Lab Worksheet 1: Learning the Linux Desktop

Before starting this worksheet, observe your Ubuntu desktop and identify the following components:
- The *Launcher bar* on the left-hand-side of the screen
- The *Menu bar* on the top of the screen with status menus towards the right-hand-side

1. Explore the top item on the *Launcher*, the Dashboard (called *Dash* in Ubuntu) by clicking its icon. Initially you will find shortcuts to recently accessed items in it. Click on the shaded icons at the bottom of the Dash window to explore Applications, Folders, Music and Videos. You can click on any of the icons that appear when selecting these shaded icons to access that particular item.

2. Another way to search all applications, folders and other files on your computer is to simply type the name of it in the search bar at the top of the Dash window. Try searching for the famous game Sudoku by typing as few letters as possible. When found, click it to launch it (execute/run it).

3. Clicking on Dash when it is 'open', closes it; clicking on it when closed, opens it. You can also toggle Dash (i.e. call it and dismiss it) by using the Windows key on your keyboard. Try pressing it several times to observe its behavior.

4. Clicking each of the other icons on the Launcher runs the corresponding application. Try launching the second application by clicking the folder icon. Though the application window appears in the middle of the screen, its menu appears on the Menu bar on the top (towards the left). Selecting the window with the mouse and then pointing the mouse at the Menu bar will display the menu for that application. All applications have similar menu items, a particularly useful one being the Help menu items on the right most side. Find out the name of the application that opens the folders and its version number.

5. Explore the folders and files in this window to find out the contents accessible to you. Click on the folder shortcut for 'File System' available in the left-panel on the window. This will show you the main folders (directories) in the Linux file system. You can minimize the folder window by clicking the minimize sign (-) on the top-left-hand of the window, or close the application by clicking the close sign (x) on the top-left-hand of the window.

6. Launch the Firefox browser by clicking its icon and visit the course page on the UGVLE. Also search for a suitable image you like on the Internet, click the right mouse button on it and select the 'Save Image As...' option to save it to your 'Pictures' folder. Minimize or close the browser application.

7. Skip to the 'System Settings' icon on the Launcher bar. Select the 'Appearance' setting under 'Personal' and change the desktop background image. Also change the size of the icons on the Launcher bar to a size that is suitable for you. Download a suitable desktop background image from the Internet and find out how to set it as your desktop background using this setting.

8. Click the 'All Settings' menu at the top of the window to get back to the main settings menu. Select 'Details' setting in the 'System' section and observe details of the hardware in your computer. Find out the available Memory in the system, the processor type and clock speed in Ghz and whether the operating system is 32 or 64 bit. You can use this to also set the default application that is launched for various types of files such as web, mail, calendar, music, photos and video.

9. Finally, search for the Text Editor in Dash, and when it is shown, drag it with your mouse to the Launcher tab on the left-hand-side. This will allow you to have a launch short cut for it. What is the name of this text editor?