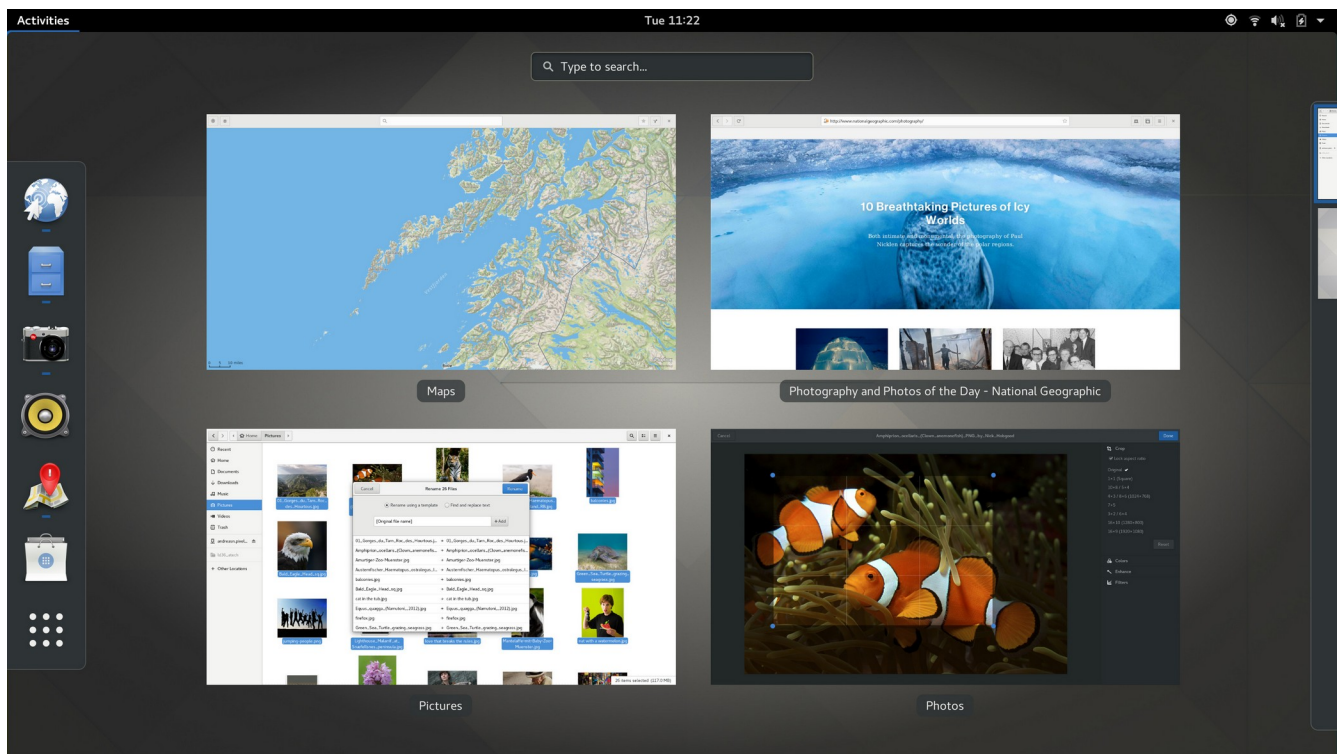Linux – Desktop Environments
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In this writing, let's talk about Desktop Environments. First of all, what is a Desktop Environment, or DE?

The definition on itsfoss.com, refers to a DE is, "the bundle of components that provide you common graphical user interface (GUI) elements such as icons, toolbars, wallpapers, and desktop widgets."

Basically, when you boot your computer into any Linux distribution, you have the ability to install a GUI that you can interact with. Some are lighter weight than others, and some can be customized more. Let's take a look at some of the more common DEs, and look at the Pros and Cons of them.
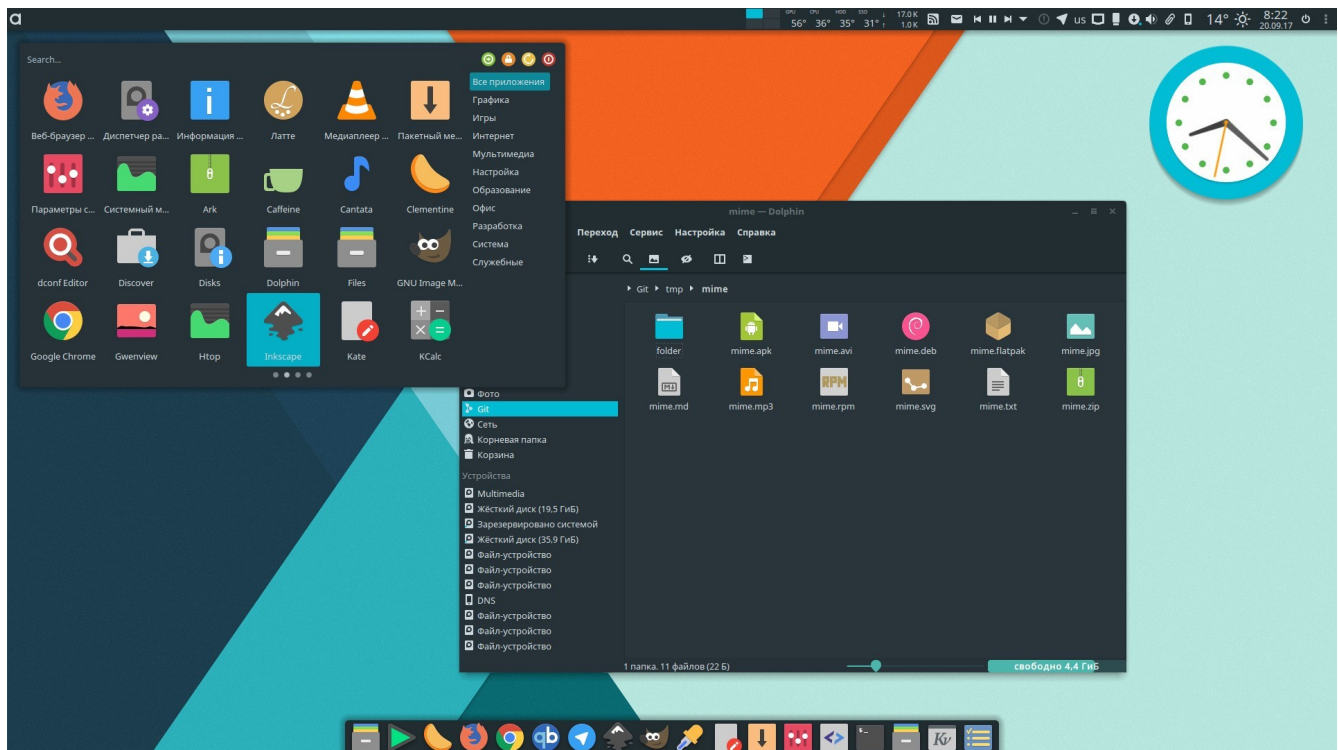
GNOME 3

Gnome 3 is probably the most popular DE out there right now. It has some great options available with it, including the Nautilus file manager, and it's simplicity. It is considered one of the more heavy DEs, as it uses more system resources than others. It has also been stated that support from Gnome is a bit lacking.

KDE Plasma

KDE Plasma is another popular DE, that is very well-polished and clean looking. It comes with Dolphin file manager, and can be customized. There have been complaints that the newer versions do not offer as much that can be customized. It is also considered one of the heavy DEs.
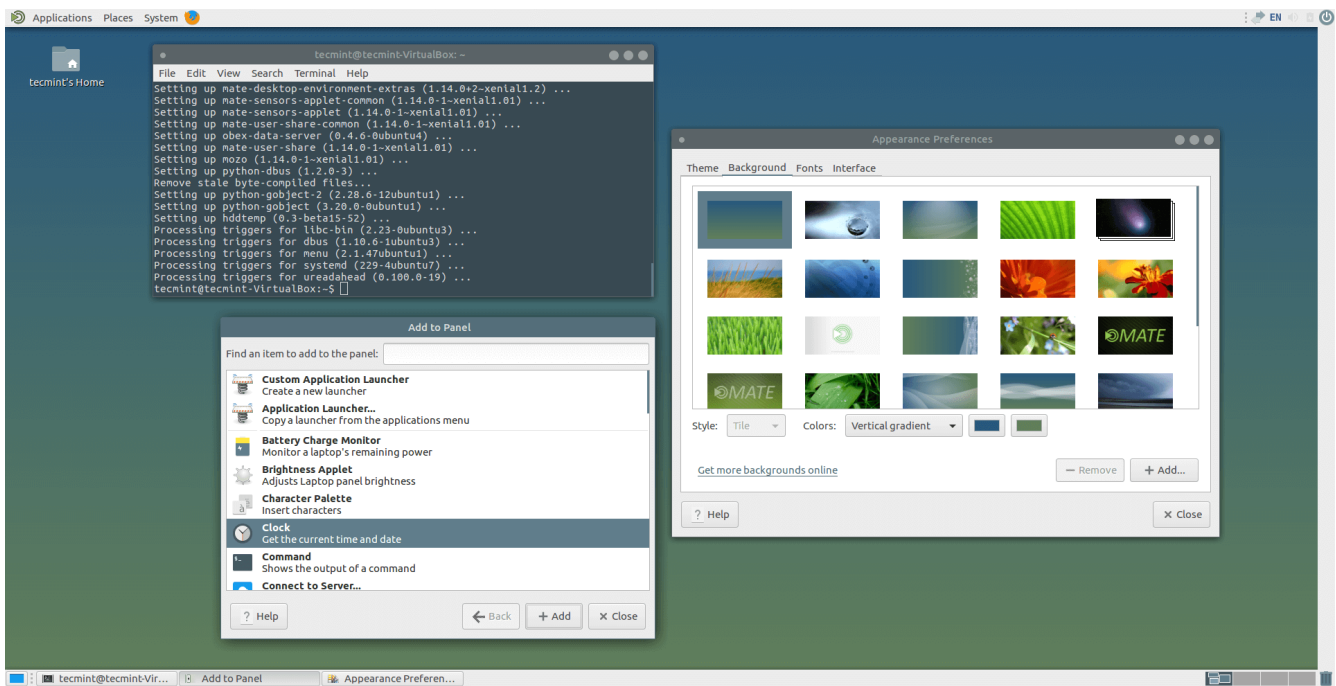
Cinnamon Desktop

The Cinnamon desktop is a fork of Gnome shell. It is easy to customize, and designed more for the traditional, non-touch, screens. There are a lot of different themes that can be downloaded for it. Cinnamon is considered to be a medium weight DE.
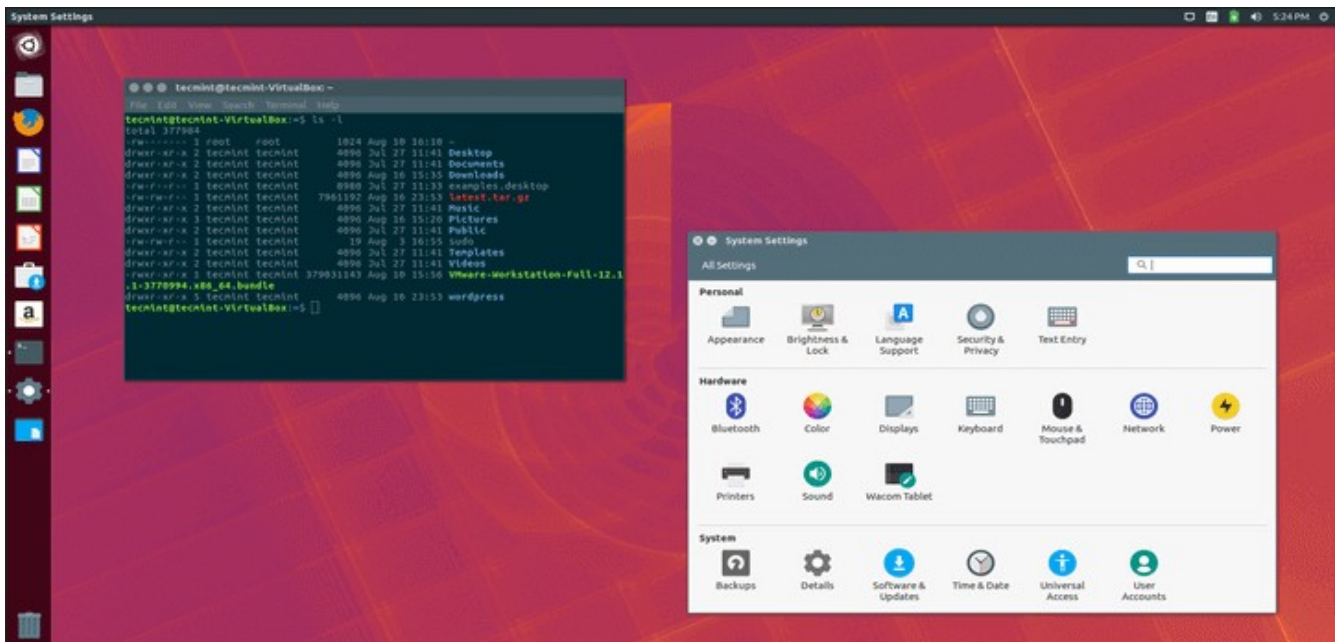

MATE Desktop
The MATE desktop is also a fork of Gnome 2. It comes with the Caja file manager, Pluma text editor, and a handful of other applications. It can easily be customized to your liking. It is also considered to be a medium weight DE.
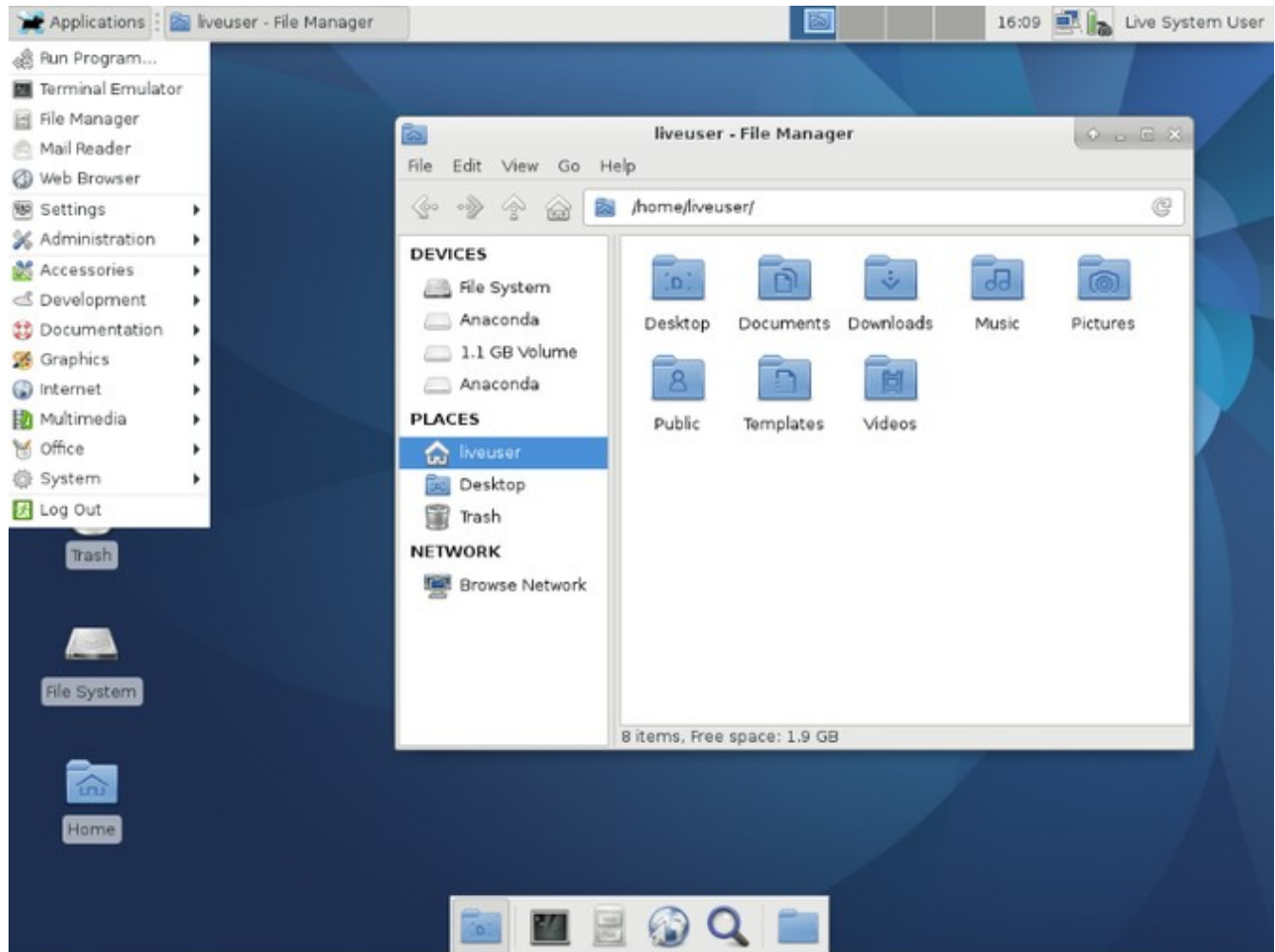
Unity Desktop

Unity is also a fork of Gnome 2, and was started by Mark Shuttleworth and Cononical (makers of Ubuntu). Unity is basically a different interface for the Gnome 2 DE, that comes with a lot of the same features. It is considered to be a heavy DE.

XFCE Desktop

XFCE is a light weight DE, that is available for many different Linux distributions, along with Mac OS X and BSD, and Solaris. It is a very fast and user friendly DE that doesn't utilize many system resources. It come with Thunar file manager and Xfwm windows manager.

There are many other Desktop environments out there that are very well done, and have many options available with them. I don't have the space or the personal knowledge on a lot of them, so I'm not including them here. Perhaps in a future writing, we can go more in depth into some of the others.