MX-flux FAQs

The fluxbox implementation on MX Linux

What is Fluxbox?

Fluxbox is a [Window Manager](#) (unlike Xfce, which is a Display Environment) that controls the placement and appearance of windows. For history and overview, consult [Wikipedia](#).

How do I start?

Right-click anywhere on the desktop to get a menu.
- The menu is set by ~/.fluxbox/menu-mx. Alternative menus in ~/.fluxbox/menus_other/
- For further menus, do a web search on "fluxbox menu example"

What is that dock across the top?

That is called the toolbar. Its width and placement can be set with the options available by right-clicking an empty space (or the workspace arrow icon) on the toolbar, while height is set in ~/.fluxbox/init/ (line 6):

```
session.screen0.toolbar.height:    0
```

If a zero is there, it means that the selected style will set the height. Otherwise, a value of 20 to 25 is often comfortable.

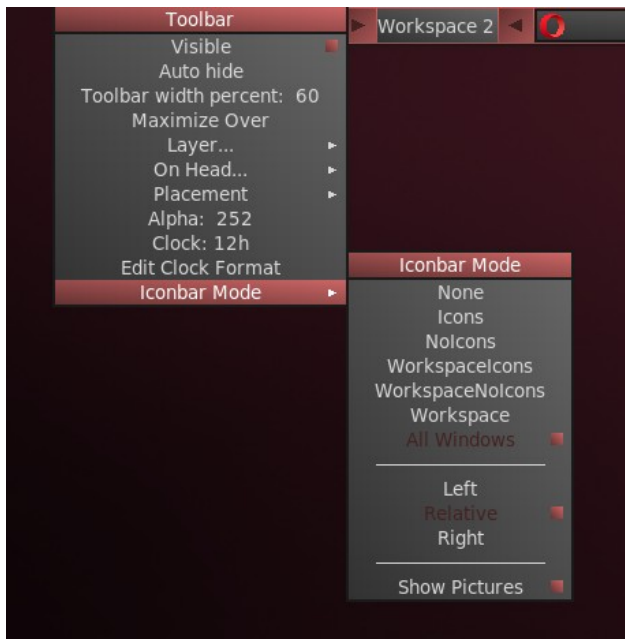The toolbar contains the following default components (L-R):

clock
- To adjust the clock to 12h or 24h, right-click and click 12h or 24h, whichever shows. If that doesn't work, select "Edit clock format."
- 24h: **%H:%M**, 12h: **%I:%M**.
- The default for MX-flux is 12h time and date in day/short month format: **%I:%M %b %d**. Many other time/date options are available: https://mxlinux.org/wiki/other/time-formats-in-scripts/

pager
- Allows you to switch workspace; same as Control + F1/F2/ etc., or using the scroll wheel over an empty section of the desktop. Number and name are set in the *~/.fluxbox/init*.

iconbar

- Here open apps will show an icon, with various window options available by right-clicking the relevant icon (including the toolbar itself) > iconbar mode. Default for MX-flux is All Windows.

Window options available with a right click

systemtray
- Equivalent of Notification Area in Xfce. Default components set in *~/.fluxbox/init*; apps that have a systemtray option will show there when launched.

You can move or delete any of the toolbar components in ~/.fluxbox/init/ (line 5), which by default are set up in this way:

```
clock, prevworkspace, workspacename, nextworkspace, iconbar, systemtray
```

How can I get rid of the FAQ icon or any conky?

Menu > Out of sight > FAQ or Conky.

The FAQ icon can be restored by navigating ~/.fluxbox/startup and removing the comment sign (= the "#") at the beginning of the line *idesk &.* For the conky, click Menu > System > Conky and select the one you want.

How can I change or add a menu entry?

Press F3 to get to ~/.fluxbox/, and click on the file *menu-mx* to edit. The syntax is: [category] (name) {command} – be sure to use brackets, parentheses and braces correctly.

Example 1: change "Browser" to open Opera instead of Firefox

- Find the line with the word Browser (use Ctrl+F if necessary)

[exec] (Browser) {firefox}

- Double-click the word "firefox" in the command part so it is highlighted, then type "opera" and save, producing this result:

[exec] (Browser) {opera}

Example 2: add Skype to the menu

- Decide where you want it to show up; for this example, let's assume you want to put it under "Communicate" and that you want to label it as "video"

- Introduce a new line and follow the pattern: [exec] (menu entry) {command}

- The result will look something like this:

[submenu] (Communicate)

[exec] (Email) {thunderbird}

[exec] (Chat) {hexchat}

[exec] (Video) {skypeforlinux}

[end]

NOTE: as the second example shows, the command to use may not always be obvious, so if necessary open All apps (F6), right-click the entry you are interested in > Edit and copy the correct full command for the menu.

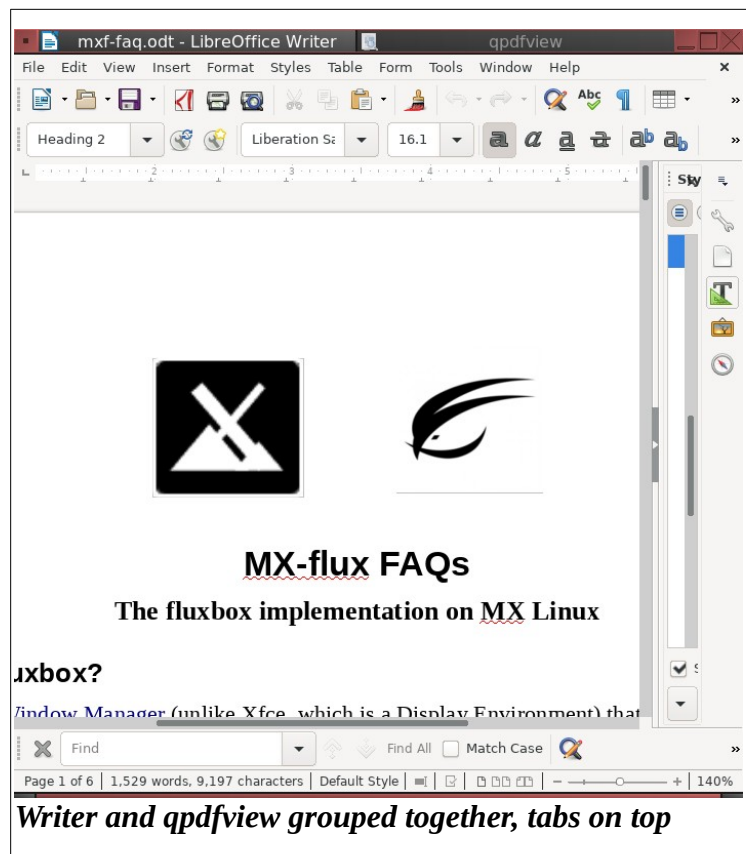## What else should I know about the windows?

Properties
- Resize: Alt + right click near the corner you want to change and drag.
- Move: Alt + left click and drag.

You can combine multiple windows into one window with tabs across the top by simply Ctrl-Clicking and holding the titlebar of one window and dragging and dropping it on another window. Reverse the procedure to separate them again.

More:
http://fluxbox.sourceforge.net/docbook/en/html/chap-tabs.html

Writer and qpdfview grouped together, tabs on top

I see styles in the menu, what are those?

Styles are simple text files that tell fluxbox how to generate the appearance of different components of the window manager. Fluxbox ships with a large number in */usr/share/fluxbox/styles/* that show in Menu > Look > Style, and many more can be found online with a web search on "fluxbox styles."

Styles can include a background image, but that is blocked in MX-flux by default with the top lines in *~/.fluxbox/overlay*. To <u>allow</u> the style to determine the background, place a hash mark in front to the line so that it looks like this:

! The following line will prevent styles from setting the background.
#background: none

If you like a style but want to change certain traits, copy it to ~/.fluxbox/styles/, rename it, and make your changes (consult Ubuntu style guide under Links, below). One of the default styles for MX-flux in that folder, for instance, is a modified form of "Twice" copied and renamed "MX-Twice," then modified to center the window titles.

Can I change the background?

First make sure the overlay file is blocking the style from determining the background. Then click Menu > Look > Backgrounds to see the available choices. The list that pops up from the menu entry includes any user backgrounds (*~/.fluxbox/backgrounds*) and system backgrounds (*/usr/share/backgrounds*), separated by a horizontal line. This setup allows you to put your preferred backgrounds in the user folder and be able to select among the group with a simple click.

Conky

MX-flux users can make use of the default conky set for MX Linux by clicking Menu > System > Conky to bring up a selection box for MX-Conky.

Users on MX-19 will likely need to change a setting to gain transparency. After opening the conky in MX-Conky, click on the Edit button. Search the text that pops up for the line:

own_window_transparent no

and replace it with:

own_window_transparent yes

Save the changed text with the ending "_fb" so that you will not override that conky for Xfce users.

To autostart a specific conky, open *~/.fluxbox/startup*, look for the line that starts with **conky -p 5** (it may be commented out), change the conky location to the one you want and uncomment if necessary.

What terminals are available?

- F4 (or Menu > Terminal) = Drop-down Xfce4-terminal
- Alt + F2 = xterm terminal
- F2 (or: Menu > Run…) = little command terminal (fbrun)
- F2, and enter *xfce4-terminal* to get a movable Xfce terminal.

Can I use my own keystroke combinations?

Yes. Many are listed by default in *~/.fluxbox/keys*, though unsure whether all of them work. The names of a couple of the keys are a bit obscure:
- Mod1 = Alt
- Mod4 = Logo key (Windows, Apple)

More: http://fluxbox.sourceforge.net/docbook/en/html/c296.html

There are 7 dedicated function keys in MX-flux (see top of *keys* to change):
- F1: fluxbox FAQs
- F2: Run command
- F3: File manager
- F4: Drop-down terminal
- F5: MX Tools
- F6: All apps

Are there options available for apps that I launch?

When an app is open, you can right-click the title bar and set any of the options available. For instance, you can select to remember workspace, size, location, etc. Your choices are recorded in *~/.fluxbox/apps* and allow you to control many window specifics.

What screen options exist?

- Brightness: right-click the battery icon in the systray
- Capture: if you have a Print Screen (AKA Print, PrtSc, etc.) key, try using that; if that doesn't work or exist, click Menu > Accessories > Capture
- Screensaver: Menu > Accessories > Screensaver

I have read about the slit: what is that?

The slit is a container for dockapps that can be located at various locations on the desktop (top left.. top center, etc.). Dockapps are small applications coming originally from Window Maker that can fit into those areas. You can search the default repo for dockapps with this terminal command:

apt-cache search dockapp

Many available in the repos may not work well, but it's worth taking a look.

Example:

- install **wmweather** (there is also a wmweather+ you can try)

- find the metar (ICAO) code of the weather station you want to use:

  https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ICAO_airport_code

- run in a terminal this command where XXXX should be replaced with the actual code:

  wmweather -s XXXX

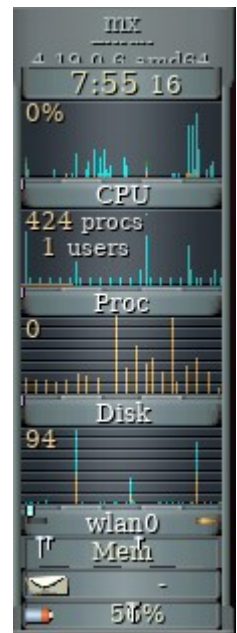- a very small box will show up in the lower right corner; click on it to see the textual readout from that station

- carefully right-click the box frame to autohide, relocate, etc.
- add it to ~/.fluxbox/startup (*wmweather -s XXXX &*) if you want it to load automatically upon login.

A very interesting and useful dockapp is the monitor stack **gkrellm**, installed by default. It is available by clicking Menu > System > Monitors and has many configuration options (right-click on the top label or on one of the charts) and many skins available. It can be set to launch automatically upon login in a hidden state by using the -w switch in the *startup* file, giving you instant access to the monitors without having it in front of you all the time.

Also in the repos, **wmbutton** has interesting potential with its nine totally configurable buttons.

The monitor stack gkrellm

Can I make use of bluetooth devices?

Yes. It is disabled by default, but to set it up click menu > Settings > Bluetooth. An icon will appear in the systray that you can right click to see a menu with many options, including Exit.

Do you have useful links to recommend?

http://fluxbox.sourceforge.net/docbook/en/pdf/fluxbook.pdf
Basic handbook, somewhat dated but still useful

https://bbs.archlinux.org/viewtopic.php?id=77729
Some good general explanations with examples

https://wiki.archlinux.org/index.php/Fluxbox
Some commands are Arch-specific

https://wiki.ubuntu.com/HowToFluxboxStyles

https://wiki.debian.org/FluxBox

https://wiki.debian.org/FluxboxIcon

V. 20191207