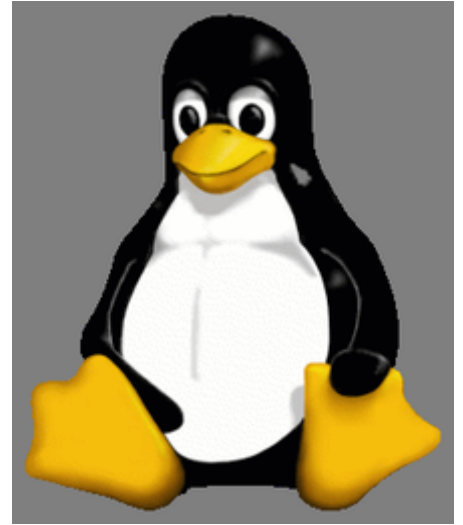


Tux (mascot)

Tux is a penguin character and the official brand character of the Linux kernel.^[1] Originally created as an entry to a Linux logo competition, Tux is the most commonly used icon for Linux, although different Linux distributions depict Tux in various styles. The character is used in many other Linux programs and as a general symbol of Linux.



Tux, as originally drawn as a raster image by Larry Ewing in 1996. Original has transparent background.

Contents

History

Origins

Tuz 2009

Linux for Workgroups 2013

Uses and reception

Video games

Female Tux versions in video games

Tux in popular culture

Other uses

List of video games featuring Tux

Gallery

See also

References

External links

History

Origins

The concept of the Linux brand character being a penguin came from Linus Torvalds, the creator of Linux. Tux was created by Larry Ewing in 1996 after an initial suggestion made by Alan Cox.^[2] and further refined by Linus Torvalds on the Linux kernel mailing list.^[3] Torvalds took his inspiration from an image he found on an FTP site,^[4] showing a penguin figurine depicted in a similar style to the *Creature Comforts* characters created by Nick Park. The first person to call the penguin "Tux" was James Hughes, who said that it stood for "(T)orvalds (U)ni(X)".^[5] However, *tux* is also an abbreviation of tuxedo, the outfit which bears resemblance in appearance to a penguin.

Tux was originally designed as a submission for a Linux logo contest. Three such competitions took place; Tux won none of them. This is why Tux is formally known as the Linux *brand character* and not the *logo*.^[6] Tux was created^[7] by Larry Ewing using the first publicly released^[8] version (0.54) of GIMP, a free software



Linus Torvalds' "favourite penguin picture", used as inspiration for Tux

graphics package. It was released by him under the following condition:^[9]

Permission to use and/or modify this image is granted provided you acknowledge me lewing@isc.tamu.edu and The GIMP if someone asks.

According to Jeff Ayers, Linus Torvalds had a "fixation for flightless, fat waterfowl" and Torvalds claims to have contracted "penguinitis" after being nibbled by a little penguin on a visit to the National Zoo & Aquarium, Canberra, Australia.^[10] joking that the disease "makes you stay awake at nights just thinking about penguins and feeling great love towards them".^[11] Torvalds was looking for something fun and sympathetic to associate with Linux, and he felt that a slightly fat penguin sitting down after having eaten a great meal perfectly fit the bill.^[12] In 2009, a sign at Canberra zoo said that staff believed the "original Tux" was still resident in the penguin enclosure.^[13]

In an interview Linus commented on the penguin bite:^[14]

I've been to Australia several times, these days mostly for Linux.Conf.Au. But my first trip—and the one when I was bitten by a ferocious fairy penguin: you really should keep those things locked up!—was in 93 or so, talking about Linux for the Australian Unix Users Group.

Tuz 2009

Tuz, a Tasmanian devil wearing a fake penguin beak, was the brand character of the 2009 linux.conf.au conference. It has been chosen by Linus Torvalds as the logo for version 2.6.29 of the Linux kernel^[15] to support the effort to save the Tasmanian devil species from extinction^[16] due to the devil facial tumour disease.

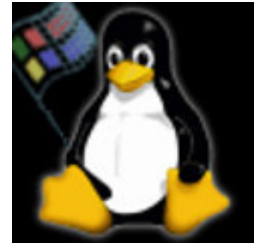
The image was designed by Andrew McGown and recreated as an SVG using Inkscape by Josh Bush,^[17] and released under the CC BY-SA license.^[18]



Tuz, the Tasmanian devil (2009)

Linux for Workgroups 2013

For the Linux 3.11-rc1 release, Linus Torvalds changed the code name from "Unicycling Gorilla" to "Linux for Workgroups" and modified the logo that some systems display when booting to depict a Tux holding a flag with a symbol that is reminiscent of the logo of Windows for Workgroups 3.11, which was released in 1993.^[19]



Tux logo in the
"Linux for
Workgroups"
release (2013)

Uses and reception

In some Linux distributions, for example [Gentoo](#),^[20] Tux greets the user during [booting](#) with [multi-processor](#) systems displaying multiple images of Tux, one for each processor core.

Video games

Tux has taken on a role in the Linux community similar to that which [Mario](#) holds in the [Nintendo](#) community. The character has been featured in open-source look-alikes of other mainstream games, such as *[Tux Racer](#)*, *[Extreme Tux Racer](#)*, *[Tux Math Scrabble](#)*, *[TuxWordSmith](#)* *[Tux Math](#)*, *[SuperTux](#)*, *[SuperTuxKart](#)*, and *[Tux Paint](#)*. See also [List of video games featuring Tux](#) below.

Female Tux versions in video games

Some games that star Tux also include explicitly female penguin characters, allowing the players to play as one of those characters instead of Tux. One such female penguin is Tux's friend "Gown". Gown is variously depicted as being a pink version of Tux (*[XTux](#)*) or as having a somewhat less fat appearance and wearing items of clothing such as a red and white short skirt and a hair bow (e.g. *[TuxKart](#)* and *[A Quest for Herring](#)*).

In *[SuperTux](#)* and *[SuperTuxKart](#)*, there is a different female penguin called "Penny" who is purple and white (*[SuperTuxKart](#)* once had Gown and still has a map called "Gown's Bow"). In the arcade game *[Tux 2](#)* there is a female penguin called "Trixi", and in *[FreeCiv](#)* the female leader name for the Antarctic civilization is "Tuxette".

Tux in popular culture

- In a [Froot Loops](#) advertisement, Tux appears as a [squeaky toy](#), the "secret weapon" to distract a pack of dogs pulling a sled containing the villain.^[21]
- In the comics *[Hellblazer](#)*, in issue 234 "Joyride, part 1", a Tux plush toy makes an appearance, set on the side of the road where a little girl was killed in a hit-and-run accident.
- [Tux](#) appeared as a character during one arc in the [webcomic](#) *[User Friendly](#)*.

Other uses

- In 1999, [Corel Linux Deluxe](#) included a free Linux Penguin (Tux) toy.^[22]

- Since around 2001, there was a Linux-based web server named TUX, which was deprecated around 2006.
- In 2006, Tux had an uncredited use in the Al Gore's Penguin Army video.
- In 2007, Tux was used by the German cutlery producer WMF in the *Sealion* set for children.^[23]
- In 2008, Tux has also been made as a virtual pet under the name Tux Droid by Kysoh for Linux and Windows, has many features including reading tweets from Twitter and checking the weather.
- Since 2009, TuxGuitar, a free guitar tab reading/editing program, features Tux holding a guitar as its brand character.^[24]
- In 2010, a prototype of a Tux monument with wings was presented in the Russian city of Tyumen by the local Linux user community.^{[25][26]}
- The avatar of Electronica artist Ephixa is based on Tux (around 2011).
- In April 2016, Tux was adapted to a designer toy called a Gwin and was distributed by October Toys.^[27] The toy was redesigned by different artists and sold in short collectible runs through the October Toys website and other collectable vinyl toy sites. October Toys has since ceased operations.

List of video games featuring Tux

Several computer games, mostly free and open-source and/or for Linux, have included Tux, including:

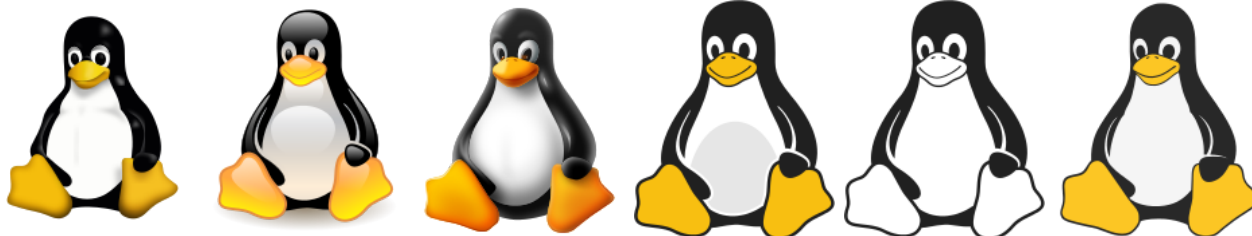
- OpenArena: contains a character named "Penguin", who is a man dressed in a costume resembling Tux.
- Pingus: A Lemmings clone in which the lemmings are replaced by penguins in reference to Tux.
- FreedroidRPG (<https://www.freedroid.org/>): An ARPG featuring Tux as the main protagonist who has to save the world from a robot apocalypse.
- Team Fortress 2: A team-based FPS that has an in-game Tux doll, which was awarded to Linux players from 14 February to 1 March 2013.^[28]
- SuperTux: a platform game inspired by Super Mario Bros.
- Tux Kart and SuperTuxKart: Kart racing games similar to the Mario Kart series.
- TuxMathScrabble: Math version of the popular family game starring Tux.
- TuxWordSmith: Scrabble in over 80 languages, starring Tux.
- Tux Paint (<https://www.TuxPaint.org/>): A drawing program for young children, most likely inspired by Kid Pix.
- Tux, of Math Command: a free-software math tutoring arcade game.
- Tux Typing: a free-software educational game designed to teach typing.
- Tux Racer/Extreme Tux Racer: A game similar to snowboarding video games, in which the player controls Tux sliding downhill on his belly rather than humans snowboarding down a track.
- FreeCiv: A Civilization clone; the leader name of the Antartican civilization is "Tux". In addition, the Colossus is an enormous Tux statue, depending on the tile set selected.^[29]
- WarMUX: A turn-based strategy game inspired by Worms, featuring many free and open-source software brand characters, including Tux.
- Frozen Bubble: A free-software puzzle game, featuring Tux-esque penguins.
- LinCity-NG: A free-software strategy game that allows you to build a Tux statue.
- There is a Pet (creature who will fight alongside your character) in the online game DragonFable that is a penguin named "Linus". Along with the tagline on the pet, he is shown to

be a version of Tux.

- *Open Surge*,^[30] in a test level by Celdecea.
- *Super Tux Party*: A party video game inspired by *Mario Party*.

Gallery

Tux variants



Vectorized
from the pixel
image
source

Gloss
Tux

look

High quality
3d-look
variant

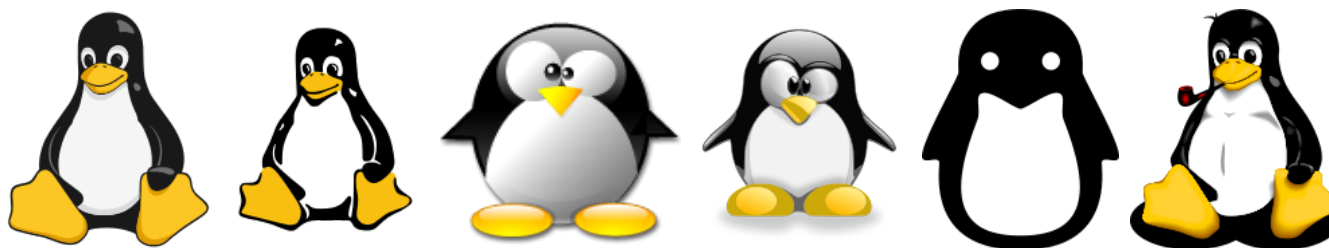
Modern
flat
look

flat

Modern
flat
look
in
monochrome

Classic

flat
look: Emblem



Classic
look: 3D

flat

Simple
vector
variant

Tux Crystal 1st
revision

Tux Crystal 2nd
revision

A
simplified
variant of the
Tux logo

Slackware
version
of
Tux



Tux
TuxGuitar

from

PaX
version of
Tux

Appearances of Tux



Tux as the player character protagonist of SuperTux

Tux on the fork of the cutlery set Sealion for children by WMF (2007).

Eight Tux displayed, representing eight processor cores running the Gentoo Linux installation CD.

A Tux rangoli by students at GNUUnify'13, Pune

See also

- List of computing mascots
- BSD Daemon, the mascot of various BSD releases
- Glenda, the Plan 9 Bunny, the mascot of Plan 9 from Bell Labs
- Kiki the Cyber Squirrel, the mascot of Krita
- Konqi, the mascot of KDE
- Mozilla, the mascot of Mozilla Foundation
- Puffy (mascot), the mascot of OpenBSD
- Tux Droid
- Wilber, the mascot of GIMP


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