

# What is Linux Mint

- GNU/Linux distribution
- Easy to use and administer
- Based on Ubuntu LTS and Debian stable releases
- Tagline "From freedom came elegance"
- Well thought out design
- Relatively recent distribution

# Why Linux Mint is interesting

- About as easy as Linux gets
- Still has the power of Ubuntu or Debian
- Best option for migration from Windows
- One of the most-used distros
- 1-3 place on DistroWatch.com

# Basic Linux Mint facts

- Based on Ubuntu and Debian GNU/Linux
- Run by Clement "Clem" Lefebvre (France)
- First release in August, 2006
- Run Benevolent Dictator-style
- Monetarily supported by website ads, commercial sponsorships, and donations
- Released for i386 and amd64 ("32-bit PC" and "64-bit PC")

# What Makes Linux Mint special

- Cinnamon and other graphical interfaces
- Further refinements and customisations
- Default programs
- X-apps programs
- Easy to use utilities written for Linux Mint
- Friendly community

# Cinnamon and other interfaces

Cinnamon is a Linux Mint project. It's a very good looking graphical interface with good features.

- There is no Unity on Linux Mint.
- Additional interfaces are MATE and Xfce, and in the past KDE
- MATE is also good looking and has good features

# Linux Mint refinements

- Added fonts and GTK engines for MATE and I think Cinnamon
- Themes, icons and great wallpaper images
- Timeshift backup and system restore software
- Forum and community websites and IRC channels
- Proprietary drivers and codecs are easy to set up
- Adobe Flash is installed
- Proprietary applications, such as Spotify and Steam, are available in the repository
- Installation of command-not-found, colour command prompt, short form apt command

# Linux Mint default programs

- GIMP
- Firefox
- Hexchat
- Transmission
- Thunderbird
- LibreOffice
- Compiz Fusion

# The X-apps series of programs

In about 2016 Linux Mint announced it was going to write a series of GTK+3-only X applications compatible with all "desktop environments".

- Xed, text editor
- Xreader, PDF and PostScript viewer
- Xviewer, image viewer
- Xplayer, media player
- Pix, image manager



# Linux Mint user utilities

- Written by Clem in Python for GTK+
- Software Manager "mintinstall"
- Software Sources, "mintsources"
- Update Manager, "mintupdate"
- USB Stick Formatter or USB Image Writer, "mintstick"
- Backup Tool, "mintbackup"
- Domain Blocker, "mintnanny"
- Upload Manager, "mintupload"
- Welcome Screen, "mintwelcome"
- Desktop Settings, "mintdesktop"
- Driver Manager, "mintdriver"
- Language Settings, "mintlocale"
- MintMenu, the menu on Linux Mint MATE graphical interfaces

# Linux Mint Software Manager

- Graphical interface to all software repositories available to APT
- Software divided into sections and sub-sections
- "Featured" section available
- Graphical icons for sections, sub-sections and packages
- Handles dependencies automatically
- Screenshots, user reviews and ratings shown in program
- Capable of queuing additional and removals
- A lot easier to use than any other package tool I have used, anyone can do it

# The other Linux Mint utilities

- Software Sources is a GUI tool to change or update your APT sources
- Update Manager is a tray icon and program to apply updates, easy to use
- USB Stick Formatter and Image Writer will format USB mass storage devices and write ISO images to them
- Backup Tool helps you back up your home directory and software selection
- Domain Blocker is a host blocker using /etc/hosts and the localhost IP address
- Upload Manager seems to be for file sharing
- Welcome Screen displays helpful starting points for using Linux Mint or getting help, it opens by default on login
- Desktop Settings changes several user interface preferences
- Driver Manager allows the installing of proprietary drivers
- System Report allows you to view system logs for reporting to others for help or diagnosis
- Language Settings changes locales and input methods for you

# Linux Mint original

- Original Linux Mint edition, based on Ubuntu
- First release was 1.0 "Ada" in August 2006
- Most recent release 19.1 "Tessa" in December 2018
- Always given a code name of a woman's name
- Releases are always based on an Ubuntu LTS release
- Released a few months after the LTS release
- Uses Ubuntu and Linux Mint repositories
- Compatible with Ubuntu PPAs
- Normally supported for 3-5 years

# Linux Mint Debian Edition

- Second edition, based on Debian
- Only Cinnamon graphical interface officially supported
- Based on Debian stable
- Made after a licensing concern with Ubuntu was raised
- Faster and more responsive than original Linux Mint
- Requires some technical knowledge to deal with Debian prompts
- Uses Debian and Linux Mint repositories
- Not compatible with PPAs
- First release September 2010, most recent release August 2018
- Most recent release LMDE 3 "Cindy" which is Debian "stretch"
- Equally aesthetically pleasing and easy to use
- Also all named with women's names

# Debian Live

- Linux Mint Debian Edition required a new installer
- A KNOPPIX-like self-contained auto-detection and booting initialisation system was invented
- This was later given back to Debian and called Debian Live
- Debian Live images have been officially available for years now



# The malware upload crime

- In 2016 the [www.linuxmint.com](http://www.linuxmint.com) website was broken into by a hole in Wordpress
- The links to two of the most popular ISOs for download were changed to an eastern European location
- These ISOs were still of Linux Mint, but with malware pre-installed on them
- It is not known if any of these computers were accessed by the criminals, or what they did with it, or if anyone is still running them
- Windows has no GPG or SHA256 verification abilities by default
- Existing ISO images and mirrors weren't compromised
- Sucuri was adopted and the cryptographic verification instructions on the Web site were improved
- A "mintverify" program to do the verification securely and automatically might be a good idea, or even a "mintdownload" program to do that and all of the above
- My idea is to put Linux Mint on the Microsoft Store for secure downloading on Windows

# Possible downsides to Linux Mint

- Some issue with security updates being not as good as something like Ubuntu or Debian
- Possible limited manpower
- Supported by web advertisements, corporate sponsors and donations
- Both editions are SystemD now, although LMDE 3 can be switched to sysvinit



# References

- Mostly my head
- Linux Mint Debian (201009) released!  
<https://blog.linuxmint.com/?p=1527>
- Linux Mint History and Development  
<https://www.unixmen.com/linux-mint-history-development/>

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