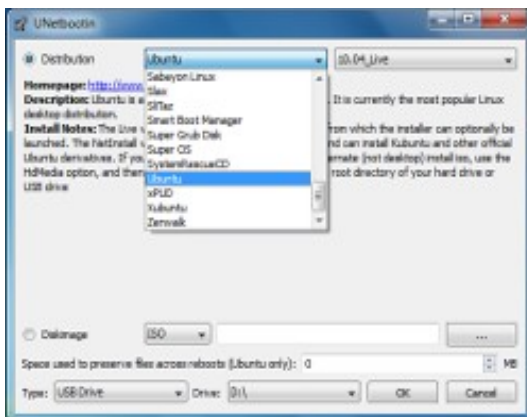
In Windows, launching the executable will format the drive and create the bootable / installable flash drive. In Linux, the drive will be have to be formatted using Gparted, Palimpsest, or KDE's Disk Utility. Launching Unetbootin will create the live filesystem.
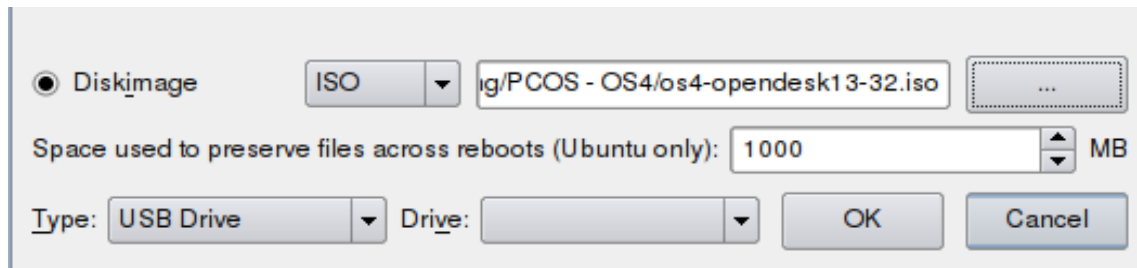
If the option for persistence, settings and programs can be added to the live filesystem, up to the limit of the space allotted.

4. Performing the installation

Depending on the PC's BIOS, set the CDROM as the primary boot device or select it at the POST boot menu. If a boot menu is available, and the BIOS supports booting from DVD / USB, make the appropriate selection. Once the PC has been booted from DVD or USB, the OS4 installation will begin. The first screen, shown below, offers the options available :

If the user wants to test OS4 with the current PC hardware set, booting the

Live System is the best option. If the user has already tested the hardware, or just wants to proceed immediately with the installation, then choosing Start the installer directly will begin the four step process : 1). Choosing language 2). Choosing keyboard 3). Selecting the installation type (replacing the existing installation, dual booting with another Windows or Linux installation, or Something Else, which involves custom partitioning). 4). Choosing the username and password.

1). Choosing language :

2). Choosing keyboard :

3). Selecting the installation type :

4). Something Else :

Using OS4 Opendesktop 13

Testing the live system and installing it are secondary concerns – what's important is learning how to use the installed system and explore the wide variety of options and software that OS4 Od 13 offers.

The Desktop

The desktop has been designed for simplicity and useability. At the bottom of the screen is what the developers have designated the Applet Bar :

It contains a Window Menu, Notification Area, Workspace Switcher, and Trash Applet. The notification area allows the user to connect to local wireless networks, Bluetooth devices, adjust audio settings and click on a menu to see open applications. In the upper right-hand corner is the Deskbar :
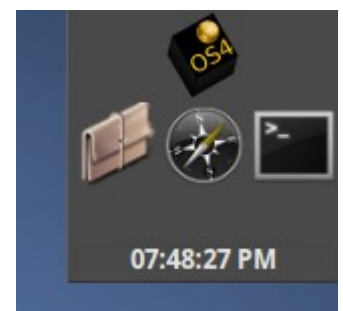
It contains the Application Menu, two Launchers, Windows Buttons and the Orage Panel Clock. Minimized windows will nest between the two default launchers (in the screenshot, the Shell application to the right has been added as a third;only File Manager and Web Browser are added to the Deskbar initially.
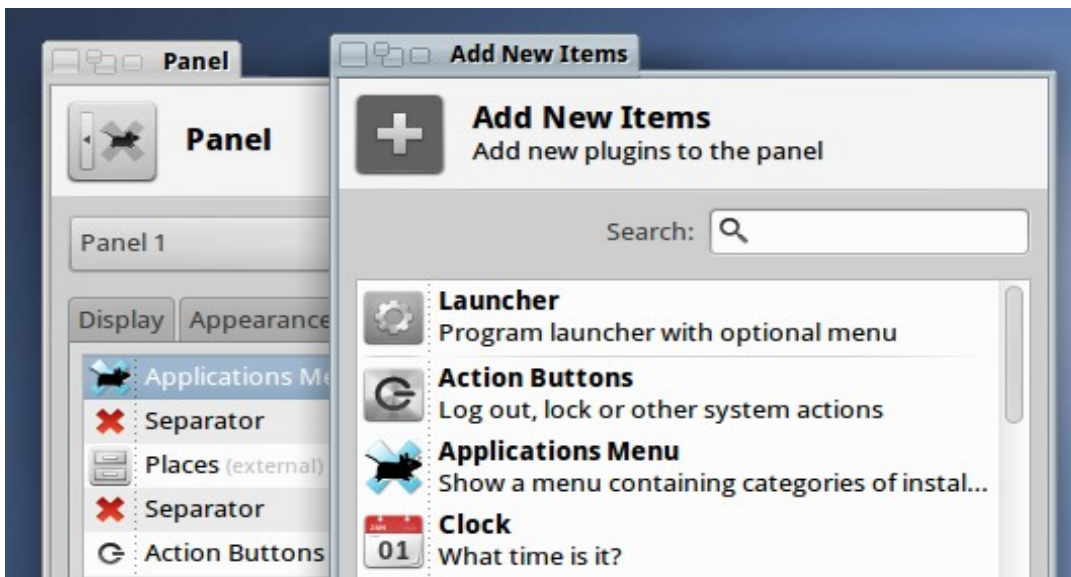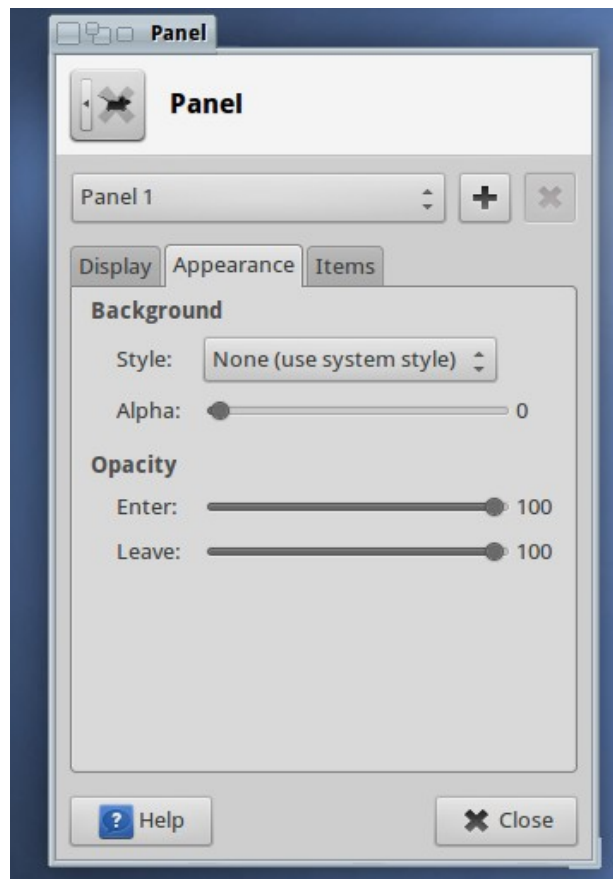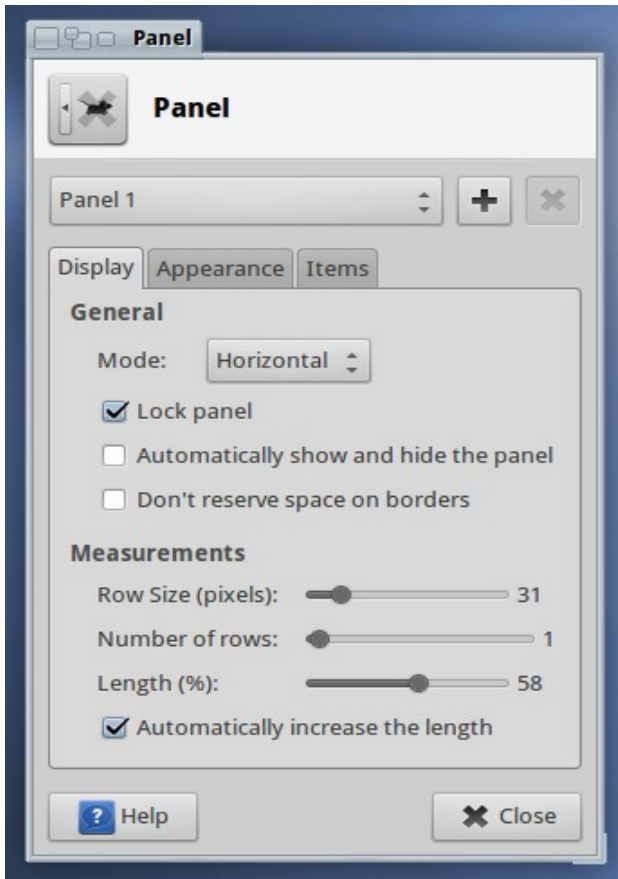
Like all XFCE

panels, the Applet Bar and Deskbar are moveable and easily configured. Right-clicking on either panel will bring up the Panel dialog box shown above. Panels can be locked / unlocked so that they can be moved and then set to a fixed location on the screen. Panels can be set to autohide, and the size and number of rows can also be set, with options for it to be opaque or transparent. Application launchers can be added to the panel through this dialog box, or they can be dragged from the desktop of from the Applications menu.

Changing Desktop settings is accomplished by right clicking on the desktop and choosing Desktop settings from the menu.

The Desktop setting dialog box allows the user to change the desktop wallpaper, add or remove desktop icons and change right-click options for the desktop.

The OS4 Applications menu can be launched from the logo on the Deskbar in the upper-right hand corner of the screen, or by right-clicking on an empty area of the desktop and selecting Applications. At the top level of the menu are Web Browser and Mail Reader. Launching these opens the default OS4 browser, Google Chrome and mail client, Claws Mail. Below the top level of the menu, are categories : Settings, Accessories, Development, Games, Graphics, Internet, Multimedia, Office, System. Locating an application is generally as simple as opening the relevant category and finding it (i.e. Word Processor would be located in Office, Xchat IRC Client in Internet). Settings contains links to hardware and system configuration options (Additional Drivers, Bluetooth Manager, Network Connections, Main Menu among others). Accessories contains the default OS4 text editor Leafpad, File Manager Thunar, Shell (XFCE terminal) and other programs that don't fall into any easily recognizeable category. System contains links to high level system management programs. Users new to OS4 or Linux should be careful when using programs in System.

Adding and removing software

Debian and Ubuntu based Linux distributions have the advantage of stability and a large base of available software. OS4 is fully compatible with Debian and Ubuntu packages. Adding these packages can be accomplished through a terminal using the apt-get command or the Synaptic frontend. Note : like all Ubuntu adminstrative tasks, installing software requires entering adminstrative credentials. In a terminal, this means that sudo is entered before the command to elevate privileges – all this involves is entering the password which was created when the OS4 system was first installed.

Using aptitude involves opening a terminal and starting by updating sources using sudo apt-get update, as shown in the screenshot :

```
noirguy@noirguy-Inspiron-530:~$ sudo apt-get update
[sudo] password for noirguy:
Get:1 http://www.remastersys.com precise InRelease [2,714 B]
Ign http://www.remastersys.com precise InRelease
Ign http://www.remastersys.com precise/main i386 Packages/DiffIndex
Ign http://extras.ubuntu.com precise InRelease
Ign http://dl.google.com stable InRelease
```

This synchronizes information between the local machine and repositories set up. Finding a particular software package from the command-line is accomplished using sud oapt-cache search. In the following screenshot, information about packages named terminator is listed :

```
noirguy@noirguy-Inspiron-530:~/Desktop$ sudo apt-cache search terminator
[sudo] password for noirguy:
terminator - multiple GNOME terminals in one window
terminatorx - realtime audio synthesizer
transtermhp - find rho-independent transcription terminators in bacterial genome
s
```

Then the package terminator can be installed using sudo apt-get install :

```
noirguy@noirguy-Inspiron-530:~$ sudo apt-get install terminator
Reading package lists... Done
Building dependency tree
Reading state information... Done
terminator is already the newest version.
```

This is a powerful way to install software, but may prove difficult for new users, which is why the Synaptic frontend is used for the same purpose. Opening the package manager requires authentication :
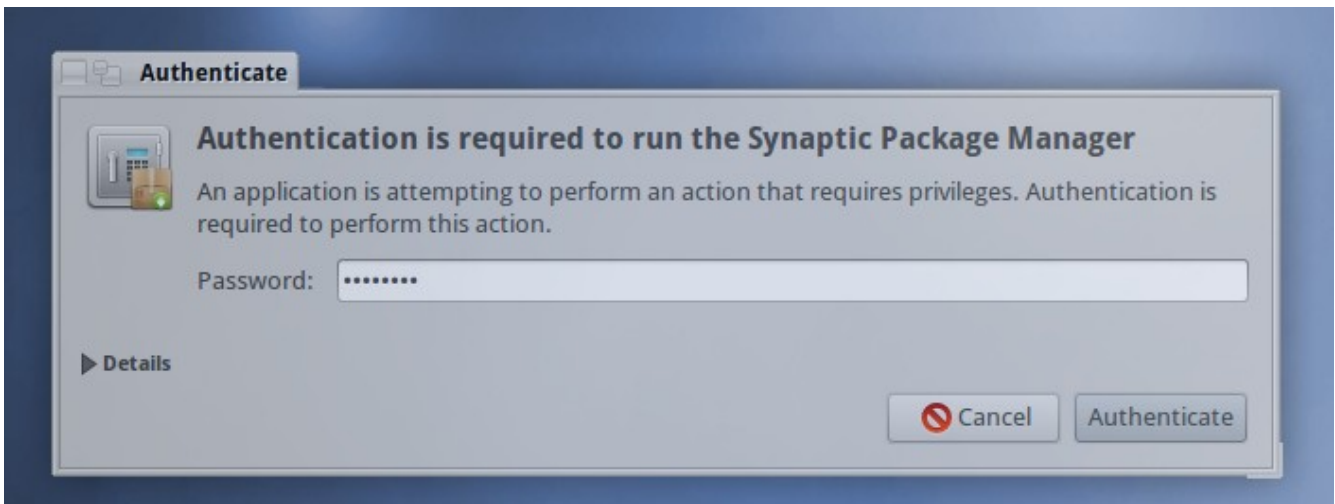
Then, when Synaptic opens, clicking refresh reloads the current package index in the same way that running apt-get update would. Then search for the package terminator :
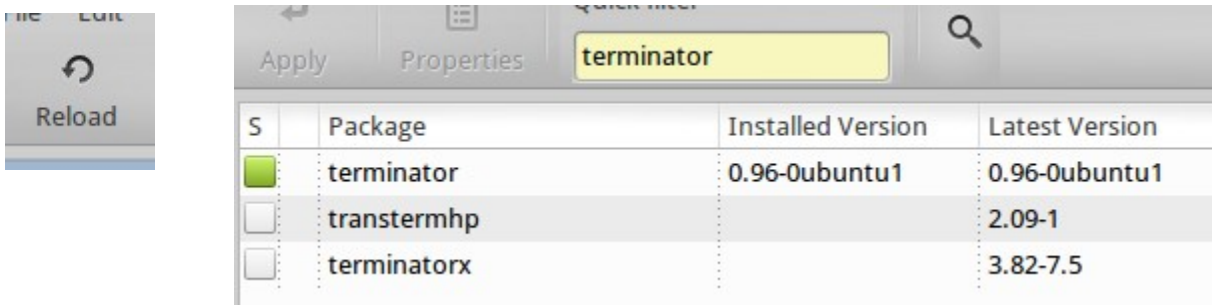
Using the search index in Synaptic is more intuitive and easier, since the software is categorized and the user can search through it in addition to performing a manual search.

Using the Gdebi package installer

OS4, like Ubuntu and Debian from which it's derived, uses files with the .deb extension. The Gdebi package installer handles installing software which may not be available for installation through the Synaptic or apt-get, as shown in the following screenshot of a Google Earth installation :