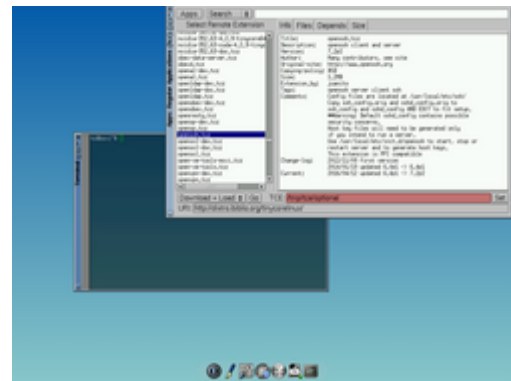# Tiny Core Linux

Tiny Core Linux (**TCL**) is a minimal Linux kernel based operating system focusing on providing a base system using BusyBox and FLTK. It was developed by Robert Shingledecker, who was previously the lead developer of Damn Small Linux.[2][3][4] The distribution is notable for its small size (11 to 16 MB) and minimalism; additional functions are provided by extensions. Tiny Core Linux is free and open-source software licensed under the GNU General Public License version 2.[5]

Types

- **Tiny Core** (23 MB) is the recommended option for new users who have a wired network connection. It includes the base Core system and a dynamic FLTK/FLWM graphical user interface.[6]
- **Core** (17 MB) (also known as "Micro Core Linux") is a smaller variant of Tiny Core without a graphical desktop, though additional extensions can be added to create a system with a graphical desktop environment.[6]
- **Core64** is a port to the x86_64 architecture with a 32-bit user land, i.e. it uses a 64-bit kernel and 64-bit modules, but it can use the same extensions as Core.[7]
- **CorePure64** is a port of "Core" to the x86_64 architecture. 64-bit kernel and 64-bit extensions.[7]
- **dCore** (12 MB) is a core made from Debian or Ubuntu compatible files that uses import and the SCE package format,[8] a self-contained package format for the Tiny Core distribution since 5.x series.
- **Core Plus** (248 MB) is "an installation image and not the distribution".[6] It is composed of Tiny Core with additional functionality, most notably wireless support and non-US keyboard support.[6]
- **piCore** is the Raspberry Pi port of "Core".

Tiny Core Linux	
Tiny Core Linux 7.1	
OS family	Linux (Unix-like)
Working state	Current
Source model	Open source
Initial release	January 5, 2009
Latest release	16.2[1] / 28 September 2025
Available in	English
Package manager	appbrowser (GUI) / tce (CLI)
Supported platforms	x86 x86-64 armv7 Raspberry Pi
Kernel type	Monolithic
Userland	BusyBox
Default user interface	FLWM
License	GNU GPLv2
Official website	tinycorelinux.net (http://tinycorelinux.net)

System requirements

Minimal configuration: Tiny Core needs at least 46 MB of RAM, and (micro) Core requires at least 28 MB of RAM. The minimum CPU is an i486DX.[9]

Recommended configuration: A Pentium II CPU and 128 MB of RAM are recommended for Tiny Core.[9]

Design philosophy

The developers describe TCL as "a nomadic ultra small graphical desktop operating system capable of booting from cdrom, pendrive, or frugally from a hard drive."[10] As of version 2.8.1, the core is designed to run primarily in RAM but with three distinct modes of operation:
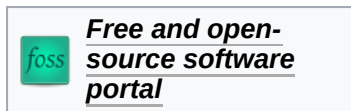
- "Cloud" or Internet mode — A "testdrive" mode using a built-in appbrowser GUI to explore extensions from an online application extension repository loaded into RAM only for the current session.
- TCE/Install — A mode for Tiny Core Extensions downloaded and run from a storage partition but kept as symbolic links in RAM.
- TCE/CopyFS — A mode which installs applications onto a Linux partition like a more typical Linux installation.[11]

Release history

Version	Stability	Release date
1.0[12][3]		January 5, 2009
2.0[13]		June 7, 2009
3.0		July 19, 2010
4.0[14]		September 25, 2011
4.7.7		May 10, 2013
5.0[12][15]		September 14, 2013
5.0.1		October 1, 2013
5.0.2		October 18, 2013
5.1		November 28, 2013
5.2		January 14, 2014
5.3		April 19, 2014
5.4		September 10, 2014
6.0		January 5, 2015
6.1		March 7, 2015
6.2		May 3, 2015
6.3		May 30, 2015
6.4	Older version	September 8, 2015
6.4.1		November 4, 2015
7.0[16]		February 23, 2016
7.1		May 22, 2016
7.2		July 4, 2016
8.0		April 10, 2017
8.1		September 3, 2017
8.2		September 22, 2017
9.0		February 26, 2018
10.0		January 20, 2019
10.1		June 11, 2019
11.0		February 9, 2020
11.1		April 1, 2020
12.0		February 17, 2021
13.0		January 31, 2022
13.1		May 8, 2022
14.0		April 12, 2023

15.0	Supported version	February 22, 2024
16.0[17]	Supported version	March 31, 2025
16.1[18]	Latest version	June 16, 2025

See also

Free and open-source software portal

- Comparison of Linux live distributions
- Lightweight Linux distribution
- List of Linux distributions that run from RAM
- Telikin

References

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External links

- Official website (http://tinycorelinux.net)
- Tiny Core Linux (https://distrowatch.com/table.php?distribution=tinycore) at DistroWatch
- "Interview with Robert Shingledecker, creator of Tiny Core Linux" (http://distrowatch.com/weekly.php?issue=20090323#feature). *DistroWatch Weekly* (295). March 23, 2009. Retrieved September 13, 2012..
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