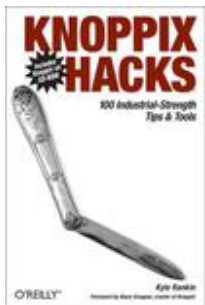


# Book review: Knoppix Hacks by Kyle Rankin

Jeremy Turner



Knoppix is a live-CD Linux distribution which comes with X Window and some of the most exciting and useful programs in the free software world ready for use.

Like the famous Swiss Army Knife, “Knoppix Hacks” is an invaluable device with the best tips, tricks, and tools, along with information on other Knoppix-like systems. It contains common pitfalls and ways around

them, most of which I had to discover by trial and error. Knoppix has quirks like mounting hard drive partitions read-only by default, but Mr. Rankin not only provides warning, but also provides guidance on how to mount read-write.

## The contents

“Knoppix Hacks” covers several areas, including: booting, using, and tweaking Knoppix, installing Linux, using Knoppix in real-world situations, repairing both Linux and Windows installations, Knoppix variants, and re-mastering your own Knoppix. Of the 100 listed “hacks”, I consider 42 of them to be essential reading. These include using Knoppix to setup temporary Samba or Apache servers when the main server is unavailable, and other hacks like repairing (or repartitioning) Linux. The book also teaches how to edit the Windows registry from Knoppix. The remaining hacks deal with using Knoppix: how to use cheat codes, connect to the internet, install applications, and create a persistent home directory. This information is necessary for understanding the later hacks: how to go war driving, migrate to software RAID, and repair damaged file systems. I really enjoyed reading the contributed “hacks” about Knoppix-like systems Morphix, Gnoppix, and DamnSmallLinux.

This link (<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/knoppixhks/>) is the book’s home page at O’Reilly. It contains PDFs of 5 hacks, along with the complete table of contents.

## Who’s this book for?

I would recommend “Knoppix Hacks” to any Linux user. It will help newer Knoppix users avoid pitfalls. However, the more experienced Linux users will find “Knoppix Hacks” to be a valuable addition to their tech toolbox, along with Knoppix itself. And when you come across someone who’s never heard of Linux, this just might be the book and CD to introduce them with.

## Pros

There were no major errors that I could find with the text. At one point, I did find that the author gave instructions for the user to unmount a mounted file system, and first change out of the directory. The “cd” command didn’t change the prompt as expected to reflect that the user would now be in the /home/knoppix directory. If the user was still in the directory of a mounted file system, the file system could not be unmounted. Having to nitpick this closely shows how well this book was written. Mr. Rankin includes a few humorous comments along the way so that the reader isn’t overloaded or bored to tears.

## Cons

None

Like the famous Swiss Army Knife, “Knoppix Hacks” is an invaluable device with the best tips, tricks, and tools, along with information on other Knoppix-like systems

## In short

Title	Knoppix Hacks
Author	Kyle Rankin
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Pages	336
CD included	Yes
Mark (out of 10)	9

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