Linux App Ecosystem

A survival guide for Windows refugees on Linux, with a focus on preserving compatibility, muscle memory and ease of use.

```
$ sudo switch-to-linux --now
```
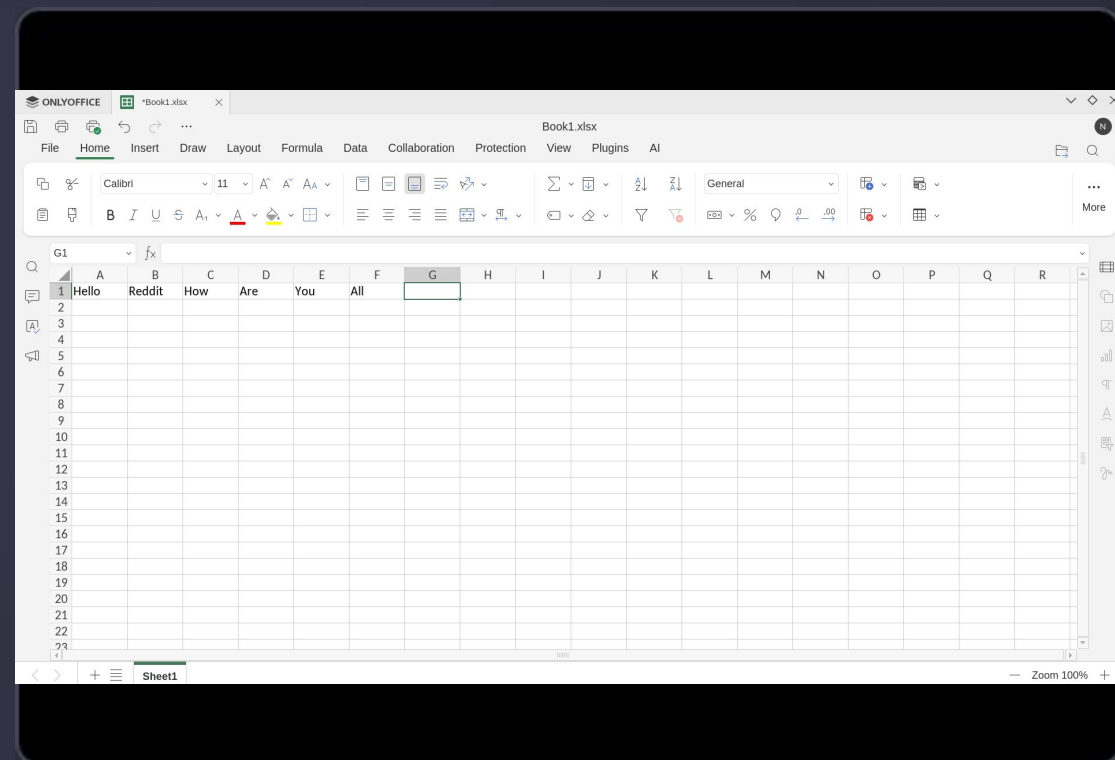
1. Office & Docs

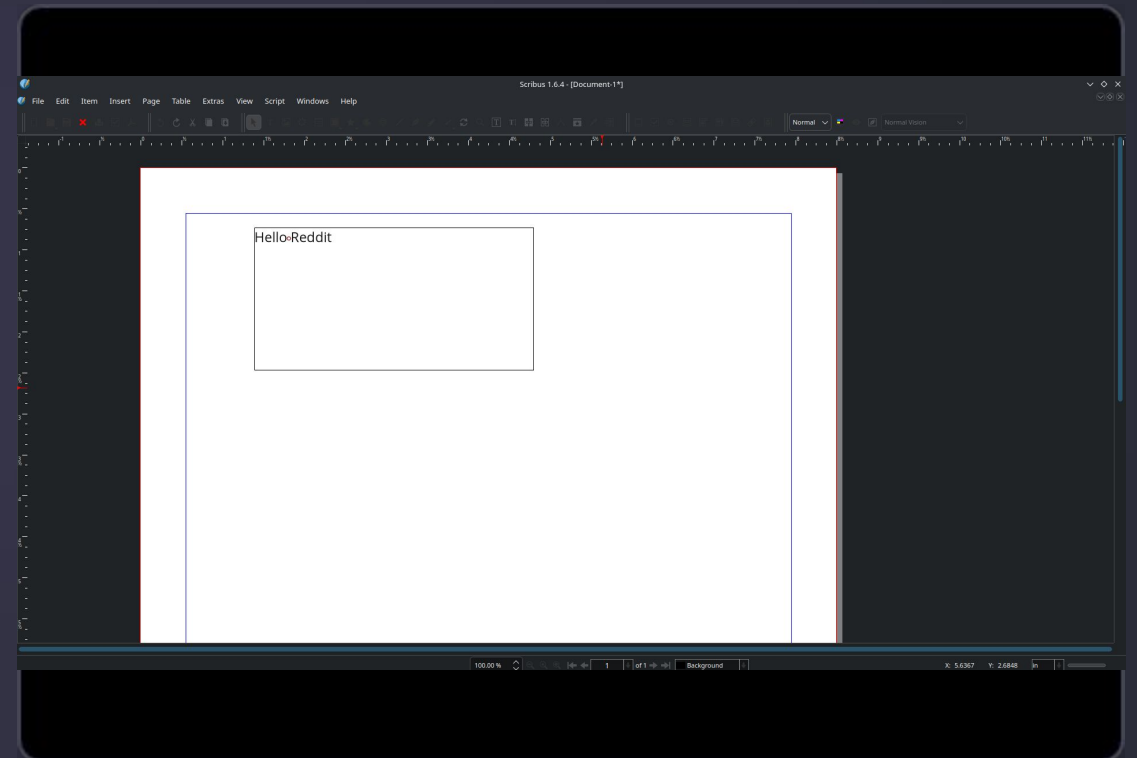Because spreadsheets happen.

ONLYOFFICE

The Microsoft Bridge

> **Best Compatibility:** Opens .docx, .pptx and .xlsx without destroying formatting. Better compatibility than LibreOffice (imo).

> **Clean UI:** Ribbon interface that feels like Office 365.

> **No Ads:** Free desktop and mobile apps. Also has online support if you really need it.
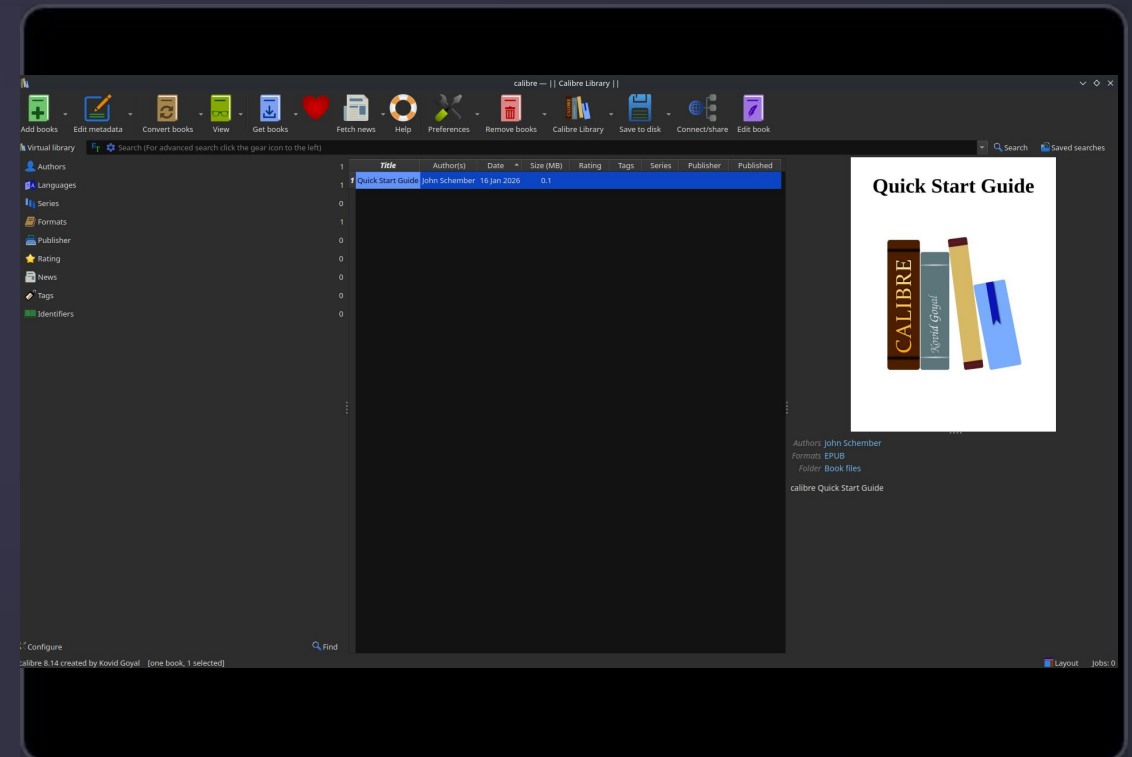
Scribus

Professional Publishing

> **Layout Powerhouse:** Open-source answer to InDesign.

> **Print Ready:** CMYK and ICC color management.

> **Use Case:** Brochures, magazines, and PDFs.

Calibre

Library Management

> **Manage Books:** Calibre is a one of a kind app helping you manage your pdfs,epubs, mobi's and comic books...

> **Tons of Functionality:** Not just read them, but also edit, convert and lots of other utilities...

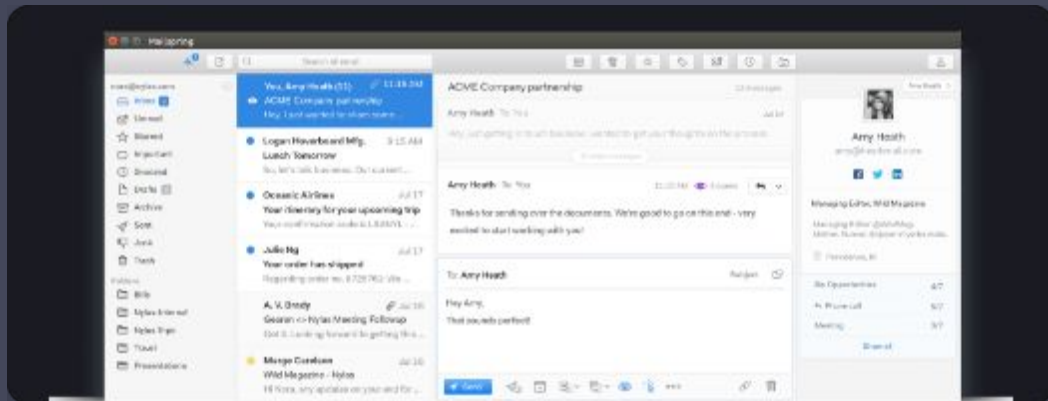# 2. Mail, Calendar & Password Manager

Proton Suite

Encrypted Lifestyle

> **Web-First:** Seamless sync across devices. Avoids the hassle of syncing and self hosting of these things.

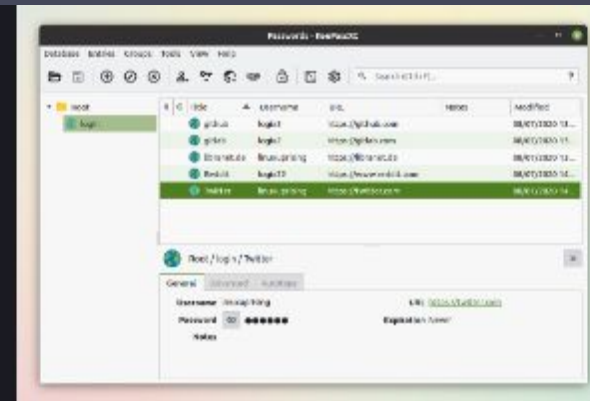> **Secure:** End-to-end encrypted email, calendar, and password manager.

Local Desktop Powerhouses

MailSpring

Modern, unified inbox supporting Gmail & Outlook.

KeePassXC

Offline-first password management. You hold the keys.

I personally don't use them because it just doesn't work for me… the hassle in syncing the password manager for example, just doesn't feel worth it…
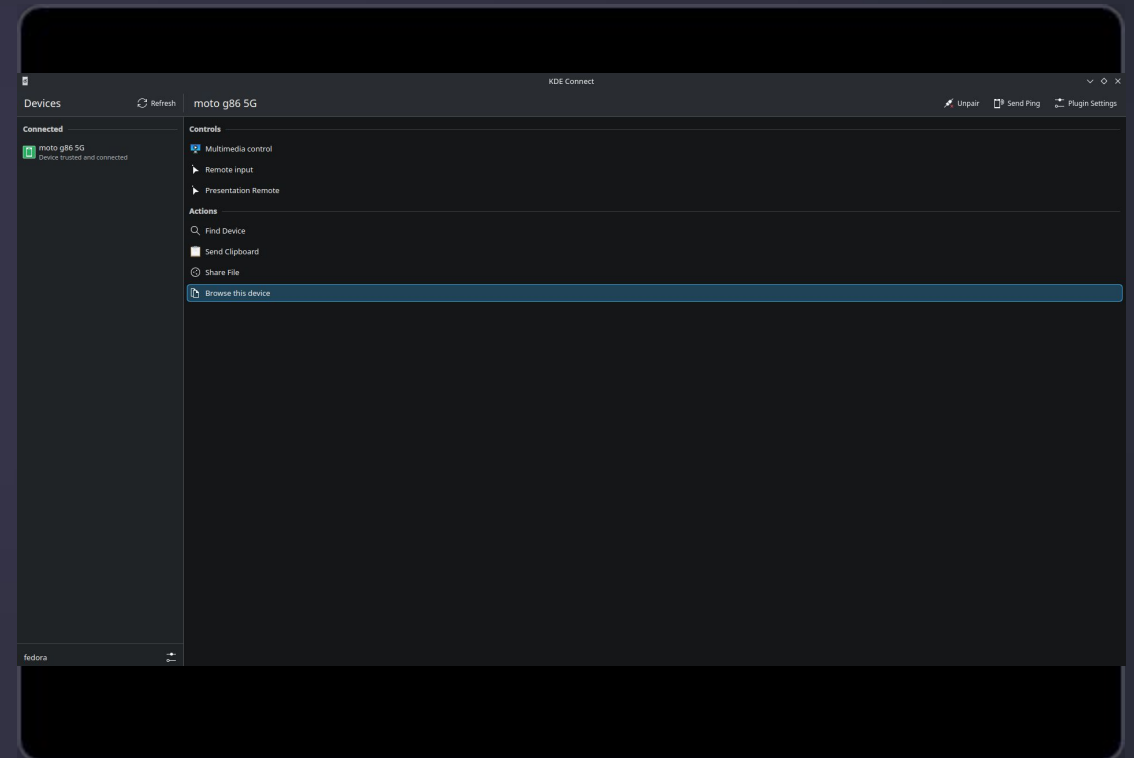
3. Utilities

Making life easier.

KDE Connect

Seamless Integration
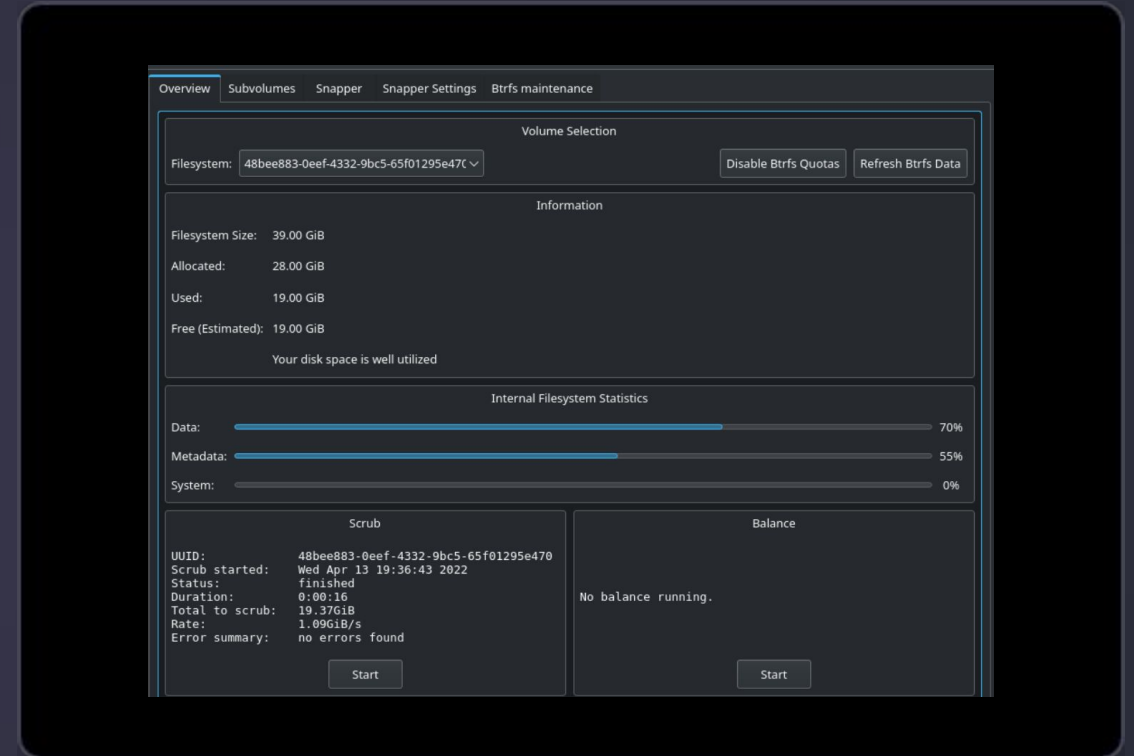
> **Magic Sync:** Connects phone and desktop over Wi-Fi.

> **Remote Input:** Use phone as a trackpad.

> **Clipboard:** Universal copy-paste across devices.

Btrfs Assistant

System Recovery Simplified

> **Magical Restore:** Benefits from BTRFS disk format and helps in recovery.

> **Avoids Disaster:** Things will break, now or 5 years down the line, that's normal for semi rolling release distros like this. Better safe than sorry.

| Overview | Subvolumes | Snapper | Snapper Settings | Btrfs maintenance |

Volume Selection

Filesystem: 48bee883-0eef-4332-9bc5-65f01295e470 | Disable Btrfs Quotas | Refresh Btrfs Data

Information

Filesystem Size: 39.00 GiB
Allocated: 28.00 GiB
Used: 19.00 GiB
Free (Estimated): 19.00 GiB

Your disk space is well utilized

Internal Filesystem Statistics

Data: 70%
Metadata: 55%
System: 0%

Scrub

UUID: 48bee883-0eef-4332-9bc5-65f01295e470
Scrub started: Wed Apr 13 19:36:43 2022
Status: finished
Duration: 0:00:16
Total to scrub: 19.37GiB
Rate: 1.09GiB/s
Error summary: no errors found
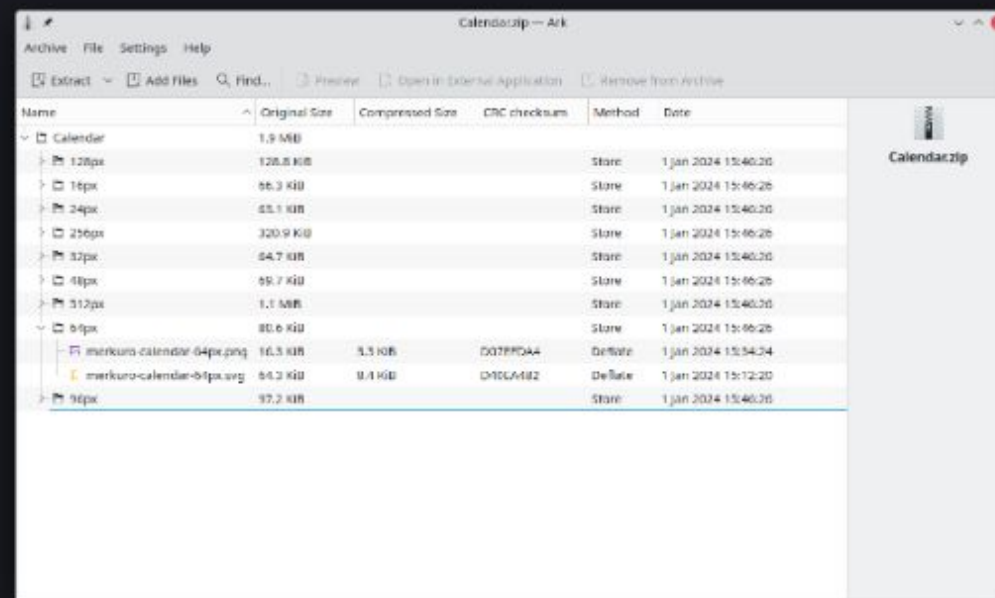
Start

Balance

No balance running.

Start

I personally don't know why something like this doesn't nudge you during the installation process or during even the post-install welcome screens...! I like the way how OpenSUSE handles this, and absolutely hated the hoops Fedora requires to get an actual working recovery system. Insane! Ubuntu/Linux Mint at least has TimeShift absolutely working properly. End Rant.

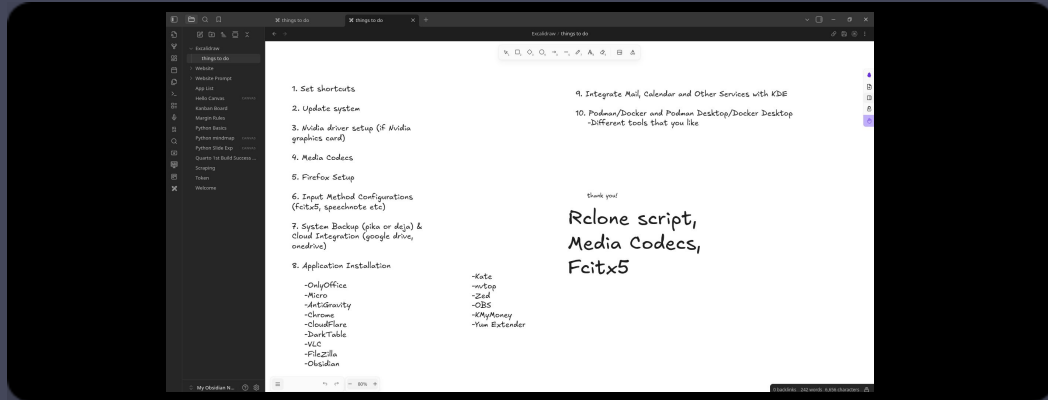Note: If you are using Ubuntu/Mint, use Timeshift.

Ark

Archive Manager

> **Universal:** Supports zip, tar, 7z, rar.

> **Integrated:** Baked right into the Dolphin file manager.

> **Fast:** Lightweight and simple for quick extractions.
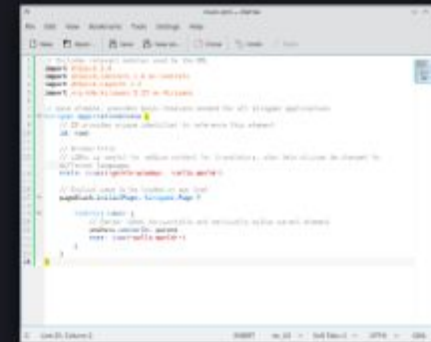
4. Text & Knowledge

Write it down.

Micro

Terminal Text Editor

> **Human Friendly:** Standard hotkeys (Ctrl+C/V) in a terminal.

> **Mouse Support:** Click to move cursor, scroll to scroll.

> **No Learning Curve:** Easier than Vim, more powerful and simpler than Nano as no new shortcuts would need to be memorized.

Notes Stack

Obsidian

Markdown-based second brain with graph view. This presentation for example was initially planned in Obsidian.

It has all the plugins the world... I mean, just install it, you will see...

KWrite

KDE-native text editor, instant startup for quick config edits for example... It's like Windows Notepad, before it got shittified.

5. Creative Tools

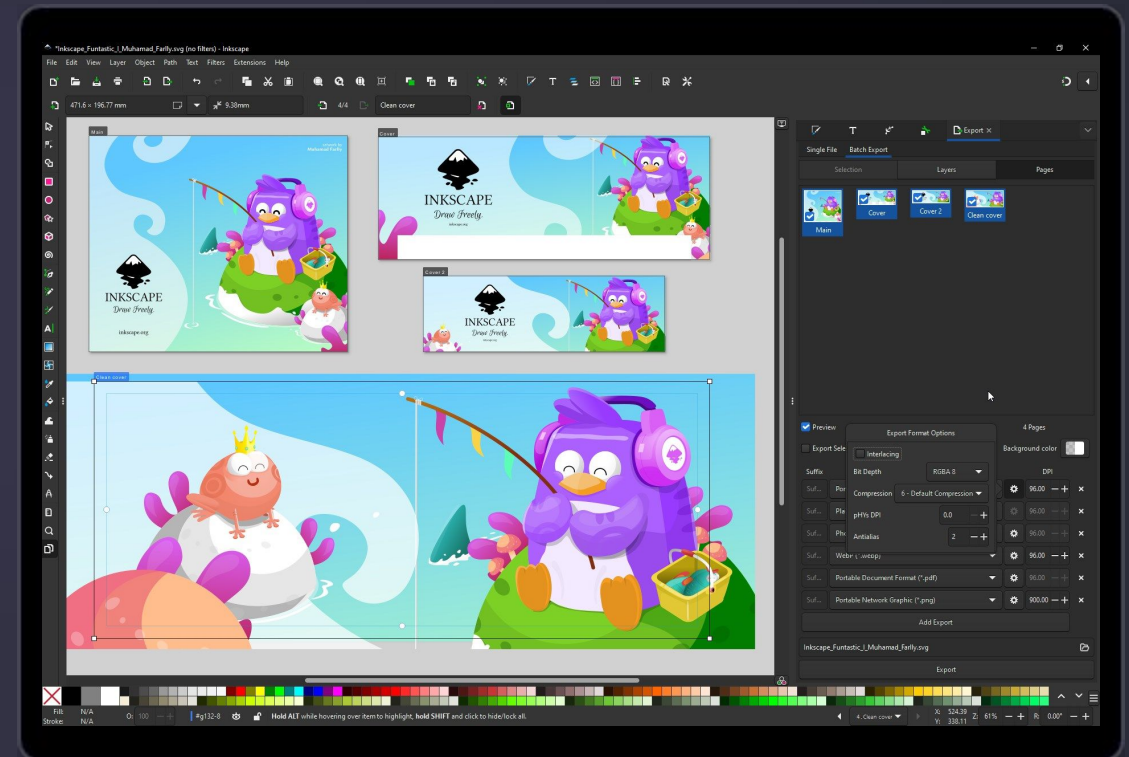Design, Paint, Create.

Krita

Digital Painting-Your Coreldraw Alternative

> **Artist First:** Designed specifically for illustration.

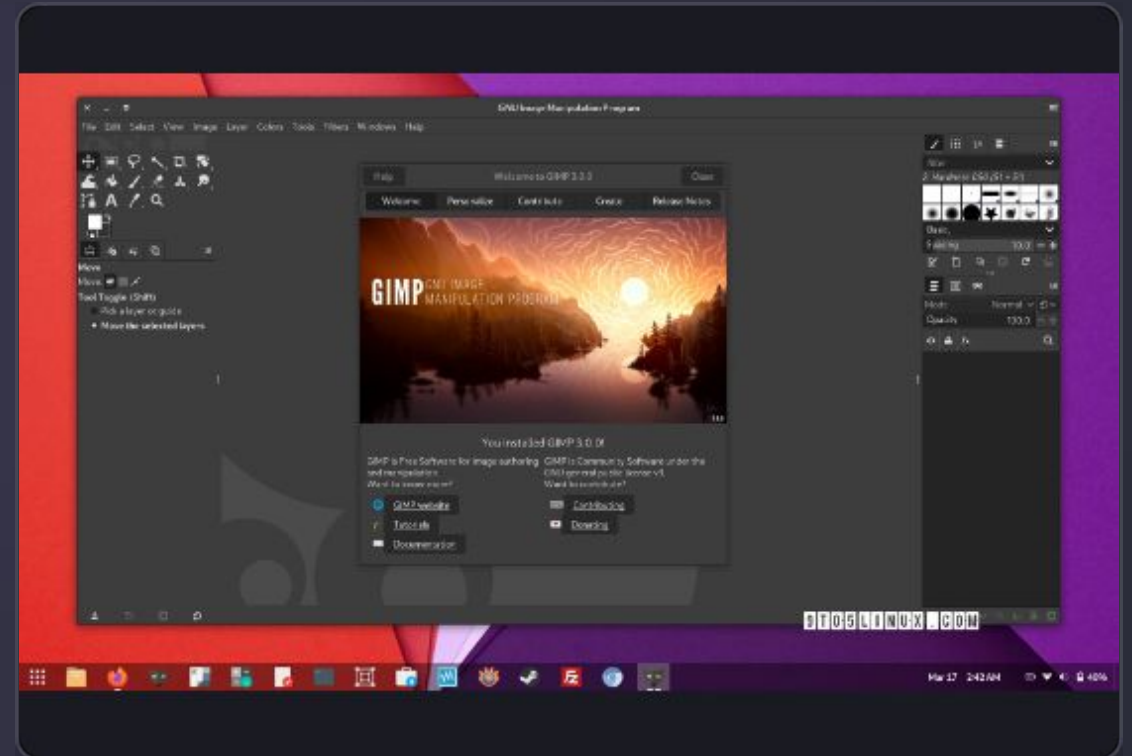> **Brush Engine:** Best-in-class tablet support.

Inkscape

Vector Design

> **SVG Native:** Perfect for logos, icons, and diagrams.

> **Precision:** Powerful node editing tools.

> **Alternative to:** Adobe Illustrator.

GIMP

Photo Manipulation

> **Powerful:** The open source answer to Photoshop.

> **Extensible:** Massive library of plugins. Still as not head to head winner as Krita, but beats Photoshop in that it's completely free...

Photography Workflow

digiKam

Professional photo management and tagging.

Darktable

Non-destructive RAW editing and color grading.

6. Audio & Video

Production Studio.

Audacity

Audio Editor

> **Simple:** Classic waveform editor.

> **Podcasts:** Great for voice cleanup and cutting.

> **Plugins:** Extensive effect library.
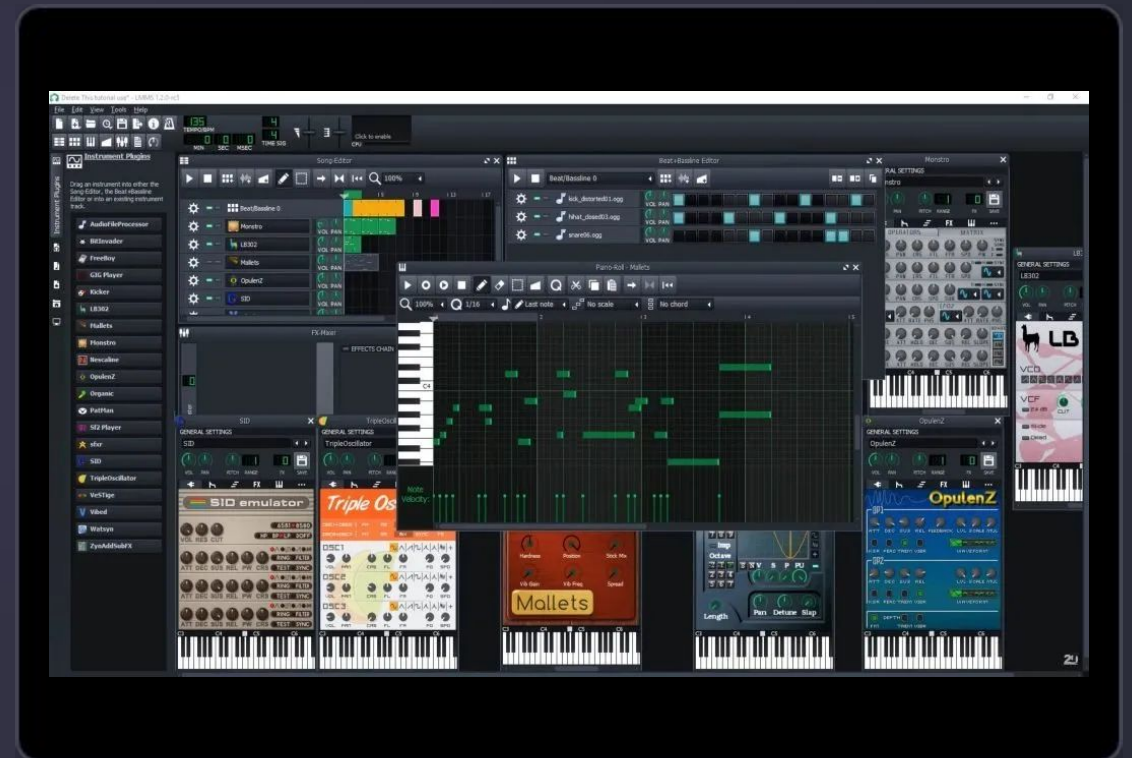
MuseScore

Music Composition

> **Notation:** Professional sheet music creation.

> **Playback:** Realistic instrument preview.

> **Alternative to:** Sibelius.

LMMS

Digital Audio Workstation

> **Production:** Beat making and MIDI composition.

> **Included:** Comes with synths and samples.

> **Alternative to:** FL Studio.

OBS Studio

Streaming & Recording

> **Standard:** The industry standard for streamers.

> **Scenes:** Complex scene composition.

> **Performance:** Low overhead capture.
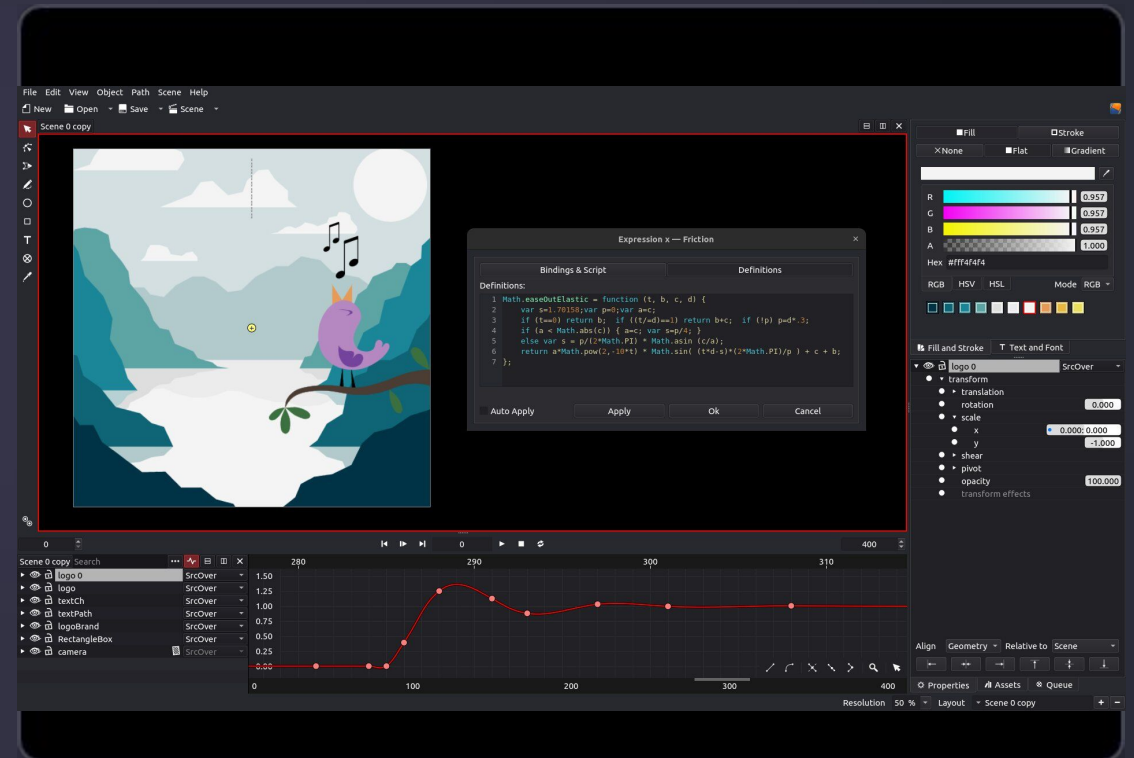
Blender

3D Creation Suite

> **Everything:** Modeling, rigging, animation, simulation, rendering, compositing.

> **Pro Grade:** Used in major film and game productions.

Friction

2D Motion Graphics & Vector Animation

> **Studio:** Used by Studio Ghibli.

> **Workflow:** Animate a logo or a character? It's got you covered

> **Alternative to:** Adobe After Effects. Not as heavy or full featured... but does its core job better.
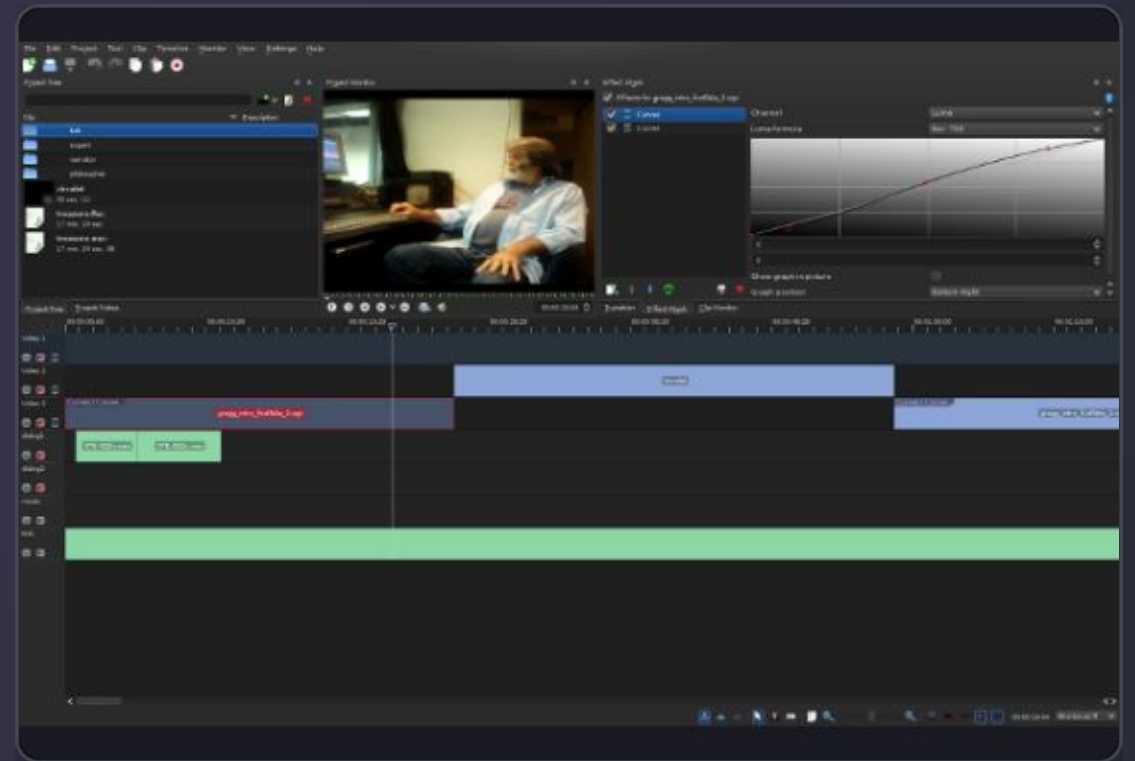
OpenToonz

2D Animation

> **Studio:** Used by Studio Ghibli.

> **Workflow:** Traditional frame-based animation.

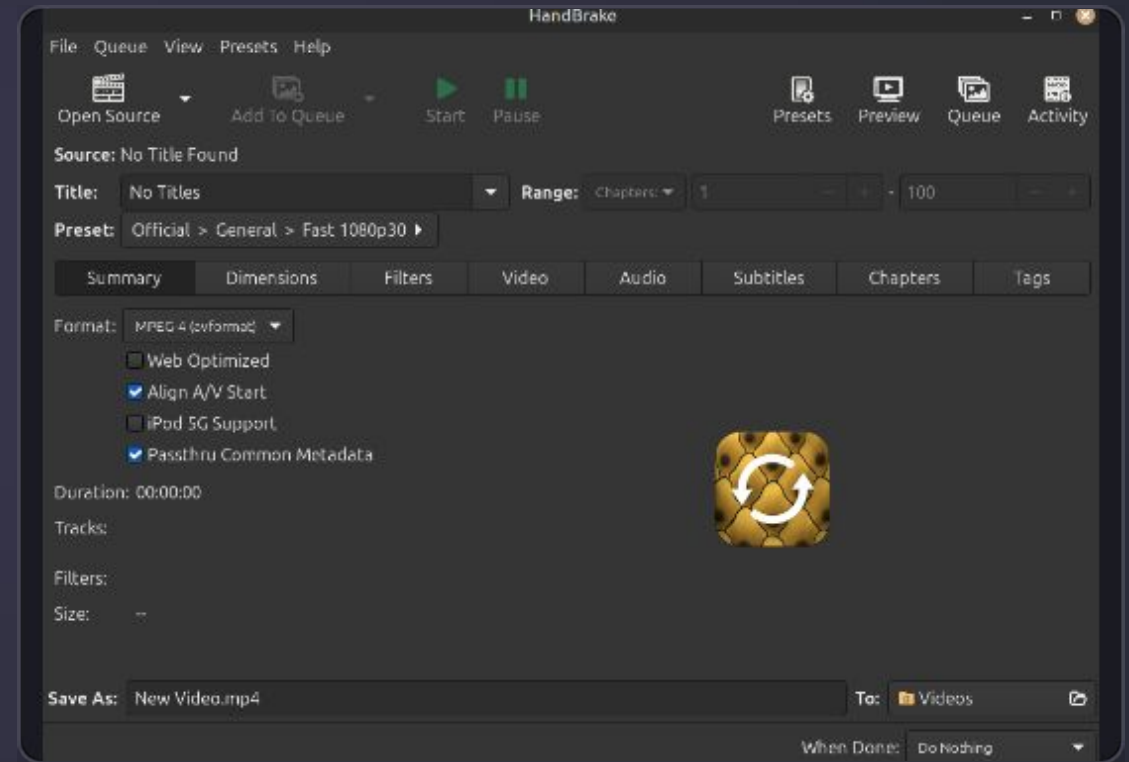> **Alternative to:** Toon Boom.

Kdenlive

Video Editing

> **Multi-track:** Professional timeline workflow.

> **Proxy:** Smooth editing for 4K footage.

> **Alternative to:** Premiere Pro with a little less capacity. If you want a complete alternative with an even better workflow, try Davinci Resolve (but I haven't used it)...

HandBrake

Video Transcoder

> **Convert:** Compress video for web or devices.

> **Presets:** One-click settings for any screen.
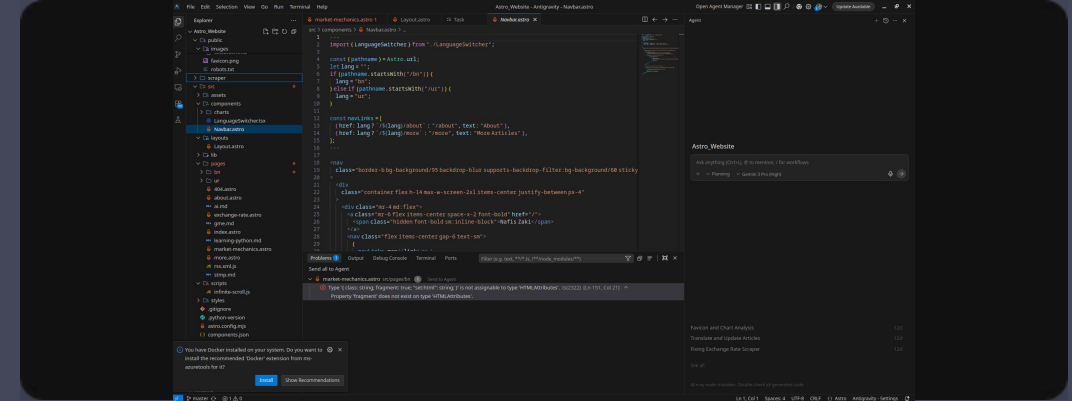
> **Reliable:** It just works.

7. Dev & Infrastructure

Backend power.

Next-Gen Coding

Zed

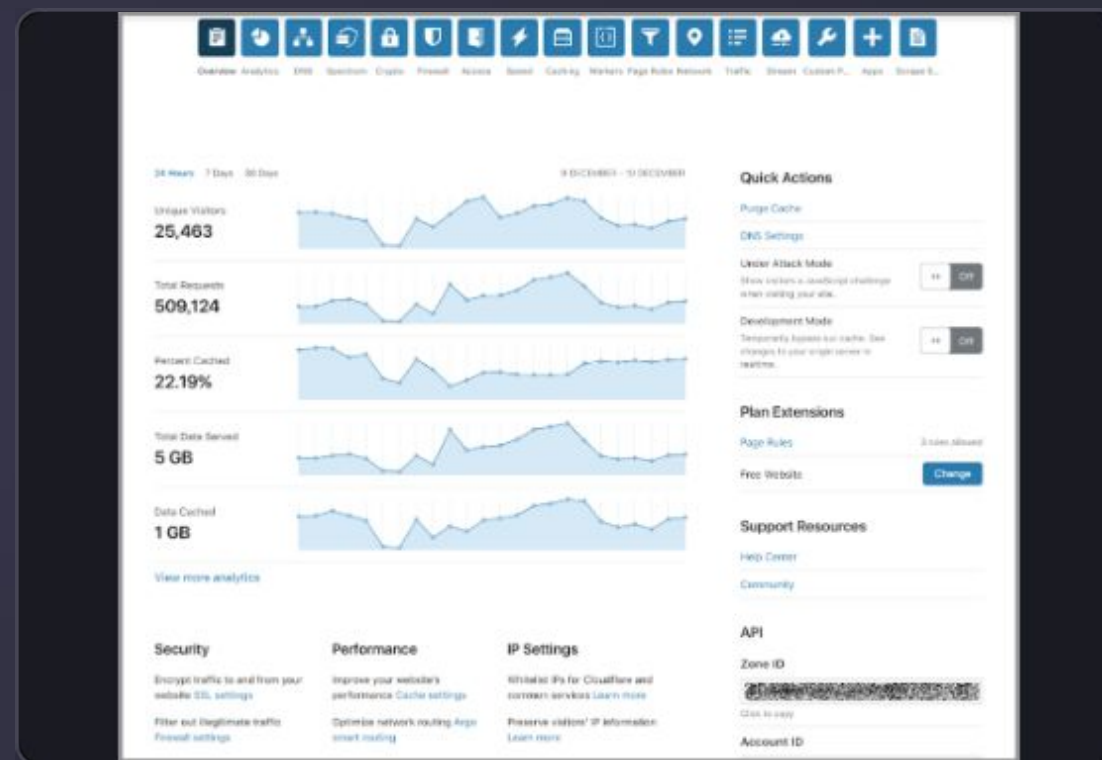High-performance, collaborative editor from the creators of Atom.

Antigravity

AI-first workflows for modern development & programming landscape.

I like both a lot
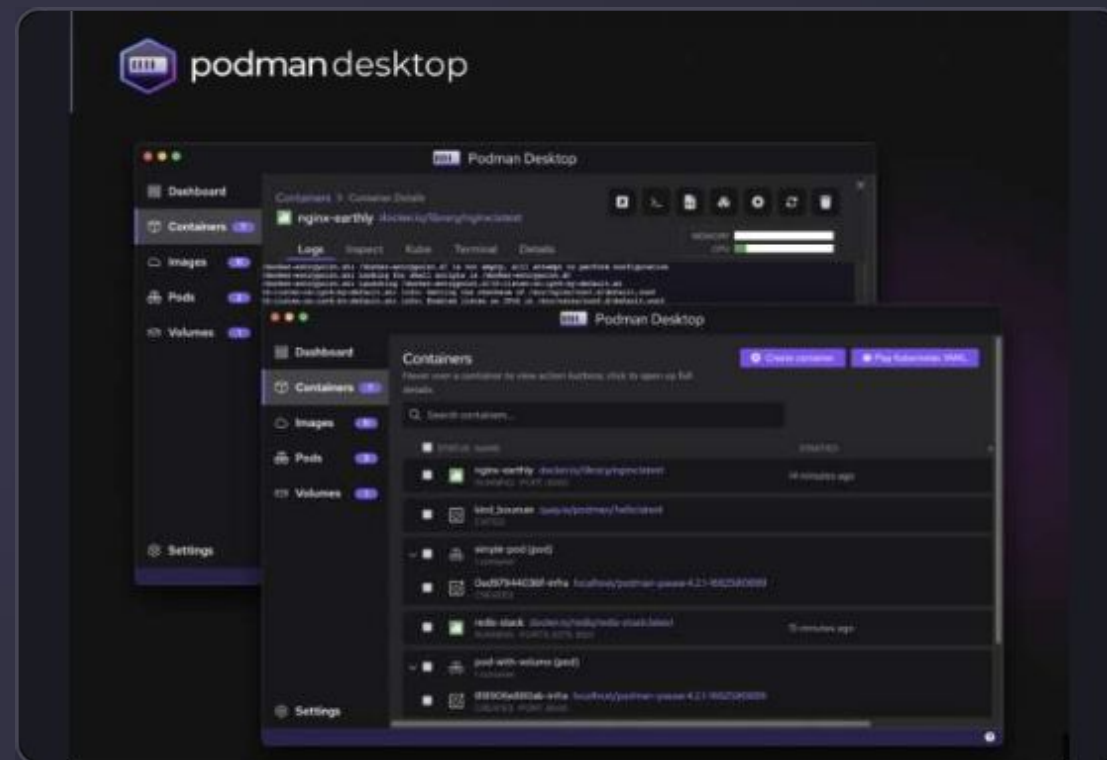
Cloudflare & VPN

Web Infrastructure

> **Network:** DNS, CDN, VPN and security for your projects.

> **Self-Hosting:** Essential for exposing local apps safely.
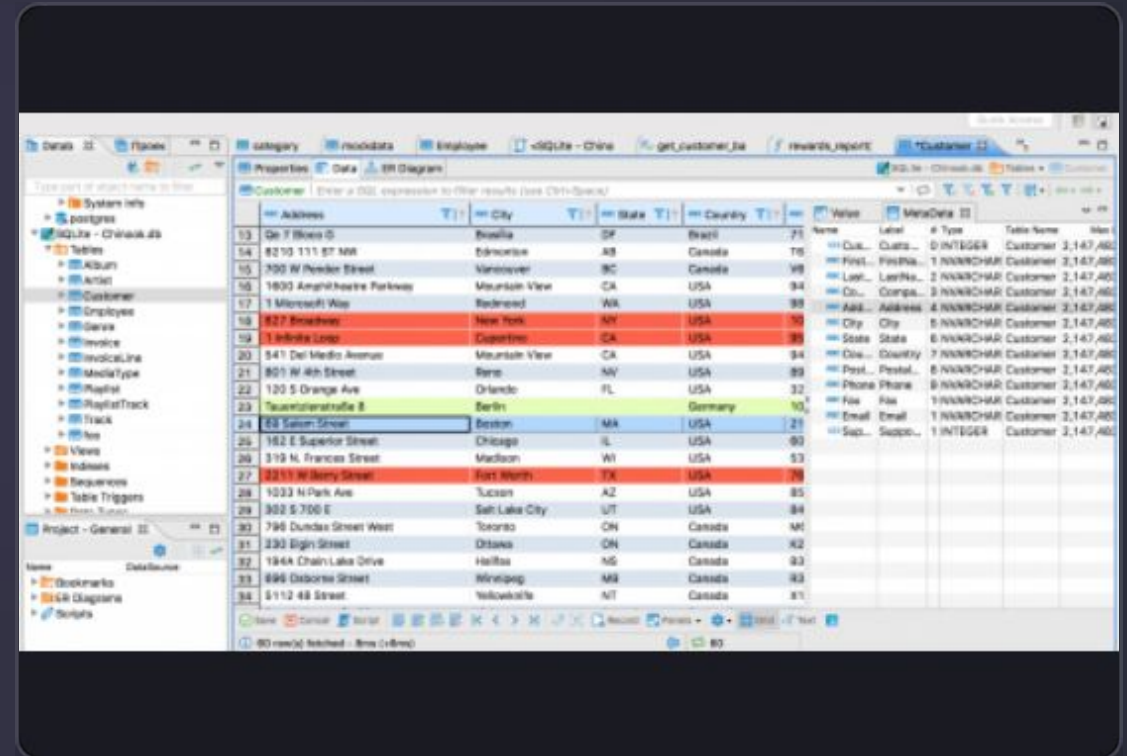
Podman Desktop

Container GUI

> **Secure:** Rootless containers by default.

> **Manager:** Handle images, pods, and volumes easily.

> **Alternative to:** Docker Desktop.

DBeaver

Database Manager

> **Universal:** SQL, PostgreSQL, MySQL, SQLite.

> **Visual:** Clean UI for queries and schema visualization.
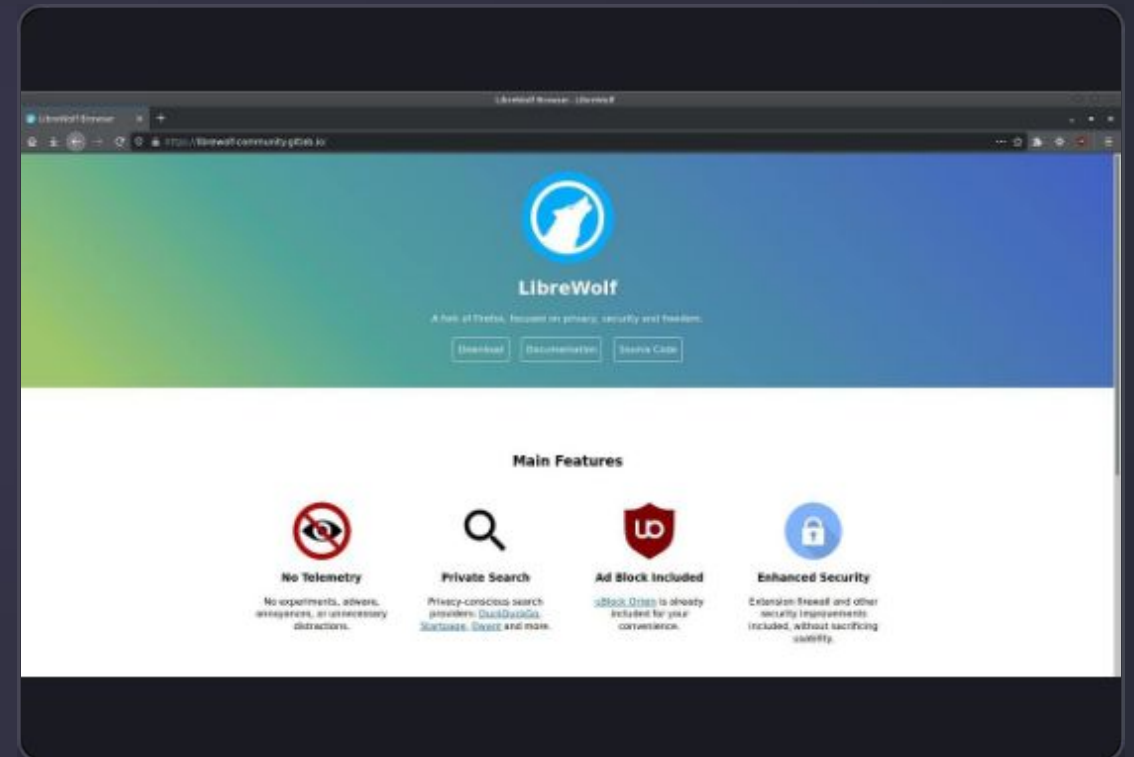
> **Alternative to:** DataGrip.

8. Internet & Finance
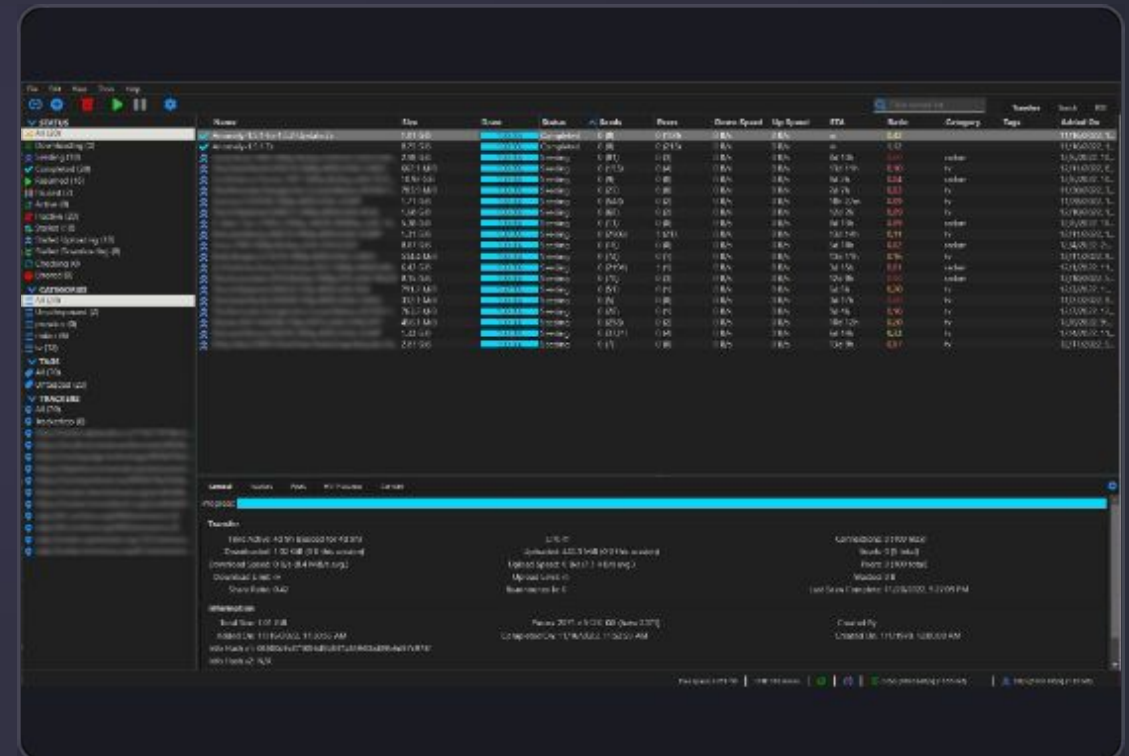
Daily Drivers.

LibreWolf

Hardened Browser

> **Privacy:** Firefox fork with no telemetry.

> **Security:** uBlock Origin pre-installed.
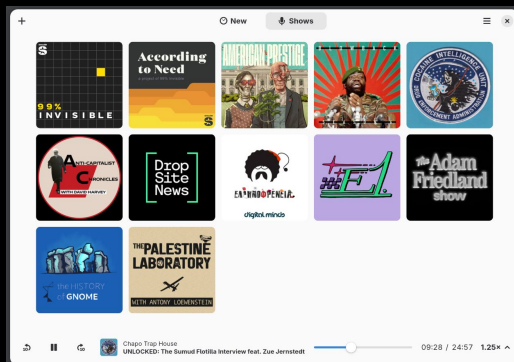
> **Clean:** No "pocket" or sponsored shortcuts.

qBittorrent

File Sharing

> **Clean:** No ads, no crypto miners.

> **Features:** Search engine and RSS support built-in.

> **Alternative to:** uTorrent.
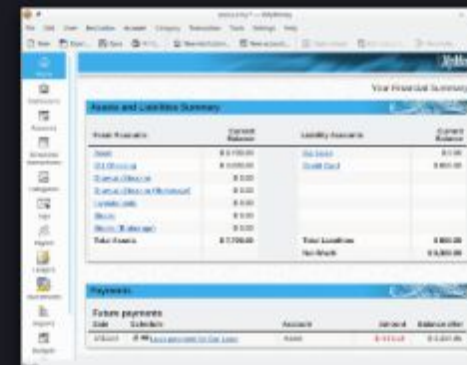
Media & Money

Podcasts

Gnome podcast client. Simply works superb.

KMyMoney

Double-entry accounting. The "Quicken" for Linux.

As you can see, I don't care about consistency in looks,
I only care about what functions better… for me.

Happy Distro Hopping!