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# HOW TO SWITCH BETWEEN GDM, LIGHTDM, MDM OR KDM IN UBUNTU [QUICK TIP]

Author: **Andrew** | Posted: July 28, 2011 | Updated: January 08, 2013

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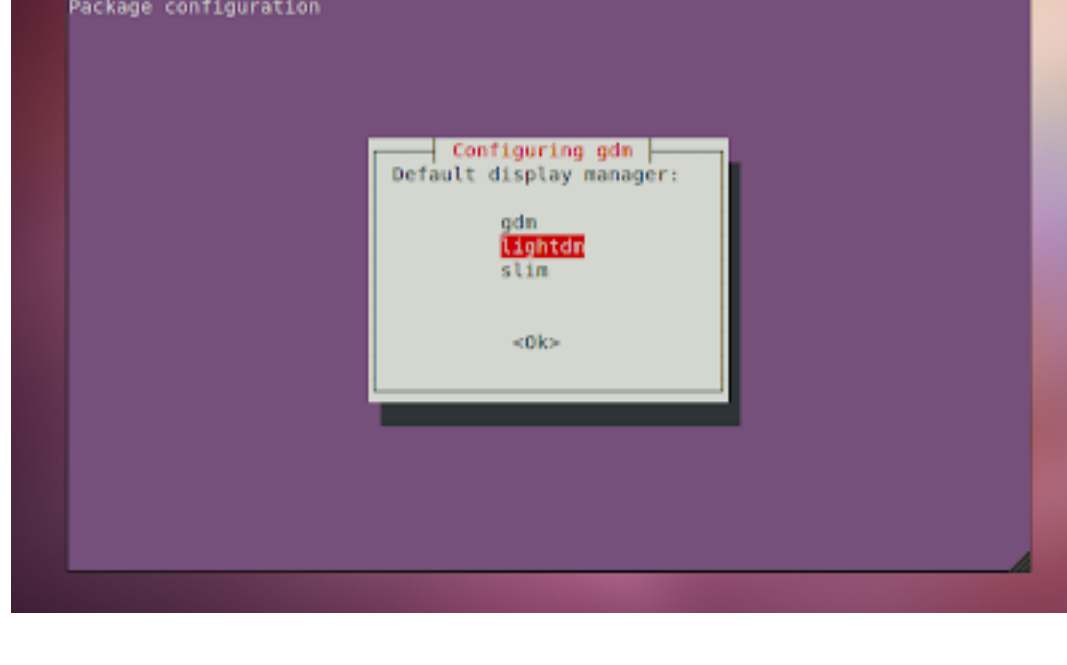


(GDM 3 in Ubuntu 11.10)

Let's say you have both LightDM and GDM display managers installed on your computer (running Ubuntu, Linux Mint or any other Debian-based Linux distribution), LightDM is default but you want to switch to GDM - to do this, run the command below in a terminal:

```
Linux terminal:~$ sudo dpkg-reconfigure gdm
```

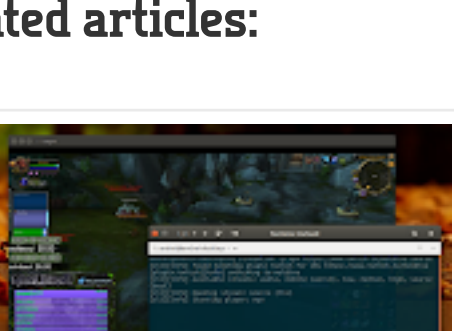
This will display something like this:

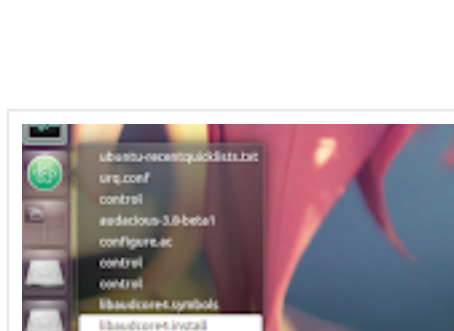


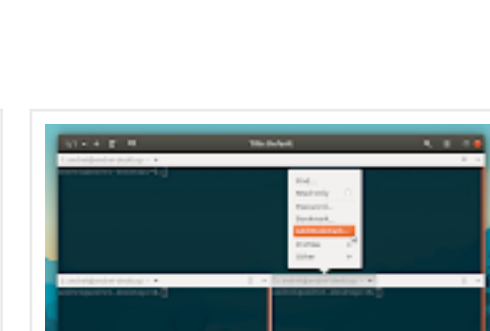
Select the display manager you want to use by default and hit enter. Then, restart your computer.

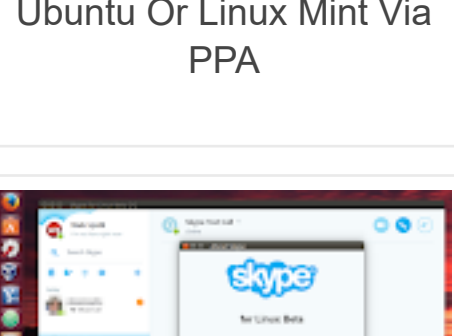
If GDM is installed, you can run the same command ("`sudo dpkg-reconfigure gdm`") to switch to any display manager, be it LightDM, MDM, KDM, Slim, GDM and so on. If GDM is not installed, replace "gdm" in the command above with one of the installed display managers (example: "`sudo dpkg-reconfigure lightdm`").

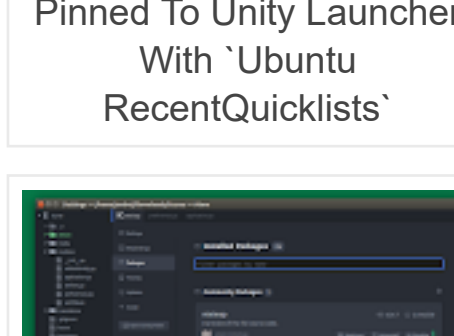
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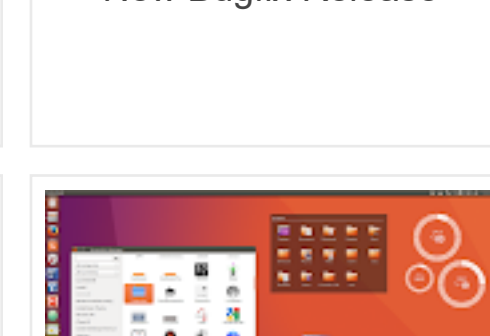
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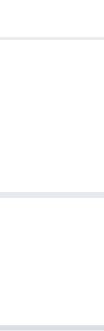
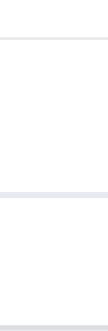
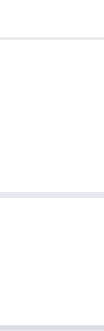

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Name

**Rens Hamburger** · 7 years ago  
Thanks handy to know  
11 ^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Sashin9000** · 7 years ago  
This is pretty cool, are log in managers all about aesthetics or are there advantages/disadvantages to using each one.

In anycase, is it possible to use GDM 3 in Ubuntu 11.04.  
1 ^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Andrew Admin** → Sashin9000 · 7 years ago  
About the first question: I'm really not aware of the technical details of each display manager.  
  
As for the second question: you can use GDM 3 in Ubuntu 11.04 but only if you install the whole GNOME 3 stack via the GNOME 3 PPA: <https://launchpad.net/~gnom...>  
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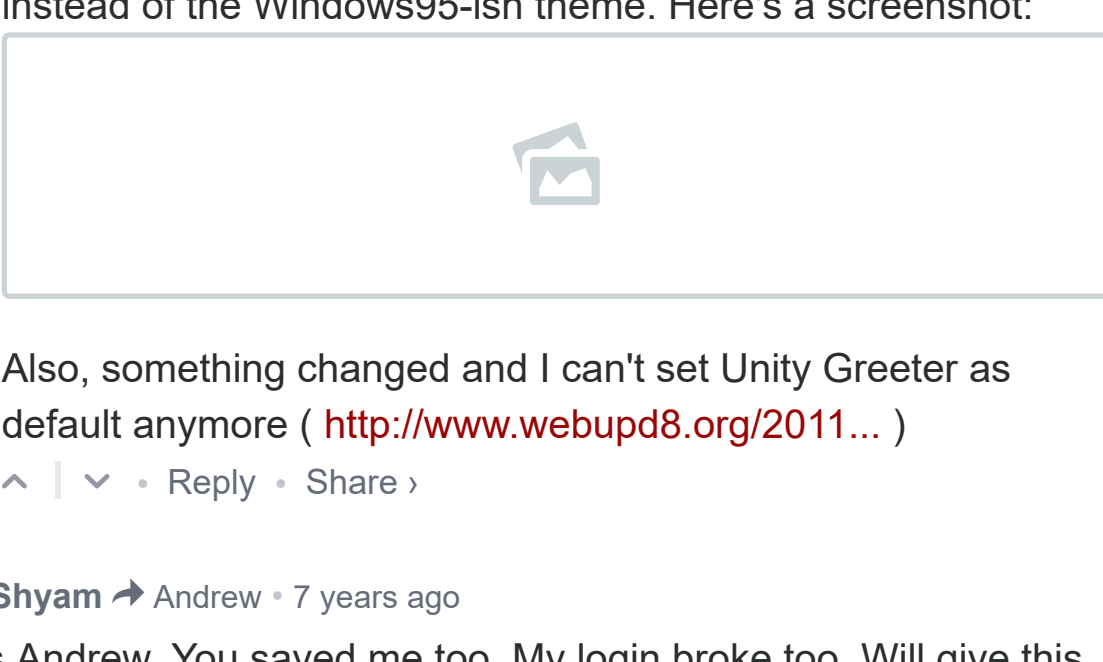
**Mihamina Rakotomandimby** → Andrew · 7 years ago  
I use Natty and Oneiric repositories running LightDM at this moment. I think you can do that and it's not mandatory to use the Gnome3 PPA.  
2 ^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**WM** · 7 years ago  
Thanks! You saved me from the lightDM broken since yesterday.  
4 ^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Andrew Admin** → WM · 7 years ago  
That bug happens to everyone it seems... If you want to continue using LightDM, fix it using the following command:  
`sudo apt-get install lightdm-gtk-greeter`

If you can't log in, see exact instructions in this comment: <http://www.webupd8.org/2011...>  
2 ^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**WM** → Andrew · 7 years ago  
Does this mean a new greeter theme come out?  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Andrew Admin** → WM · 7 years ago  
It's basically like the old LightDM greeter but it uses Ambiance instead of the Windows95-ish theme. Here's a screenshot:  
  
Also, something changed and I can't set Unity Greeter as default anymore ( <http://www.webupd8.org/2011...> )  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Reddy Shyam** → Andrew · 7 years ago  
Thanks Andrew. You saved me too. My login broke too. Will give this a try tonight.  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Mainstream** → Andrew · 7 years ago  
Ahh, i installed lightdm also.  
But whenever i want to install the gtk-greeter:  
`mainstream@dopamine-pc:~$ sudo apt-get install lightdm-gtk-greeter`  
Reading package lists... Done  
Building dependency tree  
Reading state information... Done  
E: Unable to locate package lightdm-gtk-greeter  
2 ^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Andrew Admin** → Mainstream · 7 years ago  
You probably don't use Ubuntu 11.10, right?  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Mainstream** → Andrew · 7 years ago  
Nope 11.04.  
Sorry didn't read :-)  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Alfredo Hernández** · 7 years ago  
Thanks a lot, Andrew! I was really waiting for something like this :)  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**reallycoolguy** · 7 years ago  
They should really change that gray layout, anyway I'm excited!  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Avatar** · This comment was deleted.

**Manish Sinha** → Guest · 7 years ago  
This is probably for oneiric as far as I can see  
1 ^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Joe Miller** → Manish Sinha · 7 years ago  
Well, it is in the repos for 11.04, but at least in my case it was buggy, for some reason it would randomly crash my computer upon pressing enter some times, but not other times, at least I'm thinking that's what was causing it, since the problem stopped once I switched back to gdm.  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Dennis Altersmann** · 7 years ago  
LightDM works fine in Ubuntu 11.04? Can I use another theme on it?  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**ch\_hto** · 7 years ago  
Hi,  
  
would like to know the difference between each display manager .. Is it only is aesthetic (the way they look)? Or is there something more?  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Manish Sinha** → ch\_hto · 7 years ago  
<http://www.ubuntuforecast.c...>  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**stonecut** · 7 years ago  
Nice tip. Simple but essential.  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**LLStarks** · 7 years ago  
Very nice considering all of the problems plaguing lightdm right now.  
  
As long as lightdm uses cryptic configuration files and prohibits logging in without a password, I'll stick to gdm.  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**ike ahloe** · 7 years ago  
i'm so pumped for that awesome looking lightdm login screen i saw on an earlier post  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Octavian Iolu** · 7 years ago  
Did they fix this bug yet? I am stuck at checking battery state...  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Admintech** · 7 years ago  
Hi,  
  
Its Very basic and usefull article..  
  
Thanks,  
  
<http://www.techhowknow.com>  
1 ^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**John Cartwright** · 7 years ago  
Lightdm is the best and fastest login manager. Faster than GDM by far.  
5 ^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Daniele Brugnara** → John Cartwright · 5 years ago  
slim is fast too and I prefer to lightDM but it's a personal choice :)  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**labatts** · 7 years ago  
Hm.. So out of curiosity, i tried "sudo dpkg-reconfigure kdm" (using kubuntu). This produced no results... possibly because I only have kdm installed?  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Yoram David** → labatts · 7 years ago  
Yes, when only one is installed there is no need for a popup asking which you want to configure/activate.  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Dfsiffrit** · 7 years ago  
gostei  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Tomis** · 7 years ago  
Awesome! Honestly liking LightDM a lot. So I'll stick with it.  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Hermite2012** · 6 years ago  
Hey dude very nice tip thanks a lot!  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Someguy** · 6 years ago  
Thanks a lot!  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Bevor** · 6 years ago  
Useful, thanks.  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**webhoster** · 5 years ago  
lightdm doesnt work for me on ubuntu server, bounces me back out - Robert Baidnourov  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Smileymensch** · 5 years ago  
Thanks!  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Harish K** · 5 years ago  
i am using ubuntu 13.04 but when i select lightdm on booting it show low graphic error so i switched to gdm the it boots why??  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Atreya Nixx Rivera** · 5 years ago  
To whoever made this page: Thank you SO much, you saved my butt when MDM would not work for me at all. I was able to get GDM back. I have Ubuntu-based Pinguy 12.04 LTS but I got a ton of errors using MDM and one of them was "Login Session Failed, Could not find Ubuntu".  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Atreya Nixx Rivera** · 5 years ago  
Anyone know something nice I could use for Pinguy 12.04?  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**Mustafa Hastürk** · 4 years ago  
Doesn't work on Ubuntu 13.10  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**isomorphisms** · 3 years ago  
What's the benefit of gdm VS kdm VS Lightdm VS xdm VS ndm VS ...?  
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**Gabriel Mornat** · 3 years ago  
Thanks  
^ | ^ · Reply · Share

**javanaut** · 3 years ago  
Thank you!  
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**Andrew** — Thank you! I wish... I was on **Avatar**vacation for about 4 days, the rest was due to medical issues. That's why I...

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**Andrew** — I'm glad my work is **Avatar**appreciated, thank you (and @elcste)!

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**Michael Freeman** — I love the idea **Avatar**! However, if left running long ...

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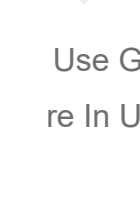
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**Станислав «сдс» Земляков** Thank you very much!

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