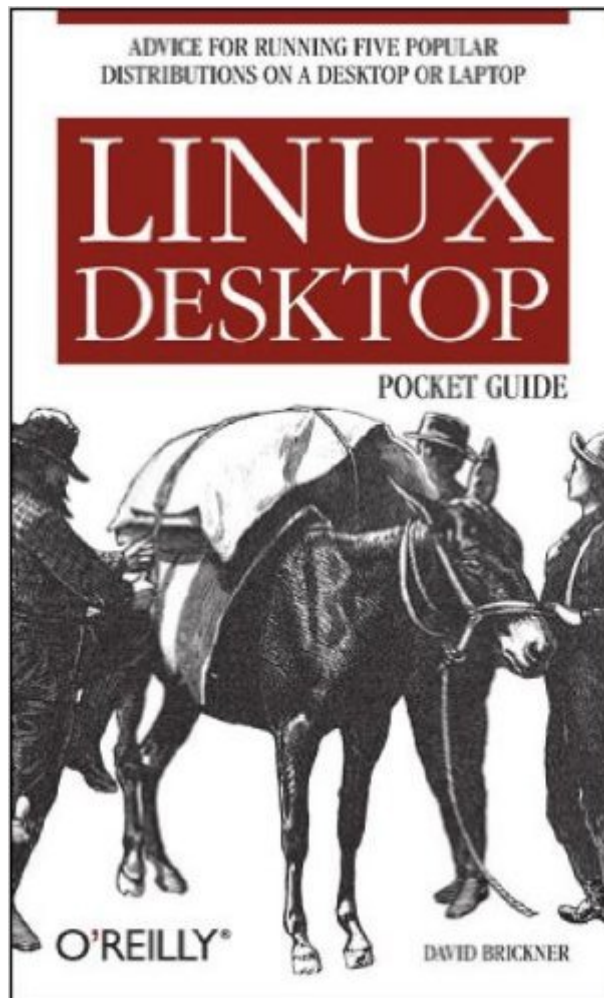


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# Linux Desktop Pocket Guide



## Synopsis

While Mac OS X garners all the praise from pundits, and Windows XP attracts all the viruses, Linux is quietly being installed on millions of desktops every year. For programmers and system administrators, business users, and educators, desktop Linux is a breath of fresh air and a needed alternative to other operating systems. The Linux Desktop Pocket Guide is your introduction to using Linux on five of the most popular distributions: Fedora, Gentoo, Mandriva, SUSE, and Ubuntu. Despite what you may have heard, using Linux is not all that hard. Firefox and Konqueror can handle all your web browsing needs; GAIM and Kopete allow you to chat with your friends on the AOL, MSN, and Yahoo! networks; and the email programs Evolution and Kontact provide the same functionality as Microsoft Outlook, with none of the cost. All of these programs run within the beautiful, feature-packed, and easy-to-use GNOME or KDE desktop environments. No operating system truly "just works," and Linux is no exception. Although Linux is capable of running on most any computing hardware that Microsoft Windows can use, you sometimes need to tweak it just a little to make it work the way you really want. To help you with this task, Linux Desktop Pocket Guide covers essential topics, such as configuring your video card, screen resolution, sound, and wireless networking. And laptop users are not left out--an entire section is devoted to the laptop issues of battery life, sleep, and hibernate modes.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I recently received a review copy of Linux Desktop Pocket Guide by David Brickner. This is one of

those books that you may like or hate depending on what you're looking for...Contents: Distributions; Logging In; GNOME; KDE; Applications; Add, Remove, and Update Programs; Configuration; Laptops; Running Commands and Editing Text; Index

Since this is a "pocket guide", I don't expect there to be a lot of conversational writing and screen prints. Normally you get core reference material that you can find and use quickly. The Linux Desktop Pocket Guide seems to be somewhat of a departure from that pattern. There's still no screen prints, which is fine. But I can't tell what level of reader would benefit most from this book. The distribution chapter has a nice short comparison between a number of distro choices, but seems to be a bit light in order for newbies to make decisions (or experts to learn anything new). GNOME and KDE are quick references to the basic desktop tool, and it will help the new Linux user to learn the basic keystrokes and components. The Applications chapter is a high-level sweep through some of the basic choices of software for things like media manipulation and office productivity software. Add/Remove finally starts to show the pattern of other pocket guides, by recapping the command line choices possible for installing programs on the different distros. Configuration and Laptops can help the reader get things like mice and sound cards running, but if you run into problems, there's not a lot of additional troubleshooting stuff here. Finally, the Running Commands appendix is just a short two or three page chapter on how the command line works.

In my opinion, I'd try and look at this book first before buying it. I'm just not sure if there's a single audience that this would appeal to without exception...

This is basically a small format pocket reference to five of the most common desktop distributions of Linux. The distributions covered are Fedora, Gentoo, Mandriva, SUSE, and Ubuntu. The author covers the basics of navigating the GNOME and KDE desktop environments and the applications that come with each of the distributions. Deviating from the normal layout of such texts it is organized by the type of application instead of by the Linux distribution. As a result if you want to work with the web browser you go to that section where the author discusses the web browsers Firefox and Konquerer. These are the two that are included because each of the distributions has either one or the other. The section on how to add, remove, and update programs is particularly good as it discusses the various techniques including how to add a package that it not part of your distribution. Here the author not only discusses the various package managers included with the distribution but also how to go the long way around and work with rpms. This is not an extensive technical reference to any of the Linux distributions discussed but it is a good first resource for common questions and a good introduction to all of them. Linux Desktop Pocket Guide is recommended for the average Linux user and a must have guide for others who need to know the

differences between various distribution.

The Linux Desktop Pocket Guide is a valuable resource for new users to the Linux world. Almost everyone has heard of Linux and recognizes it as the "next big thing". However, many people are taken aback at the sheer number of Linux distributions. The advantage of Windows is that there is only one company to go to and that provides some simplicity. With Linux, there is no one-stop shopping, and each distribution has different strengths and weaknesses. This book helps the novice user to navigate the most popular distributions to decide which will work best for them. The book compares Fedora, Gentoo, Mandriva, SUSE, and Ubuntu with a focus on their desktop environments. This book has some value for system administrators, particularly new ones, but will make the biggest impact to the casual home-user to the beginner power-user. It covers a wide range of desktop issues including Gnome/KDE support, application support, updating the OS, configuration for hardware support, and probably most usefully laptop support. Laptops have traditionally been less than friendly with Linux and this book helps navigate the big issues making Linux a viable option for laptops. It is a little thick as pocket guides go but that's more of a factor of the breadth of material covered. Like many of the O'Reilly books, it is concise and easy-to-read. It is accessible to the unsophisticated user and presents information in manageable chunks. For those looking to get a handle on Linux and making it work for them, this book is a great resource.

While the book was helpful in understanding the difference between some Linux distros it wasn't all that helpful since it is a bit dated compared to the latest versions of the distros it covers.

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