Linux Mint
Computer Handbook

Based on Linux Mint Debian Edition 4

Edition 2
August 2020

Revised for Public Use

LG Computers 4 All

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Bill Bishop
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LG Computers 4 All

Computing Power to The People!
La Grange, Texas, and Surrounding Areas
lgcomputers4all.org

Edition 2 | August 2020

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Computer Handbook

Based on Linux Mint Debian Edition 4

Created for the recipients of computers from LG Computers 4 All

Revised for Public Use

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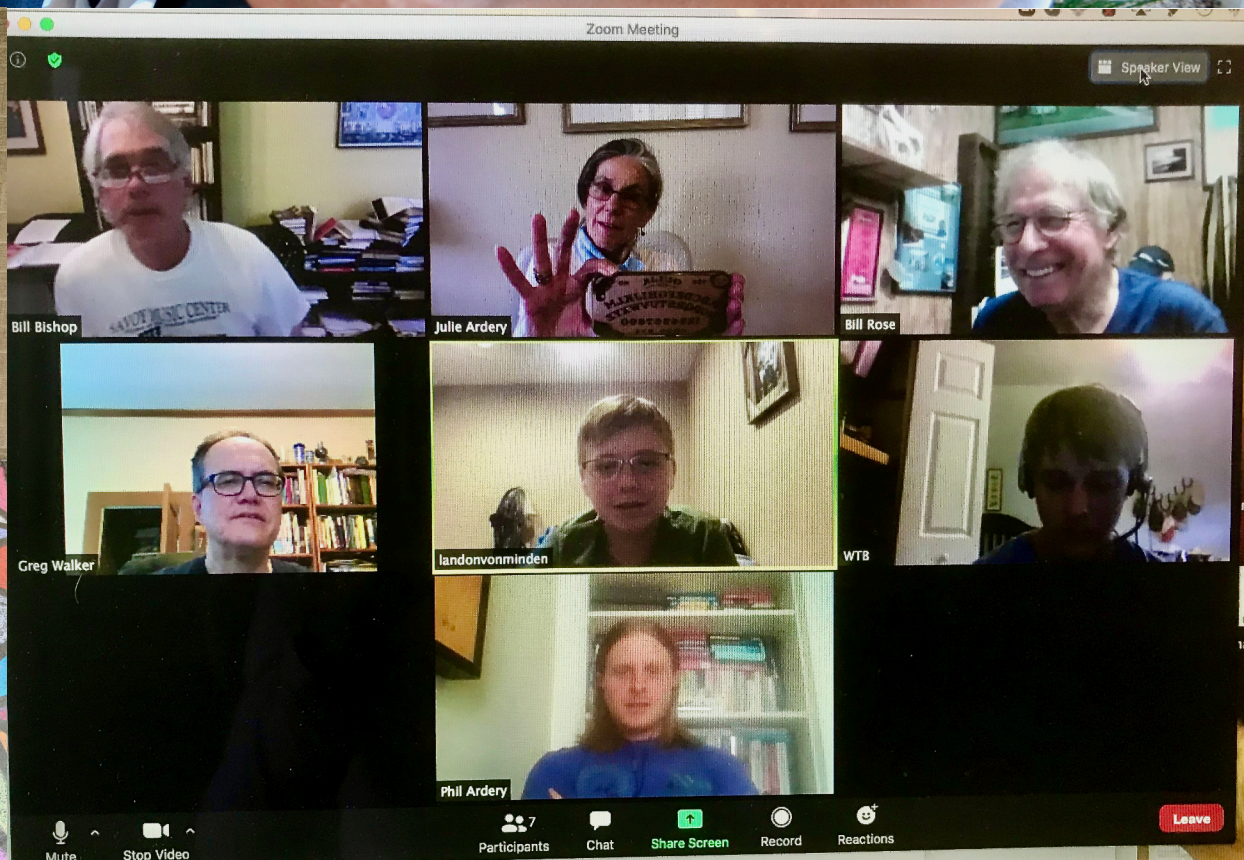
Zoom Meeting
Speaker View
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WTB
Phil Ardery
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Welcome to the Handbook!

Welcome to the *Linux Mint Computer Handbook*. This guide was created by LG Computers 4 All for the recipients of our refurbished Linux Mint computers, and has been revised for public use. This handbook is broken up into three guides: Basic, Intermediate and Advanced.

LG Computers 4 All is a volunteer organization that rehabs old computers with Linux Mint. We then give the computers away to members of our community here in Fayette County, Texas. We found that there was a lack of basic training resources for Linux Mint, so we decided to create our own. We created a comprehensive handbook specific to our users, however we revised it to create what you are now reading. We wanted to make these basic resources available to the Linux Mint community.

While this guide is based on Linux Mint Debian Edition, most of it can be applied to any Linux Mint edition.

Wether you have received a computer from another "Computers 4 All" organization, or you are interested in starting your own, we hope this guide is useful. If you are interested in starting your own computer refurbishment program, visit lgcomputers4all.org/diy.

We also hope this guide will allow those who aren't familiar with computers learn using the Linux Mint operating system.

If you have any questions, please direct them to the Linux Mint forums online or ask your local "Computers 4 All" organization if available.

You are allowed to share, edit, and reproduce this guide as long as it is not for the purpose of making a profit.

Enjoy!








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Part 1

Basic Guide

Basic Terminology

This section will introduce to you the main parts of your computer equipment and the terms that will be used throughout the rest of the handbook. As you learn more about your computer, all these terms will make more sense. Don't give up! You got this!

What is a Computer?

A computer is a machine that can perform many different operations, from searching on the internet and sending emails to complex record keeping and editing videos. There are two main parts of a computer: its hardware and its software.

Hardware and Software

Hardware refers to the parts of the computer you can touch. It's the things that are physically there. The software, which you can't see, actually controls the hardware and determines what you see on the screen. The computer's main software is called an Operating System. You may have heard of Windows; it is a popular operating system. Your computer uses a different system, also very popular, called Linux Mint. Linux Mint is used because it's a very secure operating system. Plus it's free and it runs well on computers that may be older.

Laptops vs. Desktops

There are two main types of personal computers: laptops and desktops.

A laptop is a portable computer that has a built-in screen, keyboard and trackpad. The screen and keyboard fold together to make a laptop small so it can be easily and safely carried around.

A desktop looks like a tower. It doesn't have a keyboard, screen, or trackpad built in; instead these devices are separate and plug into the desktop. A desktop is much bigger than a laptop and is meant to remain on a desk. An all-in-one is a type of desktop that does have a built-in screen, however it, too, is large and meant to stay stationary.

What is a Monitor?

A monitor is a screen that plugs into a desktop. Unlike laptops, most desktops do not have built-in screens; you need to plug in a monitor to be able to work with a desktop computer.

Keyboard

The keyboard provides one main way you interact with your computer; you direct the computer to do what you want by typing letters, words, and other characters. Laptops have built-in keyboards, while desktops have external keyboards that are plugged into the desktop tower.

Important Keys on the Keyboard

An important key on the keyboard is the "enter" key (sometimes labeled as "return"). This key will tell the computer to go. If you type in your password, you can press the enter key, and it will submit your password to the computer.

The shift key (one is located just below "enter" on the right of the keyboard) is also another important key. When you type normally, every letter appears as

lowercase (small). To type a capital letter, hold down one of the shift keys as you type the letter. The shift key will also type several symbols (like @ and %) that appear on the number keys.

Free Typing Lessons

If you are interested in free typing lessons to help you type faster, visit bit.ly/2Og8VNd and create a free account.

Mouse/Trackpad

A mouse is an external device that plugs into your computer. A mouse makes it possible for you to guide your computer, telling it what to do. On a laptop, a trackpad (the rectangle just below your keyboard) does the same thing, but it's built in to the laptop computer itself.

Clicking With a Mouse/Trackpad

Both a trackpad and mouse have two different kinds of clicks: left-click and right-click. As you'd expect, to left-click you simply press and release the left button/left side on your mouse or trackpad. A left-click is how you click normally, to activate some step you've chosen for the computer to take (open an app, send your email...). A right-click typically will bring up more options in a menu. To right-click, press the right button/side on your mouse or trackpad.

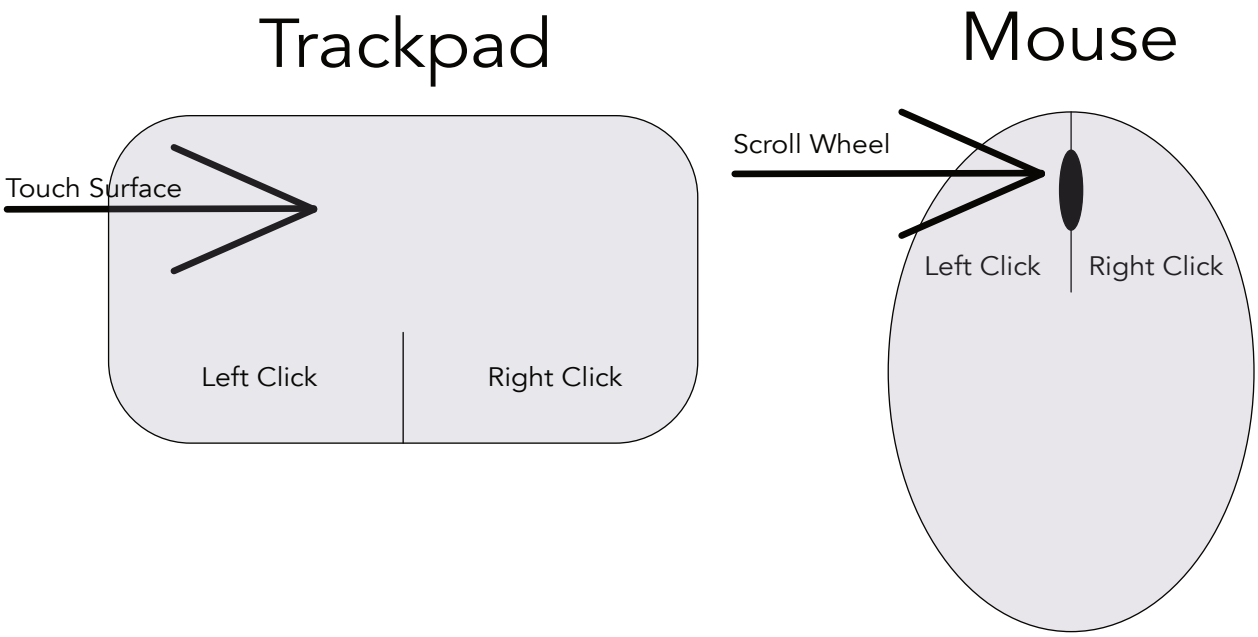
Since left-clicking is the more common way to click, when you hear click in the rest of the guide, you can assume we are referring to left-clicking. We may also specify left-click or right-click. You may find you need to click your mouse or trackpad twice quickly; this is called a double-click.

Cursor

The cursor is the pointer on the screen that you move around with the mouse or trackpad. Sometimes, especially in text documents, the cursor appears as a small blinking line. To click buttons to activate some feature of your computer or to begin typing in any space on your screen, you first have to move the cursor to the button or location where you want to work, and then left-click.

Scrolling

To scroll (move up or down) using a mouse, move the little wheel in between the left and right buttons. To scroll using a trackpad, you can either move two fingers up or down at the same time on the touch surface, or you can press the left-click button and move the slider on the right-side of the screen. Scrolling is most commonly done while searching on the internet. (See *Browsing the Internet* in Part 2).



Even though laptops have trackpads built in, you can plug in a mouse just like for a desktop. Many people find a mouse simpler to use; however, use whatever is more comfortable for you.

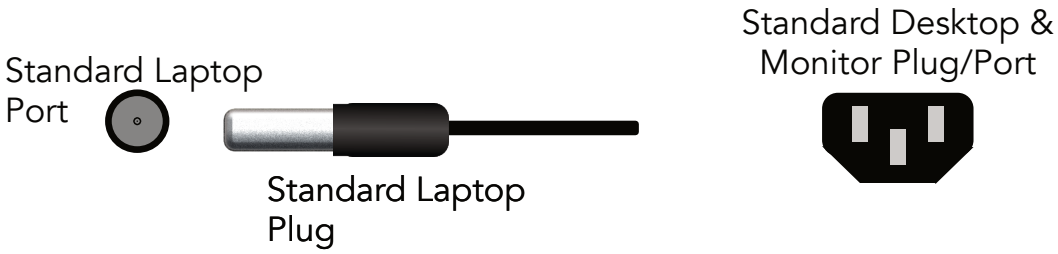
[T I P**]**- There is a type of mouse that's wireless. If you have a wireless mouse and it isn't working, you may need to replace the batteries.

Ports on Your Computer

On your computer there are places where you can plug in other devices. In this next section, we will briefly go over some of the most common ports found on your computer.

Charging/Power Port

Charging ports, also known as power ports, may look different on different types of computers, but they all have the same function. You plug the power cord into the port to charge/power your computer. (See *Powering Your Computer On/Off* later in Part 1 for more information about charging/powering your computer).



USB Ports

A USB Port allows you to plug in a mouse, keyboard, webcam, printer, thumb drive and many other items into your computer. Your computer probably will have more than one of these ports so you can use several such devices at a time. External keyboards usually have a couple of USB ports too.



VGA and HDMI Ports

These two ports are used for connecting a computer to a monitor. The image on the left shows a VGA port, and the image on the right shows an HMDI cable. Your computer may not have a VGA or HDMI port.





Audio Jack

Most computers have a small circular hole called a 3.5 Millimeter Jack, or simply a "headphone jack." Your computer may have more than one of these. You can plug in a headset, earbuds, speakers, or a microphone.

If your computer has two jacks, one is meant for a microphone and one for speakers. If you have a headset that has speakers and a microphone, you will

need an audio splitter that takes the one jack from your headphone and splits it into two jacks. Keep in mind that if your computer only has one jack, the splitter isn't necessary.

DVD/CD Drive

While it isn't a port, the DVD/CD Drive bears mentioning. Your computer may or may not have one, but if it does, you can play CDs or DVDs on your computer.

What are Apps?

Apps are programs that you can run on your computer. Apps allow you to play music, edit videos, play games, and create documents. Apps can do so many different things! A number of apps have already been installed on your computer: a web browser, an email program, apps for writing and filing & more. As you work with your computer, you may discover and use many more apps. (See *Software Manager* in Part 3 of the handbook).

Powering Your Computer On and Off

Locating the Power Button

The power button is in a different spot on every computer. It also looks different computer to computer.

Laptop Power Button

The power button is usually a circle above the keyboard, however it could be a rectangle, and it could even be located on the side. The button may have a power symbol in it as well.



This is what the power symbol may look like.

Desktop Power Button

The power button on a desktop is usually a circle on the front of the device. It usually has a power symbol within it as well.

Turning Your Computer On

To turn your computer on, press the power button. The computer should turn on, and it will load through and show different text. You should not have to do anything until it shows your name on the screen. Once it shows your name, enter your password and then type the enter (or return) key.

Turning Your Computer Off

To turn your computer off, you can go to the menu (see *LM Button (Entering the Menu* in Part 3) and click the orange shutdown button, OR you can press the power button. Either way, a window should come up with 5 buttons. There are two important buttons here: Restart and Shutdown.

Restart

Restart is the middle button in the window. This will turn off your computer and turn it back on. This option is good if your computer is slower than usual or if it is not working well.

Shutdown

Shutdown is the Red button all the way to the right. Shutdown will turn your computer off until you turn it back on again.

Powering your Computer

Laptops

Your computer must have electric power to work. Laptops have batteries that can store power. This allows you to plug in your laptop, charge the battery, and then unplug it and use it without its being plugged in. Laptops are very similar to cell phones when it comes to charging.

[T I P**]**- Some laptop batteries may not hold a charge. This means they have to

stay plugged in to work. If your laptop does not turn on, make sure it is plugged in because the battery may not be providing power.

Desktops

Desktops do not have batteries. They have to be plugged in to turn on. Make sure your monitor is plugged in as well. It too may need to be turned on. The monitor power button is usually at the bottom or underneath the screen.

Where Do I Plug in My Computer?

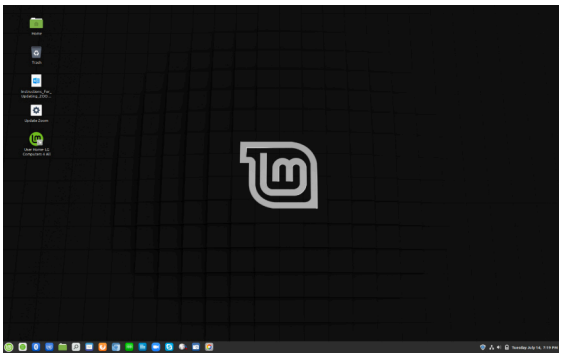
All computers have a charging/power port. For help locating this port, see *Ports on Your Computer,* earlier in Part 1.

Password

Your computer probably has a password assigned to it. This password allows you to sign in, download apps, and perform other system changes. Make sure to write down your password in a safe spot. When asked for a password, you usually use your computer login password. One exception is for Zoom. Zoom may ask for a password, but it is different from your computer password (See *Zoom* in Part 2).

Layout of Desktop

This is the desktop. The desktop is what you first see when you turn on your computer. It has apps, files and shortcuts on it, and at the bottom, it has a black strip called the panel. The panel is where you can pin your most important apps at.



This bottom row is the panel.

Apps Pinned to the Panel

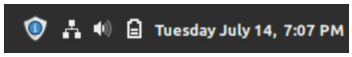
The panel is the black strip at the bottom of the screen. It includes a variety of important apps. See below for an example of some apps that are good to pin to the panel. See *Customization* in Part 3 for instructions on how to edit the panel apps. If it has a * next to it, it does not come pre-installed on your computers.



This long bar is the panel.



Here is an example of the panel with some useful apps pinned to it:



Here are the system icons that are on the right side of the panel. Please note that these icons can change depending on the apps you are using. This side of the panel always shows your date, time, battery, sound, WiFi, and Update icons.

Menu where you can access all your apps

Software Manager to download more apps

Bluetooth to connect bluetooth devices

Languages to switch languages

Files where all your files are

****Catfish File Search*** to search your files

Thunderbird to use your email

Firefox to browse the web

****Chromium*** to also browse the web

LibreOffice Calc to make spreadsheets

LibreOffice Writer to write documents

****Zoom*** to video conference

****Skype*** to also video conference

****Pulse Audio*** to adjust volume of your mic & speakers

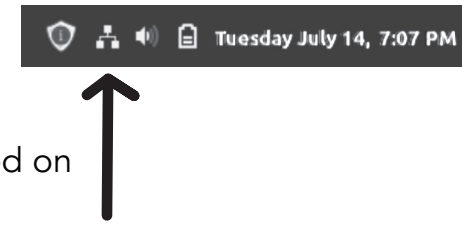
Screenshot to take pictures of your screen

Pix to view your photos.

Internet Access/WiFi

You have to be connected to the internet to do some things on your computer such as browsing for websites, checking your email, and Zooming. You can write your own documents, create spreadsheets, and use your computer in other ways without internet; however internet allows you to do the most with your machine.

You can connect your computer to WiFi or plug it into the wall if you have ethernet ports wired in your home. View the image below to see the icon to click to connect to WiFi.



Here is the icon you press to connect to the WiFi. It is located on the right side of the panel.

More Internet Options

If you do not have internet access at home, don't worry! See the options below:

Getting Home Internet

Internet providers vary depending on where you live.

Shop around and find the best deal for home internet. If you can't find any plans in your price range, call these companies and ask for a cheaper price. For one laptop, you only need 3-5 Mbps for browsing the internet and Zooming. If internet service isn't within your budget, there are still two more options.

Using Public Internet

Many public places provide free internet to their customers. You can bring your laptop to any of these public places to use their WiFi. It's a good idea to bring your charger along as well (not a possibility for desktop users). Here are several places that may have public WiFi:

- Ask your Chamber of Commerce
- A coffee shop
- McDonalds
- Ask your neighbor or friend if you can use their internet
- A local bakery
- Your local school
- Your public library
- Many more Restaurants and Public Places!

Using a Hotspot

If you have a wireless phone plan, you may be able to use your phone as a *hotspot.* This means you can use your phone's internet as WiFi for your computer. On your phone, search for *Hotspot* in settings. If you have this feature available, it will let you turn it on. Then, use your computer to connect to the WiFi network that your phone makes. For more information regarding your wireless plan and hotspots, contact your wireless provider.

Link to LG Computers 4 All Public Resources

We are excited to make our resources we have created available to the public for free. To access these resources, visit lgcomputers4all.org/public-resources. While there may not be much at the time of development of this handbook, we hope to add more in the future. We also hope to create video help series, and we will make that available on the webpage as well.

How to Open and Close Apps

After you open an app, you may want to close, expand, or minimize it. To do any of these, take your cursor to the upper right corner of the app window. You will see the three icons below:



The first icon on the left will minimize the window. This does not quit an app, however it will make the window disappear until you click it again on the panel. Clicking on the the middle icon will expand the window and make it bigger. The last icon, at the right – the green circle with the X – will close and quit the app.

Part 2
Intermediate Guide

Browsing the Internet

What's a Browser?

A browser is the tool you use to search the internet. You can find your favorite song, a recipe, the price of a new car, a YouTube video, etc... You can find almost anything.

But you need a browser to get there.

You have one default browser. You can find it at the bottom panel of your computer screen. The browser is called Firefox. Its icon is an orange square with a fox wrapped inside. There is also a second browser called Chromium that can be installed from the software manager. If someone set up your computer, it may already be installed. It is quite useful to have it installed if it is not already! It's blue with a circle in the center.

Use your mouse to left-click the browser you want to use.

Searching

Click again in the long, narrow search box at the top of the screen. Then type what you want to find.

Say you are looking for a recipe for lasagna. Type "recipe for lasagna" and then

click return/enter. The browser won't begin working until you hit return.

Then what?

In the big part of the screen you will then see all kinds of "links" to stories, recipes, YouTubes, pictures….everything you want to know about lasagna. Links look like this:

https://www.simplyrecipes.com/recipes/lasagna/

If one of these links looks interesting left-click once on the blue, underlined text.

The browser will then take you to that page. There, you can read more, click on other links, explore.

If you don't like that page, left-click on the arrow pointing to the left at the top left hand corner of the page. This will return you to the previous page on the browser.

[T I P**]**- This backward arrow is very helpful; you can easily return to the last page you were viewing. If you keep on clicking the back arrow, you'll keep moving back to earlier page views.

Surfing

It sounds complicated, but it isn't. Just explore. Search for something, click, click more, go back. Just play. (Some call this "surfing" the Internet.) You can't hurt anything.

Chromium and Firefox basically work in the same way. Type what you are looking for in the search box and hit return.

Ok, go for it!

Specific Links

You can also type in specific links that will take you to a certain page. Type in the link to the same search bar at the top of the browser. The link

lgcomputers4all.org will take you to our website. We've included short links throughout this guide. They look like this: bit.ly/lgcomputers4all. That short link will also take you to our website. Short links are links that we shorten down so they are easier for you to type into your computer.

Other Things to Know About Browser

Bookmarks

If you want to save a page you've found, you can bookmark it. While you are on the page you want to save, find "bookmarks" at the top of the browser. Click on it. Then follow the instructions to save the "address" to that page. When you want to return to that page, go to your bookmarks, find the page you want and click. No muss, no fuss. No hunting all over again.

Which Browser?

It's up to you. Chromium is made by Google, so you may find that other Google apps want you to use Chromium. For instance, if you want to get a gmail email account, it's easier to use Chromium to do that. But try them both!

Copying/Pasting and Sending a Link

If you want to send a page to someone, copy the link and then paste it in an email. For instructions on how to copy and paste, see this link: bit.ly/32vTPM7

LibreOffice Writer

About LibreOffice Writer

What is it?

This is a super-typewriter for anything you want to compose. Writer also makes it easy to save what you've written on your computer, to edit it later, to share it with others in email, and to print it.

Where Is It?

The symbol for LibreOffice Writer is the blue square with four white lines, and it can be found in the menu. It may already be pinned to the panel as well.

Why Would I Use It?

Use Writer to create any document out of words and/or images: schoolwork, a letter, a report, your diary, a flyer to announce a yard sale, a resume, a receipt, a recipe, an invitation….

How Do I Use It?

Watch the video below: (Type in the link in your web browser).

In English: bit.ly/2WiiBv7

In Spanish: bit.ly/3gRd8TO

(Because this program is already on your computer, you don't need to install it. Just watch the short introduction, seconds 0-22 of the video, then skip to 2:22 in the Youtube video to see how to use it.)

The steps:

1. Open – Left-click LibreOffice Writer to open the program.

2. Compose – Move your cursor onto the empty "page." Left-click to station your cursor on the page and start writing. (You can change the styles and sizes of your letters and do many other things to enhance the look of what you compose. Play with the toolbar!)

3. Save as you go -- Don't wait until you've finished the document you're working on to save it. It's awful to work hard on something only to lose it (computer loses battery power, you mistakenly hit a wrong key and delete your work….lots of things can happen). Save as you go.

How? Move your cursor to "File" at the far left of the black bar at the top. Left-

click to open a menu. Move your cursor to "Save As" and left-click.

Look along the left. You'll see a list of locations where the computer can place your document. Either the Desktop or the Documents folder is a good place to store your work so you can find it easily again. Click on whichever of those locations you prefer.

Then give your document a name:

See the blank space at top: Name: Untitled

Give your document a name you will recognize:

Tom's resume

Chemistry homework, September 5th

Recipe for lasagna

Type the name into the Untitled spot.

Move your cursor to the bottom left and click "Save"

Your computer will then save what you've done so far in the location you picked. It will return you to the page and you can keep on working.

4. Close the document: To close it, return your cursor to the File item, top left of the page. Click that to open the menu, move the cursor to "Close." If you have made recent changes, Writer will ask if you want to save these changes. Usually you will want to click "Save" to keep all your work. You'll then be shown a page of your most recent documents. This is handy, as now you can easily return to this document or something else to work on, or you can close the display by clicking on the small arrow in the green circle at top left.

Now what?

You can reopen this file later on to change it. If you've located it on your desktop, you should see it and can open it by double left-clicking on the file (it will look like a tiny piece of notebook paper). If you forget where the document

is on your computer, you can use the Catfish File Search app. It will have to be installed from the Software Manager if not done so already. (it looks like a tiny spyglass). Type the name of your file, or just one word of the name, like “recipe'' or “homework” and you’ll get a list of files that include that word. Then double left-click on the one you want to open, and there it will be.

You can also send a document or group of documents from your computer to someone else through email, as an attachment, or if you have access to a printer, you can print it. If you don’t own a printer, you can download your file onto a USB flash drive (sometimes called a thumb drive) and plug that thumb drive into a system that does have a printer to make a paper copy.

Email

What Does Email Do?

Email allows you to send messages, documents, links to web pages and pictures to other people who have email addresses. To use email you need an address. If you don’t have an email address, look below to see how to get one.

I Have An Email Address. How Do I Sign In?

You get your email on this computer using the Thunderbird app. It comes on the computer already installed! The icon is blue with an envelope in the middle. (Email, get it?) Left click it. You then need to set up your email account. There are three boxes to fill in.

Click in the top box and put in the name of your account. (You can put in multiple accounts. Name them so you can keep them separate.)

In the middle box, type in your email address. (Remember, to move your cursor to a new box, left-click in that box.)

In the bottom box, type your password. You can then tell Thunderbird to remember your password if you don’t want to type it in each time you check

your email.

Click on "continue" and, eventually, your email will appear. You're ready to go.

Using Thunderbird

In Thunderbird, you can send email and see the email sent to you. The emails sent to you are in the middle of the page. New or unread emails are in bold type. Click on the email you want to read and the full text will appear.

To write an email, look to the top of the screen and a little to the left. Click on "Write." Put in the email address of the person you want to write, add a "subject" line (telling what the email is about) and then type your message. To send, hit "send." That's it!

Other Email Tips & Issues

Address Book

It's impossible to remember everyone's email address. Thunderbird has an Address Book. There is an address book button on the top bar.

Basically, Thunderbird remembers the names and addresses of people who send you emails. If you want to send an email to "Bob Smith," you begin typing Bob Smith in the address box of a new email and Thunderbird will give you the email for him if it's in the address book. You can add addresses, too.

Email Management

It's easy for emails to get out of hand. It helps to put emails you want to keep in folders. You create a folder by clicking on the three horizontal bars in the top right-hand corner of the screen, slide down to "new" and then click on "folder." Name your folder -- say "Mom" for emails from your mother. You can create any number of folders. To put emails in the proper folder, click and drag emails and drop them in a folder.

Getting An Email Address

There are many places where you can get an email address. Lots of people use Gmail, from Google. Here is a youtube that explains how to get your own email address. It's best to use the Chromium browser to get this done:

In English: bit.ly/2Wi87fo

In Spanish: bit.ly/2CuyCXS

Zoom

Why Zoom?

Zoom allows groups of people to meet, talk and share information online. In a Zoom meeting you will be able to see and hear everyone attending, and everyone can talk to each other!

Zoom is used everywhere. Teachers are holding Zoom classes with their students around the globe. Zoom is a very important tool in today's world. Zoom does not come with your computer. It also has to be installed, but it has to be installed from the web. Again, like any other apps that aren't automatically installed, they may have already been installed by someone else.

How Do I Zoom?

You have been invited to a Zoom meeting. The person holding the meeting has sent you three things:

The time of the meeting.

The meeting number, which looks something like: 773 342 1111

Sometimes, the host of the meeting will also send a password that you'll be asked for and will need to type in before you can enter the meeting. (This password is different than the password used to log onto your computer.)

Using Zoom

The Zoom app is blue, with a white camera-looking design in the middle. Left-click it.

That will bring up a screen with four options. You will want to "Join Meeting." Left-click it.

It will ask you for a meeting number. Type in the number of your meeting INCLUDING the spaces between the sets of numbers.

You may be asked for the password. Type it. The password must be exact. If the password has CAPITAL letters, make them CAPITAL.

Zoom will ask you if it can use your camera and microphone. Say yes/allow to both.

Odds are you will then be put in a "waiting room." The leader of the meeting will eventually draw you into the meeting.

Check to make sure your camera and microphone are on by scrolling over the page and looking at the bottom left hand corner. You'll see a little microphone and a little camera. If either one has a red line going across it, that means your camera or mic is off. To turn it on, click the icon. The red line should disappear.

You are now Zooming!

Tips

Practice!

Everybody has trouble with Zoom at first. Everybody. The password is messed up. The sound doesn't work, or the camera. So, practice.

Find an experienced Zoom user and practice joining a meeting. Make sure your camera and microphone are working. Then quit and practice again.

Chat

Move your cursor to the bottom of the Zoom screen and you'll find a "Chat" button. If you left-click it, a box will appear. At the bottom of the Chat box you'll see "Type Message Here." You can send written messages to other people in the meeting by typing what you want to say here and then HITTING ENTER/RETURN. The message will then appear to everyone. This is a very useful feature. Find it and use it.

Mute

Say your dog is barking or your kids are screaming and you don't want to inflict that noise on everyone in the meeting. Move your cursor to the bottom left side of the Zoom screen and you'll see the "mute" button with the picture of a little microphone. Left-click it and your microphone will be turned off. Nobody will hear what you – or the dog – are saying. To turn the microphone on again, left-click the same button.

Leaving the Meeting

When it's time to go, move your cursor to the bottom right hand side of the screen. You'll see a red "End" button. Click it. Zoom will ask if you want to "leave the meeting." Left-click that button and you will be out of the meeting.

Part 3
Advanced Guides

LM Button (Entering the Menu)

This button, at the bottom far left of your computer screen, is the command headquarters for your computer. The LM insignia stands for Linux Mint, the name of your operating system. The LM button opens the *Menu*.

What Is It For?

When you left-click this button, a window will open. You'll see at left eight square icons. Moving your cursor onto each one, you'll see each identified at the lower right of the window. The three marked with * below are so frequently used, they are also included on the apps panel at the bottom of your screen. Starting at the bottom, they are:

Quit (reddish orange circle):

This is how to shutdown your computer. You may choose to Quit at the end of a day. When you come back to the computer, you'll need to power it back on.

Logout (black circle):

This is how to quit a work session. Your computer will stay on, but to use it again, you'll need to re-enter your password.

Lock Screen (padlock icon):

Your computer has been set up to lock after a certain number of minutes. If you haven't done anything with the computer, it will "fall asleep" and require you to reenter your password when you return. This is a security feature that you shouldn't have to change.

**Files/Home (green file folder):*

This is your filing cabinet of materials created or gathered onto your computer: text files, downloads, pictures, lots more. You'll see a separate file here for items on your desktop.

Terminal (black square with tiny white symbols):

This is the place where a software technician can manipulate the codes that operate your computer. Unless you're a true techie, you're better off staying out of the terminal.

If you want to learn more about it, check this out: do.co/2ZoCliE

System Settings (gray square with two oblong figures):

This is where you can change the way your computer looks and behaves without diving into actual script writing. For example, you can change the date/time feature of your computer, put a different background on your computer, change the style of type your computer uses, change colors of folders, and lots more. Use with a bit of caution as you may get more changes than your bargained for.

See more information here: bit.ly/3917PyI

**Software Manager (white square with green speckled circle):*

Through the software manager, you can shop around for other free applications to use on your computer. There are thousands! Open The Software Manager up and click on some of the Categories boxes to get a sense of what's out there. Or type a word into the search line above. How about a "real-time photo-realistic sky generator"? Or a pronunciation coach? You get the idea. From here, you can read a little about various programs and, if you choose, install them on your

computer. If you do so, you'll need to reenter your password a couple of times to authorize the installation.

**Firefox (orange square at top):*

This is the browser that comes with your computer.

Right Side of The Menu

The right-side of the menu includes all the apps that came with the computer and the ones you download from the software manager (See *Using the Software Manager* later in Part 3).

Updates

Updating gives your computer and apps the newest programming. This handbooks will look at two main updates: updating Zoom and updating the system.

Updating Zoom

Zoom has to be updated every once in a while. If Zoom isn't working or it tells you to update, then you'll need to update! If you received your computer from a program affiliated with LG Computers 4 All, then it most likely includes a custom script for updating Zoom to make the process very simple. The steps for using this is directly below. If you did not receive a computer from a program that includes this script on your computer, ask someone you know to help you update if needed.

Steps to Update Zoom

Go to the desktop and click the "Update Zoom" icon (white with a small gear in the center).

A window will pop up and you will see text scrolling across the window.

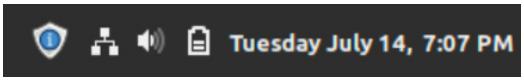
After a minute or so, you will be prompted to enter a password. Enter the password you use to log onto your computer.

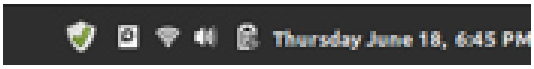
After another minute or so, the process will complete and the windows will close itself automatically.

Zoom should now be updated!

Updating the System

Updating the system gives you the newest and best versions of all the software that runs your computer. (The process for updating Zoom is different; use the Update Zoom icon on your desktop to accomplish this.) Updating keeps your computer running its best! The easiest way to see if you need to update your system is by glancing at the Update icon on the panel. It's located at the bottom right of your screen.





The Update icon, which looks like a little shield, shows your update status. Move and hold your cursor over the shield. A message will pop up saying "Your system is up to date" ("El sistema es actualizado"). This message confirms that you have the latest versions of the software you need. If you system needs updating, a different message will appear and show you the number of updates waiting for your attention.

If you need to update, do it! Click the shield icon. A window will open. Press "Install updates" at the top of the window. Enter your password in the pop-up window. This process of updating takes awhile, so be patient and don't interrupt the machine. Your computer will let you know when it's time to move on.

Sometimes when a more extensive update is in order, you'll see another window open with "Grub install devices:" at the top.

There may be several boxes in the window below. Check only the top box. Then

click “Next” in the lower right corner. Your computer will continue its update.

When the process is complete, the computer will let you know with a check mark

and “Your system is up to date.”

You may need to reboot/restart your computer for some updates to take effect. If so, the computer will show a red rectangular box that asks you to reboot/ restart. Go

back to the LM menu and click the Logout button (black with a white circle, second

from the bottom). Once you restart, you’re done –until you need to update again

File System

The file system is where all of your documents are stored. When you create a spreadsheet on LibreOffice Calc, it is stored in the filesystem. When you upload pictures to your computer, they are stored in the file system. The file system holds everything that is on your computer.

Saving Your Files

When you create a document or file, you need to make sure you save it. You will usually see a button that says “Save As” on the app you are using to save a file. Save As is what you use initially to save a file. You’ll be asked to create a name for the file. Name it something that describes the file. You will also need to select where to save it. Save it somewhere you will remember, like your desktop or documents folder. After you save your file for the first time, you will still need to save it as you edit it. Make sure to press the “Save” button on whatever app you are using as you are editing a document.

Finding Your Files

Browsing the Files App

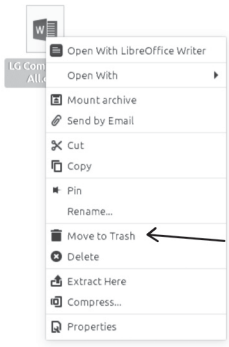
You can browse the Files app for your documents. To access the file app, find it on the panel (It is the green folder) OR open the "Home" folder located on the desktop. The Files app holds different folders that contain all of your files. Go to the Home folder. Under the Home folder will be more folders like "Documents" and "Desktops". Once again, these folders are a good place to save and find your files.

Searching For Files Using Catfish File Search

You can search for a specific file by using Catfish File Search. This is an app that has to be downloaded from the Software Manager. You can find this app on the panel. It is the grey box with the magnifying glass. If you do not have the app, you can download it from the Software Manager.

Open Catfish File Search. Type in the name of the file you are looking for. The file should come up in the search. Click the file and it should open.

The Trash



So you've made or downloaded lots of files– what do you do if you don't need one anymore? You put it in the trash! That's right, your computer has a trash can. To move any file to the trash, right-click the selected file. Click the "Move to Trash" button. You've moved your file to the trash, but it still isn't gone! You have to empty the trash. The trash should be on the desktop. If it isn't, open the files app. The trash should be on the left side menu. Open the trash. You can them empty the trash or restore any file you find there. Emptying will permanently get rid of your file. If you restore the file, it will be saved and restored to the file where it had been.

Language Toggle

Your computer comes with at least one installed language. On some computers the operating system or primary language may be English, on others it may be German, but you can change the language of your computer by following the guide below. You can choose to install other languages as well.

Switching System Languages

Open the Languages app. It is dark blue with a small map of the world. It should be pinned to the panel; however, you can search for it in the menu.

After opening the app, click the top button that shows your current language. Select the language you want to switch to. If the desired language is not there, see the guide below for installing languages.

Change the next two buttons below to the same language you are switching to.

Once the first three buttons show the language you want, press the “Apply System Wide” button. You will then have to enter the password for your computer.

After you enter your password, go to the Menu (LM Button) and press the grey “Log Off” button that is on the left stack of apps. This will bring up a window. Press “Log Out”

It will then log you out and bring you back to the screen you see when you turn on your computer. Enter your computer password.

Your computer should come up in the language you selected! There will also be a new window that appears after you log in.

This window is asking if you want to convert your folders to the new language. This will make new folders; however, all of your existing files will still be in the folders under the other language. In other words, you will have two sets of folders, but they are in different languages. (For example, there will be a “Desktop” folder and an “Escritorio” folder. Escritorio is “Desktop” in Spanish.)

Choose if you want to convert the folders to the new language or not. If you choose not to convert, your new and future files will be located in folders that have names in your computer's first language.

Installing Languages

Open the Languages app like described in the instructions above. Once the Languages app is open, go to the bottom button that says, "Install / Remove Languages..." You will then have to enter your computer password.

A new window will open. Go to the bottom and press the "Add" button. Another window will appear with many different language options. Scroll down until you find your desired language. If the desired language has a United States version, select that one. Once you have the language selected, press install.

The language will then install. Once it is installed, you can switch to it too using the directions above.

Using the Software Manager

One big advantage of the Linux operating system is that it offers you access to thousands (yes, thousands) of *free* computer programs. The Software Manager is a way for people who aren't computer programmers to grab these goodies, put them on their own machines, and use them.

The Software Manager is on the panel at the bottom of your screen. It's the white square with a green speckled circle (like a plug) in the center.

How Do I Use It?

Left-click on the Software Manager icon and you'll be taken to a page where you can search for features and applications you'd like to add to your computer. Think of it as a bookstore where everything on every shelf is free.

To get an idea of what's available, look at the "Categories" stacked at the

bottom of that page: Accessories, Games, Science and Education…. You can click on one of these and start looking at the hundreds of available programs. Or you can do a more targeted search by typing whatever feature you're after in the space at top right (by the spyglass icon). Some of the most popular apps, like Spotify and Dropbox, are displayed on the page. If an app has a green check mark by it, that means it's already on your computer.

To get more information about an app you might want to add, click on it, and you'll find a short description of what it can do. You'll also be able to read what some other people say about that program.

If you choose to add this app to your computer, left-click the "Install" button. It may alert you that other software will also have to be put on your machine. If you decide to proceed, continue. You'll be asked to authorize this change to your computer by entering your password again. It may take several minutes for the program to download onto your computer.

Once the download is finished, you can look for the new app (which has probably landed in your downloads folder) with the Catfish app on your panel (spyglass icon). When you find your new app's location in your computer, right click on it, and if you choose, you can pin it to the panel to make access simple.

Now, enjoy your new world maps program, game, audio editor, music source... with ease!

LibreOffice Calc

It's Like Microsoft® Excel, Mostly

The green icon with the white grid at the bottom of the page is LibreOffice Calc. It is a spreadsheet program. It is very similar to the more popular (and expensive) Excel.

Left-click the icon and you will see a blank spreadsheet.

Spreadsheets allow you to set up a database of numbers and text. It has

columns (the up and down rows of little boxes) and it has rows (the boxes running across the page. You can put a different piece of data in each box.

If you are familiar with Excel, Calc works much the same way. It sorts like Excel. The same "formulas" that work in Excel work in Calc. Calc allows you to make charts and graphs. You "save" files by going to the "File" menu on the top left of the page, clicking on "Save As," naming your file and then saving it to the folder of your choice.

This is a powerful program and we can't explain it all here. There are courses on how to use Excel that are taught. You may be able to find a course online, or somewhere local, such as a local community college. If interested, ask the person leading the course if you can use Calc in the courses.

Screenshot

Screenshot is an app that lets you take and keep a picture of your whole computer desktop display or particular images on your desktop.

The Screenshot app is on your bottom panel of apps; it's blue with a picture of a white camera.

What's It For?

As you use your computer, you will see pictures, alerts, error messages and other displays that you may want to keep, either to file in your own records or to show someone else. Often what you want to share can simply be saved or transmitted as a link. But other times, you will want to be able to show just what your computer screen looks like at a particular time. You could take a photo of your computer screen with your phone, but it's usually more efficient to use the Screenshot app.

How Do I Use It?

Left-click the screenshot icon and you'll see a window open. It gives you three options:

"Grab the whole screen" (to take a picture of the whole)

"Grab the current window" (to get a picture of the window that's currently on top of your desktop)

"Select area to grab"

If you choose the "select area" option, the window will disappear and you'll be able to draw a square or rectangle around the particular area on the screen you want to capture.

You can then name the screenshot (for example: "screenshot of Bob's Facebook page")

You can designate where the screenshot should go (for example, Desktop or Documents)

Then click the SAVE button. The image you captured will then be stored.

[T I P**]**- If you can't find your screenshot, remember to use the Catfish File search feature. Try to remember at least one word from the name you gave it and run a search, for example, for "Bob." Your computer will give you a list of everything on the machine with "Bob" anywhere in the title and you can find the screenshot you want from that list.

Customization

You've made it to the *very last* section! This section also happens to be the most fun! You get to make your computer look like how you want it! Another great benefit of your Operating System, Linux Mint, is that it allows you to customize your computer in so many different ways. We will be going over a few of these ways in this section.

Changing the Background

You can change the background of your desktop. To do this, open the Backgrounds app by searching for it in the Menu (LM Button). It will open a window with several options. To change your background, simply click the background of your choice. Don't like the backgrounds you see? There are many more! On the left side, there are different albums of backgrounds. Click on each album to view all the different options. You can even use your own pictures!

Themes

You can change the color and themes of your computer by going to the Themes app. You can click on the current themes and it will give you a handful of theme options that you can switch to.

Exploring the "Preferences" Category

There are many other preferences you can customize. Simply go to the Menu (LM Button) and locate the different categories that are in the middle of the menu. Scroll down and hover on the "Preferences" category. Move your cursor directly to the right where the apps are shown. The apps that are now displayed are "preferences" apps that can be changed/customized.

Apps on the Desktop & Panel

Apps on the Desktop

Before you change anything on the desktop, make sure you don't delete anything of importance from the desktop. You can add important files, apps, and websites to your desktop.

To add files to the desktop, add them to the desktop folder in the Files app. You can also add folders to your desktop, and within the folders you can store files.

To add apps to the desktop, right-click the app you want to add. A menu with options will appear. Press the "add to desktop" option.

To add website shortcuts to your desktop, find the site on Firefox. Once you are at your site, locate the search bar at the top of the window where you'll see the website link typed in. Directly to the left is a little circle with an "i". Hold down on the "i" and drag it to your desktop. You've now created a shortcut!

Apps Pinned to the Panel

You can edit any of the apps on the panel. Please do not remove the Menu (LM button). This is the first app on the panel. Removing it would take access away from all the apps you open from the menu and may be difficult to fix.

You can remove any of the other apps from the panel. Removing apps from the panel does not delete them. You'll still be able to access the app from the menu The panel is just a place for all your important and favorite apps.

To remove apps from the panel, right-click on the app you want to remove. A menu will come up, and you will want to press "Unpin from panel."

To add apps to the panel, locate the app list on the menu. Find the app you want to pin. Right-click the app and click the option that says "Pin to Panel." You can also drag the apps around on the panel to organize them any way you like.

Waydago!

You have reached the end! Thank you for taking the time to read our guide. We hope you have learned something!

Also, keep in mind that there are additional learning resources at our site. This can be accessed by going to lgcomputers4all.org/public-resources. We hope to add lots more resources as time goes on. Remember, if you have any questions, reach out to your local computer organization or an online Linux forum.

Don't be afraid to explore your computer further! Don't worry about breaking your machine or messing something up. That is extremely hard to do.

Please fill out the Exit Survey if you could: bit.ly/2ZGidZC

For any inquires you may have, here is our contact information:
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lgcomputers4all.org

Thanks!

LG Computers 4 All

Notes

Linux Mint Computer Handbook

Based on Linux Mint Debian Edition 4

Created By LG Computers 4 All

LG Computers 4 All is based in Fayette County, Texas. Our main goal is to provide refurbished computers and computer training to those within the community. This handbook was created for computer education for our users by members of LG Computers 4 All.

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Edition 2 | August 2020

Revised for Public Use