

# **Day One: What is Linux?**

*Linux Week SP26*

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# On “Learning Linux”

You can use the GUI. You can download things from the internet. You can effectively use Linux like Windows.

HOWEVER, “Learning Linux” makes your life easier.

- Manually search through tons of folders and files => a little CLI-fu
- Updating & installing programs is slow and tedious => sudo apt install x
- “Oh god why is my machine broken” => Seeing the exact error message

The best way to learn? Ask questions & practice skills to solve everyday problems.

- How to find files from terminal? Practice it!
- Something broke. How do I fix it? Investigate it!
- I want to change something on my system. Research it!

It is 2026, not 2006. Use the internet!

# What is Linux Week?

## Demystifying the Command Line

Basic command line usage & filesystem traversal via scavenger hunt!

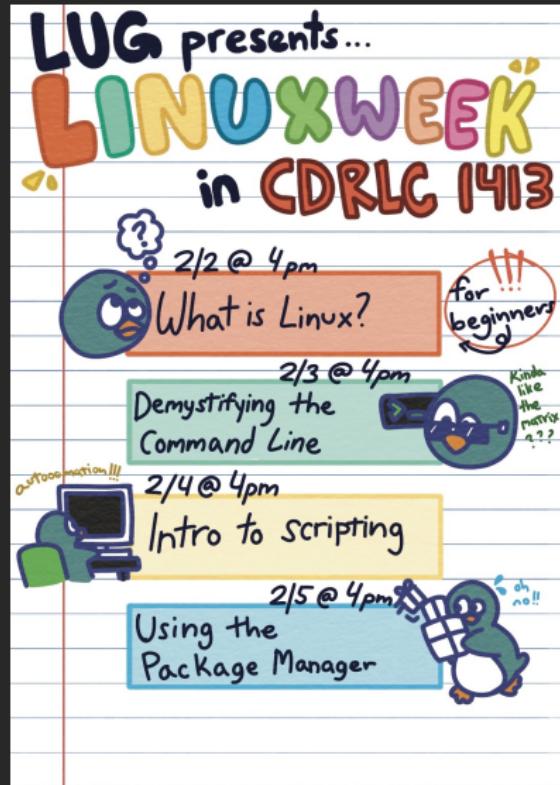
## Intro to Scripting

How to solve problems, use novel CLI tools, all to solve challenges!

## Using the Package Manager

How to use package manager & find right tool to solve a problem. Collective problem solving!

TL;DR: Learn by doing!



# The Technical Answer

*What is Linux?*

# The Kernel

Any answer given short of a lecture will be riddled with asterisks.

Your computer can run multiple programs at once\* because of the Kernel. It is the core of any Operating System. It manages and shares system resources between programs by:

- Managing Memory
  - Programs are greedy and assume they have ALL of memory.
- Scheduling processes
  - Only so much CPU, many things that need to run.
- Managing Filesystem I/O
  - Hardware: Kernel is your buddy. Tells you what to do.
  - Software: Kernel is your buddy. Tell it what you want to write.
  - User: Kernel is your buddy. Symlinks, rearrange files, etc.

# Linux Distros

## Package Managers

- Release Cycle
  - Debian: Super Stable
    - Months of testing & QA, smooth as butter.
    - Stability > Novelty
  - Arch: Bleeding Edge
    - No releases, just package most recent version of software.
    - Novelty > Stability.
- Package Repositories
  - Availability
  - Arch AUR
- NixOS

## Ancestry

Most popular OSes are typically based off of:

- **Debian**
- **Ubuntu**
- **Arch**

There are *quite a few*.

# The Philosophical Answer

*What is Linux?*

# Free, as in Libre

## Windows

- Effectively monetarily free, still requires you trick activation server
- Random updates at worst possible moment
- Always forcing new Microsoft bloat down your throat:
  - Copilot
  - OneDrive EVERYTHING
  - Start menu now searches internet!?
- Something broke? Pray its just Windows being Windows

MacOS is locked to Apple Hardware.

## Linux

- GPLv2: Copyleft
  - TL;DR: Go crazy as long as you GPLv2 your code & open source it
- Something broke?
  - Everything that your system has done since boot has been logged.
  - 99% chance that your problem has an Arch Wiki article.
- “Windows supports so much more!”
  - Community patches, Containerization, Proton
  - Mainly CAD & Adobe Suite Software stuck on Windows

# Open Source

Linux promotes an Open Source ecosystem!

## Open Source:

- Free, as in Free!
  - Share Open Source software all you want!
- Secure
  - Volunteers find bugs, vulnerabilities, review security
- Developers are Users
  - Focus is on making something actually usable, not extorting users for profit

You probably already use some Open Source projects:

- OBS
- Blender
- Programming Languages
- Git
- Godot



# The Practical Answer

*What is Linux?*

# Not Windows.

Things will take time to get used to.

- Command Line
  - Package Manager
  - Setting some things up by hand

However, a lot of things will be better!

- Super efficient
  - FOSS Ecosystem
  - Infinitely more customizability

```
[milk@sprite ~]$ fastfetch
      .
      `+o'
      `ooo'
      +oooo:
      +oooooo:
      +ooooooo:
      `/:++ooooo:
      `/++++/+oooo+:
      `+*****+*****+:
      `/+ooooooooooooooo:
      .ooooo$ss$oooo$ss$oo`:
      .o$ssssss$---`/o$ssssss$.
      :o$ssssss/       o$ssssss$++$.
      /o$ssssss$      $ssssss$oooo$.
      /o$ssssss$++:   :-/+o$ssss$++:
      +$ss$oo+-:     `.-/+o$so:
      .+/-/
      /
      OS: Arch Linux x86_64
      Host: ASUS TUF Gaming A17 FA707XU_FA70
      Kernel: Linux 6.18.7-arch-1
      Uptime: 24 mins
      Packages: 1759 (pacman), 9 (flatpak-sy)
      Shell: bash 5.3.9
      Display (B173HAN40.9 .): 1920x1080 in 1]
      DE: KDE Plasma 6.5.5
      WM: KWin (Wayland)
      WM Theme: Breeze
      Theme: Breeze [Dark] [Qt], Breeze-Dark [Qt]
      Icons: breeze-dark [Qt], breeze-dark []
      Font: Noto Sans (10pt) [Qt], Noto Sans Q
      Cursor: breeze (24px)
      Terminal: Wterm 20240203-110809-50462
      Terminal Font: Blexmono Nerd Font
      GPU: AMD Ryzen 7 7940HS (16) @ 5.26 GHz
      GPU 1: NVIDIA GeForce RTX 4090 Max-Q /J
      GPU 2: AMD Radeon 7800 Graphics [Integ]
```

# Where to start?

Ubuntu & Mint are common for good reason. I'd recommend Mint over Ubuntu.

Many people try to “learn Linux”. What they generally mean is they want to learn:

- How to get comfy with the command line?
- How do I fix problems?
- What does a free operating system even mean for me?