



Debian is a free operating system (OS) for your computer. An operating system is the set of basic programs

WHAT IS DEBIAN GNU/LINUX?

and utilities that make your computer run. At the core of an operating system is the kernel. The kernel is the most fundamental program on the computer, does all the basic housekeeping and lets you start other programs. Debian is currently based on the Linux(TM) operating system and includes more than 4000 packages of utilities and applications.

FREEDOM

Debian consists completely of Free Software. This provides for an unlimited use of Debian, even in commercial environments. All the source code for the software is freely available. Debian is the largest collection of free software, all precompiled and ready to go.

COMMUNITY

The Debian project is a 100% volunteer effort committed to producing a world class Open Source operating system. There are currently over 500 people from around the globe developing the Debian operating system, each with roles ranging from Package Development through to Quality Assurance, Security, Policy and Strategy. The Debian project is committed to the principles of software freedom and openness. Its commitment is plainly stated in the Debian Social Contract published at http://www.debian.org/social_contract.

The Debian Free Software Guidelines describe the criterion that licenses for software included in the Debian operating system must meet. The Open Source Definition is a derived work of the Debian Free Software Guidelines.

CONTINUITY

The Debian packaging system permits a seamless transition to newer program versions without the requirement to begin a new installation >from scratch and it won't delete your old configuration. The dependencies between the programs are handled automatically and you can upgrade from any media: disks, cd-roms or directly from a network connection to the internet.

STABILITY

Debian has no commercial pressure and will not release a new and possibly unstable version just because the market requires that. The Debian maintainers always test the system thoroughly and attempt to remove all known bugs before releasing a new version.

PORTABILITY

Debian is available and runs equally well on the following architectures: Intel x86 ('i386', classic PCs), Digital Alpha ('alpha'), Motorola 68000 ('m68k', Amiga and older Macs), Motorola/IBM PowerPC ('powerpc', like the iMacs), Sun SPARC and UltraSPARC ('sparc' and 'ultrasparc') and ARM ('arm', like the Corel NetWinder box.)

INCLUDED WITH DEBIAN GNU/LINUX

Actually the complete Debian GNU/Linux distribution fits barely on 6 CDs (3 of architecture-dependent precompiled binaries plus 3 of source code.) Inside you'll find:

- the full set of GNU utilities, editors (emacs, vi, ...), network clients (telnet, ftp, finger, ...), web browsers, privacy tools (gpg, ssh, ...), email clients and every little tool you can think of
- full set of network protocols (PPP, TCP/IP, Apple(TM) EtherTalk, Windows(TM) SMB, Novel(TM), ...)
- development tools for the major programming languages (and some of the more obscure too...) like: C, C++, ObjectiveC, Java, Python, Perl, Smalltalk, LISP, Scheme, Heskell, ADA, and more.
- complete XML/SGML/HTML development environment
- the X11 windowing system complemented by 10+ window managers and two of the best desktops: Gnome and KDE
- the TeX/LaTeX document preparation system, postscript and type1 fonts and tools, the Ghostscript Postscript(TM) interpreter
- GIMP, the GNU Image Manipulation Program (just like Photoshop, only free!)
- a complete set of office applications: WYSIWYG editors, calendard, spreadsheets, databases, etc.
- enterprise-level SQL relational databases (PostgreSQL, MySQL) and development tools (application servers, server side scripting languages.)

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Simply point your browser at <http://www.debian.org>. If you need any information or help you can join the #debian channel on IRC (on the OpenProjects network, you can simply use irc.debian.org.)

Another way to obtain informations or help is to join one of the Debian mailing lists. Simply go to <http://www.debian.org/MailingLists/subscribe> and follow the instructions.

If you want to install Debian GNU/Linux you can download the install floppies from <ftp://ftp.debian.org> and then go for a network install or order some Debian CDs. Debian does not make any CD but lots of vendors print 'official' CDs from the Debian Official CD Images (available from the Debian ftp mirrors.) If you elicit to buy the CD distribution, simply go to the vendors page at <http://www.debian.org/vendors>.

Anyway, be sure to give a look at the Debian Installation Guide, located at <http://www.debian.org/releases/potato>.



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