Linux pre−installation checklist

Table of Contents

Linux pre−installation checklist

from
Algologic Research & Solutions

Are you a Linux newbie ? Are you a Linux guru ? In both cases, you will find this checklist of great help to you.
How many times have you found yourself fumbling in the middle of a Linux installation process, because some vital information about the target hardware is not known ?
Have you ever crossed your fingers when you were asked by the installation procedure, a simple question, like: "to which COM port is the mouse connected ?
Let's face it, all of us have, at one time or another, felt we should have been better prepared before starting to install Linux. Here is a simple solution, brought to you by

Algologic Research & Solutions.

What does this checklist (aim to) achieve ?

This is an aide−memoire which may make installation of Linux a pleasant experience for you. It fills an important role in the promotion of Linux.
It will help you to be prepared with all the answers which may be needed during the course of installation of Linux on your machine or on anybody else's machine. Sometimes, it is very inconvenient and even impossible to find out some details in the middle of an installation procedure.

This becomes all the more difficult when you are installing Linux on somebody else's machine, and in somebody else's office.
This checklist, when filled up, will help you go through your Linux documentation and verify in advance whether certain hardware is supported by the distribution you are planning to install. It will also help you to be prepared with the packages you would need to install, and the configuration choices which need to be done.
The idea is to reduce the chances of frustrating surprises.
This checklist is only for installing Linux on PCs. You may use this checklist as a model for other classes of machines (e.g.SUN, Alpha, ...) also.

Where do I find more about Linux ?

If you want professional (PAID) help with Linux −− ask Algologic. Algologic Research & Solutions is listed in the official CONSULTANTS−HOWTO of the Linux Documentation Project.
This checklist does not give any details about hardware compatible with Linux, or other details about actually procuring or installing Linux. If you want details, just click here.
If you are the impatient type, and want help on installation directly, click here and jump the pre−installation checklist.
ATTENTION: We are actually overwhelmed by the number of general queries about procuring, installing and using Linux. We DO NOT answer such general mail. We strongly advise you to click here for finding other sources of help. Please DO NOT send us any general Linux queries.

Goto top

Who must use this checklist ?

- If you are planning to install Linux on somebody else's machine, or in a location which is not your own work place, you must absolutely get this checklist completed in advance. It is important to get this questionnaire answered by your host, so that you go adequately prepared for the installation.
- If you are planning to organise an "Install fest" (we Indians call it "Linux mela"), ask your participants to come with this checklist answered.
- Conversely, if you are going to an Install fest (aka Linux mela), to get Linux installed on your machine, do your home−work. Go with answers to this checklist.
- If you are going to ask someone to come over and install Linux for you, send him/her this questionnaire with as many responses as you know.
- If you are the D−I−Y type, you must start by answering all these questions, so that you can save time for enjoying your Linux !

Goto top

Japanese Version

This checklist is also available in Japanese. The Japanese translation is available as: a plain text file, or as a html file, at the URL given below:

- **Japanese Version:** Click here for a text−only version.
- **Japanese html Version:** Click here for a html version.

Click here to send a mail to Mrs. Chie Nakatani who did the translation into Japanese. You can also visit her home page, by clicking here.

Goto top

Dutch Version

This checklist is also available in Dutch.
The Dutch translation is available at the URL: www.nl.linux.org/~hccnoord/checklist.html

Goto top

French Version

The French translation of this checklist is at:
http://www.freenix.org/unix/linux/HOWTO/mini/Pre−Installation−Checklist.html

Goto top

Linux Pre−installation checklist

IMPORTANT:
The most recent version of this checklist will be posted at:
http://members.tripod.com/~algolog/lnxchk.htm .
Make sure you are seeing the latest version of the checklist.

```
-------------------------------------------------------------
                            LINUX
                  PRE-INSTALLATION CHECK LIST
                   (Ver. 2.6 of 1999-12-19)
-------------------------------------------------------------
                         prepared by
     Algologic  Research  &  Solutions,   Secunderabad,
                            India

                       S. Parthasarathy
                   algolog@hd1.vsnl.net.in

Updated versions of this checklist will be posted at:
         http://members.tripod.com/~algolog/lnxchk.htm

Please  make  sure that you have the latest version  of  this
checklist.

-------------------------------------------------------------

                           Welcome

Welcome to the world of Linux. Your first step in  installing
Linux on your PC will begin by answering a few (?), simple(?)
questions about your hardware.

This  is a FREE service from Algologic. Algologic offers   no
warranties, and accepts no liabilities in  this exercise. You
are using this checklist at your own risk and responsibility.

This checklist will make it easy for you and us to go through
the  installation, painlessly and without  surprises.  Please
take  your  own  time and fill up  the  following  checklist.
Wherever   possible,  and  necessary,  we  have  given   some
suggestions and hints, for your convenience.

If you don't know all the details, you should be able to find
them  in  your  computer's manuals.  Or,  ask  your  hardware
vendor, or your local hardware "guru".
```

Linux pre-installation checklist

If you still have problems finding answers, don't worry -- you can just ignore any areas you don't know. Bring in your machine and ALL manuals you have. The installation may succeed with some trials and a lot of luck.

Remember, Linux, like many other software products, is a growing product. Some of your hardware may still not be supported in the version of Linux which is being installed.

Each question below can be identified by a letter followed by a number (e.g. G3 is a question on processor speed). If you need any assistance/clarifications about the questions asked in this form, please specify the chapter identifier (an alpha) and the question number (a numeral), and send an e mail to:

algolog@hd1.vsnl.net.in

Assumptions:

1. You are interested in installing Linux on a PC (386 upwards).

2. You have a CDROM drive on your PC. You have made sure that your proposed version of Linux supports this CDROM drive. Check latest version of Hardware HOWTO of the Linux Documentation Project (LDP).

3. You have at least one 3.5" floppy diskette drive on your system.

4. The 3.5" diskette drive is a BOOTABLE drive.

5. You will keep readily available, three, bad-sector-free, formatted (3.5"), blank diskettes, for use in the installation procedure.

6. If you wish to install Linux over a LAN, you have confirmed that your network interface card is supported by your version of Linux. Check latest version of Hardware HOWTO of LDP.

CHECKLIST

A. ABOUT YOU

1* Your Name ____________________

2* Your contact phone numbers:

3* Your email adress ____________________

4* Have you used Linux before ? What distribution?

5* Have you used any version of Unix before ? Which one ?
On what hardware platform ?

6* Is this an upgrade to an existing Linux distribution ?

7* What will be the end-use of this Linux installation ?

8* Do you wish to retain DOS/Win/any other OS along with Linux, on your system ?

9* Any other detail you want to add:

____

____

G. GENERAL

1* CPU type [i386, i486 DX2...]:

2* Bus type [ISA, EISA, VESA, PCI, MCA ...]:

3* Processor speed (MHz) ?

4* What size is your RAM (minimum 4 MB needed) ?

5* Do you want X Window System (i.e. Graphic User Interface for Linux) to be installed on your system ?

6* How many serial ports (COM ports) do you have on your PC ?

7* Are you planning to add dumb terminals to your PC ? How many ?

8* Please mention below, any additional details you wish to add:

____

____

____

M. MOUSE

1* To which port is your mouse connected ? What IRQ ?

2* What type of mouse are you using [Microsoft, Busmouse, PS/2 ..] ?

3* How many buttons does the mouse have ?

C. CDROM

Useful tips: If you are not sure if your CDROM is bootable or not, power on the machine and go to BIOS settings (do not let the PC bootup). Look for bootable drive options in the BIOS settings.

```
    1* What is the make and type of CDROM drive
       [e.g. IDE ATAPI, Sony, S−B Pro/Panasonic,  SCSI,  true
       IDE ..]  ?

    2* On  which drive interface [1st IDE, 2nd IDE, 3rd  IDE,
       4th  IDE, SCSI, proprietary interface] and which drive
       [drive 1 , drive 2, SCSI−ID 5]  is  the CDROM connected
       (e.g. drive 2 of 1st IDE, SCSI−ID 5 of built−in SCSI
       interface) ?


    3* Is your CDROM a bootable drive ?


−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−

F. FLOPPY DRIVES

    1* Do you have a 3 1/2" floppy drive?

    2* Is the 3 1/2 " floppy drive a bootable drive ?

    3* Do you have a 5 1/4" floppy drive?

    4* Is the 5 1/4 " drive a bootable drive ?

−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−

T. TAPE DRIVES

    1* What  type  of tape drive do you have (can  be   NONE)
       [floppy interface type, SCSI, parallel port ..] ?

    2* Do  you  have a secondary floppy controller  for  your
       tape drive?

_____________________________________________________________

D. DISK

Useful tips: At this point, you must be clear  about  how your
Linux will be  installed and  on which disk etc. You must also
be   clear   how your  Linux   will  be   booted  (there are
different possibilities).

Read the  installation  HOWTO before you answer the following
questions.


    1* What type of drive do you have [IDE, SCSI, RLL, MFM ....] ?

    2* How many partitions are there on your first disk drive ?
       Name, type, size ? Collect these details also for other
       disk drives you may have on this machine.

    3* On which drive are you planning to install Linux (e.g. drive
       2 of first IDE, or SCSI−ID 5 of built−in SCSI interface)

    4* Can  we  re−partition your disk ? (All  existing  data
       will be lost)
```

5* Which partitions can be reformatted to become Linux partitions ? Note: All information recorded in this partition will be erased.

6* How much of disk space can you give for Linux [50 MB minimum] ?

7* What is your second hard disk (if any)?

8* What is your third hard disk (if any)?

9* What is your fourth hard disk (if any)?

10* Do you have any SCSI device ? Which SCSI controller do you have (if any)?

11* Do you plan to boot from your hard disk or floppy?

12* On which hard disk partition do you want LILO boot loader to reside?

13* Do you wish to retain the original boot sector/master boot record that is currently on your hard disk?

14* On which disk partitions will your Linux root reside?

15* Do you access the IDE drive in LBA mode (check your BIOS settings) ?

V. Video Display Unit (Monitor and controller)

Useful tips: If you do not have good documentation on your VDU, try to look at the sticker (nameplate) on the back of your VDU, you may find the answers to some of the questions given below.

1* What kind of monitor do you have [Monochrome, Colour] [EGA, VGA, CGA ..] ? What make ?

2* Size of screen [14", 15", 19"] ? Is it an interlaced monitor ?

3* What are the resolutions, and number of colours possible on this monitor [600x480, 800x600, 1024x768]?

4* What is your monitor's vertical refresh rate / vertical sync. frequency (could be a range)?

5* What is your monitor's horizontal refresh rate / horizontal sync. frquency (could be a range) ?

6* Monitor's bandwidth ?

7* Video RAM size ?

8* VDU Control card : make and model ?

9* Chip set used in VDU control card ?

10* What RAMDAC do you have ?

N. NETWORKING

1* Are you using an internal modem | external modem ?

2* What make ?

3* On which COM port is the modem connected ? What IRQ ?

4* What is the speed of the modem [bps] ?

5* What serial interface chip does your computer use (e.g. 8450, 16550C) ?

6* Is it a "Windows only" modem [WIN−MODEM...] ?

7* Which ethernet card do you have [10base2 or 10baseT; NONE for none] ? What type ?

8* Will this machine be a part of Internet or any Intranet ?

9* Will this machine use a dialup connection / PPP connection to an Internet/Intranet server ?

10* Will this machine be used as an Internet or Intranet server ?

11* What will be the hostname of your computer (e.g. penguin) ?

12* What will be the domain name, if any, of your computer (e.g. family_name.city.country)

12* What will be the IP address, if any, of your computer (e.g. 123.1.2.3) ?

13* What is the IP address of the DNS server (can be none) ?

14* What is the IP address of the default router (can be none) ?

P. PRINTER

1* Have you connected any printer on the parallel port of your PC ?

2* What is the type, make of the printer ?

L. LAPTOP

1* Number and type of PCMCIA slots on your Laptop ?

2* PC cards you plan to use ?

3* Built-in devices on your laptop (e.g. trackball, pointer, touchpad) ?

4* COM ports used for the above built-in devices ?

X. MISCELLANEOUS

Useful tip: Try to make a consolidated hardcopy list of I/O addresses, IRQs, DMA-addresses used by the different devices in your machine. Take care to find out the configuration details of your VDU-driver card, Ethernet card, SCSI card etc.

1* Does your keyboard use a round connector (DIN-5) or PS/2 connector?

2* Do you plan to use keyboard mapping to any non-US keyboards [French, Greek, Cyrillic, ..] ?

3* Are you using any Plug & play devices ?

4* Are you using any sound card ? What card ? What I/O, IRQ, DMA does it use ?

5* How many ISA spare slots do you have ?

6* How many EISA spare slots do you have ?

7* How many VESA spare slots do you have ?

8* How many PCI spare slots do you have ?

9* How many other (describe) spare slots?

10* What kind of other removable media do you have (can be NONE)?

11* Do you have any other interesting hardware?

12* Please add any details you wish to highlight:

____

____

____

Did you find this form clear ? Any suggestions for improvement ?

____

____

____

```
-------------------------------------------------------------
That  is all. Thanks for filling out the form.

Please crosscheck the above  responses, and keep the checklist
handy at the time of installation.

                          ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Algologic acknowledges with gratitude the useful  suggestions
and  inputs  from many members of the  Linux  community,  for
preparation of this checklist. This checklist is proof of the
cooperation  and goodwill which exists between  Linux  users.
Algologic submits this checklist to the Linux community, as a
humble tribute to the "spirit of Linux".


********Endchecklist
```

Goto top

What next...?

Even the longest journey has to start with a small first−step.
−− Confucious

Now that you have taken the first step of filling up the checklist, you would like to prepare for the real installation. Here are a few tips, for starters:

- A very good installation guide is here. You must visit this excellent site. It also gives tips to find answers for some of the questions asked in the pre−installation checklist (e.g. video cards, monitor, chipset, modem, ...etc.).
- The official Installation HOWTO is here.

Goto top

Your feedback is IMPORTANT

Send us an email and give us your feedback:

Tell us if you found this webpage clear.
Tell us how we can improve this questionnaire and make it more useful.
Tell us how you located this page.
Note: We do NOT answer general queries on Linux. Please click here if you want to know how to get information on Linux.
Visit our home page at: Algologic Research & Solutions.

Goto top

Thank you for your visit.

Algologic is a proud member of the
The Linux Webring
[Previous | Next | Home | Random | List]

ADMINISTRIVIA
This page last modified on: 1999–12–19
URL of this page: http://members.tripod.com/~algolog/lnxchk.htm
Send your comments about this page, to:algolog@hd1.vsnl.net.in
This page, developed and maintained by: Algologic Research & Solutions
Warning and Disclaimer

---

var code = ' '; document.write(code);