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## Section 0 Installing a Linux Desktop on Your PC

A Linux operating system is to be used as the platform for the experiments in this book. Please move to the next section if you currently have any distribution of Linux installed on your personal computer, it can be running on a virtual machine or alongside with Windows or macOS.

For these who do not currently have a Linux system in hand, or these who are even new to Linux system, Ubuntu desktop is recommended. Ubuntu is a free and open-source Linux distribution. It can be installed either on a virtual machine which is running on your current operating system or alongside with your current operating system. Please refer to appendix A for more information if you encounter some difficulties in installing Ubuntu desktop. It might take several hours if it’s your first time to install a system. Be patient and keep searching the answer whenever something confuses you.

## Section 1 Write and Run a Short Program

The best way to learn is by doing. Please note I am using Ubuntu 18.04.2 LTS, the commands or operations can be different from these given in this book if you are using any other distribution of Linux. In this case, I suppose you know how to probably change the commands or operations as you are an experienced Linux user. Log into Ubuntu desktop and do the following steps:

1. Write the first program. Find the **Documents** folder and click into it. Create a text file and name it with **first.s**. Open it, copy and paste the following lines into it then save and close.

.code16

mov $26, %cx

mov $0x0903, %dx

mov $0x000c, %bx

mov $msg, %bp

mov $0x1301, %ax

int $0x10

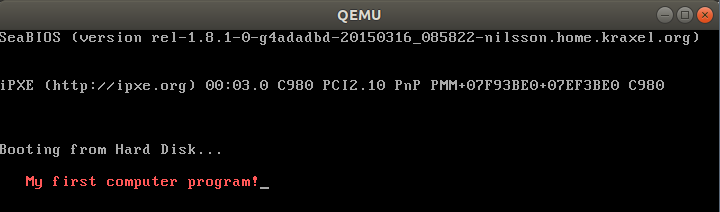
loop: jmp loop

msg: .ascii "My first computer program!"

.org 510 .word 0xAA55

Congratulations! We have finished the hardest part of the whole chapter. Do not worry at the moment if you have no idea on what you have pasted, all these will be explained in the following sections. Please move to the next chapter if you understand fully what the code does.

1. Open a terminal. Right click on the blank area inside of **Documents** folder and then click **Open Terminal** in the context menu.
2. Install **binutils** tool. Key in **sudo apt install binutils** and press Enter button. Input your password when asked.
3. Install **Qemu** emulator. Key in **sudo apt install qemu**.
4. Compile the program: **first.s**. Inside of the terminal, input **as -o first.o first.s** and press Enter button on your keyboard.
5. Generate the **first.img**. Input **ld -e 0 -Ttext=0x7c00 -o first.img --oformat=binary first.o** and press Enter.
6. Run your program. Input **sudo qemu-system-i386 -drive format=raw,file=first.img** and press Enter.
7. We will see the following window if everything has gone well so far.



1. We have finished first program and had it run. Again please move to the next chapter if you understand what we have done by now. Otherwise see the next sections for the explanations.

## Section 2 Concepts explanation: Terminal, Binutils, Assembly and Emulator

We go though some basic concepts before we explain what exactly we have done in the last section.

* Familiar yourself with Ubuntu desktop environment. New to Linux? Give yourself a quarter to click each icon or button you can find in Ubuntu desktop to see what they are. Refer to the guide below or just search any topic you are interested in if necessary.

Ubuntu desktop guide: <https://help.ubuntu.com/stable/ubuntu-help/>

* Terminal, command-line and shell. On Linux desktop, the Terminal is a program where command is used to interact with computer. Most people are familiar with GUI or graphical user interface. Instead of using mouse heavily to interact all kinds of windows, we will use command-line interface or CLI to talk to computer. In case you are new to CLI, you may want to quickly go through chapter 2~4 of this book ***The Linux Command Line*** (<http://linuxcommand.org/tlcl.php>) written by Willian Shotts. Or search something like the most used 10 Linux commands and play with these commands for an hour.
* **Binutils**, **as** and **ld**. GNU Binutils are a collection of binary tools. The main ones are **as** and **ld**. The GNU Assembler, commonly known as **gas** or simply **as**. Assembler is a computer program which translates assembly language to machine language. Assembly language is a more readable interpretation of a processor’s machine code, allowing easier understanding and programming by human [2]. Machine code is a computer program written in machine language [instructions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Instruction_set) that can be executed directly by a [computer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer)'s [central processing unit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_processing_unit) or CPU. Each instruction causes the CPU to perform a very specific task [3]. CPUs can only understand machine code. Machine code is some combination of statuses which only use two symbols: typically, “0” and “1”. The **ld** is another program, called linker, that takes one or more object files generated by a assembler and combines them into a single executable file, library file, or another object file [4].
* Qemu emulator. QEMU is a generic and open source machine emulator and virtualizer.

Section 3 A Brief Explanation of What We Have Done to the Program

Section 4 8086 Assembly Language

## Appendix A Installing Ubuntu Desktop

You may want to install the Ubuntu on a virtual machine which is running on your current operating system, Windows or macOS. Go and search in your browser on how to install a virtual machine on your current operating system. For these who want to know what is a virtual machine or which virtual machine can be used, you may want to quickly review this page <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virtual_machine>.

For these who prefer to install the Ubuntu alongside with your current operating system or who have already installed a virtual machine, please move to Ubuntu official website to download the Ubuntu desktop. During the process of downloading, you may need search on how to install Ubuntu desktop on your virtual machine or alongside with your current operating system.

## Reference

[1] William E. Shotts, Jr., *The Linux Command Line, Fifth Internet Edition*, 2019, <http://linuxcommand.org/tlcl.php>, (accessed 3 April 2019).

[2] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assembler>

[3] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Machine_code#Instruction_set>

[4] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linker_(computing)>

## Resources

1. <https://help.ubuntu.com/stable/ubuntu-help/>

<https://docs.oracle.com/cd/E19253-01/817-5477/817-5477.pdf>

<http://www.phoenix.com/resources/specs-bbs101.pdf>

<https://firmware.intel.com/sites/default/files/resources/A_Tour_Beyond_BIOS_Memory_Map_in%20UEFI_BIOS.pdf>

<https://www.cs.cmu.edu/~410/doc/minimal_boot.pdf>