# Introduction

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Ubuntu is a Linux operating system based on Debian, and is available for Desktops and Servers.

The default file manager for Ubuntu is GNOME Files, also called Nautilus, and the default desktop has been GNOME since version 17.10. Of course, it is possible to use other desktops as well.

Since Ubuntu is based on Debian, it uses APT as package manager (among others). APT is used to automatically install, update/upgrade, or remove programs from the system, as well as manage their dependencies by installing packages when required, and uninstalling them when no program are using them anymore.

A new version of Ubuntu is released every 6 months, with a Long-Term-Support (LTS) version released every 2 years in April. For example, the latest LTS version is 20.04 code-name “Focal Fossa”, released on April 2020. LTS versions are supported for 5 years, while others for 9 months.

While Ubuntu is based on Debian, many other operating systems are based in Ubuntu themselves, including Kubuntu (which uses KDE instead of GNOME), Lubuntu (which is lighter), and Ubuntu Studio (which provides audio and video tools).

## Download

ISOs for Ubuntu Desktop and Server can be downloaded for free from the [Ubuntu Downloads Page](https://ubuntu.com/" \l "download).

This document will be using Ubuntu 20.04 Server for reference, but most of the following applies for other versions as well.

# Commands

## Opening a Terminal

On a Server installation, or using SSH, there is no user interface by default, the terminal is always opened. To install the Desktop, enter the following commands:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| $  $  $ | sudo apt update && sudo apt upgrade  sudo apt install ubuntu-desktop  sudo reboot |

You will be prompted for the password the first time. It will appear invisible.

On a Desktop installation, or after installing a desktop as above, a terminal can be opened by right-clicking and choosing “Open in Terminal”, or by using Ctrl+Alt+T.

The rest of the document will be working on the terminal.

## Superuser

Some commands need to be run as a superuser (equivalent to administrator in Windows). For examples, some files and directories cannot be manipulated by anyone except a superuser, as is the case for manipulating network services, firewall rules, etc.

To switch to superuser mode in the terminal only, use the su command. To go back, use the logout command. Superuser mode is dangerous to use since it can affect important files with no going back. It is recommended to use this mode only when necessary and the user knows what they are doing.

For more safety, superuser mode can be run temporarily on a single command before automatically switching back by typing sudo before the rest of the command. Still, it is recommended to only use sudo if the user knows what following the command does.

## Package Management

To install new software or manage existing packages, Ubuntu provides the apt (Advanced Package Tool) command, which needs superuser permissions, as well as the more secure snap.

The following commands are available:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| apt update | Updates the database of available packages.  Recommended to execute before installing and upgrading. |
| apt install *<package>* | Installs a package, or upgrades it if it is already installed. |
| apt upgrade *[<package>]* | Upgrades (updates) the packages if a new version is available. |
| apt remove *<package>* | Removes (uninstall) a package. |
| apt purge *<package>* | Removes a package and its configuration files. |
| apt autoremove | Removes packages that are no longer used. |
| apt show *<package>* | Shows information about a package. |
| apt search *<term>* | Lists all packages containing the search term. |
| apt list | Lists all installed packages.  Use with --upgradable to see packages with new versions available. |
| snap install *<package>* | Installs (or downloads and install) a Snap. |
| snap remove *<package>* | Removes (uninstall) a Snap. |
| snap info *<package>* | Shows information about a Snap. |
| snap find *<term>* | Lists all Snaps containing the search term. |
| snap list | Lists all installed Snaps. |

## Navigation and File Manipulation

To check the current directory in which the terminal is opened, you can look at the prompt. For example, the following means that the terminal is opened in the ~/Desktop/Programs folder shown in blue, by the user called “user” in the computer called “ubuntu” shown in green:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **user@ubuntu:~/Desktop/Programs$** | █ |

The following commands are used for navigation and folder-related activity:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| pwd | Prints the current working directory (path). |
| ls | List files and folders in the current working directory |
| cd "*<path>*" | Changes the current directory to a relative path. cd Programs in ~/Desktop will send to ~/Desktop/Programs. |
| mkdir "*<path>*" | Creates a relative directory to the current working directory.  mkdir Programs/A in ~/Desktop will create the folder ~/Desktop/Programs/A. |
| mkdir -p "*<path>*" | Creates a relative path to the current working directory.  mkdir Programs/B/BA will create the folders Programs/B and Programs/BA. |
| mv "*<dir1>*" "*<dir2>*" | If dir2 exists, moves dir1 into dir2. Else, renames dir1 to dir2. |
| cp *[*-r*]* "*<dir1>*" "*<dir2>*" | If dir2 exists, copies dir1 and names it dir2. Else, copies dir1 inside dir2.  Use -r option for folders. |
| rm "*<path>*" | Deletes a file. |
| rmdir -r "*<path>*" | Deletes a folder and its contents. |

The following are some “special” paths:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| cd / | Absolute path: Root directory. |
| cd /home | Absolute path: Home directory. |
| cd ~ | Absolute path: User directory.  Same as cd /home/<username>. |
| cd . | Relative path: Current directory.  Does nothing on its own. |
| cd .. | Relative path: Parent directory.  Goes one folder back. |

## Reading and Writing Files

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *<command>* > "*<filename>*" | Saves the output of the command in a file. |
| cat "*<filename>*" | Outputs the content of a file. |
| more "*<filename>*" | Outputs the content of a file with down pagination.  Scroll down by pressing the “Enter” key. |
| less "*<filename>*" | Outputs the content of a file with pagination.  Navigate using arrow keys, quit with q. |

Unlike in Windows, File and directory names are case-sensitive: file.txt, File.txt, and file.TXT are all different files.

### Nano

Nano is a terminal text editor. It usually comes pre-installed, but can be installed with sudo apt install nano.

To open a file using Nano, use nano "*<filename>*". This will open the editor, with available commands shown on the bottom, prefixed by a caret (^) representing the Ctrl key, or by the letter M representing the Alt key.

These are some of the available commands:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Go to line | Ctrl+\_ - line number - Enter |
| Search | Ctrl+W - search term - Enter |
| Next match | Alt+W |
| Search & Replace | Ctrl+W - search term - replace with - Enter |
| Confirm replace | Y | N |
| Replace all | A |
| Select text | Move to beginning of text - Alt+A - Move to end of text |
| Cancel selection | Ctrl+6 |
| Copy | Alt+6 |
| Cut | Ctrl+K |
| Paste | Move to location - Ctrl+U |
| Save | Ctrl+S |
| Save as | Ctrl+O |
| Exit | Ctrl+X |
| Get help | Ctrl+G |

Other commands are available in the [Nano Documentation](https://www.nano-editor.org/dist/latest/cheatsheet.html).

### Vim

Vim is another terminal text editor. It usually comes pre-installed, but can be installed with sudo apt install vim.

To open a file using Vim, use vim "*<filename>*". This will open the editor in the normal mode. To switch to insert mode, type i. To switch to visual mode, type v. To switch to command-line mode, type :. To switch to normal mode, press Esc.

In normal and command-line modes, commands will appear on the bottom. These are some of the available commands:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Open file | :edit "*<filename>*" |
| Go to line | :*<number>* |
| Search | :/"*<search\_term>*" |
| Next match | n |
| Select text | Move to beginning of text - v - Move to end of text |
| Cancel selection | Ctrl+6 |
| Copy | y |
| Cut | Ctrl+K |
| Paste | p |
| Save | :w |
| Exit | :q |
| Get help | :help *[<topic>]* |

Other commands are available in the [Vim Documentation](https://vimhelp.org/).

## Downloading Files

Curl and wget