

12 Best Linux Distros You Should Use

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Out of all the operating systems in existence, Linux (also known as GNU/Linux) is the most frowned upon, and there are a few reasons for the same. While overall adaptability, software support, and user experience remain the most common issues with Linux, OS saturation is also a huge issue. That said, most people involved in Linux treat the overwhelming number of choices as a plus point, as it gives them the ability and flexibility to try out different desktop environments and flavors and, ultimately, settle for what they like the best. However, if you haven't tried Linux yet and want to start using it for whatever reason, here are some of the best Linux distros you should use and get started with.

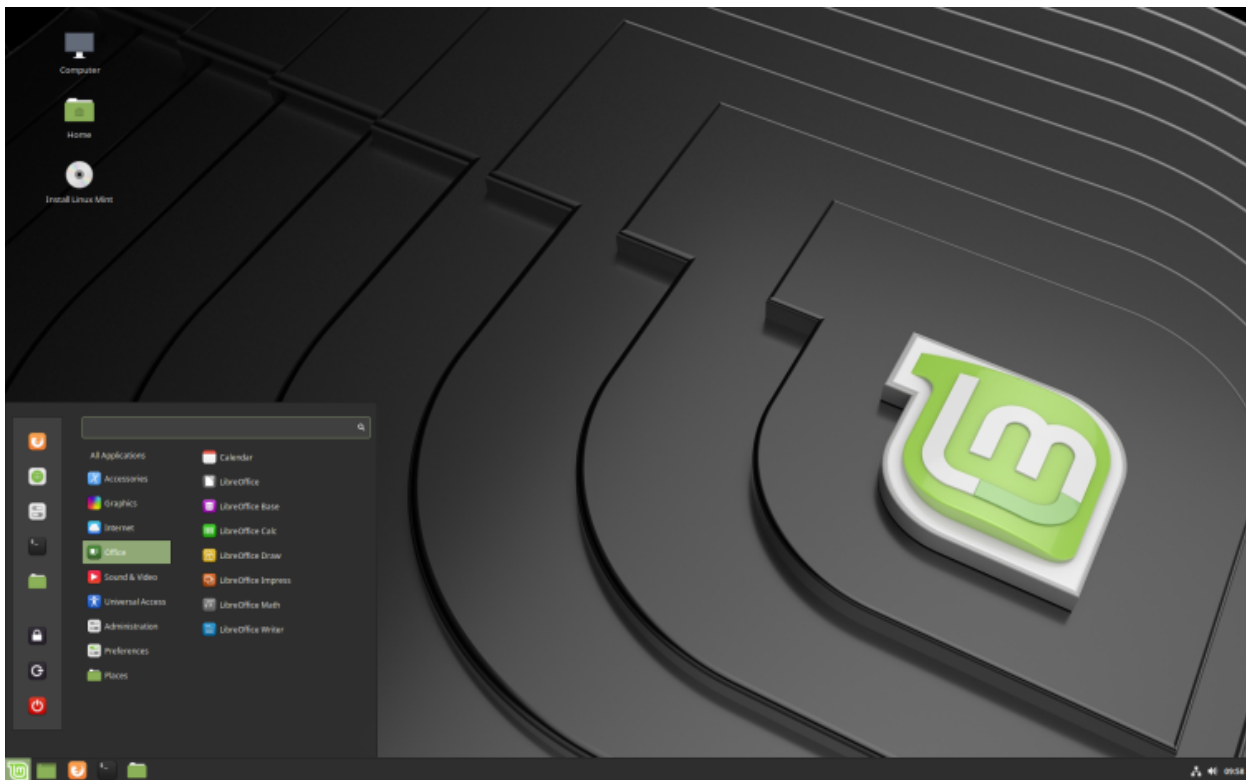
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1. Linux Mint

Linux Mint has established itself as **one of the best distros for beginner Linux users**, thanks to Cinnamon's simplicity (Linux Mint's desktop environment) and ease of use. It's an Ubuntu-based operating system that's good for day-to-day usage and gaming. The Windows-like feel of Mint makes users switching from Windows feel at home and is one of the main selling points of the distro.



Linux Mint also caters to users who hold system stability of utmost importance. A new version of Mint is released every six months, and it's usually very stable with occasional bugs. And for those who don't like Cinnamon, MATE, and Xfce are two other officially supported flavors of Linux Mint.

Cinnamon is popular because it uses far fewer system resources than GNOME, meaning it's easier to run Linux Mint on old hardware with ease – like other [lightweight Linux distros](#) we recommend. Unlike Ubuntu, Linux Mint drops support for Snaps and embraces Flatpaks with open arms, and lately, the OS is doing its best to discern itself from Ubuntu. And well, it has been successful in doing the same. Overall, it's a great Linux distro for beginners because everything just works out of the box.

Pros

Light on system resources

Cons

New features take time to appear

Pros

A great starting point for beginners
Great stability

Cons

Could be a little too basic for advanced users
Not very customizable

System Requirements:

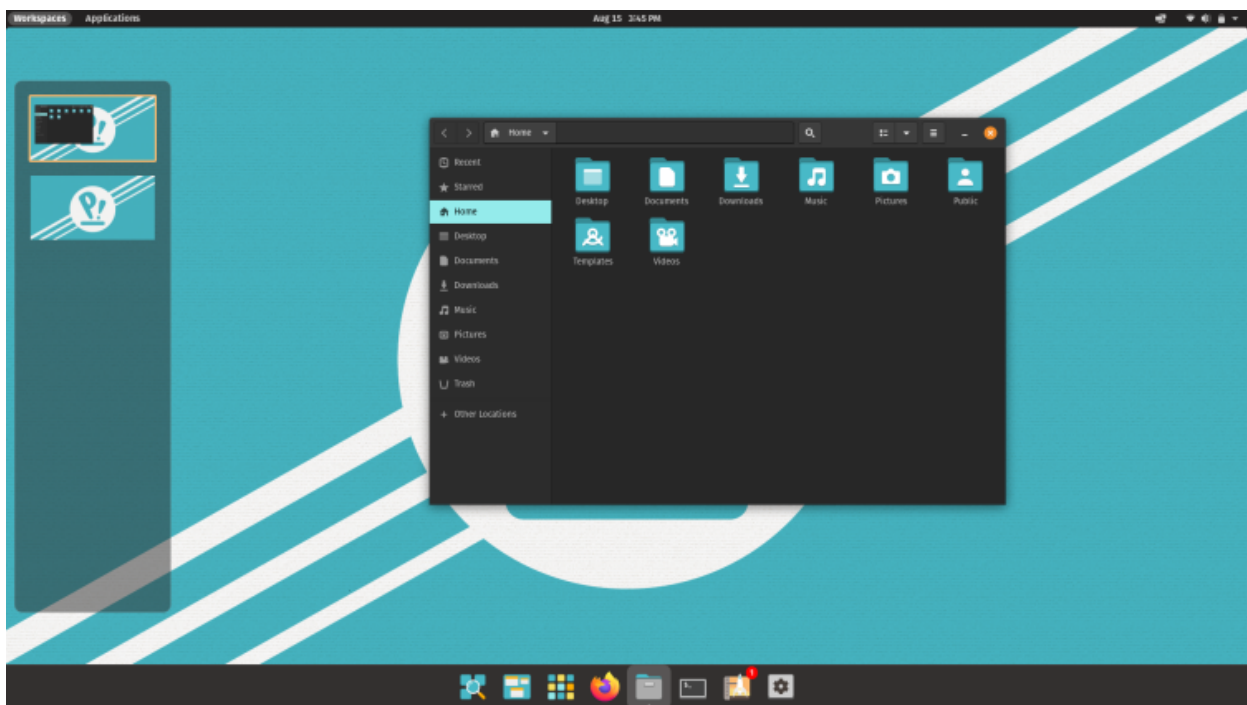
- 2GB RAM (4GB Recommended)
- 20GB Disk space (100GB Recommended)
- 1024×728 pixels resolution display
- A dual-core CPU

Flavors: Cinnamon, MATE, Xfce

[Download Linux Mint](#)

2. Pop!_OS

Pop!_OS is developed by a company named System76, which also sells PC hardware and laptops powered by the OS. The OS was originally made with STEM professionals in mind and comes with NVIDIA drivers preinstalled. Soon, the distro became a hit among gamers, largely because installing NVIDIA drivers on Linux wasn't the most user-friendly work in the world.



Pop!_OS is based on Ubuntu and uses the COSMIC desktop environment, which is Pop!_OS' homemade desktop environment based on GNOME. However, unlike GNOME, it's a lot cleaner and has got a few neat tricks up its sleeve, like the keyboard shortcuts, which makes Pop!_OS one of the cleanest Linux systems. Overall, Pop!_OS is a great option for budding creators as well as folks who want to game on Linux out of the box.

Speaking of COSMIC, System76 has recently decided to distance itself from GNOME and recode the entire desktop environment in Rust programming language. Rust-based COSMIC was announced a few

years ago and is currently about to transition from the Alpha to Beta stages. The revamped COSMIC will supposedly be faster, smoother, and less clunky than GNOME-based COSMIC.

Pros

An excellent choice for gamers and content creators

A great starting point for beginners

Stable, customizable, and feature-rich

Cons

Not a cutting-edge distro

Requires a decently specced PC

System Requirements:

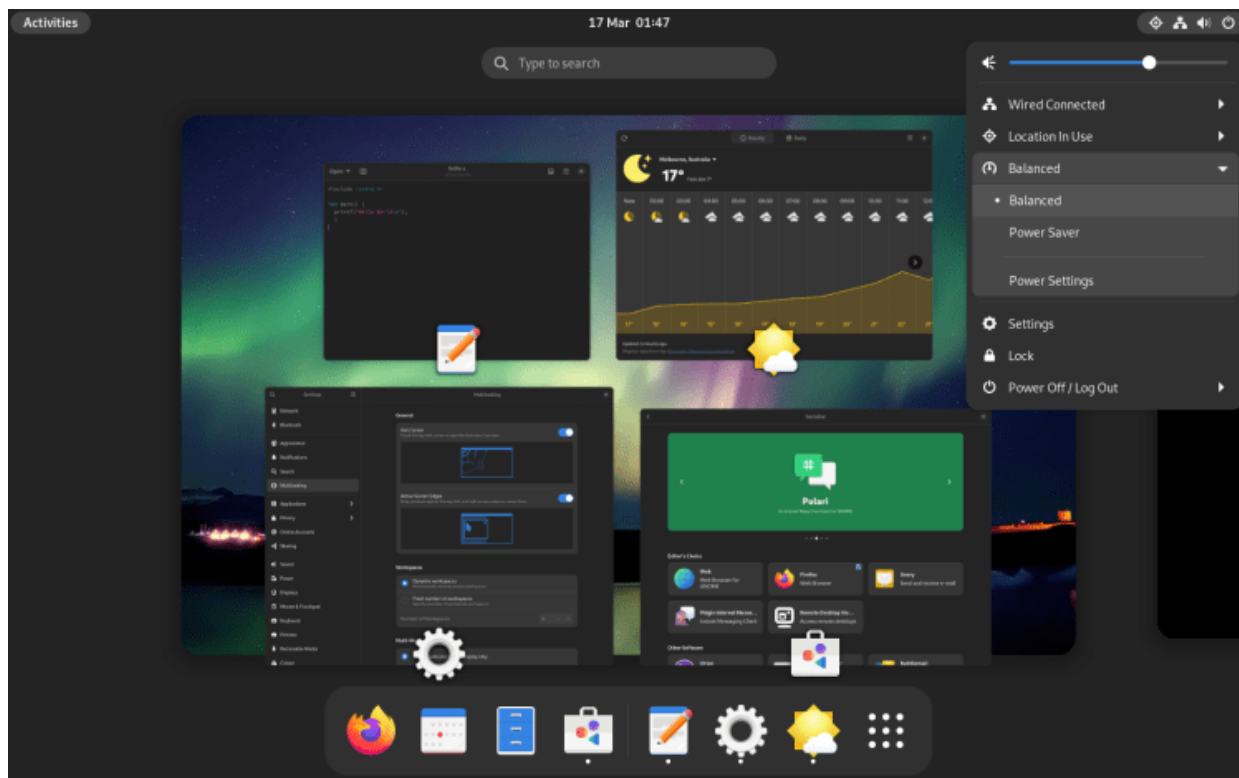
- 4GB (8GB Recommended)
- 40GB Disk space (100GB Recommended)
- A dual-core, 64-bit CPU

Flavors: None

[Download Pop!_OS](#)

3. Fedora

Fedora is the Ubuntu of the new world. It's a cutting-edge Linux distro that's an upstream version of the Red Hat Enterprise Linux. It uses the same RPM package manager and embraces Flatpaks and App Images, but more importantly (and the selling point of the distro) comes with a **near-stock version of GNOME**. Fedora is often one of the first Linux distros to embrace the latest versions of GNOME in its beta builds, which comes out every six months.



And since Fedora is open-source, it also has a few community versions called Spins. Some of the popular spins are Plasma, Xfce, LXQT, MATE, and Cinnamon. Overall, Fedora might not be the best option for absolute beginners, but it's great for those who know their way around Linux. Besides, Fedora's

got one of the most active distro communities on Reddit. Hence, if something goes wrong, the group of enthusiasts will always be there for the rescue.

One of the areas where the OS doesn't excel is with regard to system requirements. GNOME is a heavy desktop environment compared to others. As a result, it needs at least 8GB RAM and a decently powerful CPU/GPU to perform well.

Pros

Cutting-edge
Great for stock GNOME lovers
Great for gamers and content creators
Excellent community

Cons

Learning curve for a beginner
Requires a decently specced PC

System Requirements:

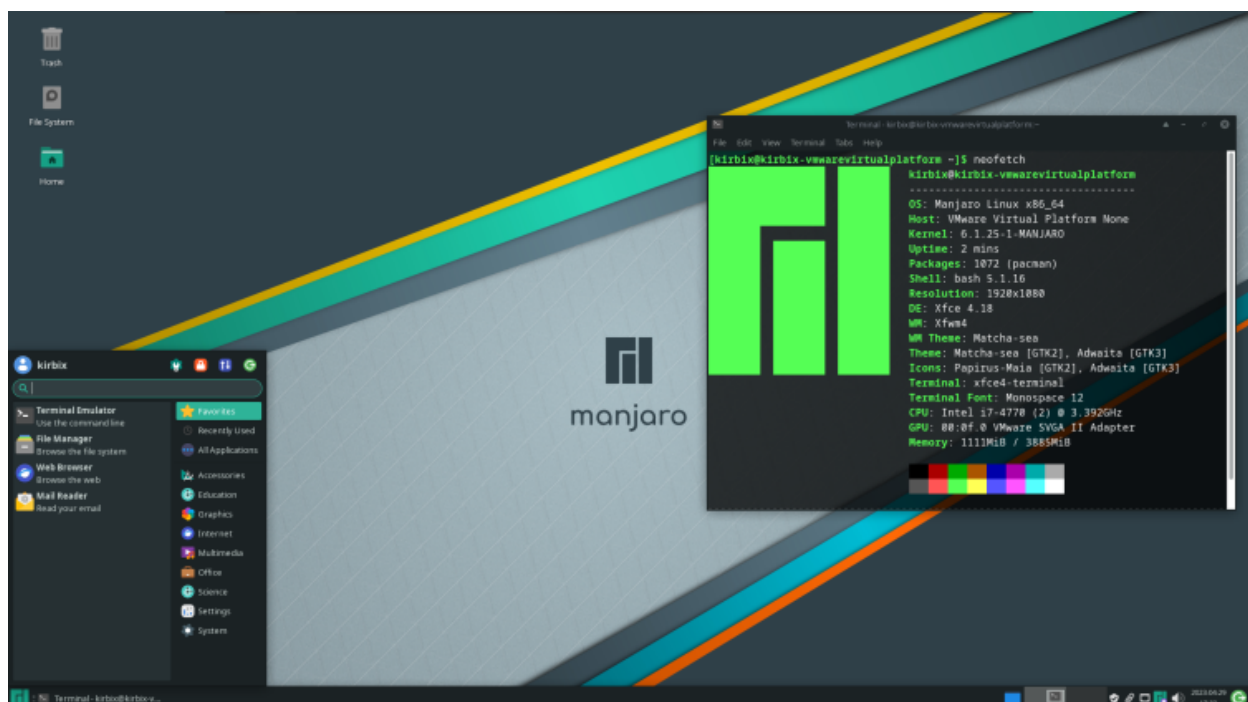
- 2GB (8GB Recommended)
- 15GB Disk space (100GB Recommended)
- A 2GHz dual-core, 64-bit CPU

Flavors: GNOME, KDE Plasma, Xfce, LXQT, MATE, Cinnamon, LXDE, SOAS, and i3 Tiling Window Manager

[Download Fedora](#)

4. Manjaro

If your friend says, "I installed an Arch-based Linux OS in just a few hours," they are probably referring to Manjaro. Arch has always been an inconvenience for new Linux folks, but Manjaro makes it easy to taste Arch. It's one of the best Arch-based Linux distros that comes in three official flavors/variants — KDE Plasma, Xfce, and GNOME.



Like Fedora Spins, Manjaro has lots of community versions like Budgie, Cinnamon, and MATE too. Hence, you are not devoid of choices in this case. That said, Manjaro **isn't a pure Arch-based system** because it isn't as cutting-edge as the next option on our list. Manjaro has its own repository where all updates from Arch are merged and pushed later. Stability is of great importance for Manjaro, hence, the new packages from Arch are thoroughly tested before they are merged into the OS.

If you're confused about which flavor to choose, GNOME, KDE Plasma, and Budgie are great if you have a decent PC. However, if you are running ancient hardware, we recommend Xfce or MATE as they use far lesser system resources.

Pros

Makes installing and trying out Arch easy
Comes in a variety of flavors
Great hardware support

Cons

Slower update releases than Arch or EndeavourOS
Known to break sometimes

System Requirements:

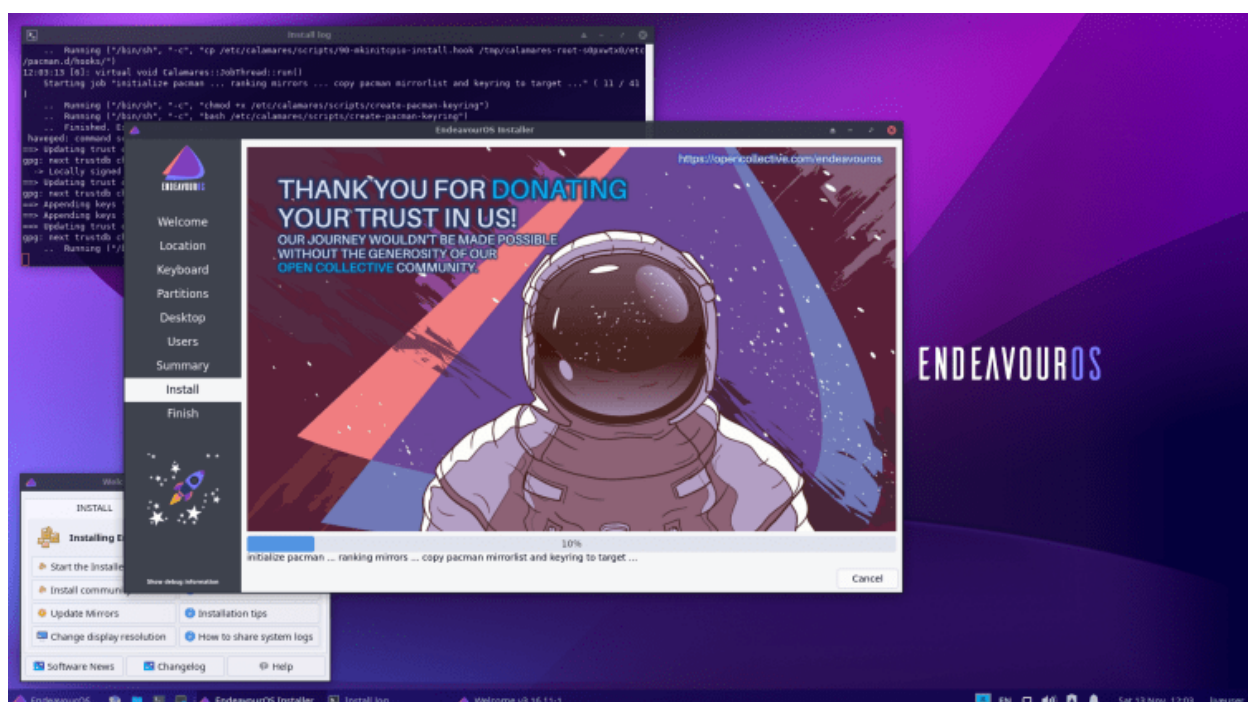
- 2GB RAM (8GB Recommended)
- 30GB Disk space (80GB Recommended)
- A 2GHz Dual-core, 64-bit CPU

Flavors: GNOME, KDE Plasma, Xfce, Budgie, MATE, Cinnamon, Sway, and i3 Tiling Window Manager

[Download Manjaro](#)

5. EndeavourOS

If Manjaro's "Endeavours" don't align with your philosophies, EndeavourOS gets a lot of things right for an Arch-based distro. It offers you the flexibility to choose whichever Desktop Environment you like, has the Arch DNA in its veins, and offers quick package upgrades.



For starters, it comes with a customized Calamares installer, which makes installation easy. EndeavourOS does not have “flavors,” instead it prompts and asks you to select the desktop environment of your choice in Calamares during the installation. Besides, EndeavourOS has a great community and is a stellar alternative to Manjaro, or even Arch, for that matter. If all you need is a great rolling distribution, you cannot go wrong with EndeavourOS.

Unlike Manjaro, in which new packages from Arch take at least three weeks to make it to the system, updates to EndeavourOS arrive at the same time as pure Arch Linux. Also, the overall bloatware on EndeavourOS is less compared to Manjaro, which makes it one of the cleanest Arch-based distros out there.

Pros	Cons
The closest cutting-edge OS to Arch	Learning curve for a beginner
Lots of desktop environment options	Frequent Arch updates might break the system or introduce bugs
Great community	
Calamares installer makes it easy to install	

System Requirements:

- 4GB RAM (8GB Recommended)
- 10GB Disk space (50GB Recommended)
- A dual-core, 64-bit CPU

Flavors: Xfce, Plasma, GNOME, MATE, Cinnamon, Budgie, LXQt, LXDE, and i3-wm

[Download EndeavourOS](#)

6. Elementary OS

Yet another Ubuntu-based distribution, Elementary OS is known for its rather striking resemblance to macOS, which makes it a great starting point for folks **who want to switch to Linux from macOS**.



Elementary OS has a few great homemade apps that look great and work well. In fact, distros such as Pop!_OS use Elementary's store, and that's a testament to the effort the Elementary team puts into developing one of these best Linux distros. Overall, Elementary OS is a user-friendly and good-looking distribution that gets most things right.

For starters, Epiphany is a decent browser available on Elementary OS, and apps such as Photos, Music, AppCenter, and more all feel like they actually belong to the OS because they're consistent. The wallpapers are some of the best you can find in any distro, and the dock and animations make the distro a visual treat.

Pros	Cons
Consistent design language	For absolute beginners; Mediocre to advanced users may not enjoy
Great set of preloaded apps	Not cutting-edge
Easy to install	The AppStore is mostly empty

System Requirements:

- 4GB RAM (8GB Recommended)
- 40GB Disk space (100GB Recommended)
- A 2GHz dual-core, 64-bit CPU

Flavors: None

[Download Elementary OS](#)

7. Zorin OS

Windows users make up a huge chunk of the crowd that switches to Linux. Hence, one of the top priorities of a few Linux distros is to make them feel at home. That's exactly what Zorin OS does with its

impeccable UI experience. Its clean, polished UI does give out the feeling of a completely revamped experience while still retaining the bits of Windows UI to comfort ex-Windows users.



Zorin is Ubuntu-based but looks/feels quite unlike Ubuntu both in terms of looks and functionality. There's also a Lite version that can run on weaker hardware. All in all, Zorin has great documentation and posts for beginners to get started, and more importantly, it is completely free and open-source.

Besides, **Zorin OS also has a Pro version that costs \$40**, and for that price, you get more desktop layout customizations, preloaded apps such as GIMP and Blender, and the ability to share your mouse and keyboard across computers. Now, we wouldn't recommend going all out on the Pro version, since most of the paid features can be added by using extensions. However, for what it is, Zorin OS is definitely one of the cleanest and best Linux distros out there.

Pros

Made with Windows users in mind
Clean and consistent user interface
Easy to install
Great for browsing and creating content
Has a Lite version for old hardware

Cons

Limited customization options in the free version
Updates are slow to arrive due to the Ubuntu base

System Requirements:

- 2GB RAM (4GB Recommended)
- 40GB Disk space (100GB Recommended)
- 1024 x 768 resolution display
- A 1GHz dual-core, 64-bit CPU

Flavors: None

[Download Zorin OS](#)

8. Garuda Linux

Garuda does things slightly differently than other best Linux distros on this list. For starters, contrary to the regular Linux kernel, it uses something called Linux-zen kernel, which claims to significantly improve the overall system and gaming performance.



The centerpiece of Garuda Linux is its UI. It gets lots of modern elements with gradient coloring splashed across the OS. Garuda Linux is **based on Arch** and follows the same rolling release pattern. It's offered in multiple flavors; some of the most popular ones are GNOME, Cinnamon, Xfce, and MATE.

The flagship Garuda variant comes with a heavily customized KDE Plasma and is offered in two editions — Dragonized and Dragonized Gaming. The latter includes all the apps you'd need to get started with gaming on Linux such as Steam, Lutris, Heroic Games Launcher, & more, which makes it one of the best Linux distros for gaming.

Pros

- Cutting-edge, thanks to its Arch base
- Highly customizable KDE Plasma interface
- Gradient theming and icons look fantastic out of the box
- Dragonized Gaming edition brings all gaming tools for you
- More optimized Linux-zen kernel for better performance

Cons

- Could be a bit too overwhelming for new users
- Higher system requirements
- Performance and stability issues due to Arch updates

System Requirements:

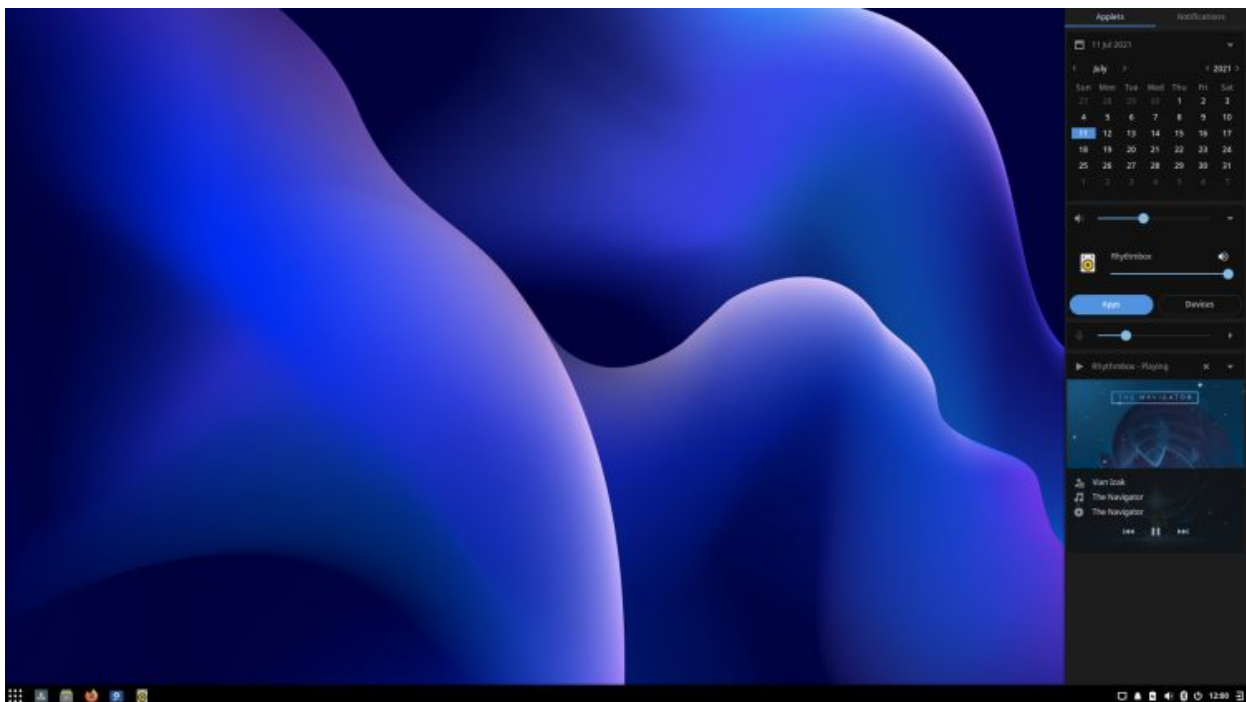
- 4GB RAM (8GB Recommended)
- 40GB Disk space (100GB Recommended)
- A 2GHz dual-core, 64-bit CPU

Flavors: KDE Plasma, GNOME, Cinnamon, Xfce, MATE, LxQT, Wayfire, Sway, i3 WM, Qtile, and KDE Lite

[Download Garuda Linux](#)

9. Solus

Solus is a rather underrated Linux distro. The OS **focuses keenly on developers, gamers, and content creators** by including the tools required to get started with development, gaming, and content creation. The flagship flavor of Solus OS uses their in-house Budgie desktop, which is one of the cleanest desktop environments you can try.



What makes Solus different is that it doesn't follow in the same footsteps as other Linux distros. It's an independently developed distro with a completely different user experience compared to others on this list. Although, if you do not end up liking Budgie, you can switch to other desktop environments, including GNOME, Plasma, and MATE.

Because Solus is an independent distro, it uses its own package manager called Eopkg. It's quite similar to Apt in Ubuntu but may have a learning curve since the commands are a bit different from the regular Apt commands. However, if you don't end up liking Eopkg, you could always use Flatpaks and Snaps on Solus. All things considered, it's one of the best Linux distros out there.

Pros

Independent OS; Doesn't depend on any other OS
Highly customizable interface

Cons

Eopkg has a shallow learning curve
Slow development pace

Pros

The Flagship Budgie desktop looks great out of the box
Comes preinstalled with a few tools for developers

Cons

Lack of software in repos

System Requirements“

- 8GB RAM (Recommended)
- GeForce 760 and above graphics card with at least 2GB of video memory.
- 40GB Disk space (100GB Recommended)
- A 2GHz dual-core, 64-bit CPU

Flavors: KDE Plasma, GNOME, MATE, Budgie

[Download Solus](#)

10. Ubuntu

In the end, we have something that you would have found in the first two entries had you read this list a couple of years ago. Ubuntu started off with the goal of making Linux more accessible and easily installable than Debian, which was then's Arch Linux. And, for the most part, it succeeded in achieving that goal, only to succumb to a corporate illness a decade after.



Don't get us wrong, Ubuntu is still a great operating system, but it has lost the bling it used to have a few years ago, and a few weird and poor decisions are to be blamed. Without getting into the details, Ubuntu uses GNOME by default, which is a tad bit customized.

Ubuntu uses Snaps for package management, and the latter is the reason the Linux community has started repelling it. They completely dropped out-of-the-box support for Flatpaks, as we mentioned in our [Ubuntu 23.04 features list](#). Although it's a good starting point for a complete beginner, we would argue there are better Linux distros to try than Ubuntu.

Ubuntu also raised a few privacy concerns when it started preinstalling Amazon and sharing data with the same a few years ago. Most of the users accused Canonical (Ubuntu's parent company) of tracking user activity by installing spyware, and it made people lose trust in Ubuntu.

Pros

Beginner-friendly
Customizable

Cons

Snaps are too slow; No Flatpak support
Requires a decent PC to run smoothly
Privacy concerns

System Requirements:

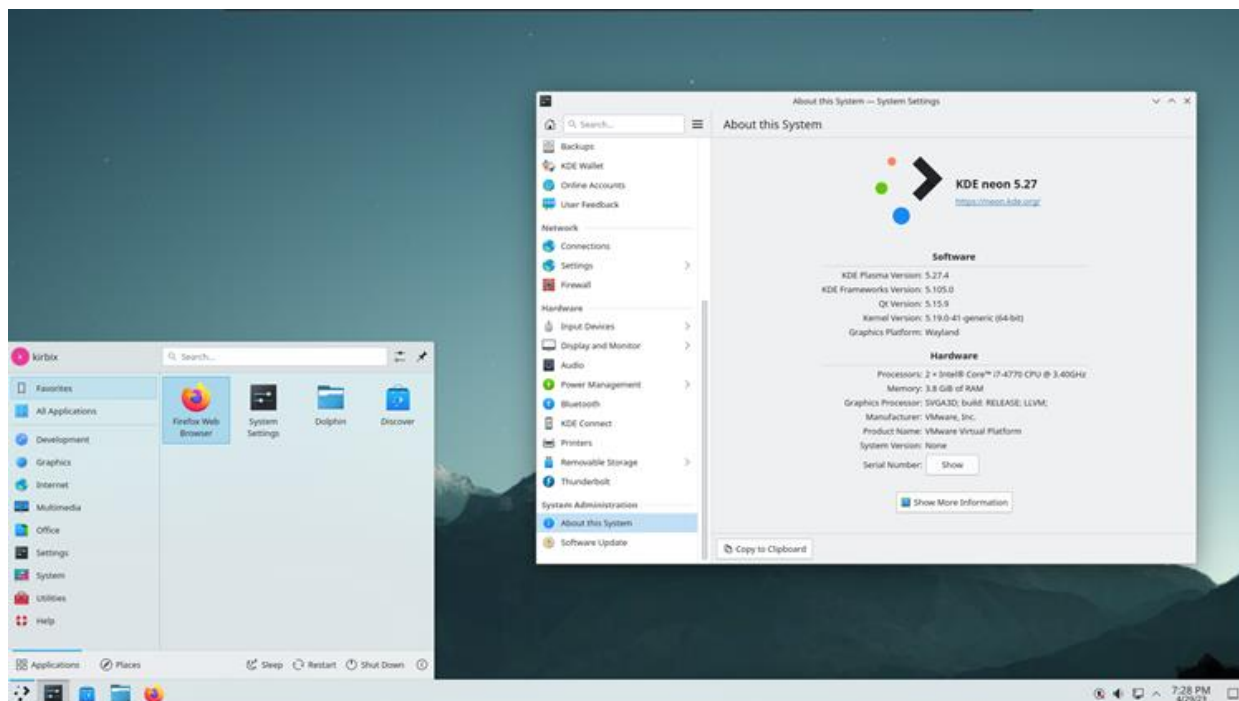
- 4GB RAM (8GB Recommended)
- 25GB Disk space (100GB Recommended)
- A 2GHz dual-core, 64-bit CPU

Flavors: KDE Plasma, GNOME, Cinnamon, Budgie, Kylin, Studio, Unity, Xfce, MATE, LxQT

[Download Ubuntu](#)

11. KDE Neon

KDE Neon is known to provide a flagship KDE experience, and it delivers! It's a culmination of the latest from KDE Plasma while maintaining the stability thanks to the Ubuntu LTS base. The latest software from KDE always makes its way to Neon first and is a great way of trying out the latest features that the Desktop Environment has to offer while avoiding butchering the stable feel of the operating system.



Since Neon is based on Ubuntu LTS, each major release comes with five years of support and a stable tried and tested LTS Kernel. Neon also has some of the best collections of software thanks to KDE Plasma interface, meaning if you're a creative individual, you could use some of the many tools the OS has on offer to boost your productivity, creativity, and be more efficient in your art.

Although most may like the interface and apps, like any other software, some may find the collection of apps a bit overwhelming. Hence, Neon may not be the distro for you if you prefer minimalism. Overall, Neon is easily one of the best Linux distributions you can try.

Pros

Runs Vanilla KDE
Comprehensive suite of apps
Customizable
Stable Ubuntu Base

Cons

Could be overwhelming for beginners
Not the best distro for minimalists

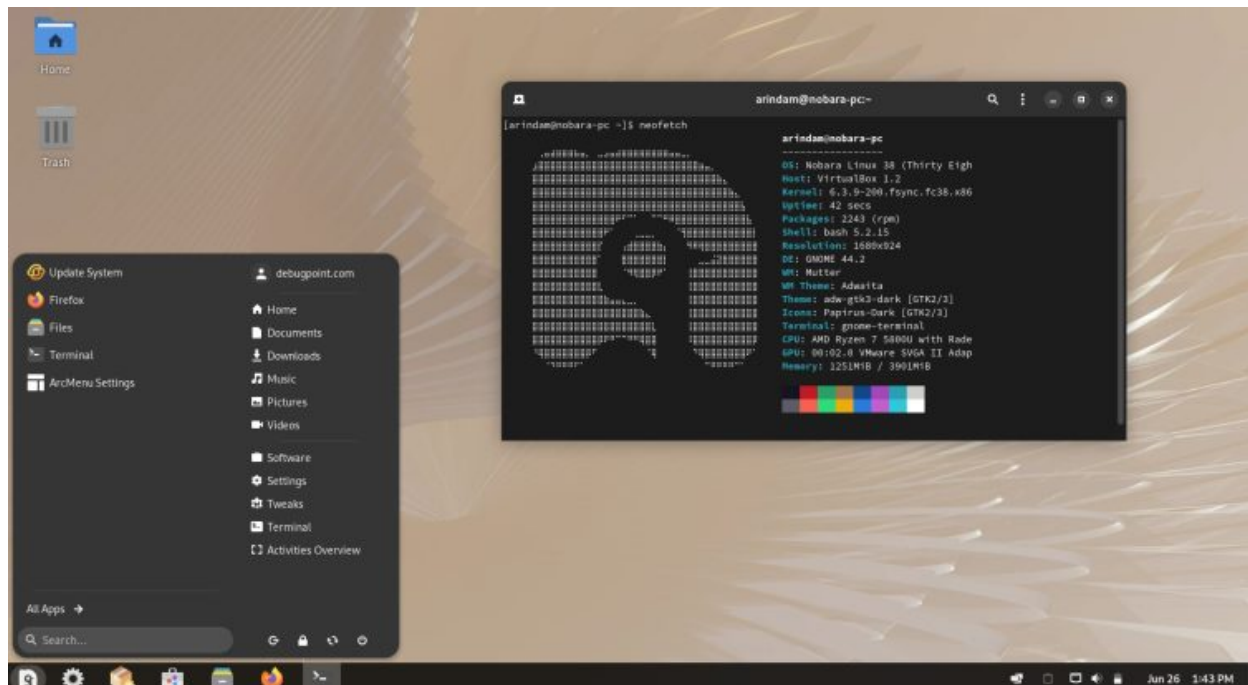
System Requirements:

- 4GB RAM (8GB Recommended)
- 25GB Disk space (100GB Recommended)
- A 2GHz dual-core, 64-bit CPU

[Download KDE Neon](#)

12. Nobara

Nobara is not a mainstream Linux distributions and isn't known by many except those who closely follow the Proton Compatibility Layer, Wine for Linux gaming, and Fedora. Nobara was created by Glorious Eggroll, the creator of Proton-GE. Nobara market's itself as a Linux distro for gamers and creators because it adds and solves a lot of things that a Linux gamer may find annoying and needed.



For example, if you're deeply immersed in Proton and Proton-GE, you may want to install new Proton versions to test for improvements and hence Nobara comes with Proton-QT preinstalled. Similarly, it's always updated with the latest version of MangoHUD, Kernel patches, has automatic driver installation for NVIDIA GPUs, and comes with things such as OnlyOffice, Steam, Lutris, Flatpak preinstalled.

Pros

Cons

Pros

Lots of important preinstalled bits
Fedora-based, stable
NVIDIA Drivers are automatically installed

Cons

Is a distro for Gaming and Creative work; May not be ideal for daily usage

System Requirements:

- 4GB RAM (8GB Recommended)
- 25GB Disk space (100GB Recommended)
- A 2GHz dual-core, 64-bit CPU

Flavors: Nobara Official, GNOME, KDE

[Download Nobara](#)

#Tags

