



Operating Systems Communication Networks [2024-2025]

Support doc - Linux Virtual Machine to support practical exercises

Introduction

Linux is required in the courses of Operating Systems (“SO”) and Communication Networks (“RC”). This support document explains how to install a pre-built image of a Linux Virtual Machine (VM) with all the necessary tools for both courses.

Students willing to install a complete Linux distribution step-by-step (either as a dual boot or in a VM) should follow the instructions provided in Operating Systems support documentation *Tutorial 01 – Installing Linux and the required tools*. This is recommended for Operating System students.

This document includes instructions to install the pre-built virtual machine provided, some Virtual Box features worth using, and Virtual Box troubleshooting.

Virtual Machine with pre-installed Linux

The pre-built virtual machine is provided in the OVA format, which is compatible with VirtualBox and VMWare virtualization software.

To proceed with the installation of the virtualization software, please follow one of the options:

- VirtualBox: <https://www.virtualbox.org/>
- Free
 - After version 6 it does not support 32 bits hosts
- VMWare: <https://my.vmware.com/web/vmware/downloads>
- Free only to run existing machines
 - In Mac it must be used VMWare Fusion which is not free

Next, download the Linux virtual machine image from <https://www.uc.pt/go/vasco> (menu option ‘Classes’).

LUbuntu virtual machine info:

- File: LUbuntu_2022.ova
- Operating System: LUbuntu 20.04 (64 bit)
 - Lightweight version in comparison to Ubuntu, as it uses the Lightweight X11 Desktop Environment
- File size: around 5GB

Software installed:

- LUbuntu 20.04
- gcc gdb ddd make
- traceroute
- net-tools
- NS-2 2.35 (allinone)
- GNS3 2.2.29
- Atom
- Wireshark
- Docker (a container was created for RC classes and added to GNS3)

The image file must be imported using the virtualization software (e.g. VirtualBox or VMWare). In Virtual Box use the option “File → Import Appliance...” ().

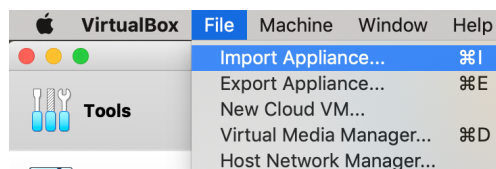


Fig. 1 – Import the VM using Virtual Box

Credentials to access the operating system:

Login/username: **user**

Password: **password**

 **Always keep a backup of your working files to prevent any virtual machine failure.**

Linux manual: LUbuntu manual online
<https://manual.lubuntu.me/>

Notes regarding the installation on VirtualBox

This section includes some notes regarding common issues with VirtualBox virtualization software.

Note 0: Initial Machine settings

Some initial problems occur due to wrong machine settings.

With the Virtual Machine shutdown, select its image from the “VirtualBox Manager” and go to “Settings”. Select “System”, set “Base Memory” from 2048 MB to 4096MB, and the number of “Processors” to the maximum available (do not exceed the green bar!). After, select “Display” and set your video memory from 64MB to 128MB. Do not use more resources than needed, more resources to the Virtual Machine mean least resources for your host system!

Note 1: Guest Additions

Guest Additions allow a better integration between the virtual machine and the host running the virtualization software. Besides improvements in performance, it also supports clipboard sharing and folders sharing between the virtual machine and the host. Remove the installed Guest Additions and install the most recent and more appropriate to your system.

- Remove the installed version:

```
$ sudo apt remove --purge virtualbox-guest-additions-iso
```
- After removing, install the appropriate Guest Additions according to the VirtualBox version:

"Devices → Insert Guest Additions CD image..."

(https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/VirtualBox/Setting_up_an_Ubuntu_virtual_machine)

Open terminal. On LUbuntu go to Guest Additions folder:

```
cd /media/user/VBox_Gas... (check the exact name as it depends on the version)
```

Run the command:

```
sudo ./VBoxLinuxAdditions.run
```

- After install, reboot the machine.

To use clipboard sharing and folder sharing facilities, these options must be activated in the respective menus options of VirtualBox.

Note 2: Sharing between the guest OS and the host

Sharing between the guest OS (Ubuntu) and the host OS is possible through VirtualBox. Guest Additions software should be installed to enable sharing options.

To share the clipboard

In the VirtualBox menu, select “Devices → Shared Clipboard → Bidirectional”.

To enable Drag and Drop

In the VirtualBox menu, select “Devices → Drag and Drop → Bidirectional”.

To share Folders

In the VirtualBox menu, select “Devices → Shared Folders”.

Select the host folder to share and mark the options “Auto-mount” and “Make Permanent”. To choose the specific guest folder where the host folder will be mounted, specify it in the “Mount point”, otherwise it will be mounted in `/media` (Fig. 2). Reboot may be necessary to enable the shared folder.

=> Keep all your important files in a shared folder. If something goes wrong with the virtual machine, you will still have a backup in your host system.

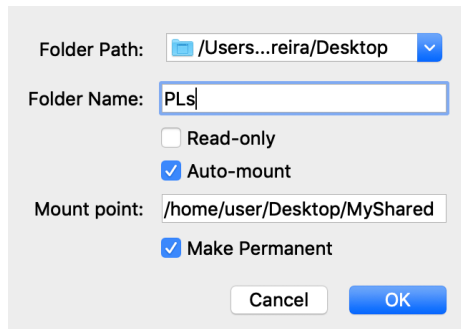


Fig. 2 – Shared folder in guest created in `/home/user/Desktop/MyShared/PLs`

If it is not possible to see the *shared folders* in VirtualBox:

- Assure that Guest Additions are installed (see **Note 1: Guest additions**).
- Try to access to the shared folder (by default it is `/media/sf_name_of_shared_folder`).

If this fails, do the following:

```
$ sudo usermod -a -G vboxsf {your username}
```

Check if your user belongs to the `vboxsf` group, by executing:

```
$ groups
```

If your user does not belong to the group, restart the machine.

VirtualBox troubleshooting

This section includes some common errors.

Problem 1: The virtual machine is very slow

Machine is too slow and initial screen may be black for several seconds.

Possible solutions:

- 1 - Check if the option in the BIOS to support virtual machines is activated.
- 2 - In the settings of the virtual machine, increase the video memory and increase the number of used CPUs to 2 (if your system allows it).
- 3 - Check the free space of you Virtual Machine (“`df`” shell command)

```
$ df -k
```

- Free some space by using the following shell commands:
 - \$ sudo apt-get clean
 - \$ sudo apt-get autoremove
- If the screen is always black and you cannot access the graphical interface:
 - Shutdown the Linux VM
 - Restart with **Shift** key pressed; it will enable the boot in recovery mode
- 4 - Check the free space of your host computer

Problem 2: Issues with graphics

- Windows are drawn very slowly in the screen
- It is not possible to perform automatic resizing of the virtual screen (for instance, it is not possible to select the option “View → Auto-resize Guest Display” or it is deactivated)

Possible solution:

- Try to remove the *Guest Additions* (see **Note 1: Guest Additions**)

Problem 3: Video resolution with problems

If you have issues with the video resolution in the Ubuntu virtual machine, execute the following command in Linux:

```
$ sudo apt install virtualbox-guest-dkms virtualbox-guest-utils
virtualbox-guest-x11
```

Problem 4: The mouse pointer disappears inside the VM

It may be necessary to modify the virtual machine configuration in the following menu:

Machine -> Settings -> System -> Motherboard *tab*

Choose the option **Enable I/O APIC**.

Problem 5: Error installing in MacOS

The installation of VirtualBox gives an error on MacOS¹:

- Starting on MacOS 10.13, it may give an error the first installation of VirtualBox, due to permission settings. Check in System Preferences, under Security and Privacy if the installation of VirtualBox software is blocked.

Problem 6: VT-x/AMD-V hardware acceleration

The installation gives the following error: “VT-x/AMD-V hardware acceleration is not available (...)”:

- The image requires support for virtualization by hardware, and it is not activated. Check if UEFI/BIOS has the virtualization by hardware activated.

Inter (R) Virtualization Technology [Enabled] or
AMD-V [Enabled]

(if you do not have experience changing the BIOS configuration, ask support from your teacher in the PL's classes)

¹ Issue documented in <https://github.com/docksal/docksal/issues/417>

Problem 7: VirtualBox and Docker Desktop

Compatibility of VirtualBox with configurations needed for running Docker Desktop on the same host:

- Docker Desktop requires certain Windows features to be turned on, which makes VirtualBox VMs to stop booting.
- To be able to run both Docker Desktop and Virtual Machines, VMWare should be used. Besides this, the features highlighted in Fig. 3 need to be enabled. To reach that configuration window follow: Control Panel -> Programs -> Turn Windows Features On or Off.
(For some users, the Hyper-V option might not be available.)
- If you have started the process for adding Docker Desktop, but decided to stop it or it failed due to some other dependencies not met, go to the same window as described above and make sure that all highlighted options are not selected. After this, VMs should work correctly again with either VirtualBox or VMWare.

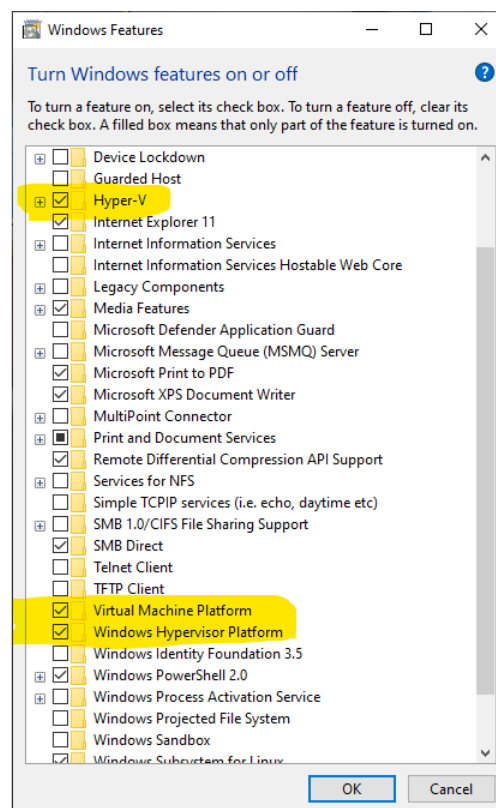


Fig. 3 – Windows features