

NAME

`gnome-session` – Start the GNOME desktop environment

SYNOPSIS

`gnome-session [-a|--autostart=DIR] [--session=SESSION] [--failsafe|-f] [--debug] [--whale]`

DESCRIPTION

The *gnome-session* program starts up the GNOME desktop environment. This command is typically executed by your login manager (either `gdm`, `xdm`, or from your X startup scripts). It will load either your saved session, or it will provide a default session for the user as defined by the system administrator (or the default GNOME installation on your system).

The default session is defined in **gnome.session**, a .desktop-like file that is looked for in `$XDG_CONFIG_HOME/gnome-session/sessions`, `$XDG_CONFIG_DIRS/gnome-session/sessions` and `$XDG_DATA_DIRS/gnome-session/sessions`.

When saving a session, *gnome-session* saves the currently running applications in the `$XDG_CONFIG_HOME/gnome-session/saved-session` directory.

gnome-session is an X11R6 session manager. It can manage GNOME applications as well as any X11R6 SM compliant application.

OPTIONS

The following options are supported:

`--autostart=DIR`

Start all applications defined in *DIR*, instead of starting the applications defined in **gnome.session**, or via the `--session` option. Multiple `--autostart` options can be passed.

`--session=SESSION`

Use the applications defined in **SESSION.session**. If not specified, **gnome.session** will be used.

`--failsafe`

Run in fail-safe mode. User-specified applications will not be started.

`--debug`

Enable debugging code.

`--whale` Show the fail whale in a dialog for debugging it.

SESSION DEFINITION

Sessions are defined in **.session** files, that are using a .desktop-like format, with the following keys in the **GNOME Session** group:

Name Name of the session. This can be localized.

RequiredComponents

List of component identifiers (desktop files) that are required by the session. The required components will always run in the session.

Here is an example of a session definition:

```
[GNOME Session]
```

```
Name=GNOME
```

```
RequiredComponents=gnome-shell;gnome-settings-daemon;
```

The **.session** files are looked for in `$XDG_CONFIG_HOME/gnome-session/sessions`, `$XDG_CONFIG_DIRS/gnome-session/sessions` and `$XDG_DATA_DIRS/gnome-session/sessions`.

ENVIRONMENT

gnome-session sets several environment variables for the use of its child processes:

SESSION_MANAGER

This variable is used by session-manager aware clients to contact *gnome-session*.

DISPLAY

This variable is set to the X display being used by *gnome-session*. Note that if the *--display* option is used this might be different from the setting of the environment variable when *gnome-session* is invoked.

FILES

\$XDG_CONFIG_HOME/config/autostart
/usr/share/gnome/autostart

\$XDG_CONFIG_DIRS/config/autostart

The applications defined in those directories will be started on login. *gnome-session-properties(1)* can be used to easily configure them.

\$XDG_CONFIG_HOME/gnome-session/sessions
\$XDG_DATA_DIRS/gnome-session/sessions

\$XDG_CONFIG_DIRS/gnome-session/sessions

These directories contain the **.session** files that can be used with the *--session* option.

\$XDG_CONFIG_HOME/gnome-session/saved-session

This directory contains the list of applications of the saved session.

BUGS

If you find bugs in the *gnome-session* program, please report these on <https://bugzilla.gnome.org>.

SEE ALSO

gnome-session-properties(1) **gnome-session-quit(1)**