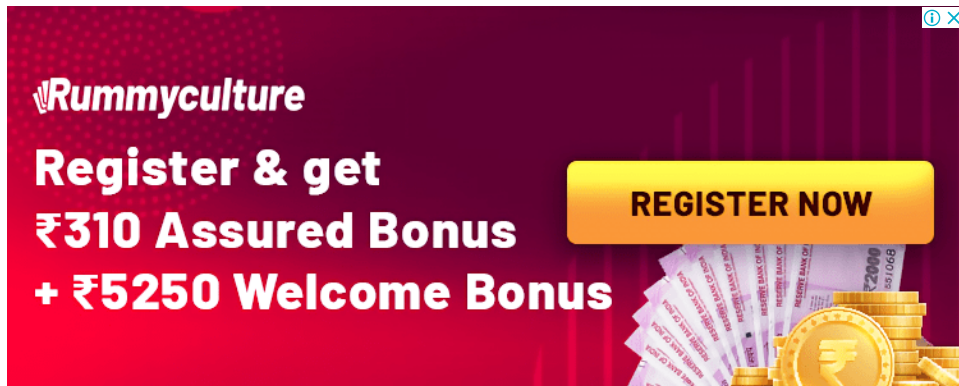


Winaero



At the edge of tweaking

You may not republish any content as your original work or without credits. © Winaero

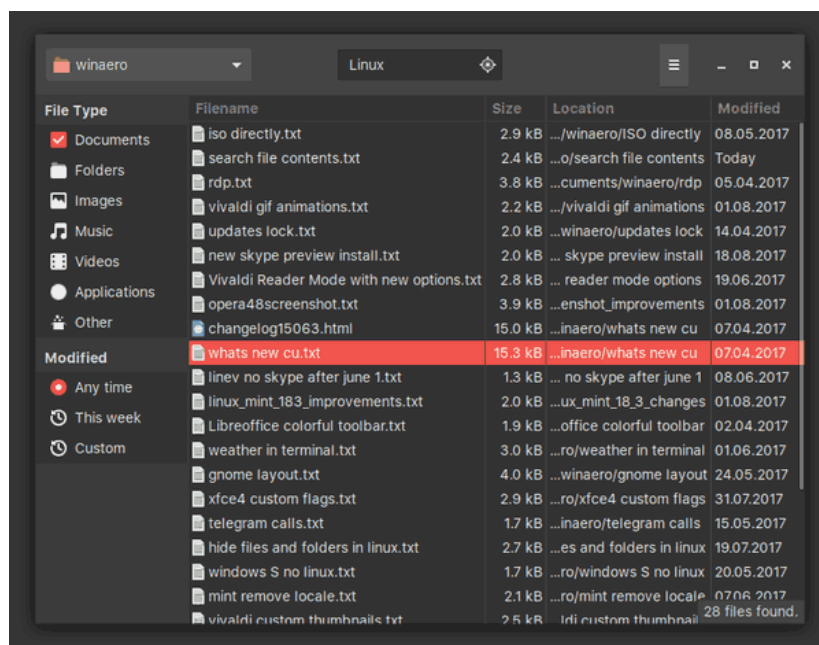


Find Files Containing Specific Text in Linux

Linux, regardless of the distro you use, comes with a number of GUI tools which allow searching for files. Many modern file managers support file searching right in the file list. However, most of them do not allow you to search inside a file's contents. Here are two methods you can use to search for file contents in Linux.

RECOMMENDED: [Click here to fix Windows errors and optimize system performance](#)

Probably, there are more methods available. There's Catfish, a popular search tool with a search index, which can find your files really quickly. It comes with an option to search for file contents, but it does not work reliably for me.

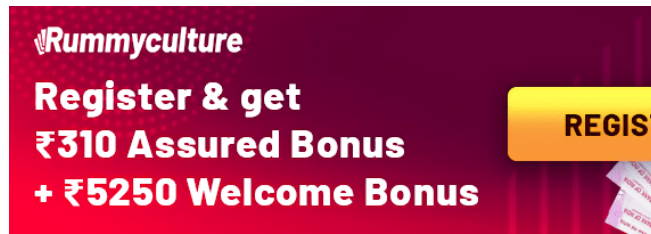


I would like to share the methods I use myself.

The first method involves the `grep` utility, which exists in any distro, even in embedded systems built on busybox.

To find files containing specific text in Linux, do the following.

1. Open your favorite terminal app. [XFCE4 terminal](#) is my personal preference.
2. Navigate (if required) to the folder in which you are going to search files with some specific text.



3. Type the following command:

```
grep -iRl "your-text-to-find" ./
```

Here are the switches:

- i - ignore text case
- R - recursively search files in subdirectories.
- l - show file names instead of file contents portions.

./ - the last parameter is the path to the folder containing files you need to search for your text. In our case, it is the current folder with the file mask. You can change it to the full path of the folder. For example, here is my command

```
grep -iRl "linux" /home/user/Documents/winaero
```

```
hb860@main:~/Documents/winaero$ grep -iRl "linux" ./
./ISO directly/iso directly.txt
./search file contents/search file contents.txt
./rdp/rdp.txt
./vivaldi gif animations/vivaldi gif animations.txt
./updates lock/updates lock.txt
./new skype preview install/new skype preview install.txt
./vivladi new reader mode options/Vivaldi Reader Mode with new options.txt
./opera_48_screenshot_improvements/opera48screenshot.txt
./whats new cu/changelog15063.html
./whats new cu/whats new cu.txt
./linev no skype after june 1/linev no skype after june 1.txt
./linux mint 18 3 changes/linux mint 183 improvements.txt
./libreoffice colorful toolbar/Libreoffice colorful toolbar.txt
./weather in terminal/weather in terminal.txt
./gnome layout/gnome layout.txt
./xfce4 custom flags/xfce4 custom flags.txt
./telegram calls/telegram calls.txt
./hide files and folders in linux/hide files and folders in linux.txt
./windows S no linux/windows S no linux.txt
./mint remove locale/mint remove locale.txt
```

Note: Other useful switches you might want to use with grep:

- n - show the line number.

```
hb860@main:~/Documents/winaero$ grep -iRl "linux" ./
./ISO directly/iso directly.txt:9: The download page on Microsoft's web site checks the user agent of the browser. If it reports the Windows operating system, the Media Creation Tool will be offered for download. However, if the user agent r
```

- w - match the whole word.

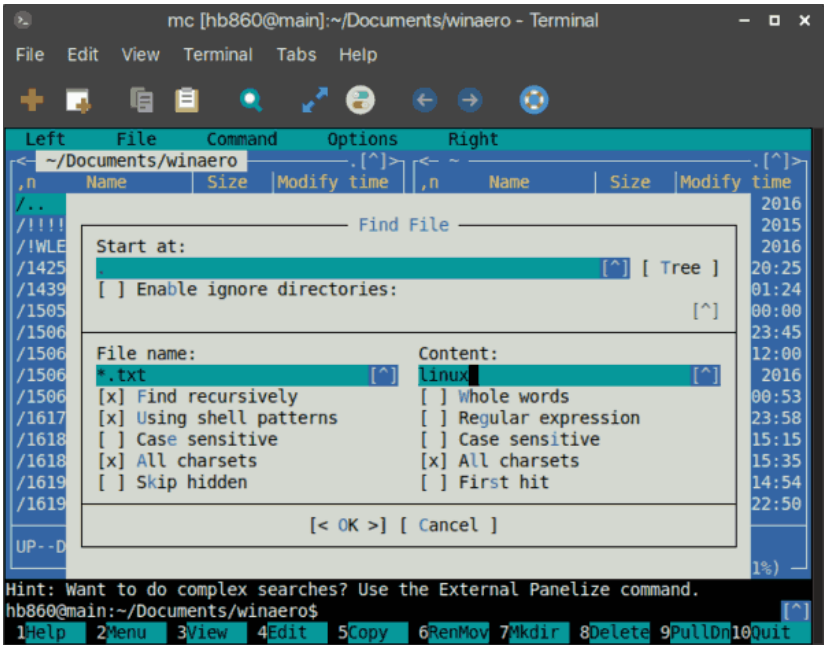
Another method I use is Midnight Commander (mc), the console file manager app. Unlike grep, mc is not included by default in all Linux distros I've tried. You may need to install it yourself.

Find files containing specific text with mc

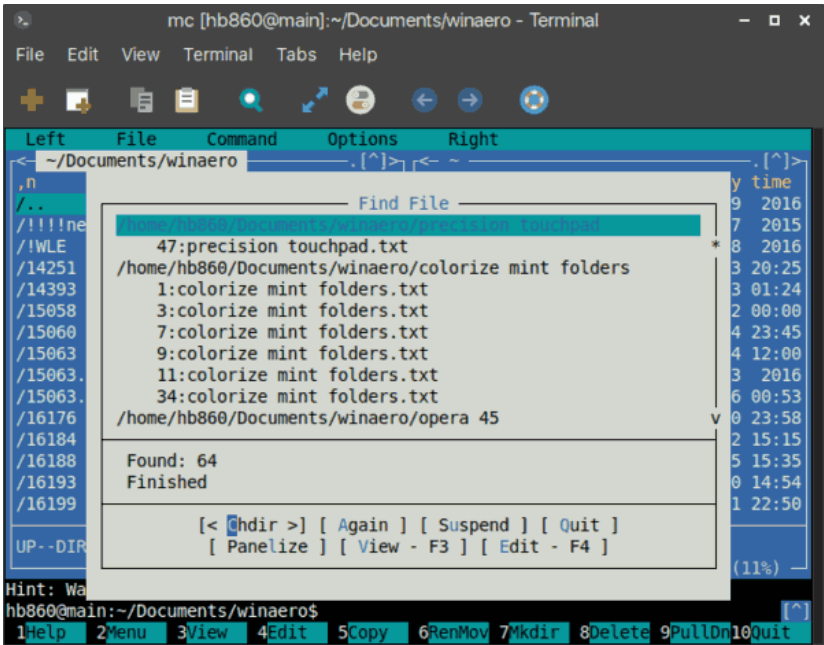
To find files containing some specific text using Midnight Commander, start the app and press the following sequence on the keyboard:

Alt + **Shift** + **?**

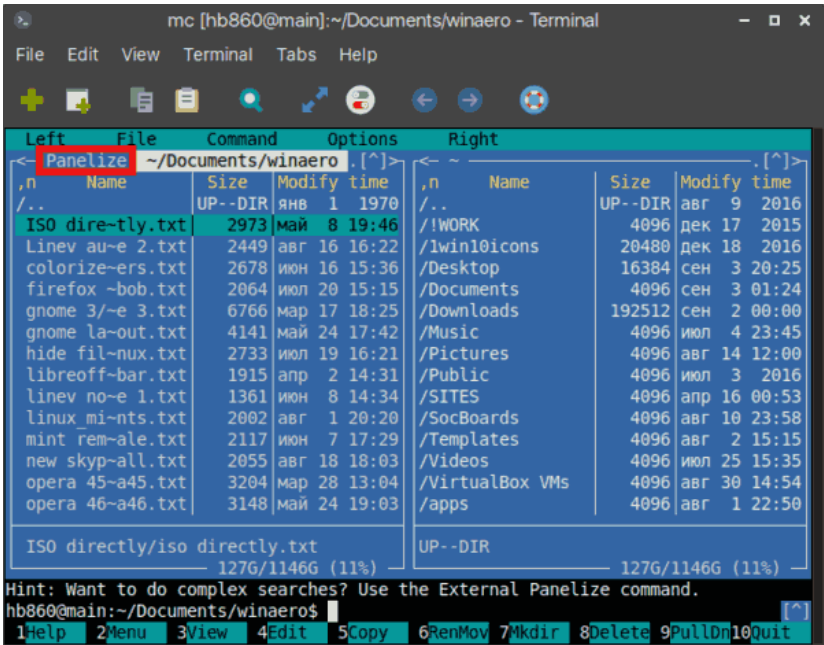
This will open the search dialog.



Fill in the "Content:" section and press the Enter key. It will find all files with the required text.



You can place these files in the left or right panel using the Panelize option and copy/move/delete/view/do whatever you want them.



Midnight Commander is a very time-saving tool when it comes to search.

That's it.

RECOMMENDED: [Click here to fix Windows errors and optimize system performance](#)

You are here: [Home](#) » [Linux](#) » Find Files Containing Specific Text in Linux

Support us

Winaero greatly relies on your support. You can help the site keep bringing you interesting and useful content and software by using these options:

Donate

Bitcoin: 18amKj99FCPUfnnpqZ6XCG2h3TGeUTCeY7

Connect with us

For your convenience, you can subscribe to Winaero on the following web sites and services.

Follow { 1,302 followers } [Telegram](#) [YouTube](#) 3K

In addition, you can share this post.

[Tweet](#) [Share](#) [Reddit](#)

This entry was posted in Linux and tagged Linux Find Files, Linux Find Files Containing Text, Linux Grep on September 4, 2017 by Sergey Tkachenko.

Sergey Tkachenko is a software developer from Russia who started Winaero back in 2011. On this blog, Sergey is writing about everything connected to Microsoft, Windows and popular software. Follow him on Facebook, Twitter or Google+.

[View all posts by Sergey Tkachenko](#) →

4 thoughts on “Find Files Containing Specific Text in Linux”

Cem Sönmez

The code that you provided helped me. There are also another commands which I cannot remember to find text in files but this one is made it quickly. I have bookmarked this post for further usage. Thank you.

MacBack123YT

WHAT ABOUT WINDOWS?!

Sergey Tkachenko [Post author](#)

I use Total Commander for that.

Mr.Anh

Thanks
