

# Setup PhysiCell on Linux

Elmar Bucher, Ph.D.-Student

Intelligent Systems Engineering  
Indiana University

2025-01-25



**LUDDY**

SCHOOL OF INFORMATICS, COMPUTING, AND ENGINEERING



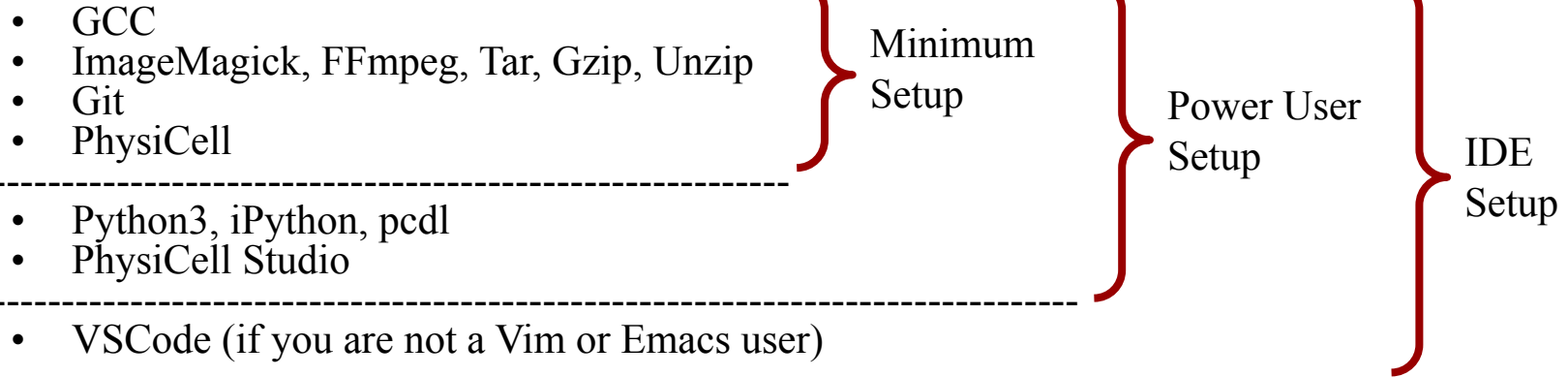
@MathCancer.bsky.social

MathCancer.org

Macklin Lab

# Overview

This document describes the PhysiCell installation on a Debian Linux distribution. If you run on another flavor, please adjust accordingly.



**LUDDY**

SCHOOL OF INFORMATICS, COMPUTING, AND ENGINEERING



@MathCancer.bsky.social

Macklin Lab  
MathCancer.org

# GCC (Minimum Setup)

- Check if GCC (the gnu compiler collection) is already installed.

```
g++ --version
```

- If not:

```
sudo apt install build-essential
```

- OpenMP (open multi processing) is a feature, used by PhysiCell, that is implemented in GCC.



**LUDDY**

SCHOOL OF INFORMATICS, COMPUTING, AND ENGINEERING



@MathCancer.bsky.social

Macklin Lab  
MathCancer.org

# ImageMagick part I (Minimum Setup)

ImageMagick is used for making jpeg and gif images from PhysiCell svg image output.

- Check if ImageMagick is already installed.

```
magick --version
```

- **If ok: you have  $\geq$  version 7 installed.** You are all set! You can move to the next page.
- **If you receive: Command 'magick' not found, try:**

```
convert --version
```

**If ok: you have most probably a version 6 installed** (like the most of us)!

- **If both of these commands do not work:**

```
sudo apt install imagemagick
```

# ImageMagick part II (Minimum Setup)

**The PhysiCell Makefile is written for ImageMagick  $\geq$  version 7**, which requires a `magick` command in front of each ImageMagick command (e.g. `magick convert` instead of `convert`).

**If and only if you have  $\leq$  version 6 installed**, you can follow the instruction below to generate a `magick` command that simply passes everything to the next command. This will make the PhysiCell Makefile work for you too.

```
cd to the folder where you have your manual installed binaries. e.g. ~/.local/bin/  
echo '$*' > magick  
chmod 775  
which magick
```

# FFmpeg (Minimum Setup)

FFmpeg is used by the `Makefile` and `pcdl` for making mp4 movies out of jpeg images.

- Check if FFmpeg is already installed.

```
ffmpeg -version
```

- If not:

```
sudo apt install ffmpeg
```



**LUDDY**

SCHOOL OF INFORMATICS, COMPUTING, AND ENGINEERING



**@MathCancer.bsky.social**

**Macklin Lab**  
**MathCancer.org**

# Tar Gzip Unzip (Minimum Setup)

Tar, Gzip, and Unzip are used by the Makefile to zip, tar, unzip, and untar folders.

- Check if you have tar, gzip, and unzip installed.

```
tar --version  
gzip --version  
unzip --version
```

- if not:

```
sudo apt install tar gzip unzip
```



**LUDDY**

SCHOOL OF INFORMATICS, COMPUTING, AND ENGINEERING



@MathCancer.bsky.social

Macklin Lab  
MathCancer.org

# Git (Minimum Setup)

git is the power user way to install the PhysiCell and the Studio source code.

- Check if git is already installed

```
git --version
```

- If not:

```
sudo apt install git
```



**LUDDY**

SCHOOL OF INFORMATICS, COMPUTING, AND ENGINEERING



**@MathCancer.bsky.social**

**Macklin Lab**  
**MathCancer.org**



# PhysiCell (Minimum Setup)

Download PhysiCell and place it e.g in the ~/src folder.

```
mkdir -p ~/src
```

```
cd ~/src
```

```
git clone https://github.com/MathCancer/PhysiCell.git
```

Test the installation with the template sample project.

```
cd PhysiCell
```

```
make template
```

```
make -j8
```

```
./project
```

```
make jpeg
```

```
make gif
```

```
make movie
```

# Overview

This document describes the PhysiCell installation on a Debian Linux distribution. If you run on another flavor, please adjust accordingly.

- GCC
- ImageMagick, FFmpeg, Tar, Gzip, Unzip
- Git
- PhysiCell

} Minimum  
Setup

- 
- Python3, iPython, pcdl
  - PhysiCell Studio

} Power User  
Setup

- 
- VSCode (if you are not a Vim or Emacs user)

} IDE  
Setup



**LUDDY**

SCHOOL OF INFORMATICS, COMPUTING, AND ENGINEERING



@MathCancer.bsky.social

Macklin Lab  
MathCancer.org

# Python3 part I (Power User Setup)

We will **generate a python3 environment with the default python installation**, where we will install all PhysiCell modelling related python libraries. We will name this python3 environment **physienv**, and we install it in the src folder where just before have installed PhysiCell. Here we demonstrate, how to generate the environment with the regular python. If you run mamba or conda, please adjust the commands accordingly.

- Generate a python environment named `physienv`:

```
cd ~  
python.exe -m venv src/physienv
```

- Generate an alias for this environment for activation:

```
echo 'alias physienv="source /home/<username>/src/physienv/bin/activate"' >> ~/.bash_alias  
source ~/.bash_alias
```



# Python3 part II (Power User Setup)

- Activate the physienv python environment using the alias generated before:

```
physienv
```

- Check if the python and pip paths point to the installed location:

```
which python3  
which pip3
```

- Install the iPython shell:

```
pip3 install ipython
```

- Install the PhysiCell Data Loader:

```
pip3 install pcdl
```



# PhysiCell Studio part I (Power User Setup)

- Download the studio and place it in the src folder, too.

```
cd ~/src
```

```
git clone git@github.com:PhysiCell-Tools/PhysiCell-Studio.git
```

- Put the studio under the PATH:

```
cd to the folder where you have your manual installed binaries. e.g. ~/.local/bin/
```

```
echo 'python3 /home/<username>/src/PhysiCell-Studio/bin/studio.py $*' > studio
```

```
chmod 775
```

```
which studio
```

```
cd ~
```

- Install the Qt library dependencies:

```
sudo apt install qtbase5-dev
```

```
pip3 install pyqt5
```



# PhysiCell Studio part II (Power User Setup)

- Test the installation with the template sample project.

```
cd ~/src/PhysiCell  
studio
```

PhysiCell Studio should open and load the template PhysiCell\_settings.xml file.

- Please check out the official PhysiCell Studio manual:

<https://github.com/PhysiCell-Tools/Studio-Guide/tree/main>



# Overview

This document describes the PhysiCell installation on a Debian Linux distribution. If you run on another flavor, please adjust accordingly.

- GCC
- ImageMagick, FFmpeg, Tar, Gzip, Unzip
- Git
- PhysiCell

Minimum  
Setup

- 
- Python3, iPython, pcdl
  - PhysiCell Studio

Power User  
Setup

IDE  
Setup

- 
- VSCode (if you are not a Vim or Emacs user)



**LUDDY**

SCHOOL OF INFORMATICS, COMPUTING, AND ENGINEERING



@MathCancer.bsky.social

Macklin Lab  
MathCancer.org

# MS Visual Studio Code part I (IDE Setup)

1. Install vs code, either from your operating system's app store or from <https://code.visualstudio.com/>

2. Generate a vs code profile for physicell:

File | New Window with Profile

Name: physicell

Icon: choose a cool one. e.g. 🔥.

Create

Add Folder: Home/src

click the profile icon (default is a gearwheel) on the left side bottom corner.

Profile > physicell

3. Open the Folder:

File | Open Folder... | src | Open

Yes, I trust the authors





# MS Visual Studio Code part II (IDE Setup)

1. Install the official python and C++ extensions into the profile:

click the profile icon (default is a gearwheel) on the left side bottom corner.

Profile > physicell

Extension: Python Install

Extension: C/C++ Install

2. Link physienv (the python environment we generated above):

View | Command Palette... | Python: Select Interpreter |  
Enter interpreter path... | Find... | src/physienv



# Overview

This document describes the PhysiCell installation on a Debian Linux distribution. If you run on another flavor, please adjust accordingly.

- GCC
- ImageMagick, FFmpeg, Tar, Gzip, Unzip
- Git
- PhysiCell

Minimum  
Setup

- 
- Python3, iPython, pcdl
  - PhysiCell Studio

Power User  
Setup

IDE  
Setup

- 
- VSCode (if you are not a Vim or Emacs user)





**LUDDY**

SCHOOL OF INFORMATICS, COMPUTING, AND ENGINEERING



**@MathCancer.bsky.social**

**Macklin Lab**  
**MathCancer.org**

# Miniforge Python3 part I (Power User Setup)

The **mamba** package manager (faster and robuster than conda, otherwise the same and totally compatible with pip and conda) comes in handy, when you want to run somewhere python3 where you have no root rights, or if you prefer to leave the python3 that ships with the distribution untouched.

[https://mamba.readthedocs.io/en/latest/user\\_guide/mamba.html](https://mamba.readthedocs.io/en/latest/user_guide/mamba.html)

- `cd` to the folder where you have your manual installed programs.  
e.g. `~/ .local/lib/`
- Adjust the download according to your CPU architecture (here x86\_64): <https://github.com/conda-forge/miniforge>
- `wget https://github.com/conda-forge/miniforge/releases/latest/download/Miniforge3-Linux-x86_64.sh`  
`chmod 775 Miniforge3-Linux-x86_64.sh`  
`./Miniforge3-Linux-x86_64.sh`
- Adjust the installation location to where your manual installed programs are.  
e.g. `home/<user>/ .local/lib/miniforge3`
- You wish the installer to initialize mamba!  
`yes`  
`source ~/ .bashrc` (or log out and in again).

# Miniforge Python3 part II (Power User Setup)

- With **mamba** you can now generate virtual python environment, in addition to the (base) environment, with the command below. **Beware:** You have at least to list one package (e.g. ipython) to successfully generate an environment!

```
mamba create -n myenv ipython
```

- You can list all existing virtual environments like this:

```
mamba env list
```

- You can activate a virtual environment like this:

```
mamba activate myenv
```

- To escape from all virtual environments, e.g. to work with the python that ships with the operating system, like this:

```
mamba deactivate
```