

Tutorial: Customizing Gedit Themes and GTK Integration

If you've been exploring Gedit, the default GNOME text editor, you might have noticed that it doesn't use the typical GTK directories to store its themes. This behavior can be confusing for users who are familiar with GTK and other theme customizations, but there's a logical explanation behind it. In this tutorial, we'll discuss why Gedit behaves this way and how you can create your own custom Gedit theme. We'll then walk through the steps to install and apply a custom theme, using a theme named after *duguaydev* as an example.

Why Gedit Doesn't Use Regular GTK Folders

By design, Gedit separates its internal theming structure from the broader GTK theming system. This separation allows it to provide a more controlled and fine-tuned interface tailored to developers and text editing, without being directly affected by system-wide GTK theme changes. Gedit applies its theming through specific files, like `gtk.css` for UI elements and XML files for syntax highlighting.

Gedit stores its themes in specific locations depending on the version you are using. For user-installed themes, they can be stored in `~/.local/share/gedit/styles/`. For system-wide themes, they reside in `/usr/share/gedit/styles/`.

Custom Theme Creation for Gedit

You can create a custom theme to personalize your Gedit interface. In this tutorial, we'll guide you through building a custom theme called **duguaydev-dark** and walk you through the process of installing it.

Step 1: Create the Gedit Custom Theme

Here's a sample Gedit theme that you can use as a base for your custom theme. We'll rename the theme and change the author to "duguaydev."

Custom `gtk.css` Theme

You'll be creating a CSS file for the Gedit UI elements. Place this file in the appropriate folder depending on whether you want it for user-only or system-wide use. Here's an example of the theme:

```
.gedit-bottom-panel-paned notebook > header.top > tabs > tab: checked,  
terminal-window notebook > header.top > tabs > tab: checked {  
    box-shadow: inset 0 -1px #2f343f;  
}
```

```
.gedit-document-panel row button {
    min-width: 22px;
    min-height: 22px;
    padding: 0;
    color: transparent;
    background: none;
    border: none;
    box-shadow: none;
}

.gedit-document-panel row button image {
    color: inherit;
}

.gedit-document-panel row: hover: not(:selected) button {
    color: #9da3ad;
}

.gedit-document-panel row: hover: not(:selected) button: hover {
    color: #ff4d4d;
}

.gedit-document-panel row: hover: not(:selected) button: active {
    color: #d8dee8;
}

.gedit-document-panel row: hover: selected button: hover {
    color: #ff6666;
    background: none;
    border: none;
    box-shadow: none;
}

.gedit-document-panel row: hover: selected button: hover: active {
    color: #d8dee8;
}

.gedit-document-panel-dragged-row {
    border: 1px solid #2f343f;
    background-color: #2f343f;
    color: #d8dee8;
}

.gedit-side-panel-paned statusbar {
    border-top: 1px solid #2f343f;
    background-color: #2f343f;
}

.gedit-search-slider {
    background-color: #2f343f;
```

```

padding: 6px;
border-color: #2f343f;
border-radius: 0 0 2px 2px;
border-width: 0 1px 1px 1px;
border-style: solid;
}

.gedit-search-entry-occurrences-tag {
color: rgba(211, 218, 227, 0.6);
border: none;
margin: 2px;
padding: 2px;
}

.gedit-map-frame border {
border-width: 0;
}

.gedit-map-frame border:dir(ltr) {
border-left-width: 1px;
}

.gedit-map-frame border:dir rtl) {
border-right-width: 1px;
}

.gedit-bottom-panel-paned {
background-color: #2f343f;
}

.gedit-side-panel-paned > separator {
background-image: linear-gradient(to bottom, rgba(42, 45, 55, 0.95),
    rgba(42, 45, 55, 0.95));
}

.gedit-bottom-panel-paned > separator {
background-image: linear-gradient(to bottom, #2f343f, #2f343f);
}

.gedit-document-panel {
background-color: rgba(53, 57, 69, 0.95);
}

.maximized .gedit-document-panel {
background-color: #353945;
}

.gedit-document-panel row {
color: #BAC3CF;
background-color: rgba(186, 195, 207, 0);
}

.gedit-document-panel row:hover {

```

```

    background-color: rgba(186, 195, 207, 0.15);
}
.gedit-document-panel row:active {
    color: #d8dee8;
    background-color: #bf616a;
}
.gedit-document-panel row:active button {
    color: #d8dee8;
}
.gedit-document-panel row:selected,
.gedit-document-panel row:selected:hover {
    color: #d8dee8;
    background-color: #bf616a;
}

```

Explanation of Key Styles:

- **Background Colors:** Dark colors like #2f343f and #353945 are used to give the theme a minimalistic, dark appearance.
- **Button Hover Effects:** The buttons change colors when hovered (#ff4d4d) and clicked, adding interactivity.
- **Document Panel Styling:** The document panel is made semi-transparent to give a layered look.

Step 2: Customize the Syntax Highlighting

Next, we will define the syntax highlighting using an XML file. This is where we modify colors for different code elements like keywords, comments, and strings.

Save this XML theme as `duguaydev-dark.xml` in the theme directory (either `~/.local/share/gedit/styles/` for user-only or `/usr/share/gedit/styles/` for system-wide themes).

```

<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<!--

```

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```
-->
<style-scheme id="duguaydev-dark" _name="DuguayDev Dark" kind="dark">
  <_description>Custom dark theme by DuguayDev</_description>

  <!-- Named Colors -->
  <color name="bg0"           value="#2C2E34"/>
  <color name="bg1"           value="#2B2C32"/>
  <color name="bg2"           value="#28292E"/>
  <color name="bg3"           value="#27282C"/>
  <color name="bg4"           value="#25262A"/>
  <color name="fg"            value="#C5CDD9"/>
  <color name="red"            value="#EC7279"/>
  <color name="green"          value="#A0C980"/>
  <color name="blue"           value="#6CB6EB"/>
  <color name="purple"         value="#D38AEA"/>
  <color name="cyan"           value="#5DBBC1"/>
  <color name="yellow"         value="#DEB974"/>

  <!-- Global Styles -->
  <style name="text"           background="bg0"
    foreground="fg"/>
  <style name="current-line"   background="bg3"/>
  <style name="selection"      background="purple"
    foreground="black"/>
  <style name="cursor"         foreground="fg"/>
  <style name="line-numbers"    background="bg1"
    foreground="fg"/>

  <!-- Specific Syntax Styles -->
  <style name="def:keyword"     foreground="cyan"/>
  <style name="def:string"      foreground="green"/>
  <style name="def:comment"     foreground="blue"/>
  <style name="def:type"        foreground="purple"/>
  <style name="def:function"     foreground="yellow"/>
  <style name="def:variable"    foreground="red"/>
</style-scheme>
```

Step 3: Apply the Theme

To apply your custom theme:

1. Save the CSS file in `~/.config/gtk-3.0/gtk.css` if you want it as a user theme.
2. Save the XML file in `~/.local/share/gedit/styles/` for user-only use, or `/usr/share/gedit/styles/` for system-wide use.

3. Open Gedit and go to **Preferences > Font & Colors**

and select your newly created theme, “DuguayDev Dark.”

Step 4: Automate Theme Updates (Optional)

To make it easier to switch or update themes, you can create a script that moves the files to the correct location.

Example:

```
#!/bin/bash
# Install Gedit theme

mkdir -p ~/.local/share/gedit/styles
cp duaguaydev-dark.xml ~/.local/share/gedit/styles/

mkdir -p ~/.config/gtk-3.0/
cp gtk.css ~/.config/gtk-3.0/gtk.css

echo "DuguayDev Dark theme installed successfully!"
```

Now, whenever you want to update your theme, you can simply run this script.

Conclusion

By following these steps, you now have a fully customized Gedit theme with dark tones and personalized syntax highlighting. This setup enhances readability, aesthetics, and overall comfort for coding or text editing in Gedit. Feel free to adjust the colors or styles to suit your taste even further!