

How do I change the default file manager back to Nautilus?

Asked 10 years, 3 months ago Modified 2 months ago Viewed 77k times



49



A while back, I set my default file manager to Nemo. I like it a lot, but it constantly crashes. I remember editing a text file to set it as default, but I forgot which file it was. How do I switch back to the Nautilus file manager?

nautilus

filemanager

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edited Jan 3, 2013 at 19:26

asked Jan 3, 2013 at 14:41



nick

853

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Official documentation for changing and restoring file manager: [Ubuntu documentation for Default File Manager](help.ubuntu.com/community/DefaultFileManager) – Sohail xIN3N Feb 27, 2014 at 10:28

3 Opposite of this question: [askubuntu.com/questions/260244/...](http://askubuntu.com/questions/260244/) – Wilf Jun 22, 2015 at 23:38

5 Answers

Sorted by:

Highest score (default)



52



This did it for me, after I google for a while:

```
xdg-mime default nautilus.desktop inode/directory application/x-gnome-saved-search
```

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Jul 18, 2018 at 4:26 

The `xdg-mime` command worked for me in Ubuntu 16.04. I replaced `nautilus.desktop` with `pcmanfm.desktop` since I wanted to use that as my default file manager. You can find the name of the file manager you want to use by using the following command `ls /usr/share/applications` and finding its corresponding `.desktop` file. – [OwN](#) Jun 19, 2019 at 3:08 

5/5/20, it works on Ubuntu 19.10 – [Anh-Thi DINH](#) May 5, 2020 at 7:36



21



I spent AGES trying to find a method that would work. Eventually I found this advice, which is incredibly easy, and worked for me:

Install [exo-utils](#) (this package contains the Xfce settings plugin and the utility files for libexo-2-0). Open a terminal and type:

```
sudo apt install exo-utils
```

Then run:

```
exo-preferred-applications
```

then switch to Utilities tab and select File Manager you prefer.

exo-preferred-applications was dropped entirely in version 4.15.3-1. Install `xfce4-settings` with `sudo apt install xfce4-settings` and use this instead:

```
xfce4-mime-settings
```

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edited Jan 18 at 12:27



[karel](#)

108k

96

264

294

answered Apr 7, 2017 at 12:22



[user282186](#)

317

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It'll only work in Xubuntu or systems that have `exo-utils` installed – [Anwar](#) Apr 7, 2017 at 12:26

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The file manager choice is handled by a file in `~/.local/share/applications`. They are `mimeapps.list` and `mimeinfo.cache`, deleting both of those files will reset your file manager to the default, which is Nautilus.



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edited Apr 23, 2016 at 16:03

answered Jan 3, 2013 at 19:30



Bus42

365 2 3 12



RolandiXor

51.1k 31 160 256

1 I'm afraid that solution didn't work. — **nick** Jan 4, 2013 at 14:12



3

The answers here didn't work for me on Debian Bookworm - so after figuring it out myself:



Premise

Every time I attempt to leverage `xdg-open` on a directory (typically through an application; like Keybase's *"open in file explorer"* option, or something similar in Steam), what opens is Visual Studio Code.

What doesnt work

Attempting to *"Open with other application"* a directory via the context menu in *"Files"* [Nautilus] (file explorer when using Gnome on Debian) and then *"Forget association"* on Visual Studio Code (*right click on it in the list of applications*), subsequently choosing *"Files"* to open the directory with - does not fix what is used for directories when `xdg-open` is invoked; it only changes what opens a directory from within *"Files"* [Nautilus].

What does work

Run the following:

```
xdg-mime default org.gnome.Nautilus.desktop inode/directory
```

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- For the mimetype `inode/directory` (*found using `xdg-mime query filetype /path/to/target` , with target in my case being a directory.*)

The accepted answer results in `Nautilus.desktop` and `application/x-gnome-saved-search` becoming the default application(s); which is not correct, it must needs be `org.gnome.Nautilus.desktop` .

Also, setting desktop icons to be shown won't set the default application when opening directories via `xdg-open` .

Alternatively, you can also set it as follows:

```
nano ~/.config/mimeapps.list
```

Scroll down to `inode/directory` under [Added Associations] , as well under [Default Applications] , and ensure that the line(s) read:

```
inode/directory=org.gnome.Nautilus.desktop
```

You can additionally add, under [Removed Associations] :

```
inode/directory=code.desktop;
```

This is just the manual, longer, way of doing what I suggested first - together with the "*Forget association*" bit I portrayed I had attempted

Restore Behavior in Terminal

A user provided edit surmises that one should source the default list of file associations "for immediate effect". This answer, however, focuses on file associations for when `xdg-open` is invoked by another application.

With that in mind. and in reviewing the default file associations (on Debian and Ubuntu) at

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Rik

131 4

1 This has got to be the oldest thread I've seen revived, 7 years later – [nick](#) Aug 30, 2022 at 13:48

@nick It's a good question because it can stump people who've used Debian/Ubuntu for even longer; and 7 years later the answer(s) can/will change. You should never hesitate to answer a question regardless of its age; especially if the question exists already - and the historic answer doesn't work any longer. People are encouraged *not* to repeat questions; stack has evolved its products so that answers may stack according to most recent upvotes (recent preference changes, you may have noticed). In a sense revival isn't really a thing, because ongoing support is supported/expected. – [Rik](#) Aug 31, 2022 at 14:11



1



1. `sudo mv /usr/bin/nemo /usr/bin/nemo.backup`

2. Open any folder. You could use `xdg-open /path/to/folder/` while in the command line, for example. Or you could use a X application that requests a file.

3. A dialog should appear to you requesting a default application to be your file manager. Type `/usr/bin/nautilus` there and confirm.

After that, as long as you don't rename *nemo* to its original name/location, nautilus will be your default file manager again.

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answered Jun 24, 2013 at 21:32



thiagowfx

795 5 9



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