

The PCLinuxOS magazine

Volume 211

August, 2024



So cool, ice cubes are jealous

ICYMI: SSH Server Bug Opens Vulnerabilities

Inkscape Tutorial: Bending Text Around A Corner

The Easiest Ways To View/Sample Font Files

PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner: Broiled Tilapia Parmesan

HEIC Images: A New Graphics Format Player In The Game

Running Orage From Your Panel Clock

Tip Top Tips: Change User Account UID & GID

Repo Review: GNU TeXmacs

PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

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From The Chief Editor's Desk

We took the kids to the drive-in theater recently. Yes, we still have one of these dying breeds of theaters near us. They had only been once before (during the pandemic), and they have been clamoring to go see another movie at the drive-in theater.

We chose to go see the new “Twisters” movie. We didn’t stop to consider that this was the movie’s opening night. The drive-in theater was packed with movie goers.

One of Ryan’s favorite movies (at almost 11 years old) is the original Twister movie, starring the late Bill Paxton and Helen Hunt. He is fascinated by tornadoes. How convenient, since we live in “Tornado Alley.” He definitely wasn’t disappointed by this sequel to the original movie. I have to agree. It was pretty good.

I have a real soft spot for the drive-in theater. When I was 13 years old, I got my first real job working at the drive-in theater. I worked on the “day crew,” which was responsible for cleaning up the expansive parking lots and the bathrooms. Later, when I was 15, I went to work in the concession stand. I also did the marquee every week as the movies changed. For a while, I worked at two drive-in theaters in the same chain at the same time.

It’s amazing how similar a trip to the drive-in theater is and how much it differs from all those years ago. The “feel” of being at the drive-in



theater is remarkably the same as it was nearly 50 years ago. But now gone are the totally awful monaural speakers, replaced by a low power FM simulcast that you can listen to over your car stereo, or on a portable radio. The sound quality is quite decent, especially compared to those tonally-challenged monaural speakers.

Since we have an inflatable mattress we place in the bed of the pickup truck (which is where the kids lie and watch the movie, and it’s made especially for use in the bed of a pickup truck), we use the portable radio method. We actually

use two portable radios, one in the bed of the truck where the kids are lying on the mattress, and another on the tailgate so mom and I can hear the movie well. For what it’s worth, Laura and I sit on chairs outside of the truck.

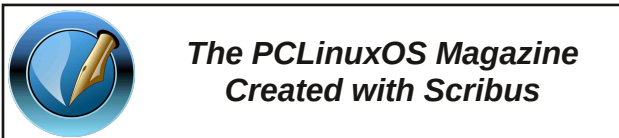
And, there are the same annoyances. People driving through after dark ... and after the movie has started ... with their lights on. The idjit two rows up from us who keeps tapping on his brake pedal. The incessant talking of the movie goers around you. “Parents” who let their children run feral. I think you get the picture.

Even with all of those annoyances, we find a trip to the drive-in theater an enjoyable experience. There's little else that compares to sitting out under the stars, watching a movie as a family. Plus, it's a LOT more affordable than going to an indoor theater. To start with, and to avoid the overpriced food in the concession stand, we bring our own drinks, snacks and popcorn. The cost of admission is only \$25 per car, and they usually show two movies. That means if there is only one person in your car, or 12, the cost is still only \$25.

Oh ... and as far as the movie is concerned ... Twisters is DEFINITELY worth seeing!

This month's cover was created by parnote. The base image is by [Sebastian Nikiel](#) from [Pixabay](#), and I added the "embellishments" to the interior of the ice cubes.

Until next month, I bid you peace, happiness, serenity, prosperity, and continued good health!



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Screenshot Showcase



Posted by astronaut, July 1, 2024, running Openbox.



The Easiest Ways To View/Sample Font Files

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

As you can imagine, as the magazine’s Chief Editor for the past 15 years, I care a LOT about fonts. I have a lot of regard for the fonts installed on my computer, mostly because I tend to use them when putting the magazine together. Personally, I have just a small handful of fonts that I routinely use for my daily activities, but that’s not always the case when producing the magazine.

One of the things I miss from my time with Windows (the last version I used as a “daily driver” was WinXP) is the ability to double-click my mouse on a font (*.ttf or the newer *.otf) file, and a sample of that font is displayed in Windows Font Viewer. As a side note, I also “used” Windows 7 when I worked in the hospitals, but they were so locked down, it was more like using a “dumb terminal.”

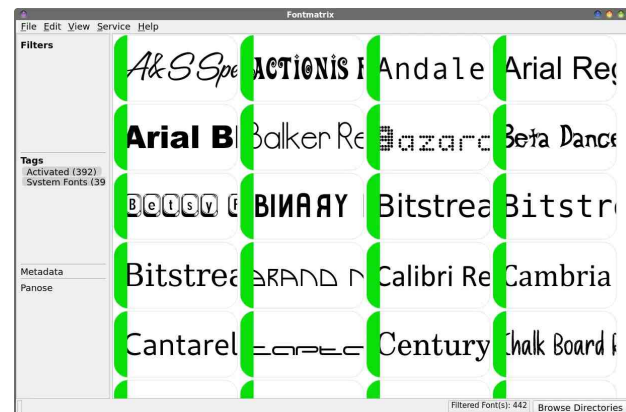
Of course, I started my search for a font viewer by looking in the PCLinuxOS repository. But I found only one program that even came close, but it felt like overkill. I knew **someone** must have wanted or needed a **simple** font viewer besides just me, so I took my search online. Believe it or not, there’s not much available for Linux. Most of what I found was for Windows.

Ever since coming over from the “dark side” of computing (Windows), I’ve casually searched

for a simple way to view a sample of font files. It wasn’t until just recently that I discovered not one, not two, but three methods of viewing font file samples.

Sure, you could open a blank word processing document and play with fonts there. But, if I just want to see what a font looks like, this seems like a very arduous and tedious task. I might be trying to see if I want to install a particular font on my computer, and any word processor program is only going to show you fonts that are already installed on your computer. Being able to simply view what a font looks like, without installing it on your computer, was beginning to look like a difficult task to conquer.

Fontmatrix



Fontmatrix is the one program that is in the PCLinuxOS repository that’s specifically for dealing with font files installed on your

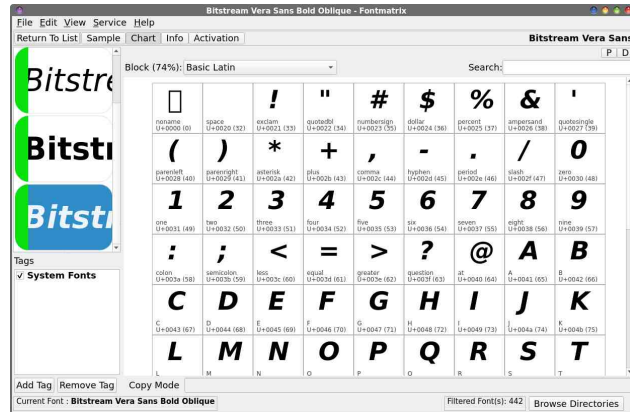
computer system. And, while very capable, it seems a bit like overkill for what I’m looking for. It actually may not be overkill, but something about it just “feels” like overkill. I’m all for keeping things simple, and Fontmatrix feels like anything but simple.

In the image above, Fontmatrix displays all of the fonts already installed on your computer. If you click on the “Browse Directories” button in the lower right corner of the Fontmatrix window, you can import fonts from other directories into your font collection. To be perfectly honest, I don’t know if it just adds it to your catalog of fonts in Fontmatrix, or if it installs them on your system at the same time.



Double-clicking on a font in the first image loads the entire font family into Fontmatrix, and causes it to switch to the “Sample” tab. Select which member of the font family you want to view, and the sample text is displayed in your selected font. You can adjust the display size at

the bottom center of the window, by adjusting the number in the “Font Size” setting. The full name of the selected font is shown in bold at the lower left corner of the window.



Selecting the “Chart” tab, Fontmatrix will display all of the characters in the selected font file. It also displays the “name” of the character, the Unicode hexadecimal value for that character, and the ASCII keycode for each character.

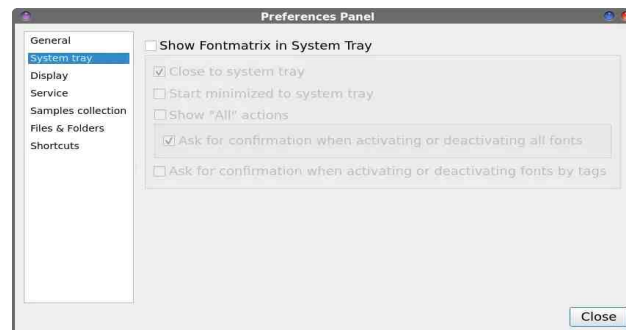


Clicking on the “Info” tab will reveal all of the font information, such as who owns the copyright, who made the font, and all sorts of

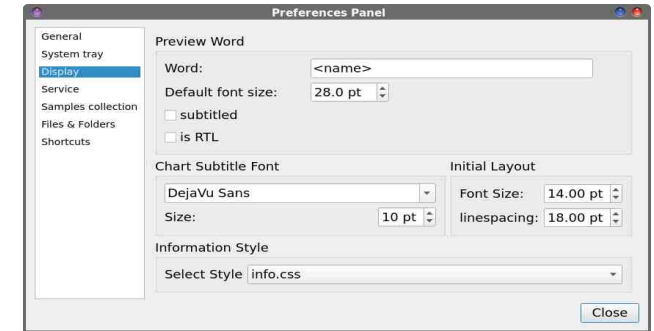
information that most people never even think about with font files.



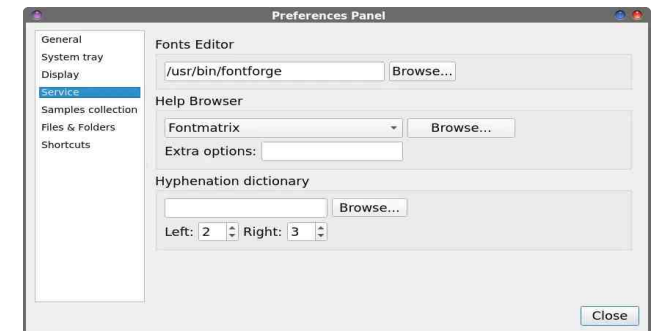
Under the “Activation” tab, you have (presumably) the option of activating or deactivating an installed font on your computer. You can remove individual members of a font family, or the entire font family.



Under the “Edit” menu, there’s the “Preferences” option. Selecting it will bring up the first dialog, shown above. In both of the first two settings, I’ve left everything at their default values. The selections should be self-explanatory.



The next section, named “Display,” contains the settings for the display of the font names in Fontmatrix’s main window, as well as the font on the “Chart” tab. As far as I can tell, the default value of <name> tells Fontmatrix to use the font name to display the sample in the main Fontmatrix window.

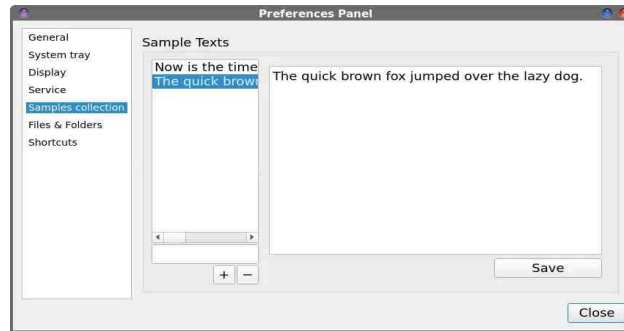


The “Service” section makes a few choices available to the user. If you have the FontForge font editor installed, you can point to the location where that is installed. The “Help Browser” section tells Fontmatrix if you want

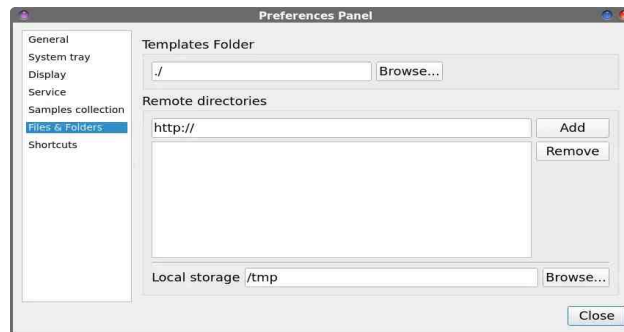
the Help file open in a Fontmatrix window, or in your browser. If you have a “Hyphenation dictionary” installed for LibreOffice, you can point Fontmatrix to that dictionary.

Just a word about the Help file, by the way. When I pulled it up, it didn’t match up with what I was seeing in the Fontmatrix window. For example, my copy of Fontmatrix has five menu items in the main window, while the help file lists seven. So, immediately, I notice that the two don’t match up, significantly decreasing the usefulness of the help file. The help file talks about one entry in particular (the “Browse fonts” sidebar), which is nowhere to be found in my copy of Fontmatrix. It’s a shame, because that particular feature sounded like it might be something I might find interesting and useful.

I thought perhaps there have been later releases, but then I compared the version I have installed on my computer with the latest version available on [GitHub](#). Nope. That’s not it. The version from the PCLinuxOS repository is the latest version available from GitHub. So, I have no explanation for why the help file doesn’t match up with the installed version of Fontmatrix.

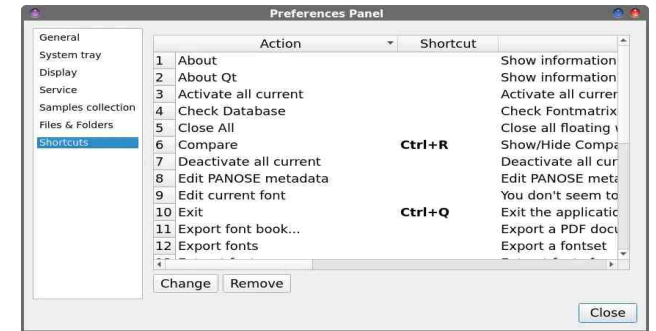


The “Samples collection” is where you set the text that is displayed on the font sample page. Type in whatever you want into the text entry box (bottom left side of the right pane), and then select the “Save” button. You can even enter Lorem Ipsum text (you can find examples on the internet, courtesy of your favorite search engine ... [here’s](#) one I used).

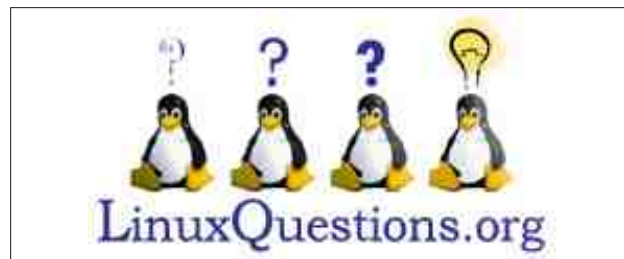


In the “Files & Folders” field, I’ve left everything at their default values, as pictured above.

Under the “Shortcuts” section, you can set your own keyboard shortcuts for interacting with Fontmatrix. A few come predefined, and you can change them to shortcuts that better correspond to how you work (if you want). I’ve also left all of these at their default values.



Verdict: Fontmatrix is a good program, but it feels like it has been overcomplicated, like someone spent way too much time overthinking things. The “missing” items from the program that are discussed in the help file are pretty discouraging, and that alone doesn’t give me a lot of confidence. While it’s great for viewing fonts on my system ... both installed and uninstalled ... it still isn’t the “simple” solution I’ve been searching for. Plus, I don’t think I need to give up 83.2 MB of storage space for the program. **Grade:** C-



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Gnome Fonts Viewer



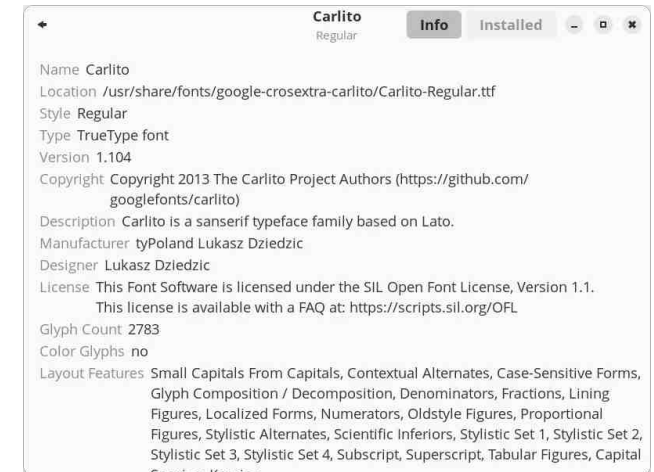
During my search for a font viewer, I kept coming across people talking about **Gnome Fonts Viewer**. Well, lo’ and behold, wouldn’t you know that it exists as a flatpak package. I went and grabbed the flatpak, and was pleasantly surprised that a) it ran at all, and b) that all of the functions of Gnome Fonts Viewer worked exactly as they should. If you need to review how to install a flatpak file, take a look at the article we ran on Flatpak and AppImage files [here](#).

The main window (shown above) lists all of the fonts it can find on your system. Each font is represented by “Aa” displayed in each font, with the font name just below it.



Double-clicking on a font in the main window will open that font with the sample text “The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.” already displayed, in several different font sizes. The name of the font appears at the top of the window.

Notice how in the first image, the button at the top of the window says “Installed.” But, in the second window, that same button has changed to a blue button that says “Install.” If you click on the “Install” button, that font is then properly installed on your system, and it appears in /usr/share/fonts, typically in its own directory. The “Install” button installs all members of that font family, not just the one font family member that you happened to be viewing at that moment.

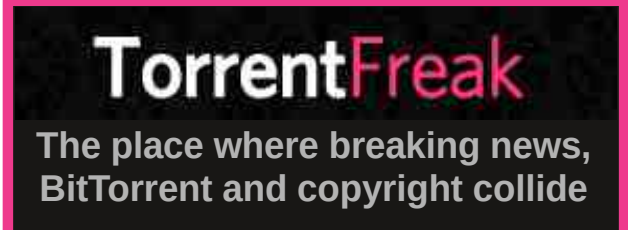


Selecting the “Info” button at the top of the program’s window displays all the information about that font, that’s stored within the font file, as shown above. The second item listed in the “Info” listing is the path to where that particular font file is stored on my computer.



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TorrentFreak

The place where breaking news, BitTorrent and copyright collide



The "About" dialog for Gnome Fonts Viewer

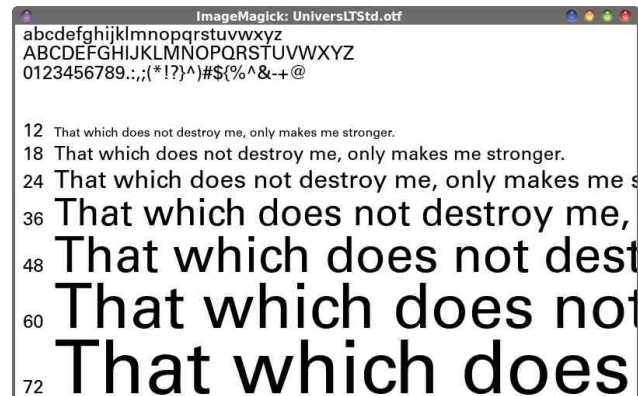
Verdict: Gnome Fonts Viewer has all of the features of Fontmatrix that I care about, but presented in a much simpler GUI. I can install any fonts I come across that I want to keep on my system, without having to go into Configure Your Computer (PCC) to do the installation

from there. Still, it's overkill for what I'm looking for. And, I'm not sure I really need to relinquish 351 MB of storage space (the final size after installed from the flatpak) just to view a font file. Still, it has a lot going for it, even beyond its simpler, less cluttered interface. **Grade: B+.**

Using What You Already Have

There's something to be said for the K.I.S.S. principle. When I was teaching respiratory therapy, I used a modified version of K.I.S.S. with my students: Keep It Super Simple. The simplest answer is/was usually the right course of action. Just as with my students, I explained that none of them were stupid, so I changed up the words for the acronym. None of you are stupid either, so I feel better using my modified version of K.I.S.S. with y'all, as well.

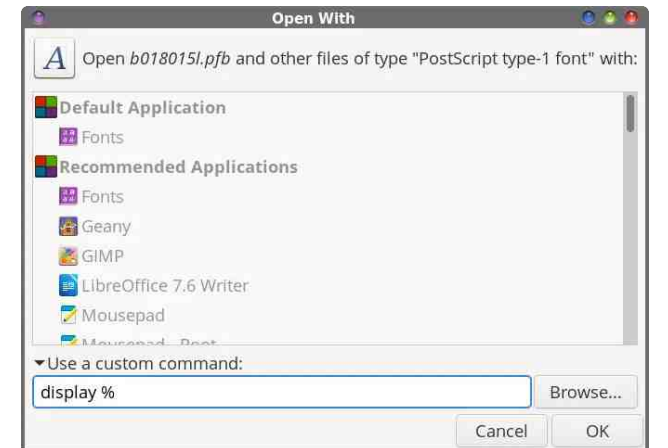
WHAT IF you discovered that you already had everything you needed already installed on your computer to create a very simple and effective font viewer? When I discovered this, I was amazed to find out I had this ability all along,



but never knew about it. I was in awe at how easy it was.

During my search for a solution, one small [entry](#) from StackExchange caught my eye (it's the third solution down). I was stunned! Certainly, it can NOT be THAT easy!

Just about every PCLinuxOS user has ImageMagick installed on their computer (and if you don't, you should have this graphics powerhouse at your disposal). ImageMagick continues to amaze me with its abilities. One of the programs in the ImageMagick suite of programs is called **display**.



The "pot" keeps getting sweeter for the use of the display command to serve as our font viewer. ImageMagick's display command can open TrueType font files (*.ttf), OpenType font files (*.otf), and PostScript Type 1 files (*.pfb). PFB stands for PostScript Font Binary, and they are older than TTF and OTF font file formats, and are heavily tied to Adobe. PostScript Type 1 files came out in 1984. TTF files came out in 1991, developed by Apple. OTF files came out



The Easiest Ways To View/Sample Font Files

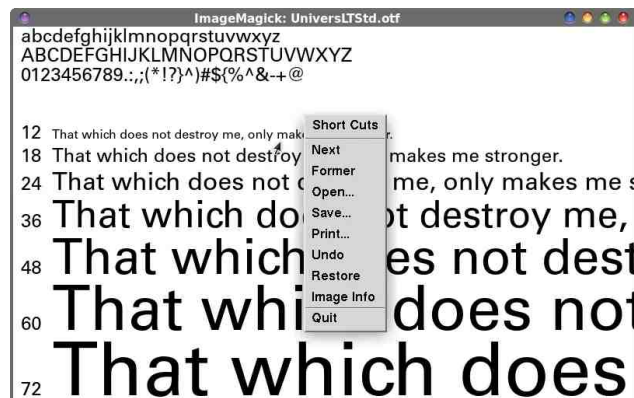
in 1996, as a joint venture between Microsoft and Adobe.

For what it's worth, neither Gnome Font Viewer nor Fontmatrix appear to be capable of viewing PFB font files. It is, however, no problem at all for using ImageMagick's display command.

Keep in mind that I use the Xfce desktop exclusively, so my images and approach reflect how to set this up under that desktop. However, it should be a trivial task to do the same or similar thing under other desktops, like Mate, KDE, LXQt, etc.

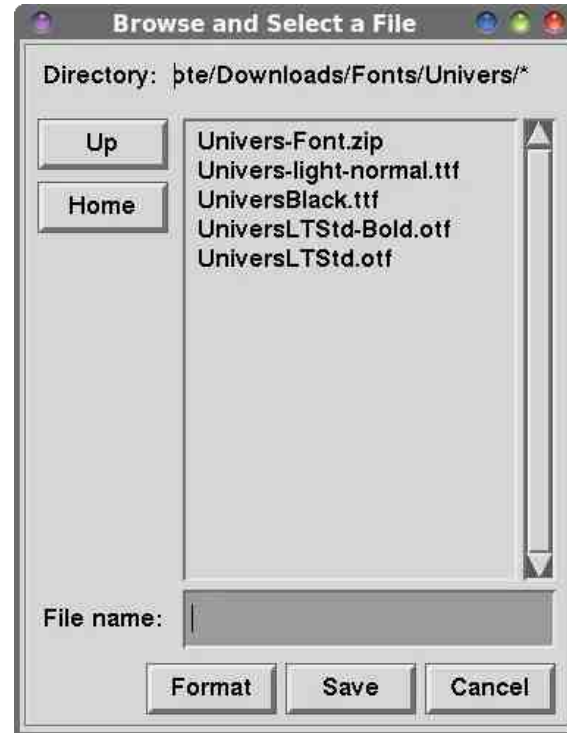
In the image above, find a font file on your system (in this particular image, it's a PostScript Type 1 *.pfb file), right-click on the file, select "Properties," drop down the list under "Open With...," and select "Use a custom command." Then, in the text box, type **display %**, and then the "OK" button. Repeat these steps for samples of the TTF and OTF files on your computer.

Now, whenever you double-click on any of these font files, you will get the first image shown in this section of the article, showing you



a sample of the selected font in the ImageMagick window that appears.

That sample, for what it's worth, is a PNG graphic file! Right-click your mouse anywhere within that image, and navigate to "Save..." in the context menu.



Now, type the filename you want to save this image as (I used UniversLTStd.png), and you can save the image to your hard drive. This makes it super easy to create a catalog of your fonts. The images are all the same size (800 x 480), so all you have to do is save an image for each font file, and then combine them all into a PDF file. To create that PDF file, probably one of the easiest ways is to load each image into LibreOffice Writer, and then output it as a PDF

file. Ideally, you'd probably want only one or two images per page of your catalog.

The text displayed by the use of the display command appears to be predefined ("That which does not destroy me, only makes me stronger."). To me, that sounds just as good as "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog." or any other sample text. While it is possible to change that text, in the end, you lose the display of the sample text in multiple sizes. I've not yet figured out how to make it mimic the display of the default text, with multiple font sizes. As a result, I don't try to redefine that sample text, because I like seeing a representation of the font at different font sizes.

If you're interested, there is a [sample script](#) from the ImageMagick legacy website that resets the sample text. But, it also doesn't present font samples in different sizes. Even though the sample script appears to be somewhat unfinished, it does run perfectly, as is (there are options in the script that are never accessed, as if the plan was to implement them but, in the end, they were not implemented). Just save it to where you save your bash scripts, and mark it as an executable file. To make it even more useful, use this command line syntax (should you decide to give this sample script a try): **show-fonts.sh -2 -p 48 [name-of-font-file]**. I've got it saved on my computer. It may come in handy when/if I figure out how to replicate the display of the fonts in multiple font sizes.

Verdict: This is EXACTLY what I've been looking for ever since I switched from being a Windows user to being a Linux user. I love that

it works for ALL types of font files, too. Even Gnome Fonts Viewer had difficulty displaying PostScript Type 1 font files. My only complaint about this method is that ImageMagick uses more of the X-Windows styled dialogs to save the PNG files, almost as if they are “homegrown” in appearance, instead of using the Gtk+ or Qt styled dialogs that we are more accustomed to. The dialog boxes used in this manner are not as intuitive or easy to navigate as the Gtk+ or Qt styled dialog boxes that we’ve become used to.

While this method does NOT allow me the option of installing a font, I’m more than ok with that. Much of the time, I’m merely wanting to VIEW a font file. I may view 20 or more font files before finding the ONE that I want to install. To install the selected font, it’s a trivial matter to switch to another program ... Fontmatrix, Gnome Fonts Viewer and PCC all work well for this ... and install the font (or font family) to my hard drive for use. What I like most is that this method uses what I already have installed on my system (ImageMagick), with no other software needed. **Grade: A+.**

Conclusion

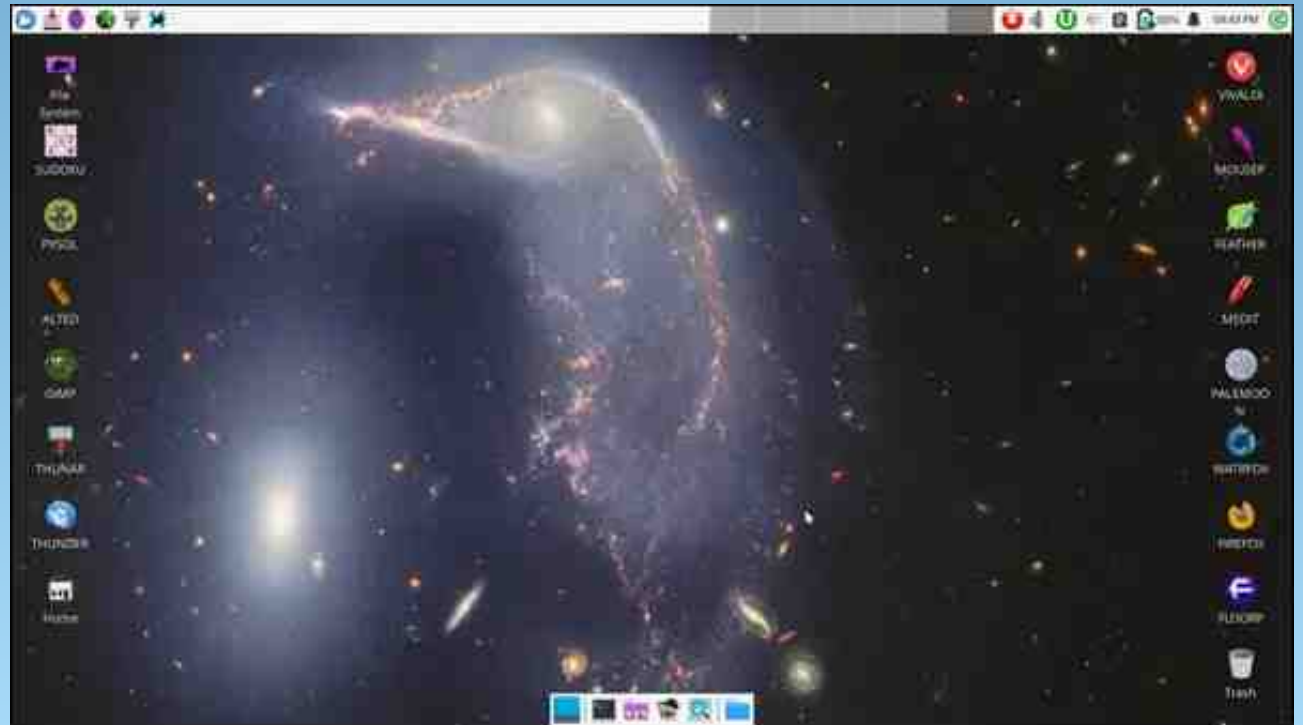
Now, you have at least three different programs to use to view font files. I can’t believe that it took me THIS LONG (I’ve been using Linux since at least 2006, and PCLinuxOS since 2007) to find a replacement for Windows Font Viewer. And, for all this time, I had the solution installed on my computer all along!



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Screenshot Showcase



Posted by DrMop, July 13, 2024, running Xfce.

Inkscape Tutorial: Bending Text Around A Corner

by Meemaw

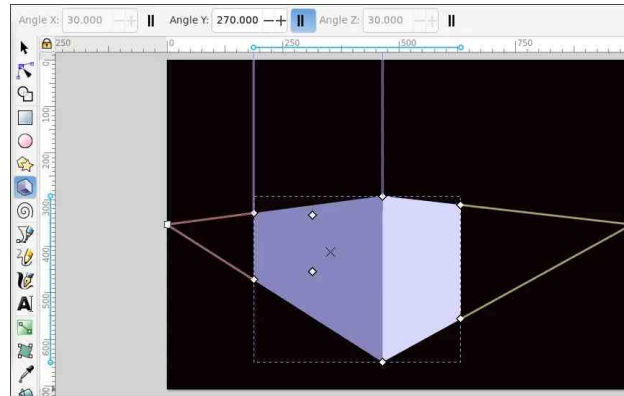
I've seen another tutorial I think is fun! This one is from Rick at [IronEcho Design](#), on [how to bend text around a corner](#). He has some cool tutorials, and especially the ones he's seen as Adobe Illustrator tutorials, and then figured out for Inkscape.



It's kind of fun as well!

Start by opening Inkscape and editing your document properties so your page has a black background and is in Landscape orientation. He suggests size B1 (which is 700 px by 1,000 px).

The next thing to do is to create a 3D box using the 3D Box tool. You can make it however you want. My first try used the box that you see here, where the bottom isn't visible (center, top).

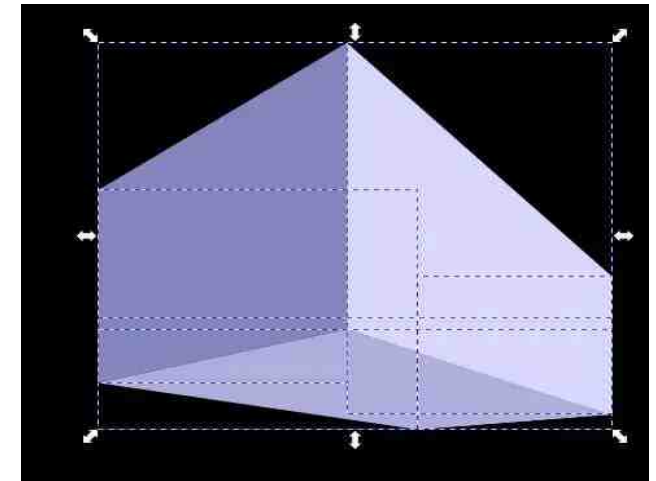


On the box you'll see a number of nodes that you can use to edit the box, but first, grab the "X" (you can see it in the left-hand surface), and move it around. You can manipulate it so the top or bottom is visible, it is closer or farther, or anywhere on the page. Also, in the toolbox above you'll see Angle X, Angle Y and Angle Z. X is the left side horizon (where the lines come together for perspective), Y is the horizon at the top, and Z is the right side horizon. Notice that the lines at the top are parallel, meaning that the Y perspective in an object this close to us is generally almost infinite. Anyway, for the purposes of this project, the setting for Y needs to be the parallel lines (so the front of the box is absolutely vertical).

When you get it shaped the way you want it, change to the Selection tool, make the box bigger if need be, then click **Path > Object to path**. You'll notice at the bottom of the window that Inkscape says "Group of 6 objects in layer

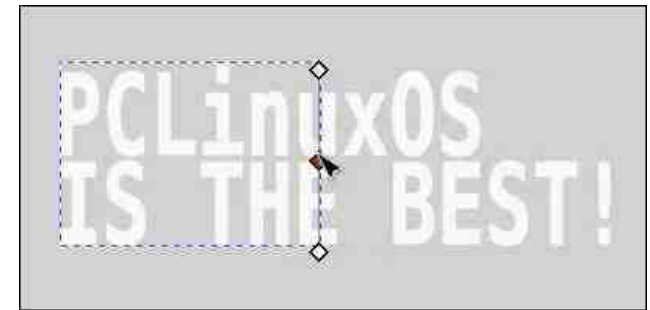
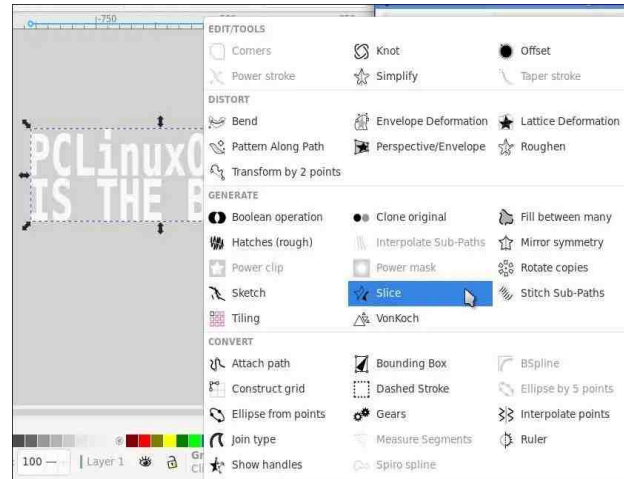
Layer 1" (meaning that the box is a group of 6 objects (sides) in the layer named Layer 1). Since we can't see the back of the box (and depending on how you drew it, we might only be able to see 2 sides), we can ungroup the sides and delete the ones we don't need.

Select the box and click **Object > Ungroup** (or use the tool at the top). You'll see something like this:

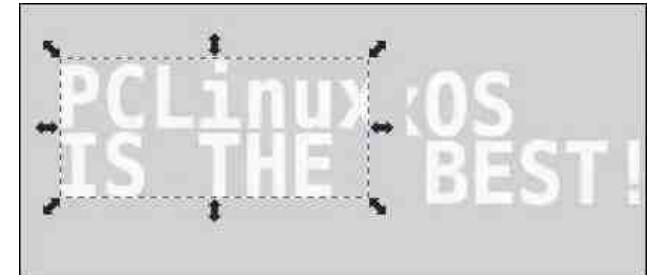


Every side has an outline, so click away from the box, then, holding down the <Shift> key, select the ones you want to keep and move them away from the others. In this case, the left and right sides and the bottom would be the only ones that would be visible to put text on, so save them and delete the other three. In the image below, we want the left group, and I'll delete the others (next page, top left).

When you get your text edited the way you want, change to the Selection tool and click **Path > Object to path**. With your text still selected, choose **Path > Path Effects**. When you get your menu, add the path effect **Slice**.



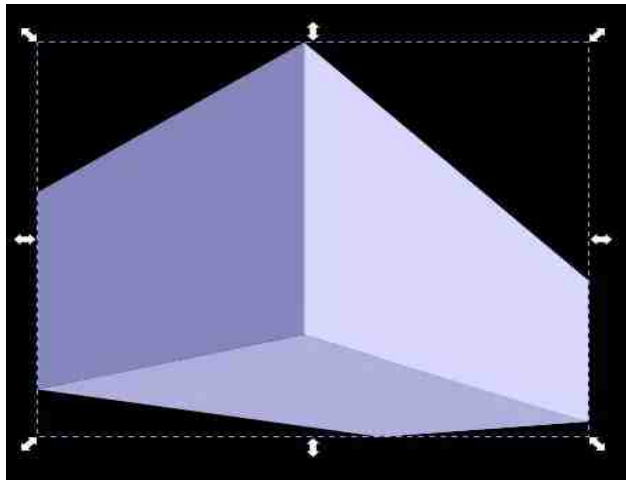
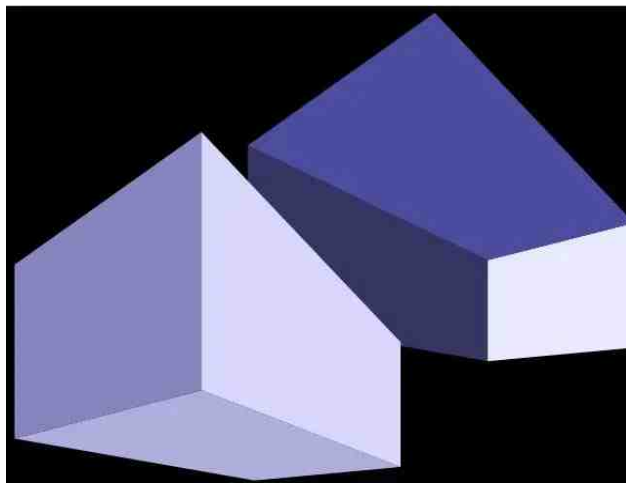
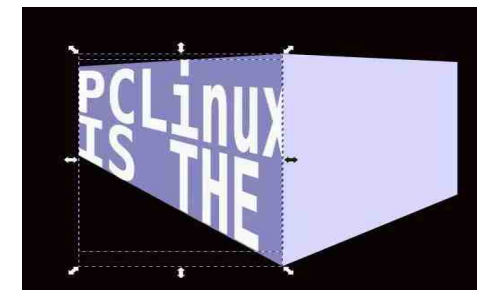
Then you can change back to the Selection tool and move your text apart.



When you choose the Slice effect, you'll see that the box around the text has changed to being around the left half of the text. You may like that slicing point, but if not, there is a way to change it. Go to your nodes tool, grab the center node in that line, and move it left or right. Rick at IronEcho urges you to cut your letters somewhere other than exactly in the center, because it seems to look better.



Now we work the magic. Choose the left side of the box and the left side of your text. Go to **Extensions > Modify Path > Envelope Deformation**. Your text should jump onto the box face selection. **NOTE:** If you get an error message about one of your selections being a group, it's probably the text. Inkscape made my text of two lines a group of 2 paths. The solution is to ungroup them, then click **Object > Union**. Go back and select the text and the box face, and go back to Extensions. It should work now.



OK, now for the text. You can use any font you want, but these kinds of projects seem to work best with bold fonts. I used Bitstream Vera Sans Bold, around 150 pt, and reduced the space between the lines to .80 pt. Type your text, but since you are putting it on the surface of the box, you should probably make it more than one line.

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Using the same steps, do the right side. **BEFORE** you enable the extension, your text needs to be manipulated a bit — something about how the 3D Box tool works. If you leave the text as it is, it will be turned wrong on the box face. Do a *horizontal flip*, and then *rotate it 90° to the left*, and then it will look right. You might also have to move the text a tiny bit to line it up with the left face.



You can change the text color depending on which way the light is coming from as well. I left the left side while, but changed the right side to a medium gray, then I deleted the box faces.



My next try showed the bottom of the box as well. When you put the text on the bottom, you only have to *rotate it 90° to the right*. Have fun!



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PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner



Broiled Tilapia Parmesan

Serves: 4

INGREDIENTS:

4 TBSP butter (unsalted)
3 TBSP mayonnaise
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese
1/2 tsp old bay seasoning
1/4 tsp dried basil
1/8 tsp celery salt
1/8 tsp onion powder
1/4 tsp black pepper
fresh lemon juice
tilapia filets – Try to find fresh filets as they tend to be larger than flash frozen.
Minced parsley – Optional, for serving.

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat your broiler and line a cookie sheet with foil and lightly spray with olive oil.

In a small bowl mix together; butter, mayo, Parmesan, Old Bay, basil, black pepper, onion powder and celery salt. Squeeze in the juice of half a lemon and set aside.

Arrange the tilapia with the dark vein (bottom) side up and broil all fish together for 3 minutes.

Remove and carefully flip the fish so they are now right side up.

Divide the Parmesan mixture over each filet and slide back into the oven for 3 more minutes, or until the fish is opaque and flakes easily, and the topping is golden and bubbly.

Serve with a sprinkle of Parmesan cheese and minced parsley.

NUTRITION:

Calories: 392 Carbs: 2g Sodium: 538mg
Fiber: 0.1g Protein: 38g



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ICYMI: SSH Server Bug Opens Vulnerabilities

by Paul Arnote (parnote)



Microsoft has been charged by the EU for breaking antitrust rules. The European Commission claims that by bundling Teams into the Office 365 and Microsoft 365 suites, the company disproportionately restricts competition in the market for communication apps, according to an [article](#) from TechRepublic. The primary reason for this is because Microsoft's suite of business productivity tools, like Excel, Outlook and PowerPoint, is the second [most popular](#) worldwide after Google Workspace. Therefore, when Teams is included with 365 by default, it gives the company a so-called "distribution advantage." Customers are unlikely to seek out another communications app if they have invested in the 365 tools, and Teams comes with them automatically. Any interoperability limitation between Microsoft's

offerings and Teams' competitors exacerbates this issue.

Apple has become the first tech giant to be formally charged by the European Commission for violating the Digital Markets Act, according to an [article](#) from TechRepublic. A preliminary ruling was made on June 25, 2024, and the Cupertino firm could be handed a hefty fine as a result. The Commission has found that Apple has three sets of business rules that ultimately prevent iOS app developers from directing their users towards third-party purchase options. This goes against the DMA, which states that developers should be able to steer their customers towards purchasing options outside of the App Store easily and free of charge. Apple takes a 30% commission from the revenue of any in-app purchases, so when users make app-related payments on their phone browser, for example, it eats into its profits.

On July 1, 2024, Meta became the second company charged with violating Europe's Digital Markets Act, one week after the EU [threatened](#) Apple with a \$38 billion fine, according to an [article](#) from Lifehacker. While Apple's charge focuses on its treatment of outside payment methods and third-party apps, Meta's is all about its big money maker: ads on Facebook and Instagram. Throughout most of the world, Meta monetizes its sites using targeted ads, which means it harvests your data to focus your ads on your interests. To attempt to

appease the DMA's privacy regulations, the company lets European users [subscribe](#) to an ad-free plan for €9.99 per month (more if you add linked accounts or subscribe using an app store), but the region is now saying this isn't enough. In a preliminary ruling posted to its site today, the European Commission said Meta must also allow users to access a third option, which should be a free plan that would still show ads but use less personal data.



Glibc-based Linux systems are vulnerable to a new bug (CVE-2024-6387) in OpenSSH's server (sshd) and should upgrade to the latest version, according to an [article](#) from The Register. Infosec researchers at Qualys published their findings today, revealing that

sshd is vulnerable to a race condition that could allow an unauthenticated attacker to achieve remote code execution (RCE) on potentially hundreds of thousands of targets. Successful exploitation could give intruders root-level access to a system, allowing them to potentially get away with virtually anything. Of the 14 million possibly vulnerable sshd instances that show up on Censys and Shodan scans, Qualys believes that roughly 700,000 of these internet-facing instances could feasibly be hit by regreSSHion – the name researchers gave to the flaw based on its roots. Never fear ... Texstar has already patched OpenSSH and the SSH server software the PCLinuxOS repository.

This ought to make it evident that big tech is playing with two sets of rules: one for them, and another for the “rest of us.” **Content that has been posted on the open web should be treated as “freeware”, according to Microsoft’s AI chief**, in an [article](#) from Forbes. That being the case, he appears to have just ripped up the licensing agreement for software such as Microsoft Windows and Office. Mustafa Suleyman, the CEO of Microsoft AI since March this year, made his eyebrow-raising comments during an [interview](#) with CNBC. Asked if the training of AI models on internet content was tantamount to intellectual property theft, Suleyman made the argument that anything posted on the web was fair game. “I think that with respect to content that’s already on the open web, the social contract of that content since the nineties has been that it is fair use,” said Suleyman. “Anyone can copy it, recreate with it, reproduce with it. That has been freeware, if you like, that’s been the

understanding.” So all those versions of Windows and MS Office posted to the web are **FREEWARE**? If you try it (playing by the “rules” he proposes), be prepared to be contacted/visited by Microsoft’s legions of overpaid lawyers.

Enterprise software vendor HubSpot says it’s “actively investigating and blocking attempts” to hack into customer accounts and warned that at least 50 HubSpot targets have already been breached, according to an [article](#) from SecurityWeek. “While our investigation is still underway, we believe based on our initial assessment that the bad actors were able to gain unauthorized access to less than 50 HubSpot accounts,” HubSpot said in a brief notice posted online. The Cambridge, Mass.-based HubSpot, which sells specialized tools for sales and marketing teams, said the unidentified hackers

are continuing to target a limited number of HubSpot customers and attempting to gain unauthorized access to their HubSpot accounts.



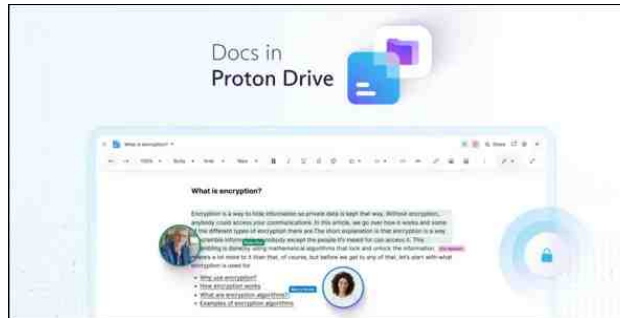
Image by [Elchinator](#) from [Pixabay](#)

According to a report from Korean news agency [JTBC](#), **users of torrent-based “webhard” services—file storage and transfer platforms that are popular in South Korea—began reporting in 2020 that they were experiencing slow transfers, busted files, and malfunctioning PCs**, says an [article](#) from PC Gamer. When one of the webhard providers noticed all the users experiencing issues were KT customers, the company reported the information to Korean law enforcement. ISPs have waged war against torrent traffic for years. In the US, before those few years where the FCC decided to give things a go without net neutrality (it didn’t go well), [Comcast](#) earned itself a cease-and-desist in 2008 after throttling BitTorrent transfers. Legal protections and networking advances have seen those efforts subside somewhat in recent years, making it even wilder that Korean police found evidence suggesting that KT was distributing malware to its own customers as punishment for using P2P services.



According to an [article](#) from TechRadar, **threat actors are abusing a vulnerability in an outdated D-Link router to steal people's sensitive data, researchers have claimed.** Cybersecurity experts from GreyNoise recently reported observing hackers in the wild, abusing a critical vulnerability in D-Link DIR-859 Wi-Fi routers. The flaw is described as a path traversal vulnerability that leads to information disclosure, and is tracked as CVE-2024-0769. It has a severity score of 9.8/10, and was first discovered in January 2024. The vulnerability has no patch available.

In a possible glimpse at future internet speeds, **scientists in Japan recently powered a 402,000 Gbps connection using commercially available optical fiber**, according to an [article](#) from PCMag. The [research](#) comes from Japan's National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT), which has partnered with other labs to use existing optical fiber tech to deliver huge speed enhancements. In March, one of NICT's partners on the project, Aston University in the UK, [beamed](#) internet speed at 301,000 Gbps over a single, standard optical fiber. NICT has since followed up with another test, hitting 402,000. The feat was achieved by harnessing additional wavelength bands—essentially colors—within the optical fibers to increase the data transmission rate. Specifically, NICT scientists tapped the O-, E-, and S-bands to amplify the data when the C- and L-bands are typically used for long-haul transmission over fiber networks.



Billions of people use online document editors like Google Docs or Microsoft 365 to write reports, collaborate on projects, and keep track of meeting notes (The PCLinuxOS Magazine uses Google Docs for collaborative editing of its magazine articles). But there is a growing concern about Big Tech platforms having access to your content, tracking you across the web, and collecting data to train privacy-invading AI models. On July 3, 2024, **Proton announced a new end-to-end encrypted, collaborative document editor** that puts your privacy first, according to an [announcement](#) on the Proton blog. Docs in Proton Drive are built on the same privacy and security principles as all our services, starting with end-to-end encryption. Docs let you collaborate in real time, leave comments, add photos, and store your files securely. Best of all, it's all private — even keystrokes and cursor movements are encrypted.

Millions of WordPress websites are under threat after a critical security breach involving several popular plugins, according to an [article](#) from eSecurity Planet. Security researchers discovered malicious code injected into these plugins, granting hackers the ability to create unauthorized administrator accounts. This

compromise can lead to severe consequences for website owners, including data breaches and total website takeovers. The specific number of affected plugins and websites is still under investigation. However, initial reports suggest prominent plugins with thousands of active installations might be involved, raising serious concerns about the overall security of the WordPress ecosystem and the vulnerability of websites built on the platform.

Japan FINALLY phases out floppy disks, 13 years after the country's producers manufactured them, according to an [article](#) from the New York Times. One of the world's most technologically advanced nations has held on to some of the most outmoded devices. Japan scrapped every regulation requiring the use of floppy disks for administrative purposes this week, catching up with the times 13 years after the country's producers manufactured their last units. The floppy disk, invented in the 1970s, was once a ubiquitous part of computing. Other forms of memory like flash drives and internet cloud storage have since taken over. The next target for Japan's war on outdated technology: fax machines.

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Google's latest annual environmental [report](#) reveals the true impact its recent forays into artificial intelligence has had on its greenhouse gas emissions, according to an [article](#) from TechRepublic. The expansion of its data centers to support AI developments contributed to the company producing 14.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents in 2023. This represents a 48% increase over the equivalent figure for 2019 and a 13% increase since 2022. "This result was primarily due to increases in data center energy consumption and supply chain emissions," the report's authors wrote. "As we further integrate AI into our products, reducing emissions may be challenging due to increasing energy demands from the greater intensity of AI compute, and the emissions associated with the expected increases in our technical infrastructure investment."

As originally [reported](#) by TechRadar, **researchers say they found a text file, called `rockyou2024.txt`, containing nearly 10 billion unique passwords, all stored in plain text**, according to an [article](#) from Lifehacker. That means anyone with access could scrape the list as they would a PDF and discover each and every password for themselves. This was not a project that happened overnight: These passwords were collected over time, from various attacks and leaks over the past 20 years. Attackers added 1.5 billion of these passwords to the file from 2021 to this year alone. The fact that these are all unique, too, means there are no repeats in the list. It's tough to wrap your head around that many passwords.

Are you concerned by what (and how much) data Google has collected about you? Would



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you like to have some control over that data, including the ability to delete it? If so, then this [article](#) from Lifehacker is for you! They walk you through how to view and possibly delete the data that Google has collected on you.



Image by [Pheladi Shai](#) from [Pixabay](#)

A lawsuit was filed on July 11, 2024, against Hershey, Walgreens and several others in the case of a Massachusetts teen who died after he participated in a spicy tortilla chip challenge that was widely promoted on social media, according to an [article](#) from the Associated Press. The teen, a 10th grader from the city of Worcester, died Sept. 1, 2023, after eating the Paqui chip as part of the manufacturer's "One Chip Challenge." An autopsy found Wolobah died after eating a large

quantity of chile pepper extract and also had a congenital heart defect.

Apple actually did send alerts to users on July 10, warning them they might be targeted by "mercenary spyware attacks." According to Apple, it sent the alert at 12 p.m. PT on Wednesday to users in 92 countries, according to an [article](#) from Lifehacker.

Handheld phone use while driving is a major factor in vehicle crashes, according to one [study](#) recently published in the JAMA Open Network. Scalable interventions are needed to encourage drivers not to use their phones. **The objective is to test whether interventions involving social comparison feedback and/or financial incentives can reduce drivers' handheld phone use.** In a randomized clinical trial, interventions were administered nationwide in the US via a mobile application in the context of a usage-based insurance program (Snapshot Mobile application). Customers were eligible to be invited to participate in the study if enrolled

in the usage-based insurance program for 30 to 70 days. The study was conducted from May 13 to June 30, 2019. Analysis was completed December 22, 2023.



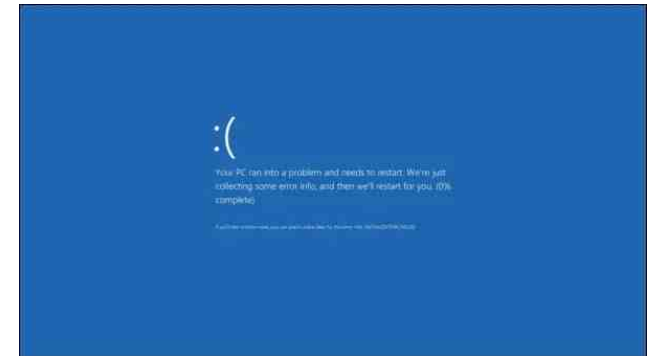
Image by [Clker-Free-Vector-Images](#) from [Pixabay](#)

As if you really needed it, here's something to make you feel really old. **This year marks the 30-year anniversary of the grill, officially known as the George Foreman Lean Mean Fat Reducing Grilling Machine,** according to an [article](#) from The Hustle. After a slow start, it became an indelible part of '90s consumer culture and the world's most popular product for cooking hamburgers, hot dogs, salmon, and just about everything else (Oprah Winfrey preferred it for bacon). Read the article for an interesting history of how the grill came about, rose to popularity, and remained popular.

AT&T **revealed** on July 12, 2024, that a cybersecurity attack had exposed call records and texts from "nearly all" of the carrier's cellular customers (including people on mobile virtual network operators, or MVNOs, that use AT&T's network, like Cricket, Boost Mobile, and Consumer

Cellular), according to an [article](#) from The Verge (and widely reported on in multiple media outlets). The breach contains data from between May 1st, 2022, and October 31st, 2022, in addition to records from a "very small number" of customers on January 2nd, 2023.

Inflection AI co-founder Mustafa Suleyman joined Microsoft as CEO of Microsoft AI in March, and took "several" coworkers with him, according to an [article](#) from TechRepublic. Now, the UK's Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has opened an [inquiry](#) into whether this and Microsoft's other deals with Inflection should be considered anti-competitive. The CMA has until Sept. 11, 2024 to decide whether to continue the investigation.



Businesses across the world are reporting IT outages, including Windows "blue screen of death" errors on their computers, in what has already become one of the most widespread IT disruptions in recent years, according to an [article](#) from TechRadar (and very widely reported on in just about every media outlet). The outage — linked to a software update from popular cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike — has affected computers running Microsoft Windows

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at organizations across various sectors, including airlines, banks, retailers, brokerage houses, media companies and railway networks. The travel sector seems to be one of the hardest hit, based on online chatter.

UPDATE: In a post to its website July 20, 2024, Microsoft released a file for USB drives that can quickly and near-automatically fix PCs downed by the CrowdStrike fiasco, according to an [article](#) from Lifehacker. It comes with a fix that does all the work for you but requires a BitLocker recovery key (if BitLocker is enabled), as well as one that can bypass BitLocker but needs you to do a bit more legwork. Download the file [here](#) and follow the instructions to create a recovery key, then pick one of the recovery options based on your needs. Most users will be better off with the automatic option, Recover from WinPE, so start there and only move on if you're prompted for a BitLocker key you can't get. If you need but can't get a BitLocker key, use Recover from safe mode instead. It's more involved, but finally offers a [way into](#) machines that have otherwise been closed off.

If you were looking forward to an internet free of cookies, you'll be sorry to hear this bad news: Google is officially canceling its plans to kill cookies, according to an [article](#) from Lifehacker. The company announced the decision in a [blog post](#) July 22, 2024, citing feedback from regulators, publishers, developers, and individuals in the advertising industry. Google says that, while the company still believes it can strike a balance between the online ad marketplace and user privacy, it

understands the existing challenges in doing so with this many moving parts. The company says, "this transition requires significant work by many participants and will have an impact on publishers, advertisers, and everyone involved in online advertising." As such, Google announced it is changing tactics on its privacy plans for online advertising: While the company will be

abandoning its push to retire cookies, it will be introducing a new option in Chrome that, "lets people make an informed choice that applies across their web browsing." Google fell short of explaining exactly how this "informed choice" works, but users will have the option to change their choice at any time.

Screenshot Showcase



Posted by The CrankyZombie, July 7, 2024, running KDE.

Repo Review: GNU TeXmacs

by David Pardue (kalwisti)

GNU TeXmacs is a free/libre scientific document editor, designed to create beautiful technical documents using a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) interface. TeXmacs combines the advantages of LaTeX's premium document quality with the more intuitive interface of a word processor. In particular, the program is optimized for efficient input of mathematical formulas and for structuring mathematical documents.

The Confusing Name

Before discussing TeXmacs' features and history, I need to clarify one issue: the program's name. "TeXmacs" is misleading because it does **not** use TeX as its typesetting engine. It does not have any TeX-related dependencies; instead, the program uses custom typesetting algorithms (which are a rewrite of TeX algorithms with tweaks). In addition, TeXmacs is not based on Emacs (although you may select an Emacs "Look and feel" option.) It might be more accurate to say that (La)TeX and Emacs served as inspiration for GNU TeXmacs.

The choice of name has caused confusion over the years. Some people mistakenly assumed that TeXmacs was yet another distribution of TeX, tailored for macOS (like [MacTeX](#)). Other people have the misconception that the program is related to LaTeX and/or Emacs. In fact, there have been periodic discussions on the TeXmacs [mailing list](#) about changing the app's name. Some users favored the name JollyWriter (after the title of Joris van der Hoeven's book on TeXmacs). Typesetica was also suggested.

The logo for TeXmacs, featuring the word "TEX" in a large, stylized font above the word "MACS" in a smaller, simpler font.

History

GNU TeXmacs was started by Joris van der Hoeven, an [award-winning](#) Dutch mathematician and computer scientist, in 1998. The program's first beta release was on Oct. 26, 1999. Although van der Hoeven is the primary developer, he is assisted by a multinational team of contributors which includes [François Poulain](#), [Miguel de Benito Delgado](#), [Massimiliano Gubinelli](#), [Darcy Shen](#) and others. Dr. Van der Hoeven is committed to the idea of libre software; in TeXmacs' help pages, he writes that "only free programs are acceptable from a scientific point of view."

The program version in the PCLinuxOS repositories is 2.1.2 (released in May 2022). The current version is 2.1.4 (from April 2024), which was also released in AppImage format for the first time. I tested both versions of TeXmacs on my PCLinuxOS systems and they worked reliably. In the case of the 2.1.4 AppImage, just remember to first change the permissions on the file to make it executable:



GNU TeXmacs is multi-platform: Linux, macOS and Windows. The program is written in C++ and Scheme (a dialect of Lisp). It has its own file format (XML-like), and supports native output to PDF and PostScript. Built-in converters offer the capability of exporting to LaTeX format (.tex) as well as HTML.

Program Strengths

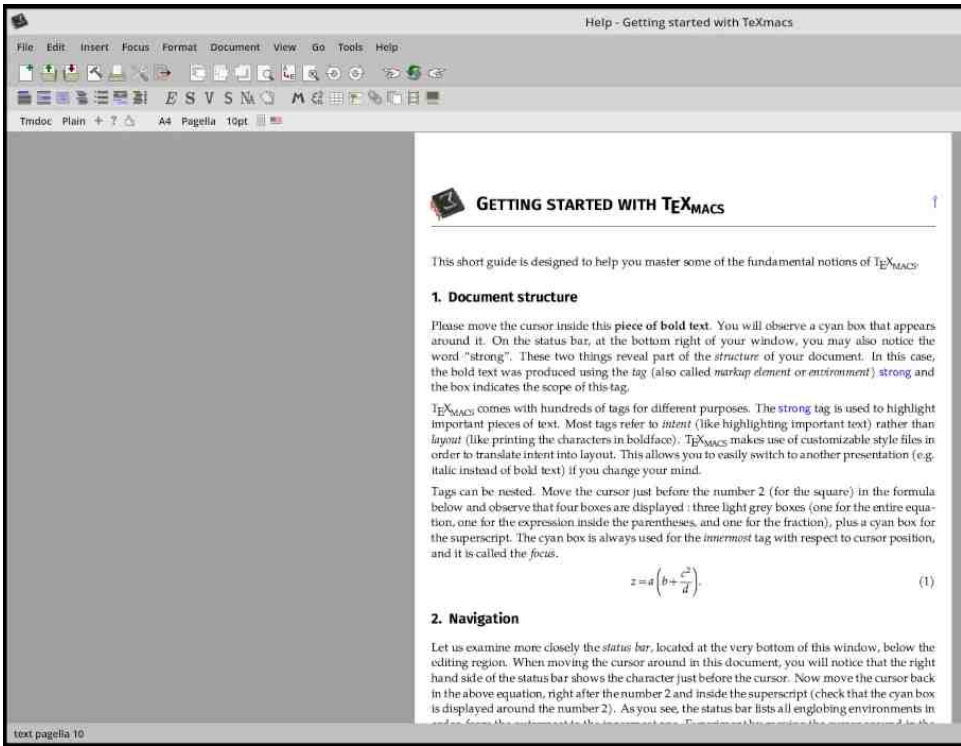
Undoubtedly, a highlight of TeXmacs is its typesetting quality; it produces documents which match the standards of professional publications. Indeed, printed TeXmacs documents are indistinguishable from those produced with LaTeX. The program includes special TeX Gyre fonts for mathematical typesetting and output: Bonum (similar to Bookman Old Style), Pagella (similar to Palatino), Schola (similar to Century Schoolbook) and Termes (similar to Times New Roman). The fonts Linux Libertine, Linux Biolinum and Fira (a humanist sans-serif typeface) are also bundled by default.

GNU TeXmacs has less of a learning curve than LaTeX. If you are a beginner or non-programmer who does not want to wrangle with LaTeX markup, TeXmacs can save you time and effort. The editor is WYSIWYG, so there is no need to compile your document — as in LaTeX — nor is a separate window required to display your typeset document.

TeXmacs enthusiasts believe that the program provides a better user experience than LaTeX because everything you need is available in the UI. This makes it easier to concentrate on your writing, to focus on “content over code.” If you have ever tried LyX, you will notice some similarities between it and TeXmacs.

Like LaTeX, GNU TeXmacs allows you to easily produce structured documents and to semi-automate some writing tasks — such as generating a table of contents, labeling and numbering sections, figures and/or equations, managing references and creating bibliographies. For reference management, the bibliography must be in BibTeX format (.bib). (I am writing a follow-up article which describes how to create a bibliography and add citations in TeXmacs, since some readers are probably unfamiliar with BibTeX and a LaTeX-style bibliography management system.)

Image at right.



Math Typesetting

If you are a mathematician or scientist needing to incorporate many equations/formulas into your papers, GNU TeXmacs merits a closer look. The program allows you to type (and edit) math formulas quickly and naturally; they appear immediately in finished form. Joris van der Hoeven recorded a video tutorial which demonstrates how to type basic mathematical formulas. I learned that one area in which TeXmacs is popular is in teaching mathematics to high-school students and university undergraduates.

Another of GNU TeXmacs’ development principles is that with the advent of a wide variety of mathematical software, it should be possible to make documents more interactive. The program’s functionality can be further extended via plugins for external computer algebra systems and packages such as Octave, Maxima, Axiom, Mathematica and Mathmagix. These



interfaces can be used in either shell-like sessions, inside spreadsheets, or on the fly inside regular text.

Additional Features

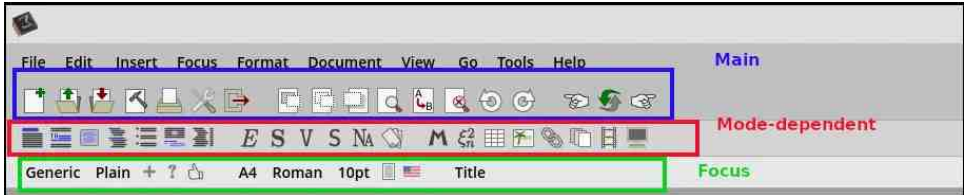
TeXmacs also includes an editor for creating graphical pictures, a presentation mode and a rudimentary spreadsheet facility.

The program's usefulness extends beyond writing mathematics. TeXmacs has enabled writers to produce articles, theses (up to approximately 150 pages in length), as well as books. It can also be used for lecture notes, personal notes and plans, letters, presentations, résumés — and webpages. (The TeXmacs [website](#) is maintained as TeXmacs documents, then exported to HTML.)

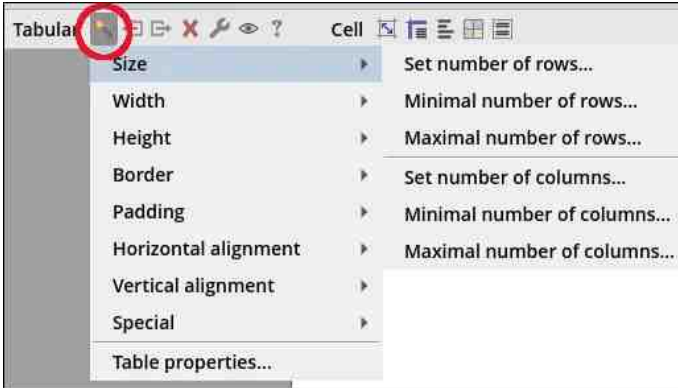
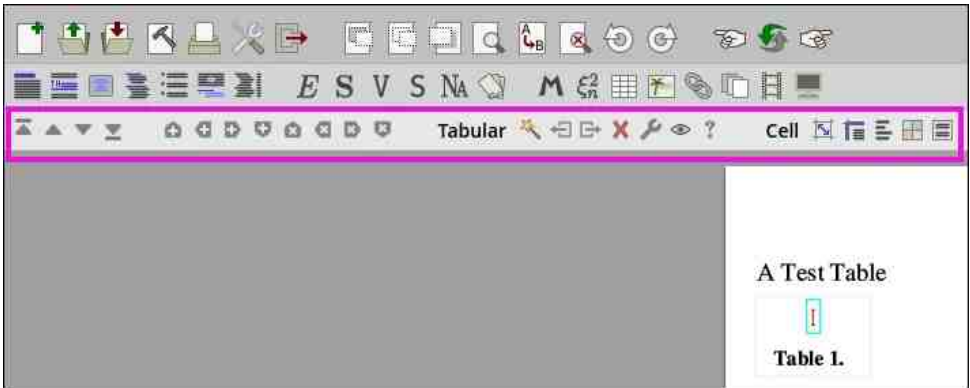
User Interface

A nice feature of GNU TeXmacs is its context-sensitive user interface. The menus and toolbars depend on the cursor position. There are three toolbars:

- A main toolbar
- A “mode-dependent” toolbar
- A “focus” toolbar (The smallest in size)



As an example of context-sensitivity, when you edit a table, TeXmacs automatically displays additional icons for inserting and manipulating table cells (right, top):



Disadvantages

GNU TeXmacs does not lend itself to collaborating with others, if they are LaTeX users. Although you can export your project as a .tex file and the generated file's code is usually clean, it might still require tweaking. Therefore, you need some knowledge of LaTeX to correct file anomalies. (The same is also true of LyX.)

If you are in academia, TeXmacs is not mainstream. There is an expectation of LaTeX proficiency because it is the de facto standard — especially in mathematics. (I have read online discussions suggesting that the requirement for journal submissions in TeX format is part of the peer review process. It is a filter that serves to discourage “non-serious” submissions.)



However, the goal of the TeXmacs project is not to be another front-end for LaTeX, nor to be 100% interoperable with LaTeX. TeXmacs is its own ecosystem. Some TeXmacs users adopt a mixed usage approach; they write a quick draft with TeXmacs (saving time by skipping LaTeX markup), then use LaTeX for the document's final version.

Mogan Research (Fork)

For the curious and the early adopters, there is a fork of GNU TeXmacs called [Mogan Research](#), which is updated more frequently than TeXmacs. Mogan Research and TeXmacs can be regarded as the same kind of product, released by different teams.

The program is developed by [Darcy Shen](#) and named for [Mount Mogan](#) (Mògān Shān in pinyin), a famous natural attraction in the province of Zhejiang, China.

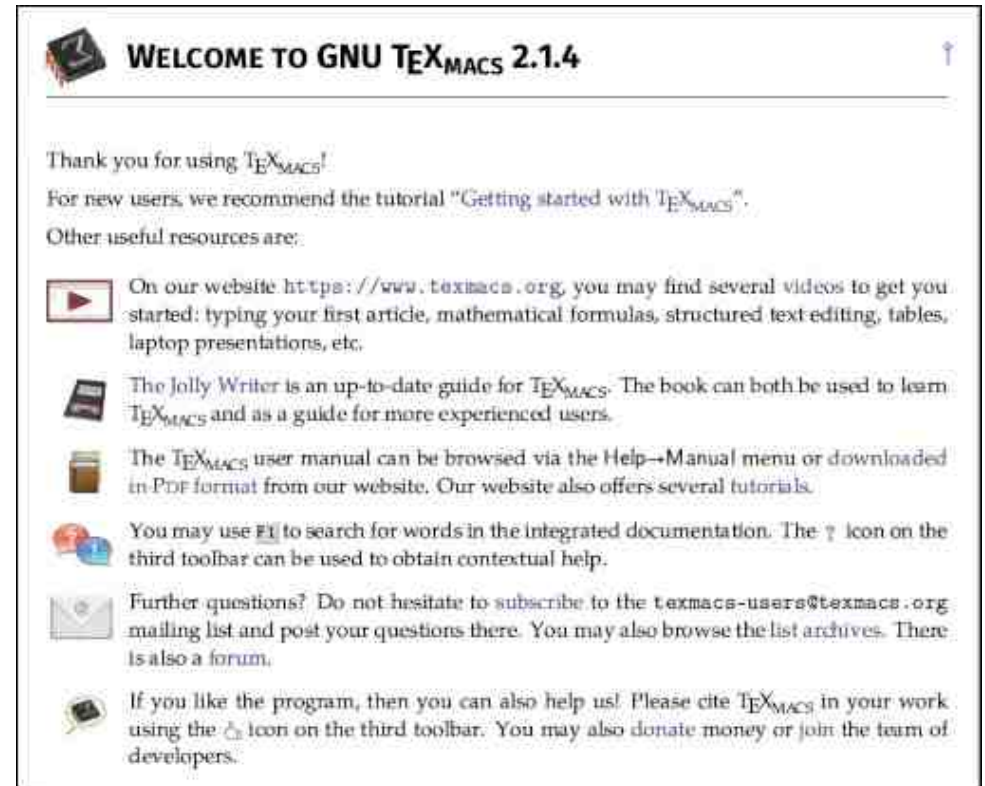
Additional Resources

If you are interested in learning more about TeXmacs, excellent documentation is available. I found the resources listed below to be helpful.

To watch TeXmacs in action, there is a quick three-minute tour (with captions and a swinging jazz manouche soundtrack):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H46ON2FB30U>

From within GNU TeXmacs' help pages:

The Welcome section (from the **Help** menu > choose **Welcome**):



The brief "Getting Started with TeXmacs" guide (**Help** > **Getting started**).

Some written tutorials may be accessed on TeXmacs' official website:

<https://www.texmacs.org/tmweb/help/tutorial.en.html>

Although the definitive guide to TeXmacs is [The Jolly Writer](#) book (Scypress [2020], €49) by Joris van der Hoeven, a slightly older version (2019) of the manual can be downloaded as a [PDF file](#), or consulted in [HTML](#) format.

If you prefer video tutorials, the [TeXmacs Videos](#) channel on YouTube has several good demonstrations (recorded in 2019 by Dr. Van der Hoeven himself).

There is also an active GNU TeXmacs user forum:
<http://forum.texmacs.cn/>

Summary

GNU TeXmacs is an impressive example of high-quality FOSS software. The program is mature and stable. During my experiments, I used the AppImage for v. 2.1.4 almost exclusively. The only trouble I had was self-inflicted (changing internal font settings by mistake); TeXmacs refused to launch. The problem was easily solved by deleting my ~/.TeXmacs directory, as suggested in the [Troubleshooting](#) section of the FAQ.

If you want to produce nice-looking PDFs, are a non-programmer, need to include mathematical equations, do not collaborate with LaTeX co-authors, and you want a gentler learning curve than LaTeX requires, TeXmacs is well worth your time to check out. GNU TeXmacs simplifies document creation by integrating the advantages of LaTeX with the user-friendly environment of a word processor.



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Good Words, Good Deeds, Good News

Compiled by Meemaw

Strangers Attend Veteran's Funeral



U. S. Marine veteran Gerry Brooks passed away at the age of 86 on May 18. Even though he had a few relatives, no one stepped up to arrange his funeral. The funeral home did it, and sent out a request for pallbearers and attendees, so the funeral could be done. Within minutes of posting the request, they had to start turning away pallbearer volunteers, as so many had called in.

Patriot Guard Riders, a volunteer organization that attends the funerals of U.S. veterans and first responders, escorted the hearse for 40 miles from the funeral home on motorcycles. Members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) organization performed a 21-gun salute

as volunteers held American flags and a crane lifted a giant flag at the entrance of the cemetery.

Hundreds of people attended the funeral, including his son, granddaughter, and son-in-law.

“It renews your faith in humanity,” Katie Riposta, the funeral director, said. “It sounds like he was a good person, but I know nothing about his life,” she continued, saying that a woman contacted the funeral home to say that Brooks’ had taken her in when she had nowhere else to go.

“It doesn’t matter if he served one day or made the military his career,” Riposta said. “He still deserves to be respected and not alone.”

Florida Brothers Help Multiple People in a Fiery Car Crash



Florida brothers Christian and Dillon heroically helped multiple people involved in a fiery, fatal car crash. In the middle of the bridge, a truck pulled to the side, and in front of that, they saw a smashed car, a car on fire and a truck that had turned over.

They ran to the truck to help those people out and then to the smashed car. A 55-year-old man and a 15-year-old girl who were riding in the pickup truck were hospitalized with minor injuries, as well as a 26-year-old man in the smashed car. The police hadn’t announced the victim in the car on fire, or disclosed the cause of the accident.

The brothers expressed the hope that if they were ever in that kind of trouble, someone would step up to try to help them.

“You have to kind of give yourself a pep talk and think, ‘If this were me, I hope somebody would help me,’” Christian said. “Your life can be over in a second. That was almost us. We were quite literally one car away from it all.”

“I would say, if you’re able to help, then help,” Dillon added.

Officers Save Newborn With No Heartbeat

Two policemen in Alexandria, Virginia, revived a newborn in the tense moments after he was

born not breathing. The 9-1-1 call stated that the other had just given birth, and that the baby seemed lifeless. When they responded, they found him not breathing and having no heartbeat.



Their training kicked in, and one officer began administering CPR, while the other officer tried to keep the parents calm. After two rounds of CPR, he found a pulse, and the baby “started fussing”. The officer added, *“It felt amazing to hear him cry. In that moment, all the stress and fear of the situation just left me.”*

The baby and his mother are doing well and have since returned home after a short stay in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

Neighbors Save Drowning Child

A little boy is alive thanks to community members near Boston, Massachusetts, who were there when he desperately needed help. 9-1-1 was called, saying that there was a child who

had drowned in a park pond. The fire department said that bystanders had pulled him out of the water and that he was unresponsive.



Community members there had CPR training, and gave the four-year-old CPR. When the firefighters arrived, he was breathing. However, a 10-year-old girl had seen the boy under the water and pulled him onto the shore. He was taken to a nearby pediatric trauma center after being stabilized. There was no report on his condition.

The 10-year-old girl was also credited for saving his life, along with all those involved in reviving him.

Hero Dog Saves 38 Others

A 10-year-old Basset Hound ran away from the home she was living in. When officials found her wandering, they had her checked to see if she had a chip, which she did. It turns out the home she ran away from was neglecting the animals there, and her running away saved the

animals that were still there — 36 dogs, a cat and a chicken.

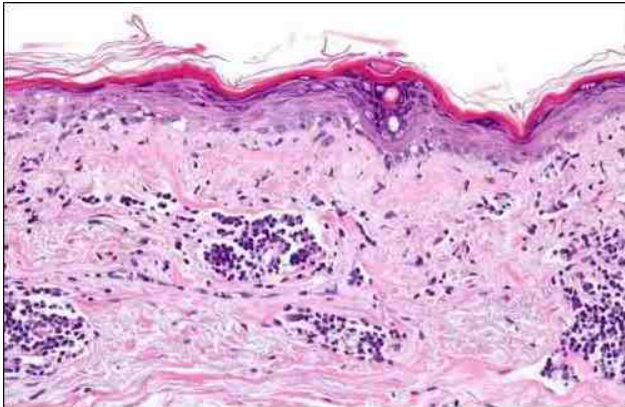


She has been named Hero Salvare (the last name meaning to save and protect). The Humane Society in South Carolina described the conditions at the home, saying that the animals were in small cages, with filth everywhere, and some of them had untreated injuries.

The Humane Society took in 15 of the dogs themselves, including Hero, with several other smaller animal rescues taking in the others. Members of the community pitched in to help cover medical and other expenses for the rescued animals. Many of the dogs, including Hero, have been adopted now.

Primary Cause of Lupus Discovered—and A Possible Way to Reverse It

A team of scientists from Northwestern Medicine and Brigham and Women’s Hospital have identified the cause of lupus, a devastating autoimmune disease that affects 1.5 million Americans.



Lupus effect on the skin

The researchers first studied lupus patients and found that those with the disease had higher levels of an infection-fighting protein called interferon and not enough aryl hydrocarbon receptor (AHR), which regulates how the body responds to infection.

The team aims to develop medications to activate the AHR pathway. When this pathway is insufficient, it results in too many immune cells that promote the production of disease-causing autoantibodies.

“We found that if we either activate the AHR pathway with small molecule activators or limit the pathologically excessive interferon in the blood, we can reduce the number of these disease-causing cells,” said a researcher. “If these effects are durable, this may be a potential cure.”



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Screenshot Showcase



Posted by brisvegas, July 1, 2024, running Mate.

HEIC Images: A New Graphics Format Player In The Game

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Right up front, let me just state that I don't own an "i" anything. No iPad. No iPhone. No iPod. Nope. Nothing preceded by an "i." The closest I ever came was when I bought my wife an iPod Shuffle when they first came out, and that was years ago (they have been discontinued long ago).

And, until just a few weeks ago, I had never even heard of HEIC graphics files. Believe it or not, these two things are connected. You'll see the connection here in a few minutes.

What Are HEIC Images?

I definitely had to do some exploring here, having never heard of or encountering HEIC images.

Just like WEBP graphics use the compression technology of the VP8 video codec to create high quality still images that are absolute misers when it comes to file size, HEIC images use the H.265 video compression codec from the Motion Pictures Experts Group to create high quality still images with impressively small file sizes. You can see our coverage of WEBP graphics [here](#).

The HEIC format was formally "finished" in 2015 by "the Group," and Apple adopted it in 2017. Today, unless the "i" user has changed the defaults, all images taken by a current iPhone or iPad are saved in the HEIC format.

While it's easy to see or understand why Apple is/was attracted to the HEIC format due to its high image quality and small file sizes, it does create a problem when an "i" user attempts to share images with someone

who isn't a member of the "i" club. Adoption and support for the HEIC format is NOT universal, at least not yet.

To somewhat complicate things more, HEIC isn't so much of a file format as it is a container format. If you're not sure what a container format is, they've been with us for a while. Think of interleaved audio and video files (the "rest of us" used to call them AVI files, back in the day). Within that container, both the audio and video portions of the file are capable of being compressed by different codecs, and then the data is stored in the AVI container in such a way that it can be easily and properly put back together by the player when it comes time to play the AVI file back.

From [Wikipedia](#):

HEIF is a container format, it can contain still images and image sequences that are coded in different formats. The main filename extensions are .heif for still images and .heifs for sequences, which can both be used with any codec. Generic HEIF image files are typically stored with filename extensions .heif, but they may use a different extension to indicate the specific codec used.

HEIF means **H**igh **E**fficiency **I**mage **F**ormat. So, the way that Apple is utilizing the HEIC format is for storing images. HEIC, in the way that Apple is using it, means **H**igh **E**fficiency **I**mage **C**odec. HEVC, in the way that Apple is using it, means **H**igh **E**fficiency **V**ideo **C**odec. For the latter, the "rest of us" call it H.265 encoded video.

Granted, the HEVC format (H.265) is quite adept at storing high quality video in some of the smallest file sizes I've ever encountered. If you want or need to explore HEVC farther, we've covered them in the past. You can view Archie's solution to converting his video files to HEVC [here](#), in the March 2021 issue of The PCLinuxOS Magazine. So, much in the way that WEBP files leverage the compression techniques of the VP8 video codec to produce smaller, high quality still images, HEIC leverages the

compression techniques of the H.265 video codec to produce smaller, high quality still images.

In the way that Apple is using the image format, that image can contain the same image at different resolutions, images stored in different formats, or a sequence of images, all wrapped up in the container format. The end user can then extract which of those images or image sequences they want/need to use, provided that the tool the user is using is capable of extracting them. If that makes your head spin a bit, do not feel alone. I experienced the very same feeling. It's a lot to wrap your head around.

I should at least explain how/why I went down this "rabbit hole." I originally saw an [article](#) on Lifehacker about how to view or convert HEIC files on Mac or Windows. To be perfectly honest, that was the very first time I had heard about HEIC files. So, that got me thinking, "What about Linux?" This article is a result of going down that rabbit hole.

The Lifehacker article explains how to make your iPhone or iPad share images with other platforms that are more easily viewed. Their article also instructed those "i" users on how to change the default from HEIC to JPG (although I wouldn't take that route, and forfeit the advantages that HEIC files provide ... higher image quality at smaller file sizes).

That article also suggests using online graphic file converters to convert HEIC files to a format that is more easily viewed (and much more widely accepted). However, I wanted to avoid that situation altogether, fearful that this particular solution won't settle well with a lot of users who go out of their way to preserve their privacy. And, I can't say I blame them, with every entity on the web (it seems) wanting to extract its ounce of personal and private information. Being able to convert them on your own computer, without uploading anything online, is the best solution that helps preserve user privacy.

The file size savings for the HEIC format are HUGE. Compared to JPG files, HEIC images offer far better resolution, at file sizes that represent very significant savings in storage space. For the sample HEIC image used below, it comes in at 1.5 MB in file size. Converted to JPG, the same file takes up 2.3 MB of storage space. As a PNG file, the image comes in at

13.4 MB. And, as a WEBP file, the image comes in at a very comparable 1.3 MB.

How To View HEIC Images

Some operating systems now come with (or easily facilitate) the viewing of HEIC files. Windows 10 users can view them if they are running release 1803, provided the user has installed the HEIF Image Extension. Windows 11 users have the ability to read HEIC files built-in, from version 22H2 and later. MacOS from High Sierra and after has the ability to read HEIC files. iOS users can read and write HEIC files from iOS 11 and later. Android users from Android 10 and later can read HEIC files. As for Linux, it appears that it's more driven by what software you use, as opposed to a system-wide ability to view HEIC files.

As for software on PCLinuxOS that is capable of displaying HEIC files, those software programs include **GIMP**, **Krita**, **ImageMagick**, **DarkTable**, **GPicView**, **Shutter** and **Ristretto**. For what it's worth, GPicView did not properly display the HEIC file initially. But, upon a subsequent attempt (I was attempting to show how things look in a program that doesn't support viewing HEIC files), GPicView displayed them perfectly. I have **no** idea why it failed the first time. The real "heavyweights" here are GIMP and ImageMagick. With those two alone, there is no problem viewing, creating or converting HEIC files.

As for web browsers, ONLY Apple's Safari is capable of displaying HEIC images.

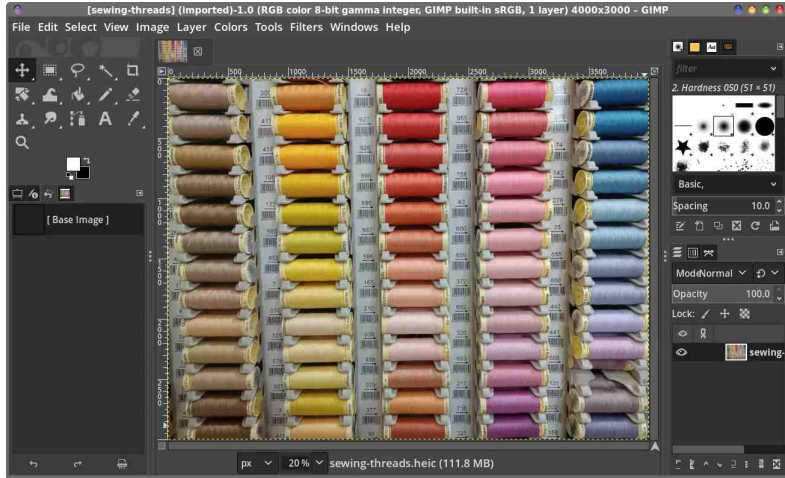
Meanwhile, I've found (mostly by trial and error) that **mtPaint** and **XnViewMP** are incapable of properly displaying HEIC images. I'm certain that there are other graphics viewers incapable of properly displaying HEIC images, but I'm not prepared to install every graphics viewer in the PCLinuxOS repository just to find out which ones display HEIC images and which ones don't.

HEIC Images: A New Graphics Format Player In The Game

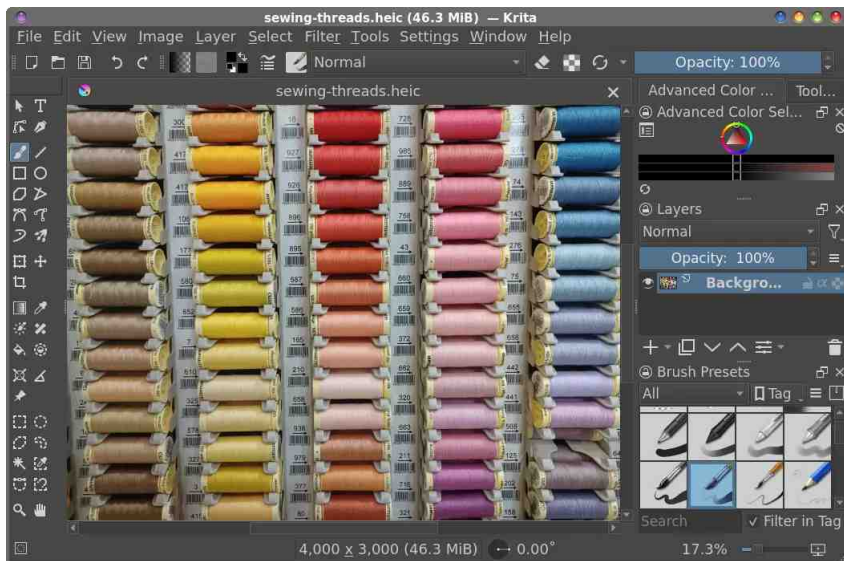
Some HEIC Examples

What would an article about a “new” image format be without some examples? Even with a leisurely search, it’s relatively easy to find some HEIC image samples.

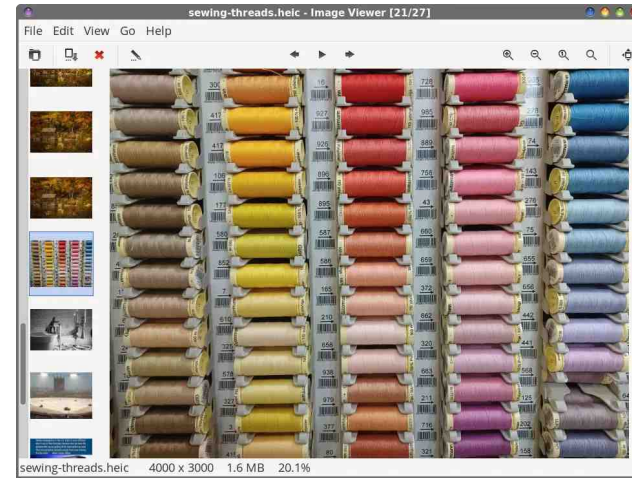
Here is a HEIC image loaded into GIMP:



Here is the same HEIC image loaded into Krita:



Here is Ristretto viewing the same HEIC image:

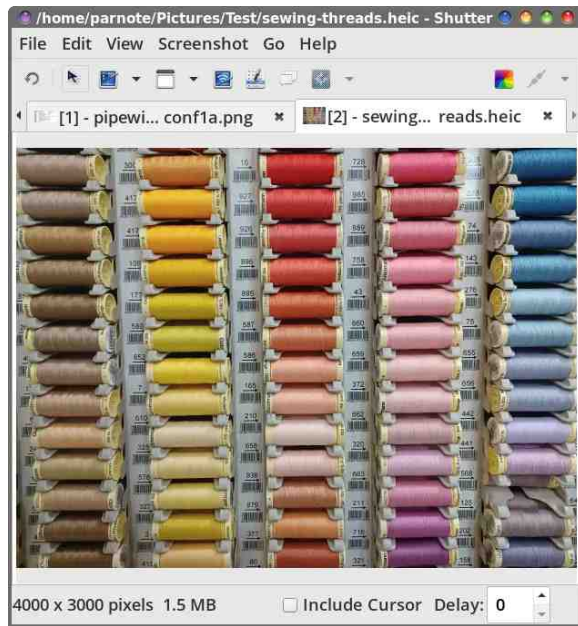


Here is GPicView displaying that same HEIC image:

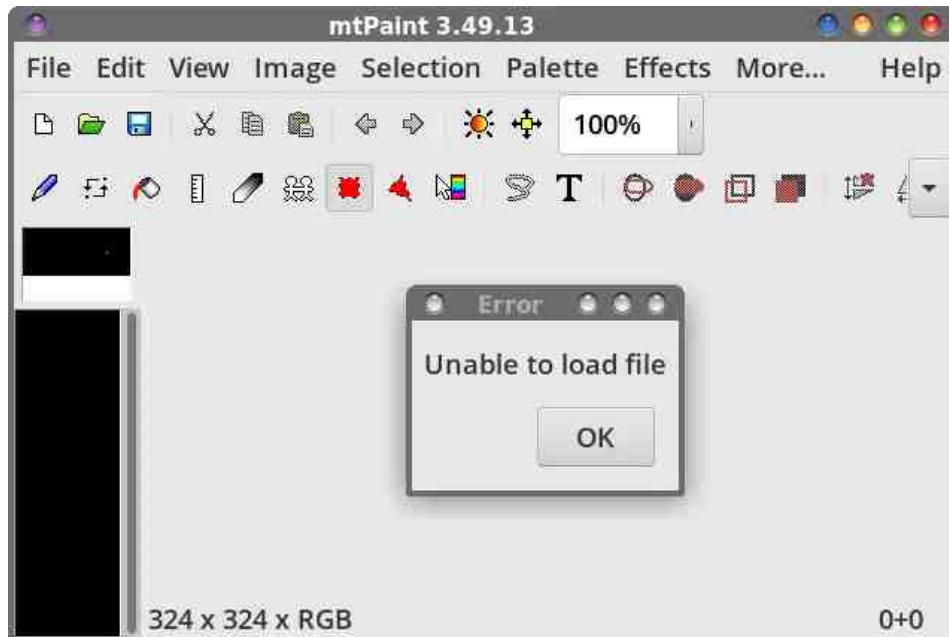


HEIC Images: A New Graphics Format Player In The Game

And, here is Shutter displaying the same HEIC file:

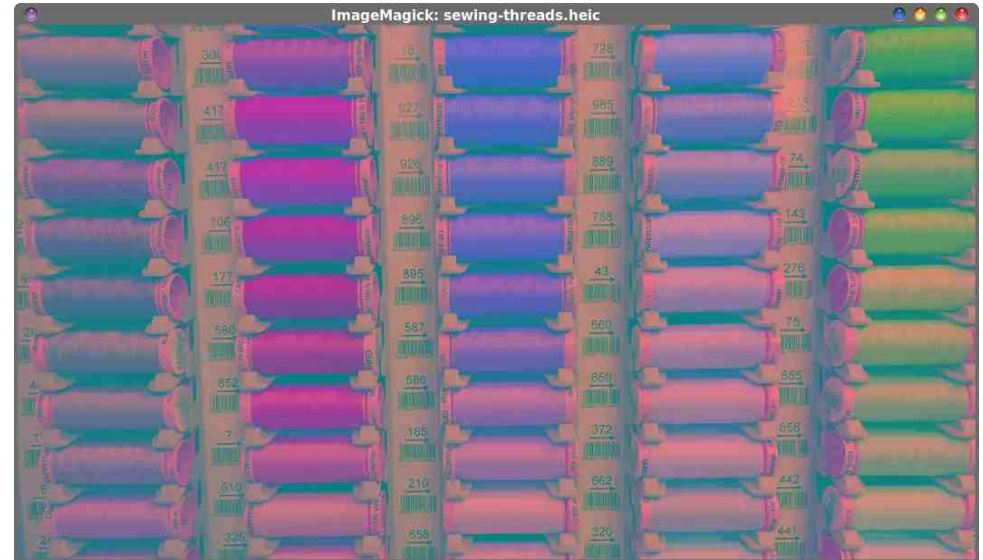


Meanwhile, below is what you see trying to open a HEIC file in mtPaint:



The image below is similar to what you *might* see if an image viewer doesn't properly support the viewing of HEIC files (and this is what I saw the first time I loaded up a HEIC file in GPicView). For this, I used ImageMagick's **display** command (but, ImageMagick DOES support HEIC files, so don't misinterpret this to mean that ImageMagick doesn't support them ... it just means that the "display" command doesn't support HEIC files). I have used my Image Converter script (March 2023 [issue](#)), which leverages ImageMagick for the "heavy lifting," to convert HEIC files to JPG, PNG or WEBP files, and the script produces perfect results.

For what it's worth, just inserting "heic" into line #5 of the aforementioned script, right after "webp" and before "avif," adds the conversion to/from HEIC image files to the script. Easy peasy!



The improper display of colors is one of the first things you might notice, and is what I saw the first time I tried to view a HEIC file in GPicView.

Summary

To be perfectly honest, I have zero ideas of why Apple chose to support HEIC over WEBP. At least WEBP graphics are displayable by most top-tier web browsers, and have found a greater and wider range of acceptance

among users on different platforms. While “this” is only conjecture, I suspect it may have something to do with Google buying up On2 Technologies (the makers of the VP8 codec), and Apple not wanting to tie its fortunes to something owned and controlled by Google, despite WEBP being released for free usage. The “climate” between Apple and Google hasn’t always been “clear skies” or “clear sailing.”

With millions (possibly billions) of “i” devices in use, and with every “i” device saving images in the HEIC image format by default, it’s only a matter of time before we see much wider support for HEIC images.

Still, the image quality from HEIC images is easily on par with that produced by WEBP graphics, and the file sizes are quite small.

While I don’t have a lot of confidence in the MPEG folks (they are the ones who also came up with JPEG2000, JXL and multiple other formats that have failed to gain traction), HEIC images will eventually gain traction as more and more of them proliferate from users of “i” devices.




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Screenshot Showcase



Posted by tbs, July 1, 2024, running KDE.



commandlinefu.com



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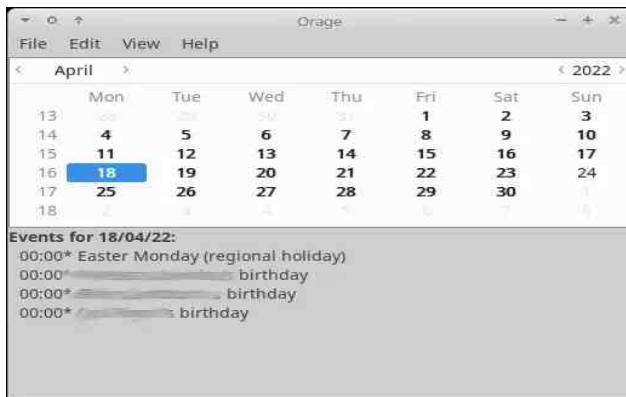
Running Orage From Your Panel Clock

by davecs (Dave Spagnol)

I am really happy that the development of the Xfce Calendar program, Orage, was started again with Xfce 4.18. I was never sure why it was abandoned in Xfce 4.16, as the basic program hasn't really changed, it just needed to link to more modern libraries. But I'm not a programmer, so what do I know?

Orage can be run as a standalone appointments calendar, which stores its data in **ICS** format. Where it becomes really powerful is in conjunction with a background program called **vdirsyncer**. This enables data to be exchanged with online services such as Google Calendar. I [have updated the article I wrote on that](#), to take into account Google's changes in OAuth.

Installing Orage is simple enough in most Linux distros, just go to the package installer, and find it in the "Stable Repo" tab and install!



Despite originally depending on the Xfce panel, nowadays, this will run on pretty much any desktop. When you run Orage, there is a setting under Edit > Preferences > Calendar Window > Calendar Visibility which enables you to see an icon in the System Tray, which will show the day of the month. This way it will run in the background, and when you click on the icon, the Orage window will alternately appear/disappear. But in Xfce (and also with the LXDE panel and some others), you can attach it to a panel clock, which is much nicer in my view.

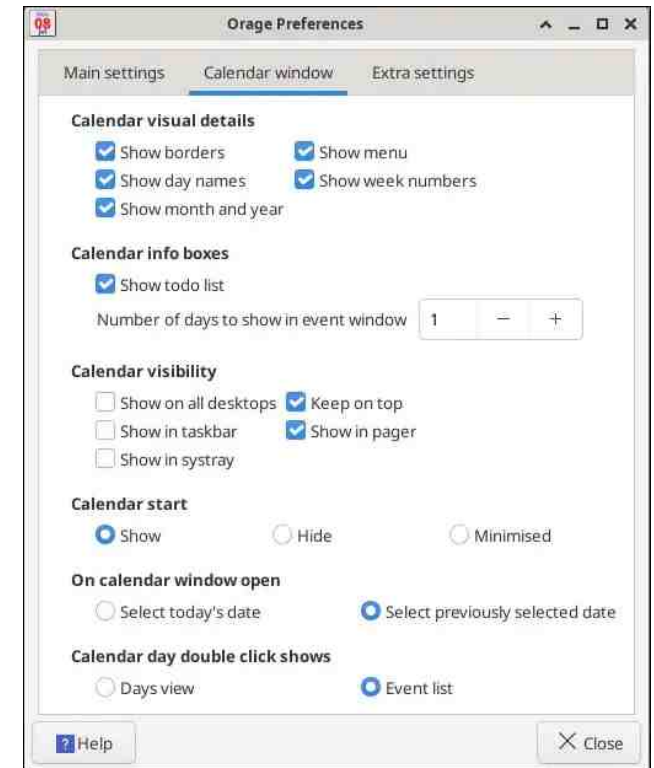
Attaching Orage to the XFCE panel clock:

From Xfce version 4.18, and with some other panels, Orage can be attached to the panel clock. With systems based on Debian Stable, it can take a little work. Both Texstar's PCLinuxOS and the Debian Edition have an up-to-date version of Orage, and the command **orage -t** works as it should. However some Debian-based distros may have an earlier version where **orage -t** doesn't run orage if it's not running already. Here is a script that will take care of it:

```
#!/bin/bash
pidof orage >/dev/null && orage -t
|| orage
```

I called it **orage-flip** and saved it as root in **/usr/local/bin** — you also need to change its properties so that it is executable. On up-to-date

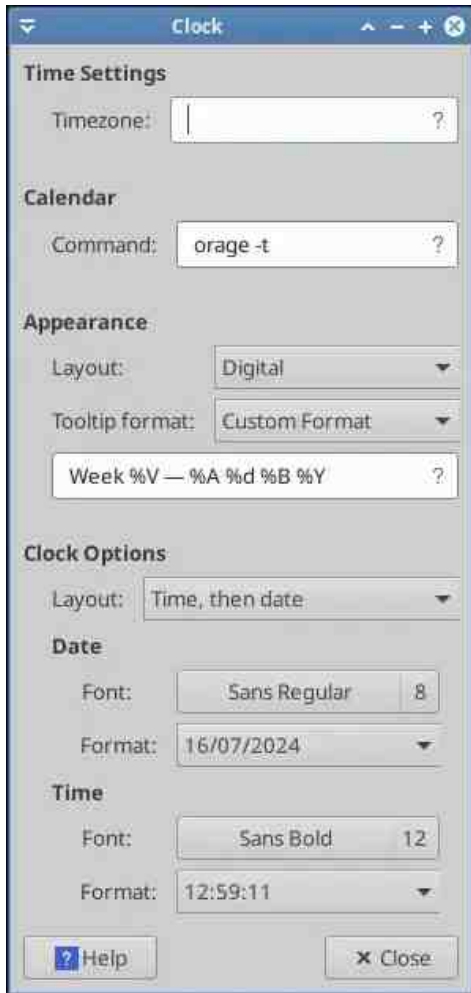
versions, you don't need the script and you only need to put **orage -t** as the command to run when the clock is clicked. To test which version you have, just run **killall orage** followed by **orage -t** from a terminal and see what happens. If orage runs, you don't need the script and just use **orage -t**.



Orage Calendar Settings Window

Since you will be making **Orage** appear and disappear when you click on the clock, you don't need it to show in the taskbar or the

systray. If you are using the **orage-flip** method, set the calendar window preferences as shown.



XFCE 4.18 Clock Properties setting window.

In order to run Orage when you click on the panel clock, all you have to do is to right-click on the clock, select Properties, and put the command in the box as shown on the left. Either **orage-flip** or **orage -t**.

Next Month, we will be showing how to link Orage to your Google Calendar.

(We'd like to thank davecs for allowing The PCLinuxOS Magazine to reproduce this article from his blog, at <https://davespagnol.wordpress.com/2024/07/08/orage-returns/>)



Screenshot Showcase



Posted by Meemaw, July 12, 2024, running Xfce.

Tip Top Tips: Change User Account UID & GID

Editor's Note: Tip Top Tips is a semi-monthly column in The PCLinuxOS Magazine. Periodically, we will feature – and possibly even expand upon – one tip from the PCLinuxOS forum. The magazine will not accept independent tip submissions specifically intended for inclusion in the Tip Top Tips column. Rather, if you have a tip, share it in the PCLinuxOS forum's "Tips & Tricks" section. Occasionally, we may run a "tip" posted elsewhere in the PCLinuxOS forum. Either way, share your tip in the forum, and it just may be selected for publication in The PCLinuxOS Magazine.

This month's [tip](#) was started by **Seacht**, and added to by others from the forum. Let's try to distill it down from those various posts.

Here's Seacht's original post:

Recent changes to the UID used by default on PCLinuxOS ISOs have changed from 500 to 1,000 for the first user created. Should you wish to change your existing user IDs, these two commands are useful.

As root:

To assign a new UID to an existing user:

```
usermod -u 1000 <username>
```

To assign a new GID to an existing group:



Compounded image from [Clker-Free-Vector-Images](#) on [Pixabay](#)

```
groupmod -g 1000 <groupname>
```

All files and folders in the user's home directory will automatically change the UID and GID. However, files and folders outside ~/user will need to be changed manually.

That post led to a question from **AnalogueMan** about another command that Texstar had previously posted. Namely, that command from Texstar is:

```
chown -R username:username /home/  
yourloginname.
```

To answer AnalogueMan's question, **kjpetrie** responded with the following:

That is an alternative command which works a different way in a different situation. Seacht's command is for changing the UID/GID of the existing system without reinstalling to bring it into line with the ISOs and prevent having to use Texstar's command if you do subsequently need to reinstall.

Texstar's command is for use after reinstalling if your files still have the old IDs, though there is the alternative of using Seacht's command the other way round to restore the system to the previous IDs.

So it's either one or the other, but usually not both.

There are subtler issues if you've set up multiple users and groups to maximize your use of UNIX permissions, but if you've done that, you will have the knowledge to work out your best way to restore the intended access after reinstalling.

Armed with that information, AnalogueMan attempted to execute Seacht's commands, after using `su -` to switch to the root user. Something went awry.

tbs chimed in that it will work much better to open a virtual tty window (`Ctrl + Alt + [F1-F7]`), log in as the root user, execute the commands, and then reboot. When you log back in, your `userid` and `groupid` should both be set to the current user and group ID of 1000. To return to

the GUI interface of PCLinuxOS, press a combination of the **Ctrl + Alt + F8** keys.

Keep in mind that Seacht's command ONLY works on files stored in the user's `/home` directory. As **bliss** and **Gerrit Draisma** pointed out, any files on external drives (or any other files NOT stored in the user's `/home` directory) will need to use a different command to change the ownership of those files. That command has to be entered as the root user, and it is:

```
chown -R username:username /path/to/  
folder/you/want/to/change/permissions/  
for
```

That led to another question by AnalogueMan, about why the PCLinuxOS installer update changed the UID and GID from 500 to 1000.

Seacht had the answer:

"Most other Linux distros use IDs of 1,000 and up, so changing PCLOS allows user files to be read by other distros, and [the] PCLinuxOS user to read other distro user files, without the necessity of changing ownership."

And that, as the legendary broadcaster Paul Harvey was famous for saying, is the REST of the story!

A collection of PCLinuxOS merchandise including a white polo shirt, a black t-shirt, a white mug with the PCLinuxOS logo and "radically simple" text, a yellow baseball cap with the PCLinuxOS logo, a black circular mousepad with the PCLinuxOS logo, white shorts with a small PCLinuxOS logo, a white square mousepad with the PCLinuxOS logo, and a white t-shirt with the PCLinuxOS logo.

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PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner Bonus



Hamburger Helper Type Beef Stroganoff

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 packet Lipton Onion Soup Mix
- 4 1/2 cups water
- 1 pound bow tie pasta
- 10 ounces cream of mushroom soup
- 3/4 cup sour cream

INSTRUCTIONS:

Brown the ground beef and then drain off fat in a large skillet that has a lid. Add the onion soup mix and water and mushroom soup mix (if you want). Mix well and bring to a boil.

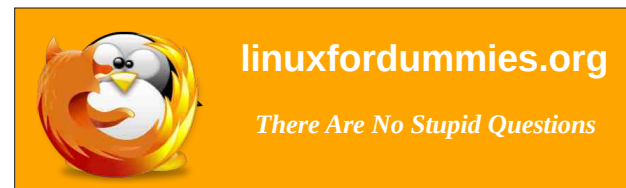
Add the Bow Tie pasta and bring back to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-high and cover. Cook for 10 -12 minutes. Take off heat and gently stir in the sour cream. Enjoy this quick and delicious version, and you won't go back to the box. If you would like to make more of a

meal out of this, add some fresh broccoli or other vegetables.

TIPS:

I suggest that you can go up to 2 pounds of ground beef if you really want a heartier dinner. You may also want to add a couple of small cans of mushrooms to this recipe. You may also want to switch the soup recipe for the Mushroom Soup with Roasted Garlic variety. It would work well too!

If you want a cheesy dish, use cheese instead of sour cream. Throw in some diced tomatoes and really enjoy something nice!



PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

		2		3		4		
9								
		6	1			5	3	
1					6		8	
	2							
	3		5				6	
		7		2		6		8
					9		4	
		4		1		9	7	

SUDOKU RULES: There is only one valid solution to each Sudoku puzzle. The only way the puzzle can be considered solved correctly is when all 81 boxes contain numbers and the other Sudoku rules have been followed.

When you start a game of Sudoku, some blocks will be prefilled for you. You cannot change these numbers in the course of the game.

Each column must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same column of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same. Each row must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same row of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.

Each block must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same block of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.



SCRAPPLER RULES:

1. Follow the rules of Scrabble®. You can view them [here](#). You have seven (7) letter tiles with which to make as long of a word as you possibly can. Words are based on the English language. Non-English language words are NOT allowed.
2. Red letters are scored double points. Green letters are scored triple points.
3. Add up the score of all the letters that you used. Unused letters are not scored. For red or green letters, apply the multiplier when tallying up your score. Next, apply any additional scoring multipliers, such as double or triple word score.
4. An additional 50 points is added for using all seven (7) of your tiles in a set to make your word. You will not necessarily be able to use all seven (7) of the letters in your set to form a "legal" word.
5. In case you are having difficulty seeing the point value on the letter tiles, here is a list of how they are scored:
 - 0 points: 2 blank tiles
 - 1 point: E, A, I, O, N, R, T, L, S, U
 - 2 points: D, G
 - 3 points: B, C, M, P
 - 4 points: F, H, V, W, Y
 - 5 points: K
 - 8 points: J, X
 - 10 points: Q, Z
6. Optionally, a time limit of 60 minutes should apply to the game, averaging to 12 minutes per letter tile set.
7. Have fun! It's only a game!



Triple Word



Double Word



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Possible score 261, average score 183.



August 2024 Word Find

Picnic Supplies

K O S T U I D W F Y E W P D Q O F Y E T G Y F Y F A K L O D
 Z H M J O W X W S B O M F C N V X H I L A W N C H A I R V Y
 D C O E D K N I W R B K B V K Z D H Z A M K H K R F L P H B
 M S Q E M A G L L A B I T A Y E K A C T R O H S K P D A A E
 S S J C T C D E V H B X Z P V Q G P L A T E S N I U U R M Y
 M W K N B I L X Y P W V L I L L R X X A Y J U F D K C K B B
 M T M W D U S U J C L S U U E A F F L D S F Y O N C T T U D
 J N E T T N R P D M S G R J A I Y M V I C O F G D P J R R X
 U N O V X E U R M K P G U S V T G G U P I F T X N N E D G Y
 K T F I T W A O I A M A O M L T C R R R N S R A A N O U E A
 X J X L T Y J O R O C N H D D A R Y D O K T G X T I J I R T
 Z C E A K A Y X V G S K A A T A W W P O U A P O S O Y L C U
 G H X C P X E J F K P F Q C K O W N I D O N I W D W P T D V
 S O A U P I J R N P A M S H E M H I C Y Q F D M N Y P Y Q N
 B B N D S T P I C U T O A E Y F D F N H U S R C A M O R F N
 Z E L D D I R G Z E W J L C H M P L I O A M X E B L L I R G
 T R C E W D L O I A R V G D D C U Q C R U I C Z G N S L J F
 C A B E T Q S V T J F Q H J W H N M T W X E R O F N W V G E
 Q E Z F M S N E E K A E E B G F F E A W B U K S C H I K X E
 B S O N C B R M L R L W Q W Z I T V B H V C W K G Z X F A U
 B S N D M L P T A B W L L A B Y E L L O V E D Y G D C X F T
 F U K R H M Q D A O A A V E B W T V E B B B V E V J P D E S
 H R Z T F V W T P D S T R A W B E R R Y V R P S O J B F P I
 X Q W C X E Z W O G X I D E L G W U V E K A C F O E C E I P
 S J T O A D R O V P F G R S U L F X E F Z B S A K J S T J E
 L N H O G M O Z D P D Q I D M V J A K L S E F M V R E M C T
 R U E L G U H X M O C J N H D C Y U E O R S C I C L H U X R
 D V A E R T P A H O V B K X L X P X E O V B J L Y H T H M O
 M A E R C E C I E D A M E M O H A Z M P N X T Y Z X E R M D
 J W J N N I N V L U F C U C S W X S L B O A Y P X Z H P P Z

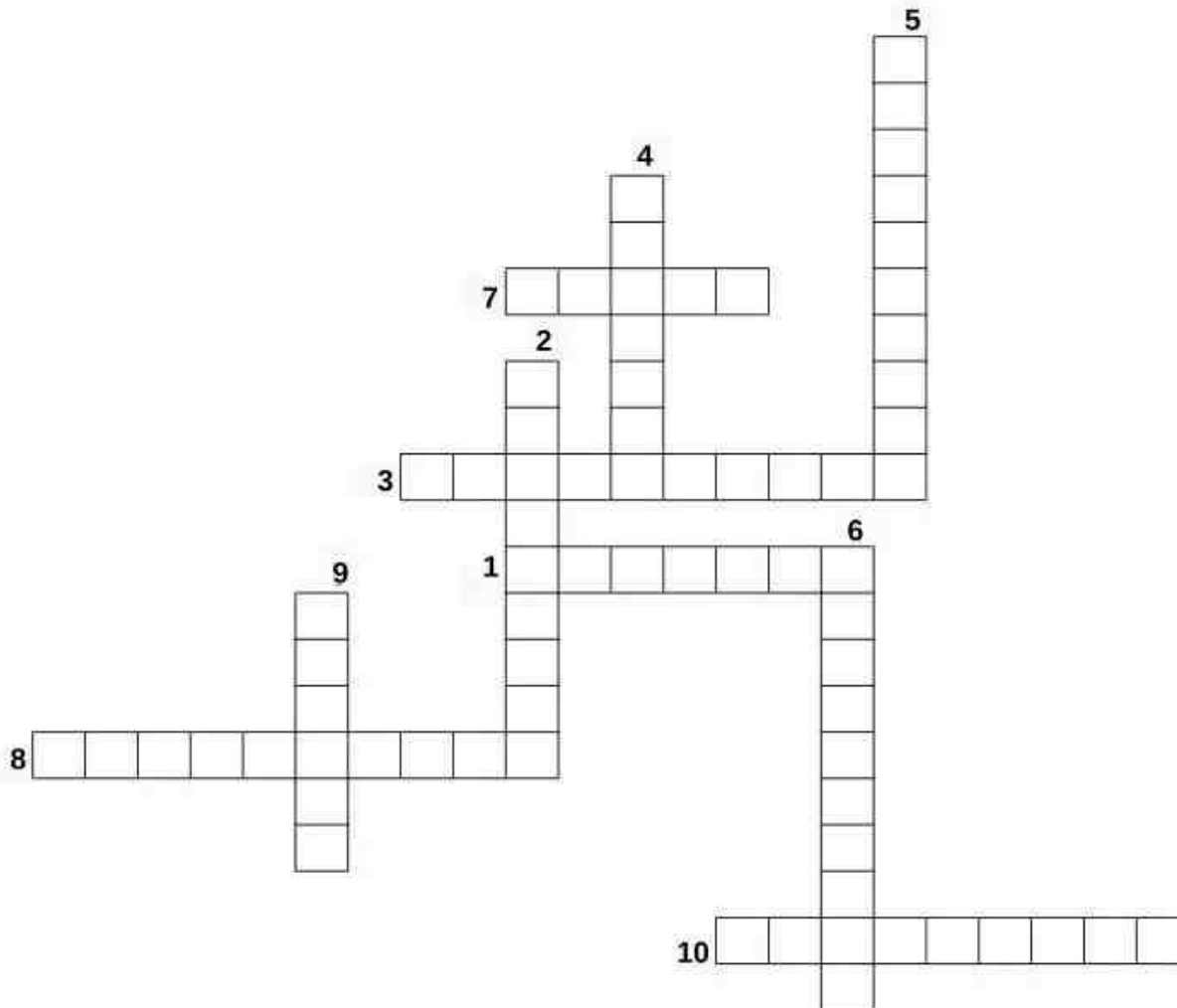
- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| PICNIC TABLE | LAWN CHAIRS |
| BENCHES | CAMPFIRE |
| PIECE OF CAKE | CAMPSITE |
| STRAWBERRY | SHORTCAKE |
| S'MORES | TABLES |
| HOMEMADE ICE CREAM | |
| SLOPPY JOE | POTATO SALAD |
| LAWN CHAIR | FAMILY |
| COOLER | PLATES |
| SILVERWARE | DRINK |
| GRILL | CAMPGROUND |
| PARK | SHELTER |
| TABLE | BARBECUE |
| RECREATION | PLAYGROUND |
| GRIDDLE | BACKYARD |
| POOL | BALLGAME |
| HOT DOGS | WATER |
| BANDSTAND | FINGER FOOD |
| VOLLEYBALL | SOFT DRINKS |
| HAMBURGER | |

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August 2024 Crossword

Picnic Supples



1. A structure that provides cover or protection, as from the weather.
2. An outdoor platform, often roofed, for people to enjoy a musical group's performance.
3. Small types of food that can be eaten without the use of silverware.
4. A flat metal surface, such as a pan, that is used for cooking.
5. A piece of ground used for recreation, especially containing equipment such as slides or swings.
6. Refreshment of ones mind or body after work through activity that amuses or stimulates; play.
7. A type of cooking equipment where the cooking surface consists of an open rack or grate with a heat source underneath.
8. An area used for setting up tents or vehicles to sleep in.
9. Confection made from graham crackers, marshmallows, and chocolate bars.
10. A bun filled or covered with ground beef cooked in a spicy tomato sauce.

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Mixed-Up-Meme Scrambler



HACCO



NOMUD



DERAIV



LEEPPPO



Important to do when you marry twice.

“ _____ ”

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