

Finally, an Answer to What is The Best Linux Distro?

Finally, an attempt to answer to the age old question: Which Linux distro is the best?

This question has been asked time and time again and debated from the moment more than one distro existed – so, pretty much since day one. It has been so hotly debated that it has caused true animosity and people rage-quitting entire sites. Some people have high conviction that their distro of choice is the best distro!

Hint: It's not.

I've been using Linux exclusively for more than a decade.

Many years ago, I used Unix extensively.

I have *dozens* of virtual machines of current distros.

My Linux ISO folder is 250 GB in size.

If you can name it, I've probably installed it and used it.

I think that makes me pretty darned qualified to finally put this question to bed.

So, what is the best Linux distro?

There isn't one.

There is No Best Linux Distro:

The best Linux distro is the one that is best one for you. It's the distro (perhaps even plural, 'distros') that suits your individual needs best. The best Linux distro the one where you're most able to get your work done, because that's what an operating system is for. An operating system is a tool to help you accomplish a computational goal.

The best distro the one that's suited to your personal

workflow. It's the one that makes you the most happy, and the one that best lets you use the applications you need to use. Basically, it's the one that works for *you*.

You can look up Linux distro [benchmarks](#).

And can check their [popularity](#).

Or you can test them out virtually [online](#).

You can download the images and use [VirtualBox](#) to test them for longer periods. You can download the various .iso images and test them on bare metal by using them live – without making any changes to your currently installed operating system.

But, at the end of the day, nothing beats experience.

It May Take a While:

The reality is, it may take you some time to find the right distro for you. Maybe you'll start with something easy to install and maintain, and maybe your final destination ends with [Gentoo](#). Who knows? Only you. Only you know.

When someone attempts to tell you the best Linux distro, what they really mean is what is best for them. That may not be the best for you. It could very well be, but you won't know until you try. You still might not know until you've tried many distros.

There are many things to consider. Do you want a stable release? Maybe you want a rolling release with the most up-to-date software? Or, perhaps you want to use Aptitude or Zypper, or maybe no package manager at all? Which desktop environment do you want? What default software do you want? Which window manager is right for you? Do you want a fancy desktop or just the bare minimum? How about something in between?

TIP: You can do some *really* refined searches at [Distrowatch](#).

Do you want a distro that comes with just the basics so that you can add your own software? How about a distro that comes with the software you're most likely to use? Maybe you want a specialist distro that comes with the tools you need, like [Springdale Linux](#)? Do you want to work with multimedia as a creator with [Ubuntu Studio](#)?

Then, what computer architecture are you using? Are you trying to keep your old 32 bit computer running? You can do that!

Do you want to use your SBC ([Single-Board Computer](#)) as your HTPC ([Home Theater PC](#))? You can do that!

Do you want to set up your own router and firewall? You can do that!

Do you want to set up your own NAS ([Network-Attached Storage](#))? You can do that!

There are unique Linux distros to do all of those things!

So Many Choices:

There are many, many choices. Odds are great that there's a distro that's just right for you. And, if you can't find one that's just right, you can make your own. On top of that, you can make pretty much any distro do the same thing that another distro does. So, you can start with one distro and turn it into whatever you want.

The choices are so many and so broad that you have practically limitless choices. That's one of the things that makes Linux so great. You have a say in what your operating system does (and what it doesn't) do. It's your computer, you get to decide.

And that, that's the answer to this age-old question. There is no right distro, there's only the right distro for you.

Me? I'm old. I want stability and an environment that gets out

of my way to let me get my work done with the smoothest possible workflow. The distro that does that is the distro that's right for me. You do you and you decide what the best distro is for you.

Most of all, enjoy the wondrous journey of discovery, as you too find the right Linux distro for you.

Closure:

This article has been pulled over from the old site. It may look familiar to some of my readers. I cleaned it up and moved it, formatting it to match the current site.

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NOTE: This article was updated on 06/19/2021.