

The Perfect Desktop - gOS 1.0.1

Version 1.0

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This tutorial shows how you can set up a [gOS 1.0.1](#) desktop that is a full-fledged replacement for a Windows desktop, i.e. that has all the software that people need to do the things they do on their Windows desktops. The advantages are clear: you get a secure system without DRM restrictions that works even on old hardware, and the best thing is: all software comes free of charge. gOS is a lightweight Linux distribution, based on Ubuntu 7.10, that comes with Google Apps and some other Web 2.0 applications; it uses the Enlightenment 17 window manager instead of GNOME or KDE.

I want to say first that this is not the only way of setting up such a system. There are many ways of achieving this goal but this is the way I take. I do not issue any guarantee that this will work for you!

1 Preliminary Note

To fully replace a Windows desktop, I want the gOS desktop to have the following software installed:

Graphics:

- The GIMP - *free software replacement for Adobe Photoshop*
- F-Spot - *full-featured personal photo management application for the GNOME desktop*
- Google Picasa - *application for organizing and editing digital photos*

Internet:

- Firefox
- Opera
- Flash Player 9
- FileZilla - *multithreaded FTP client*
- Thunderbird - *email and news client*
- Evolution - *combines e-mail, calendar, address book, and task list management functions*
- aMule - *P2P file sharing application*
- BitTornado - *Bittorrent client*
- Azureus - *Java Bittorrent client*
- Pidgin - *multi-platform instant messaging client*
- Skype
- Google Earth
- Xchat IRC - *IRC client*

Office:

- OpenOffice Writer - *replacement for Microsoft Word*
- OpenOffice Calc - *replacement for Microsoft Excel*
- Adobe Reader
- GnuCash - *double-entry book-keeping personal finance system, similar to Quicken*
- Scribus - *open source desktop publishing (DTP) application*

Sound & Video:

- Amarok - *audio player*
- Audacity - *free, open source, cross platform digital audio editor*
- Banshee - *audio player, can encode/decode various formats and synchronize music with Apple iPods*
- MPlayer - *media player (video/audio), supports WMA*
- Rhythmbox Music Player - *audio player, similar to Apple's iTunes, with support for iPods*
- gtkPod - *software similar to Apple's iTunes, supports iPod, iPod nano, iPod shuffle, iPod photo, and iPod mini*
- XMMS - *audio player similar to Winamp*
- dvd::rip - *full featured DVD copy program*
- Kino - *free digital video editor*
- Sound Juicer CD Extractor - *CD ripping tool, supports various audio codecs*
- VLC Media Player - *media player (video/audio)*
- Helix Player - *media player, similar to the Real Player*
- Totem - *media player (video/audio)*
- Xine - *media player, supports various formats; can play DVDs*
- GnomeBaker - *CD/DVD burning program*
- K3B - *CD/DVD burning program*
- Multimedia Codecs

Programming:

- KompoZer - *WYSIWYG HTML editor, similar to Macromedia Dreamweaver, but not as feature-rich (yet)*
- Bluefish - *text editor, suitable for many programming and markup languages*
- Quanta Plus - *web development environment, including a WYSIWYG editor*

Other:

- VMware Server - *lets you run your old Windows desktop as a virtual machine under your Linux desktop, so you don't have to entirely abandon Windows*
- TrueType fonts
- Java
- Read-/Write support for NTFS partitions

Lots of our desired applications are available in the Ubuntu repositories, and some of these applications have been contributed by the Ubuntu community.

I will use the username falko in this tutorial. Please replace it with your own username.

2 Installing The Base System

The installation of the base system is easy as 1-2-3 because the gOS installer doesn't offer a lot of options to choose from, so you cannot go wrong.

Download the gOS 1.0.1 iso image from <http://www.thinkgos.com/downloads.html>, burn it onto a CD, and boot your computer from it. At the boot prompt, select Start or install gOS:



The system boots and starts a desktop that is run entirely in the RAM of your system (the gOS installation CD is also a Live-CD) without changing anything on your hard disk. This has the advantage that you can test how gOS works on your hardware before you finally install it.



This is how the gOS desktop looks. You'll find lots of web applications in the dock at the bottom and a Google search box in the top right corner:



You can also access the applications from the dock by right-clicking on the desktop:



By left-clicking on the desktop or on the green leaf in the bottom left corner, you open the normal menu from which you can access all installed applications, system settings, etc.:



Double-click the Install icon on the desktop to start the installation to the hard drive:



The installer starts. First, select your language:



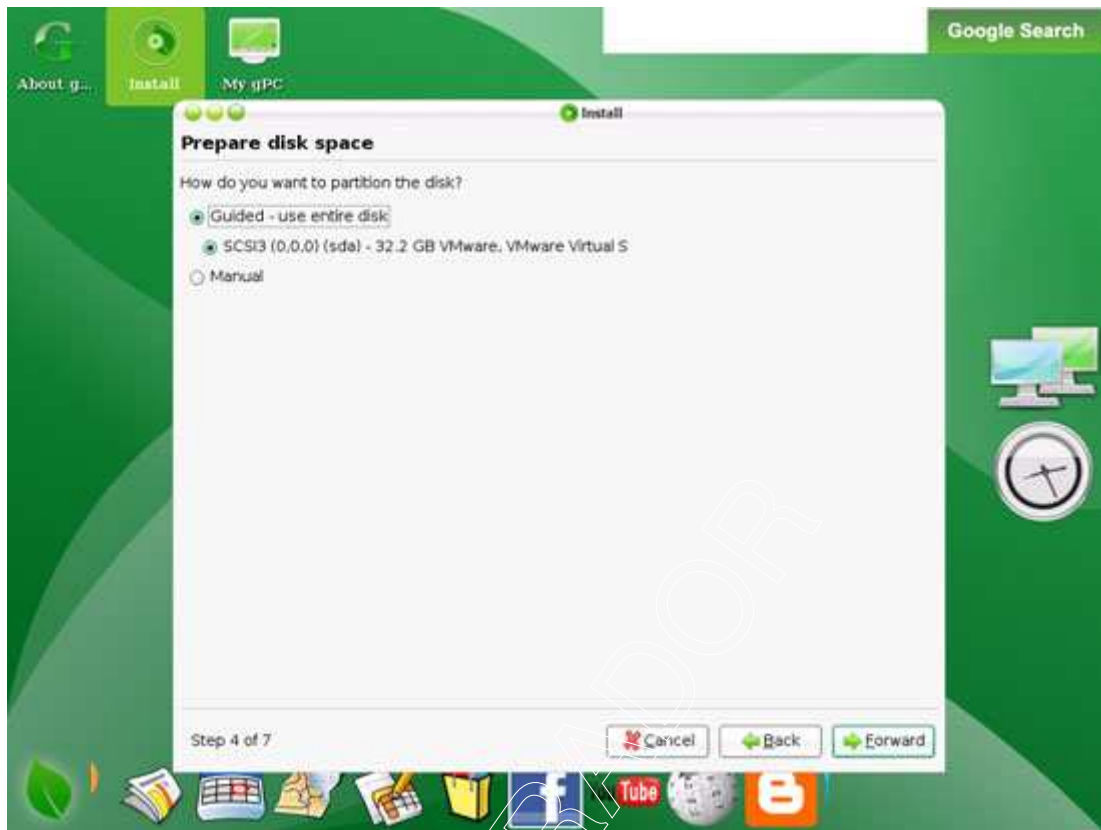
Then choose your time zone:



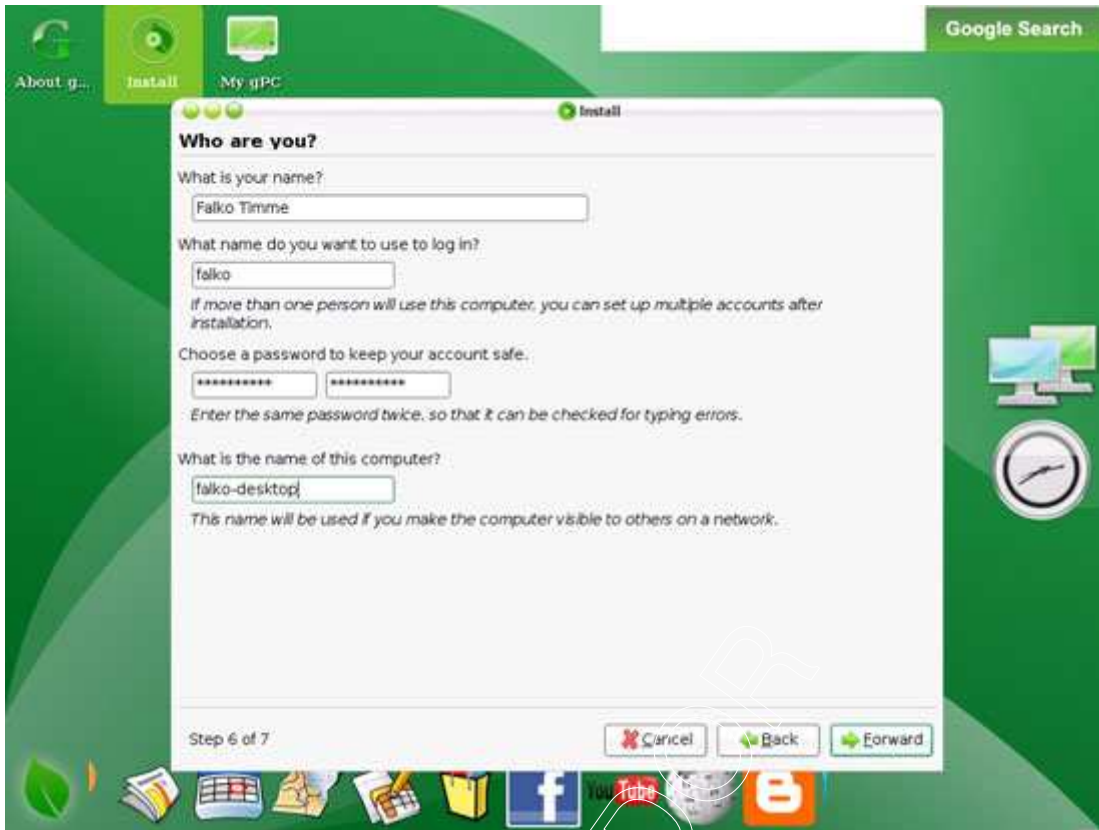
Change the keyboard layout, if necessary:



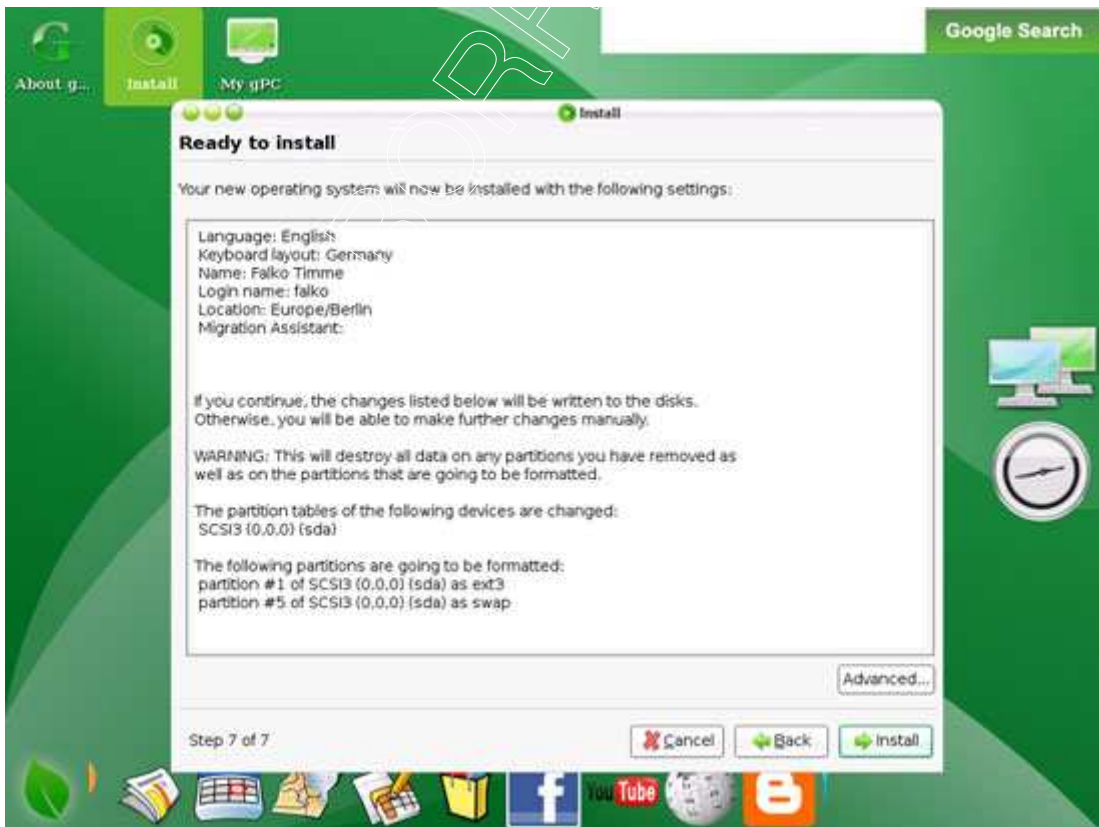
Now we come to the partitioning of our hard disk. Usually Guided - use entire disk is a good choice, unless you need custom partitions and know what you're doing. Use entire disk will create one big / partition for us:



Type in your real name, your desired username along with a password, and click on Forward:



The next screen shows us a summary of the installation settings. Click on Install to start the installation:



The hard drive is being partitioned:



Afterwards, the gOS system is being installed. This can take a few minutes, so be patient:



After the installation is complete, we must reboot the system to use it. Click on Restart now:



The Live-CD desktop shuts down. At the end (when you see the blue rectangle with white text at the bottom of this screen), the gOS CD is ejected. Remove it from the CD drive and hit the <ENTER> key to boot into your new gOS desktop:



Your new gOS system starts. Log in to the desktop with the username and password you provided during the installation:



When you log in for the first time, you must accept the license of the firefox-google-toolbal-plugin; therefore you're asked for your password again:



Afterwards, accept the license of the firefox-google-toolbar-plugin:



This is how your new desktop looks:



Now the base system is ready to be used.

3 Update The System

When you log in for the first time, you will most likely see an orange software update icon in the lower right corner which means that updates for the installed software are available. To install the updates, click on that orange icon:



The Update Manager tells you which updates are available. Click on Install Updates to install them:



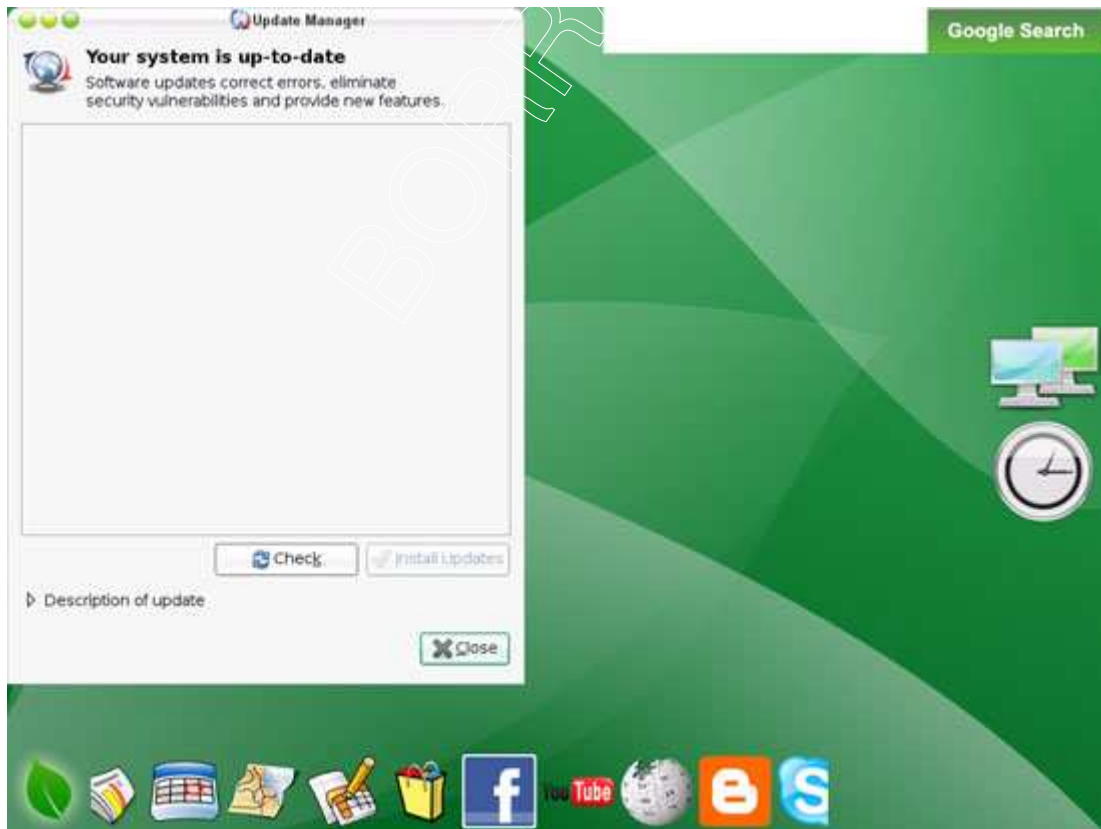
The updates are being downloaded and installed (this can take a few minutes):



When the update is complete, click on Close:



Then close the Update Manager:



The orange software update icon is now gone. The system is up-to-date.

4 Inventory Of What We Have So Far

Now lets browse all menus under Applications to see which of our needed applications are already installed:



You should find the following situation ([x] marks an application that is already installed, where [] is an application that is missing):

Graphics:

[x] The GIMP

[] F-Spot

[] Picasa

Internet:

[x] Firefox

[] Opera

[] Flash Player

[] FileZilla

[x] Thunderbird

[] Evolution

[] aMule

[] BitTornado

[] Azureus

[x] Pidgin

[x] Skype

- Google Earth
- Xchat IRC

Office:

- OpenOffice Writer
- OpenOffice Calc
- Adobe Reader
- GnuCash
- Scribus

Sound & Video:

- Amarok
- Audacity
- Banshee
- MPlayer
- Rhythmbox Music Player
- gtkPod
- XMMS
- dvd::rip
- Kino
- Sound Juicer CD Extractor
- VLC Media Player
- Helix Player
- Totem
- Xine
- GnomeBaker
- K3B
- Multimedia Codecs

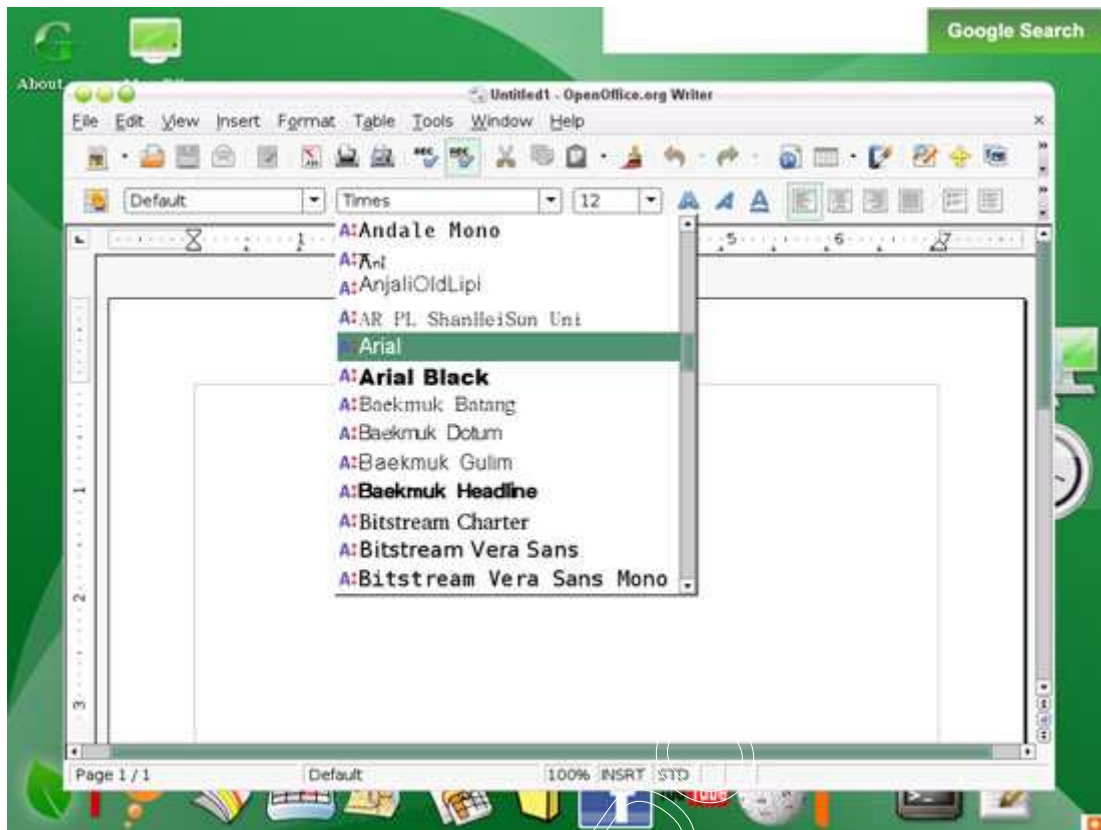
Programming:

- KompoZer
- Bluefish
- Quanta Plus

Other:

- VMware Server
- TrueType fonts
- Java
- Read-/Write support for NTFS partitions

So some applications are already on the system. Microsoft's TrueType fonts are installed as well, you can check that for example by opening the OpenOffice Writer. Take a look at the available fonts, and you should find fonts such as Arial, Times New Roman, Verdana, etc.:



NTFS read-/write support is enabled by default on Ubuntu 7.10 (Gutsy Gibbon) and all derived distributions.

5 Install gnome-terminal And gedit

Before we go on, we should install a terminal that allows us to copy & paste commands, and a text editor (you don't need a text editor to follow this tutorial, but it's always good to have one installed). The default terminal on gOS is UXterm, but the problem with this terminal is that you cannot copy & paste commands (e.g. from this tutorial). Therefore we install gnome-terminal (and gedit, our text editor).

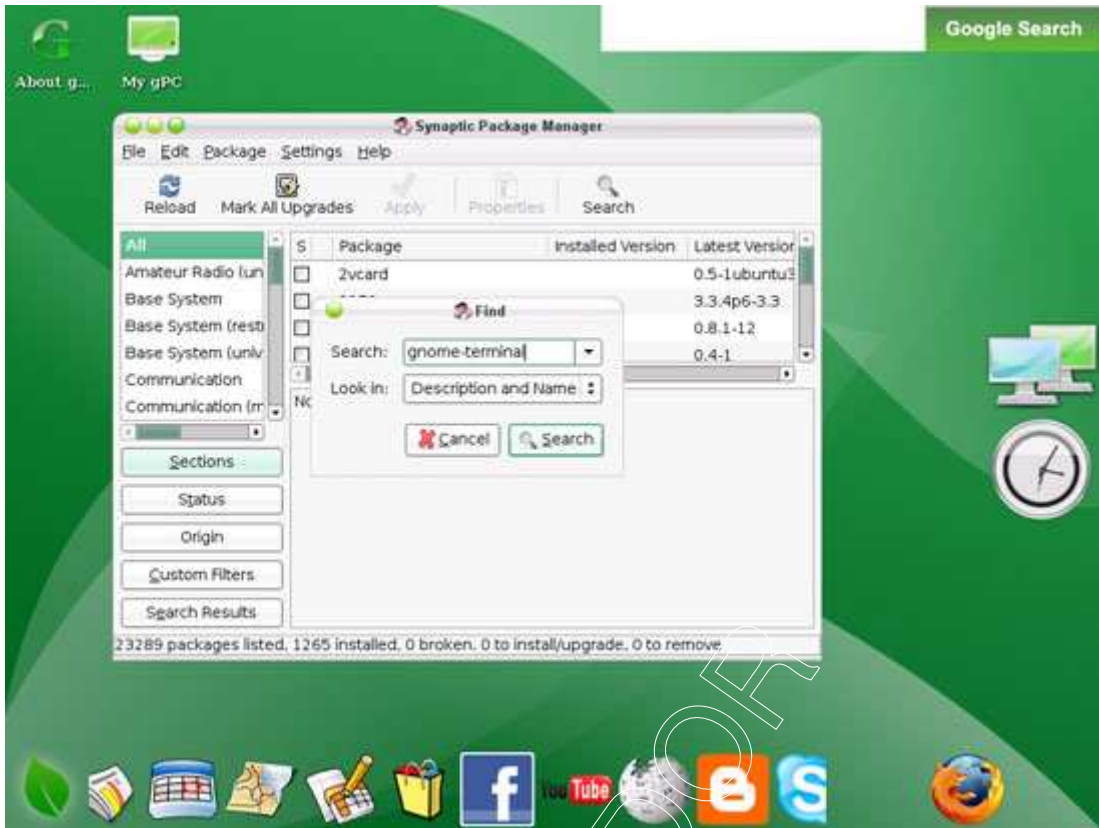
Open the Synaptic Package Manager (Applications > Administration > Synaptic Package Manager (Package Manager)):



Close the Quick Introduction window:



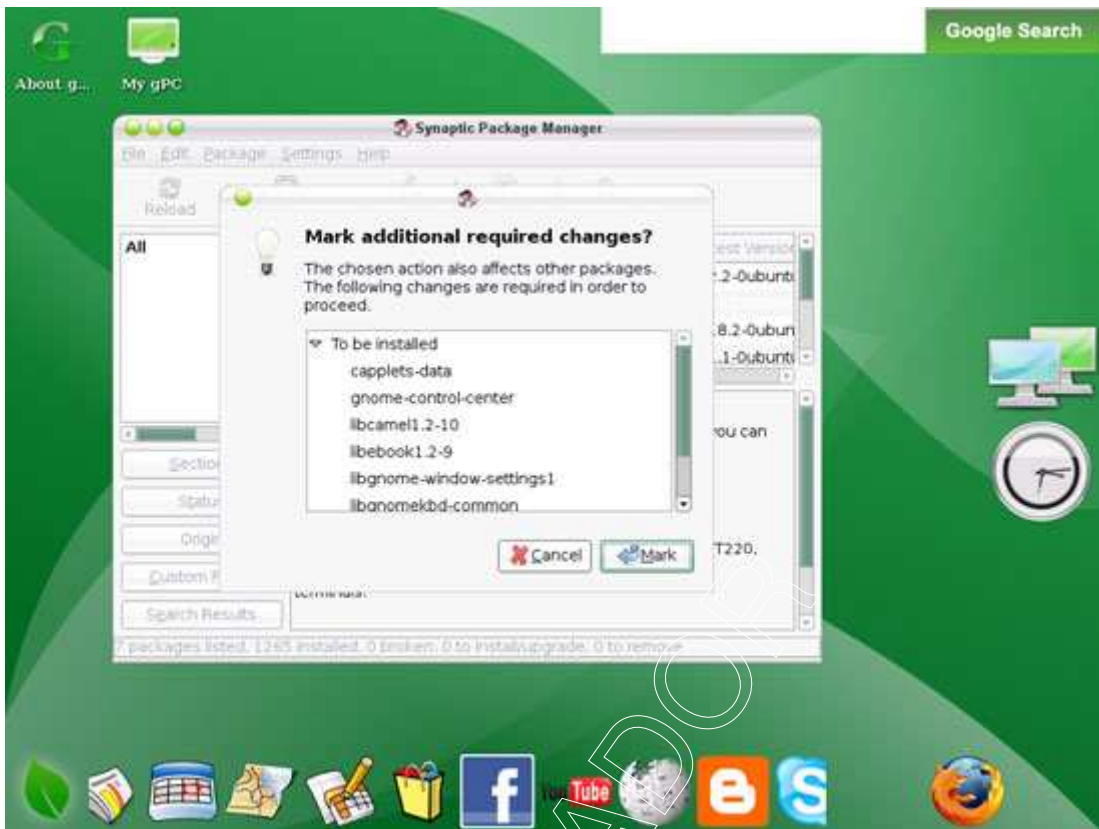
Click on the Search button and search for gnome-terminal:



The package `gnome-terminal` should appear in the list of results. Click on it and select **Mark for Installation** from the menu:



Accept gnome-terminal's dependencies by clicking on Mark:

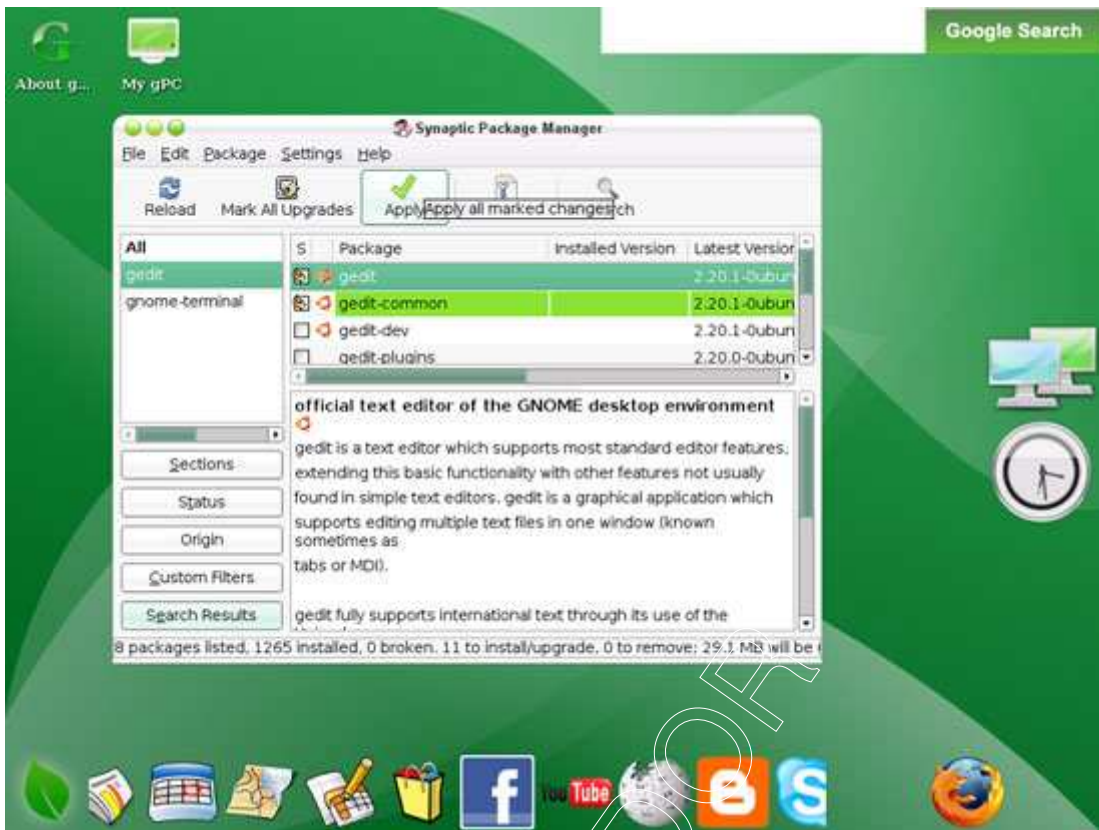


Now do the same again for gedit:





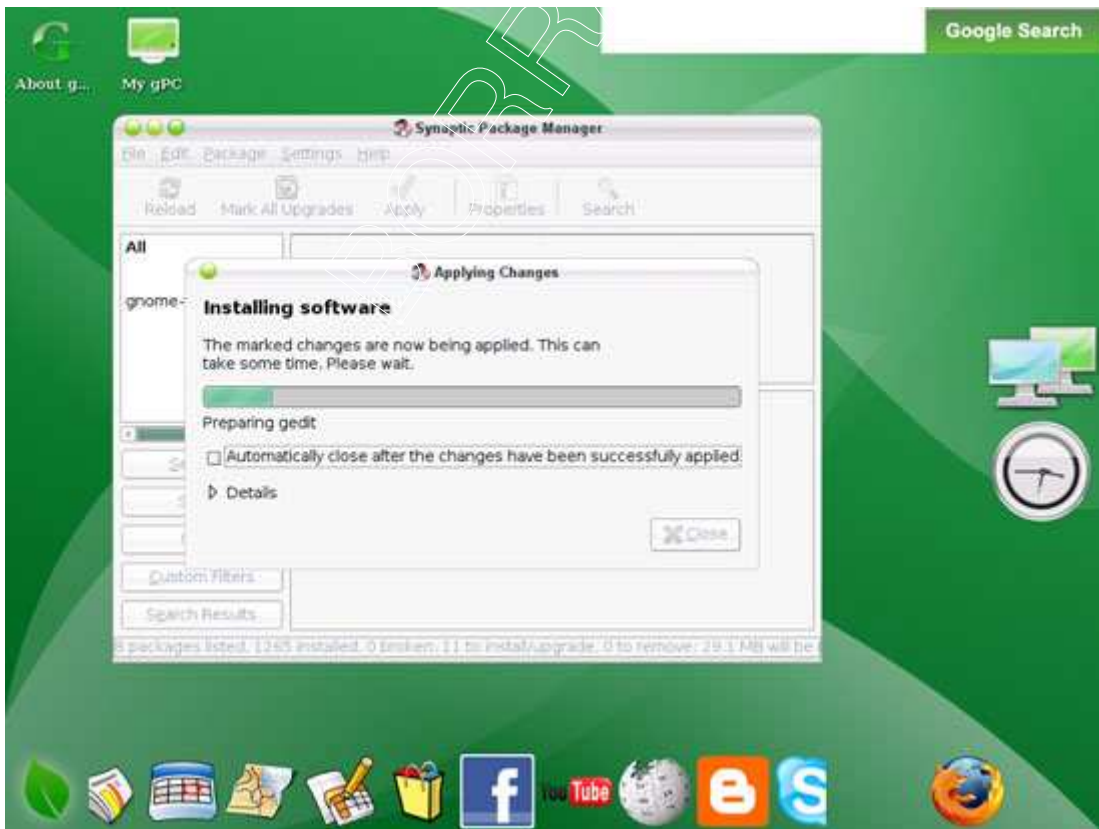
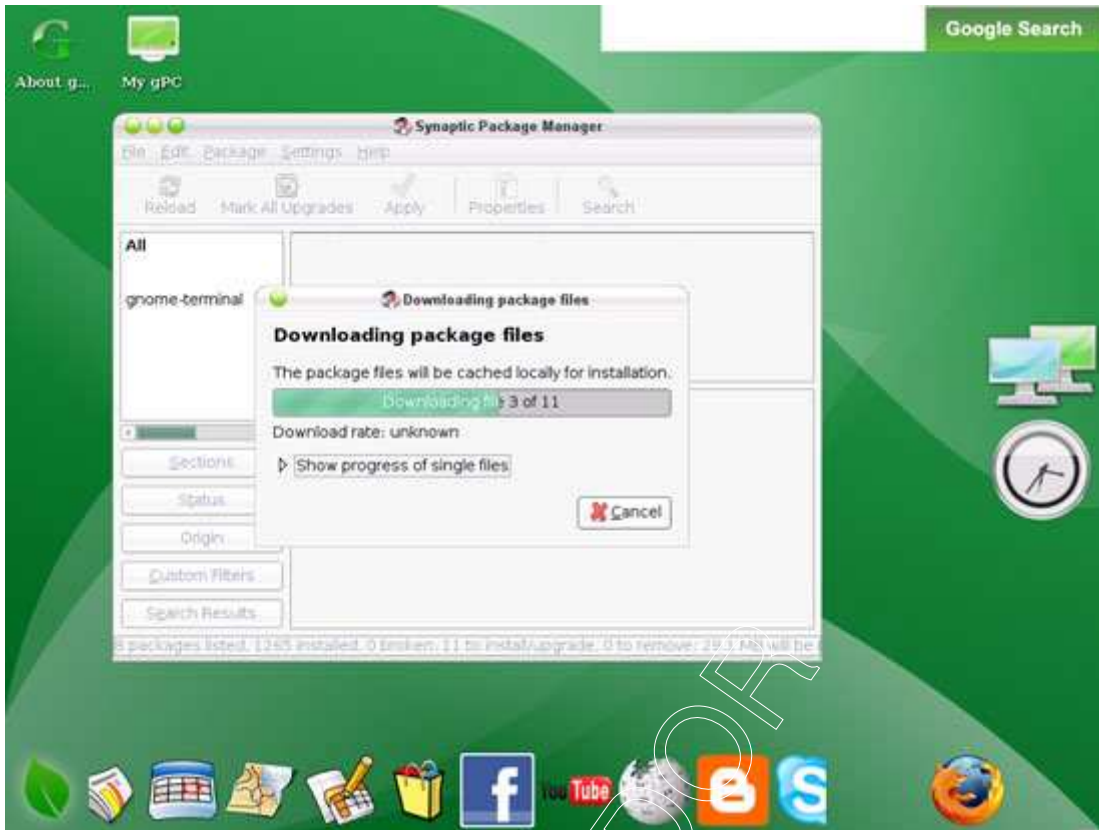
Afterwards, click on the Apply button to start the installation:



Confirm your selection by clicking on Apply:



Afterwards the selected packages are being downloaded and installed:



After all packages have been installed, click on Close:



6 Configure Additional Repositories

Some packages like the Adobe Reader are not available in the standard Ubuntu repositories. The easiest way to make such packages available to your system is to add the [Medibuntu repository](#). To add this repository go to Run Command:



Type in

`gnome-terminal`

to start the GNOME Terminal:



In the GNOME Terminal, run the following commands to enable the Medibuntu repository (you can copy & paste them from here to your GNOME Terminal to avoid typos):

Import the repository:

```
sudo wget http://www.medibuntu.org/sources.list.d/gutsy.list -O  
/etc/apt/sources.list.d/medibuntu.list
```

Import the gpg-key and update your package-list:

```
wget -q http://packages.medibuntu.org/medibuntu-key.gpg -O- | sudo apt-key add - &&  
sudo apt-get update
```




Afterwards, you can close the GNOME Terminal.

In addition to the Medibuntu repository, we also enable the gutsy partner repository which contains the Opera browser. Go to Applications > Administration > Software Sources (Software Sources):



Type in your password:



The Software Sources window contains repositories that are already known to the system (no matter if they are enabled or not). Go to the Third-Party Software tab, enable the gutsy partner repository and click on Close:



Now the system's package database has to be updated (because we've just added a new repository), therefore we click on the Reload button:



Now the package database is being updated:



7 Install Additional Software

To install additional applications, open the Synaptic Package Manager (Applications > Administration > Synaptic Package Manager):



Select the following packages for installation (* is a wildcard; e.g. gstreamer* means all packages that start with gstreamer):

- amarok
- amule
- audacity
- azureus
- banshee
- bluefish
- dvdrip
- filezilla
- evolution
- evolution-plugins
- gnucash
- gstreamer*
- gtkpod
- j2re1.4
- j2re1.4-moyilla-plugin
- k3b
- kino
- mplayer
- mozilla-mplayer

- totem
- totem-gstreamer
- totem-mozilla
- quanta
- kompozer
- scribus
- sun-java6* (except sun-java6-doc)
- vlc*
- xchat
- xchat-common
- xmms*
- f-spot
- flashplugin-nonfree
- bittornado
- bittornado-gui
- googleearth
- acroread*
- sound-juicer
- helix-player
- mozilla-helix-player
- non-free-codecs
- opera

There are also lots of other applications available that you can install as well if you like.

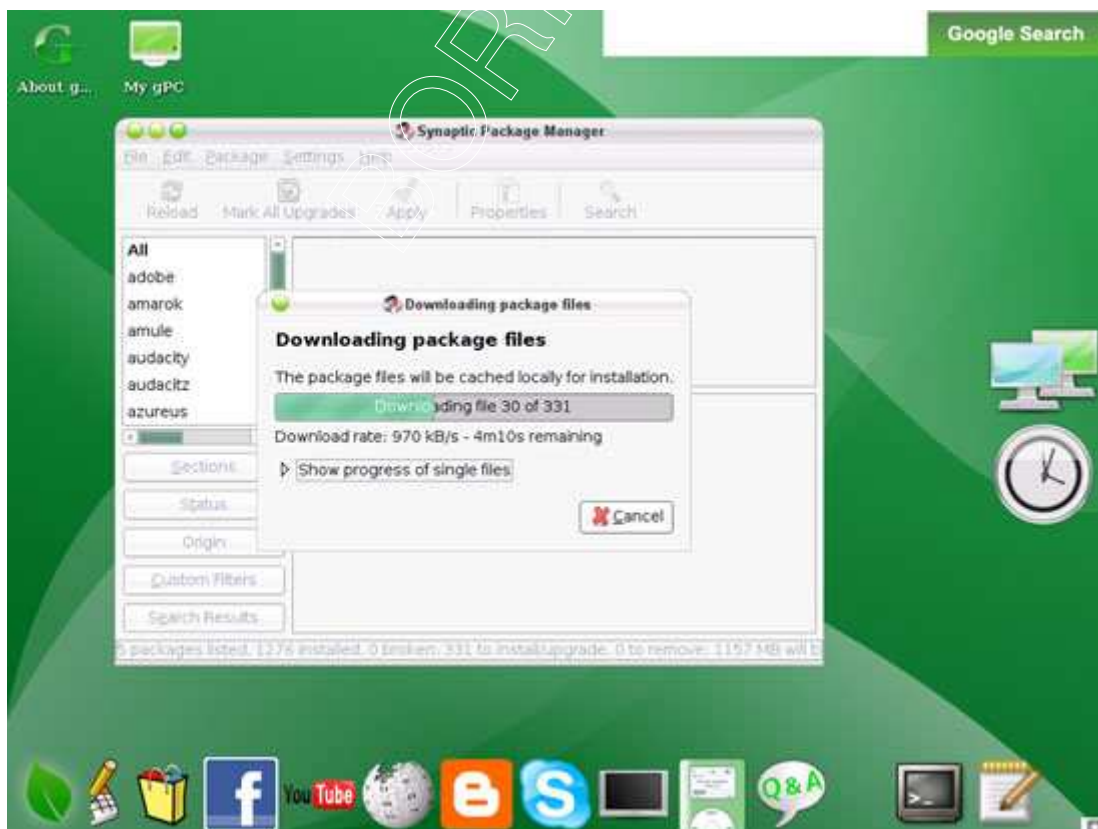
After you've selected all wanted packages, click on the Apply button:



Confirm your selection by clicking on Apply again:



Afterwards all selected packages are being downloaded and installed:



Some packages require that you accept their licenses (for example j2re1.4):



The Adobe Flash plugin can be installed from a local file or from the internet. Most probably you did not download the Flash plugin before; therefore leave the Location to the local file field empty and click on Forward:



Accept the license of the Flash plugin:



If you don't have a 3D graphics card and you see this message, simply click on Forward:



You can accept the default MPlayer font:



Afterwards, a few more licenses have to be accepted:



During the installation, you will be asked a second time regarding the Flash plugin (not sure why...). Answer as before:



After all packages have been installed, click on Close:



8 Inventory (II)

Now let's check again what we have so far by browsing the menus again:



Our inventory should now look like this:

Graphics:

- [x] The GIMP
- [x] F-Spot
- [] Picasa

Internet:

- [x] Firefox
- [x] Opera
- [x] Flash Player
- [x] FileZilla
- [x] Thunderbird
- [x] Evolution
- [x] aMule
- [x] BitTornado
- [x] Azureus
- [x] Pidgin
- [x] Skype
- [x] Google Earth
- [x] Xchat IRC

Office:

- [x] OpenOffice Writer
- [x] OpenOffice Calc
- [x] Adobe Reader

- [x] GnuCash
- [x] Scribus

Sound & Video:

- [x] Amarok
- [x] Audacity
- [x] Banshee
- [x] MPlayer
- [x] Rhythmbox Music Player
- [x] gtkPod
- [x] XMMS
- [x] dvd::rip
- [x] Kino
- [x] Sound Juicer CD Extractor
- [x] VLC Media Player
- [x] Helix Player
- [x] Totem
- [x] Xine
- [x] GnomeBaker
- [x] K3B
- [x] Multimedia Codecs

Programming:

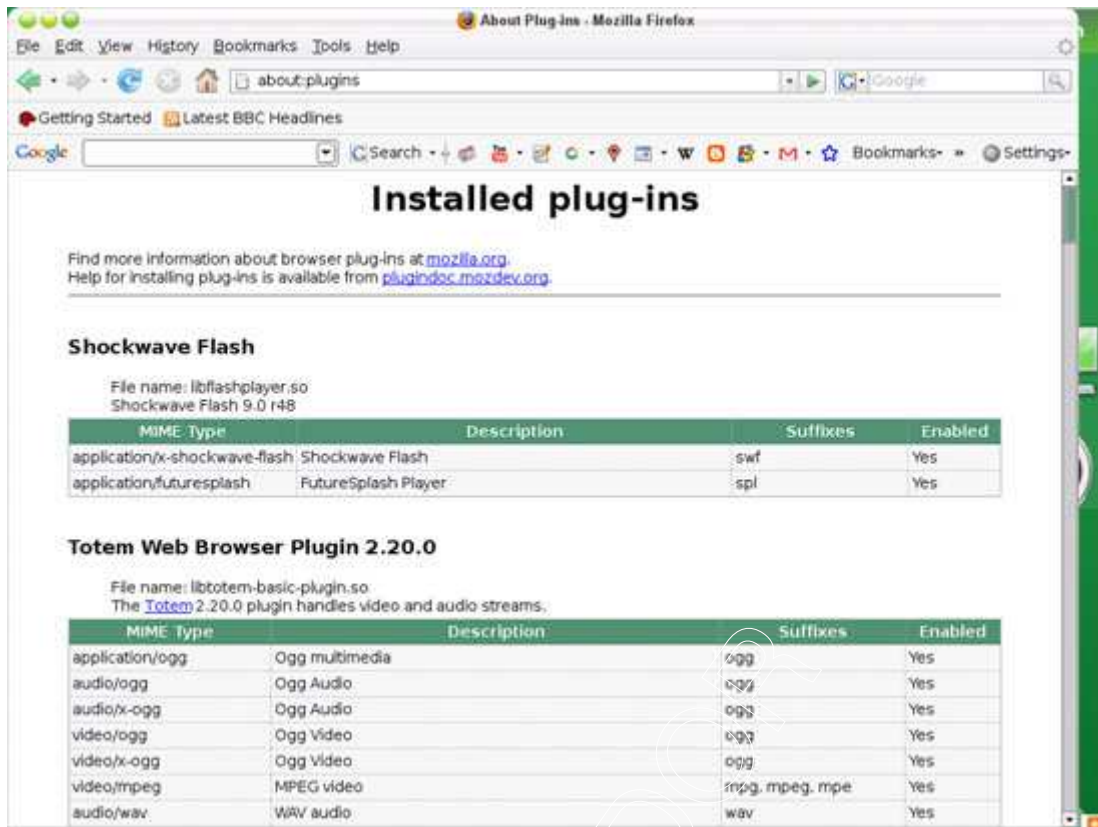
- [x] KompoZer
- [x] Bluefish
- [x] Quanta Plus

Other:

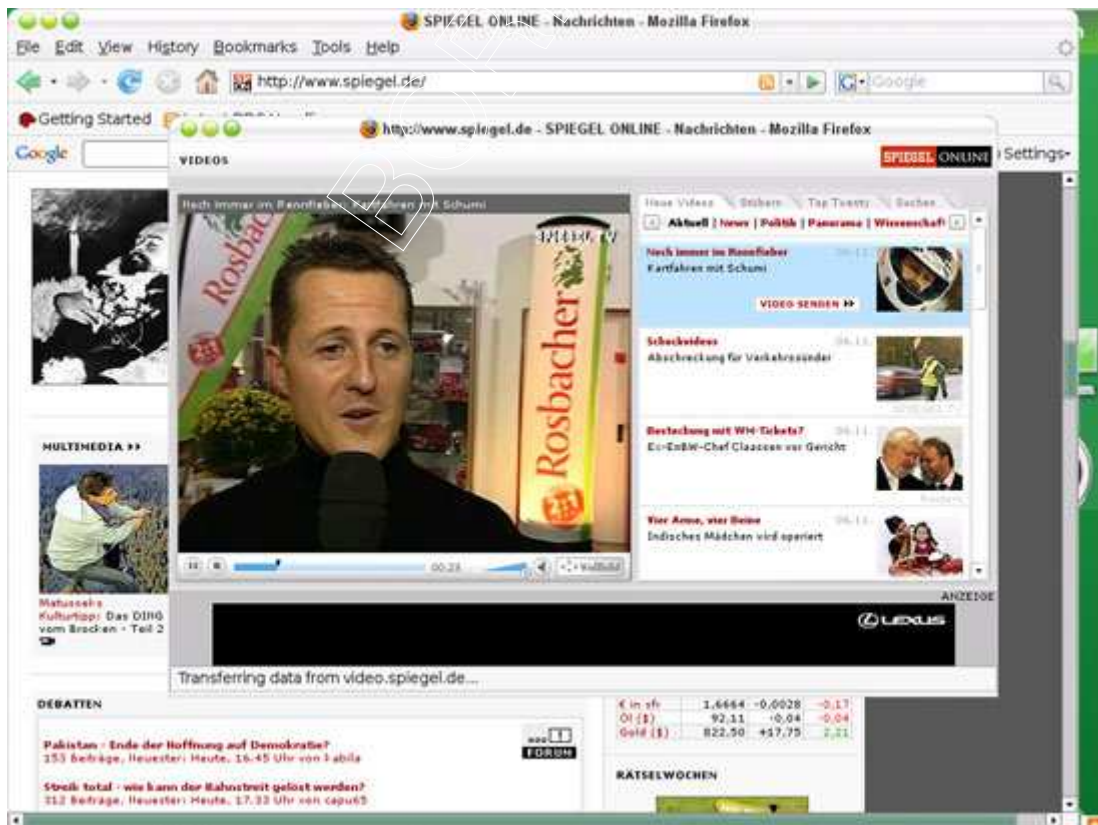
- [] VMware Server
- [x] TrueType fonts
- [x] Java
- [x] Read-/Write support for NTFS partitions

9 Flash Player

To see if the Flash plugin (which we installed before) is working, start Firefox. Then type about:plugins in the address bar. Firefox will then list all installed plugins, and it should list the Flash Player (version 9.0r48 which is the newest one at the time of this writing) among them:



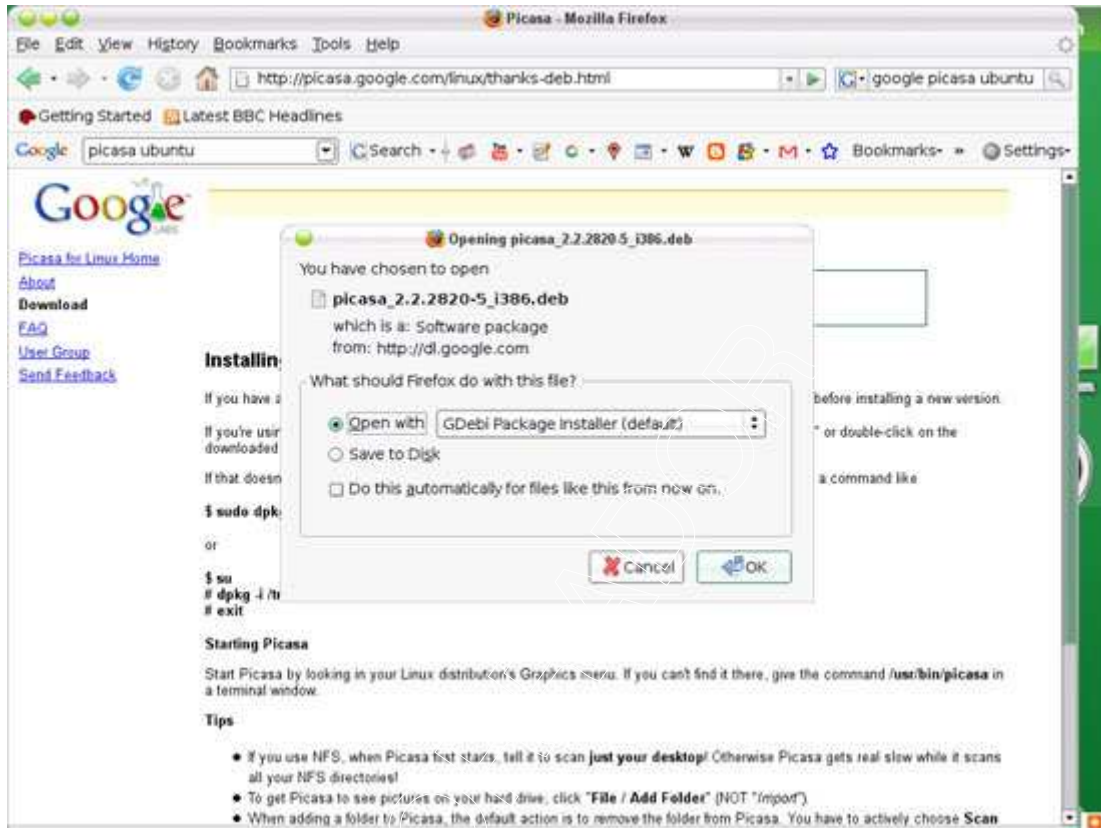
You can now open a web site of which you know that it uses Flash. For example, www.spiegel.de has video news in Flash. You should be able to see (and hear) the Flash movies:



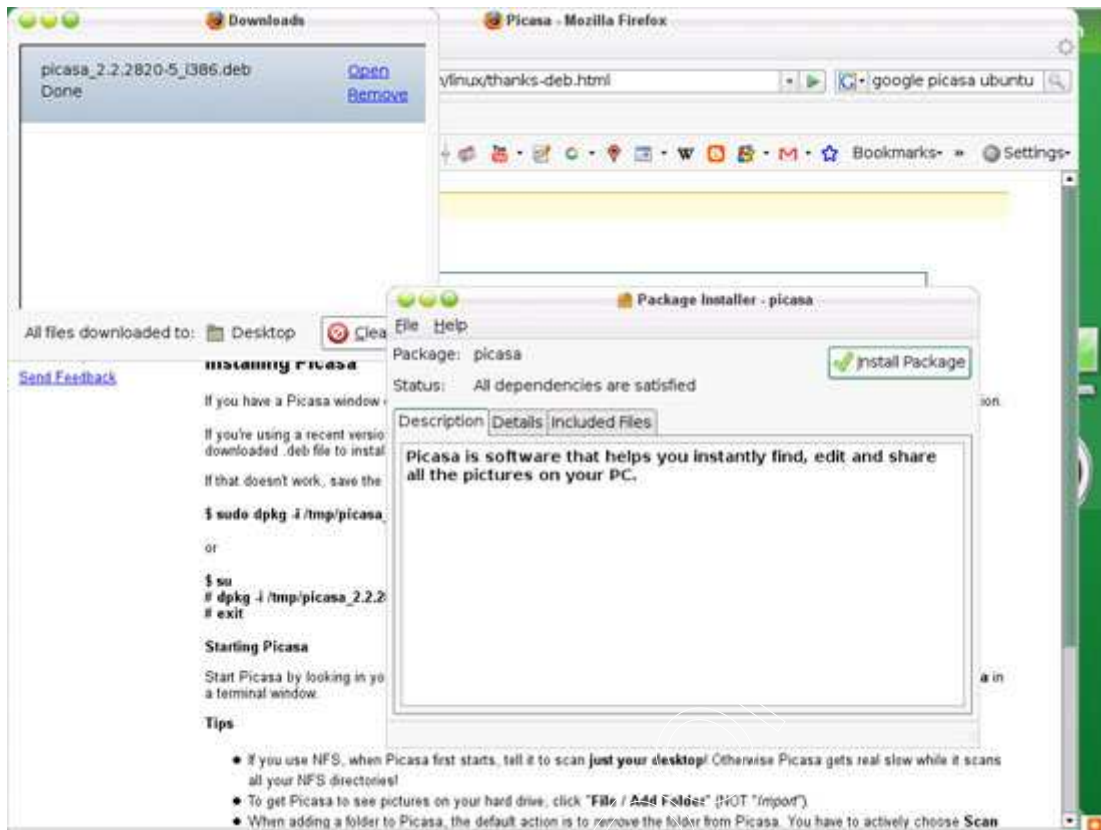
Another web site that uses Flash movies is [YouTube](#), for example.

10 Google Picasa

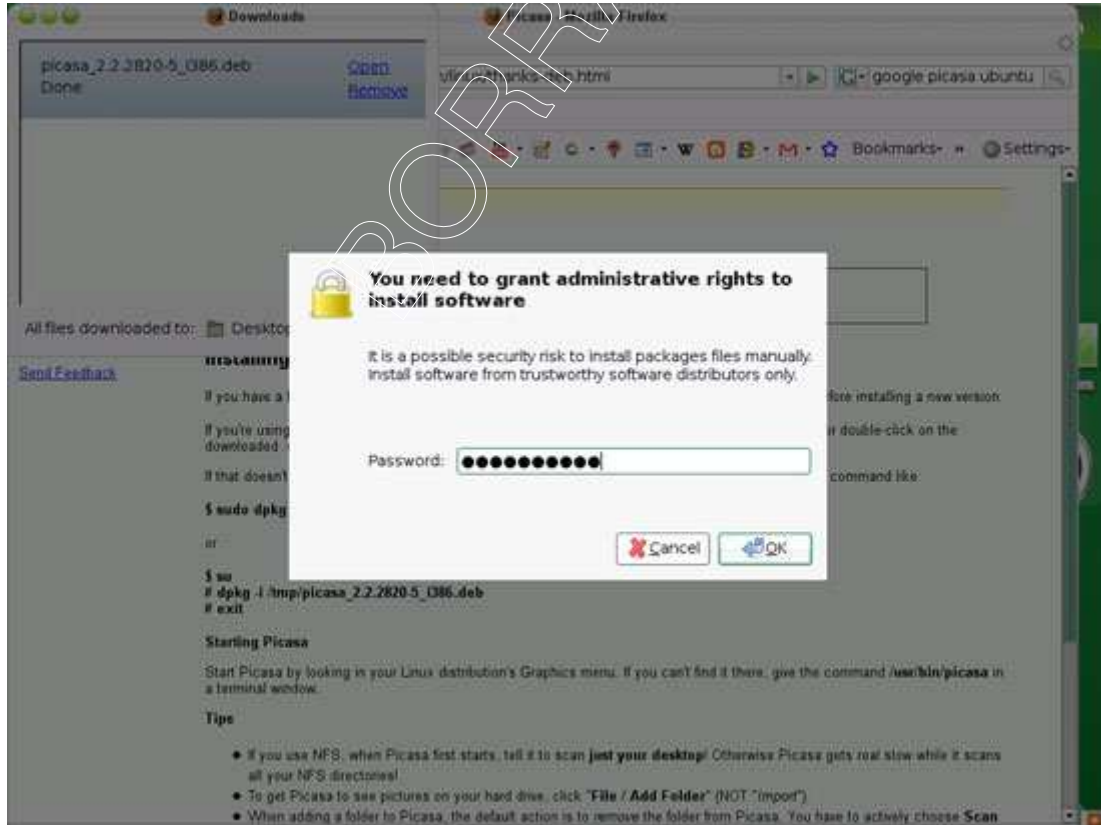
Open Firefox and go to <http://picasa.google.com/linux/thanks-deb.html>. A download dialogue should come up automatically. Select Open with GDebi Package Installer (default):



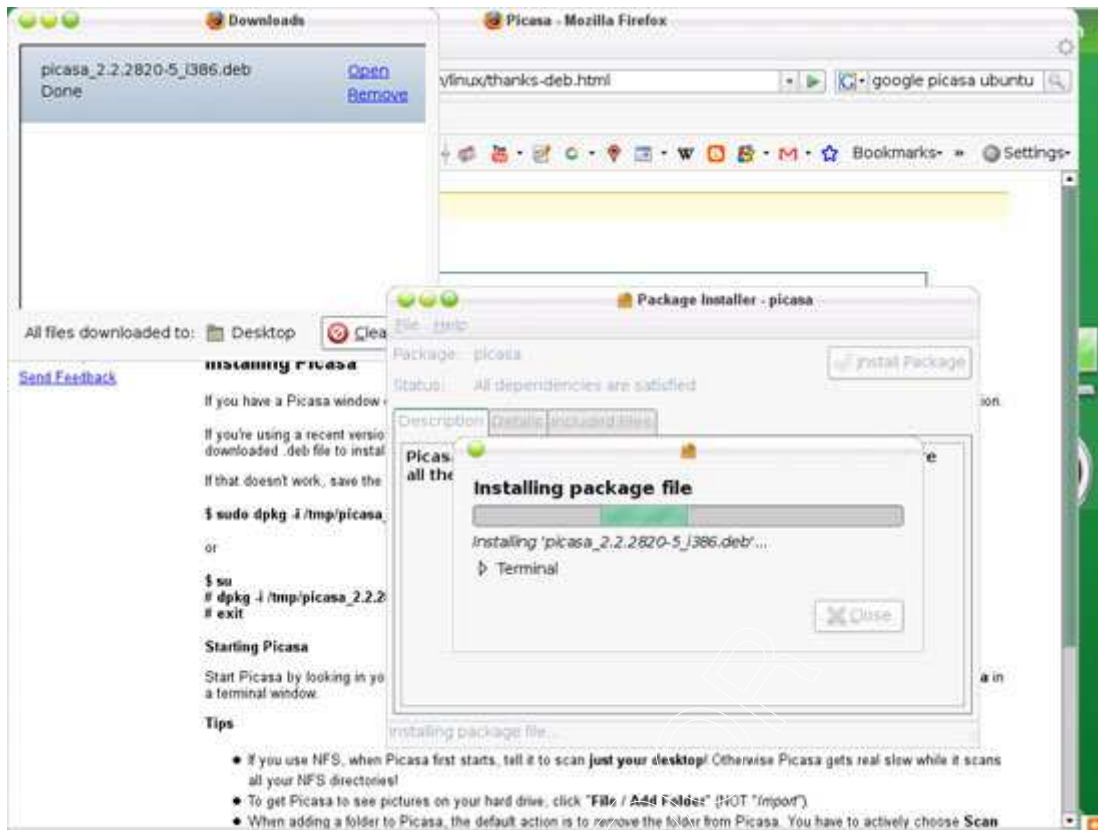
A Package Installer window comes up. Click on the Install Package button to install Picasa:



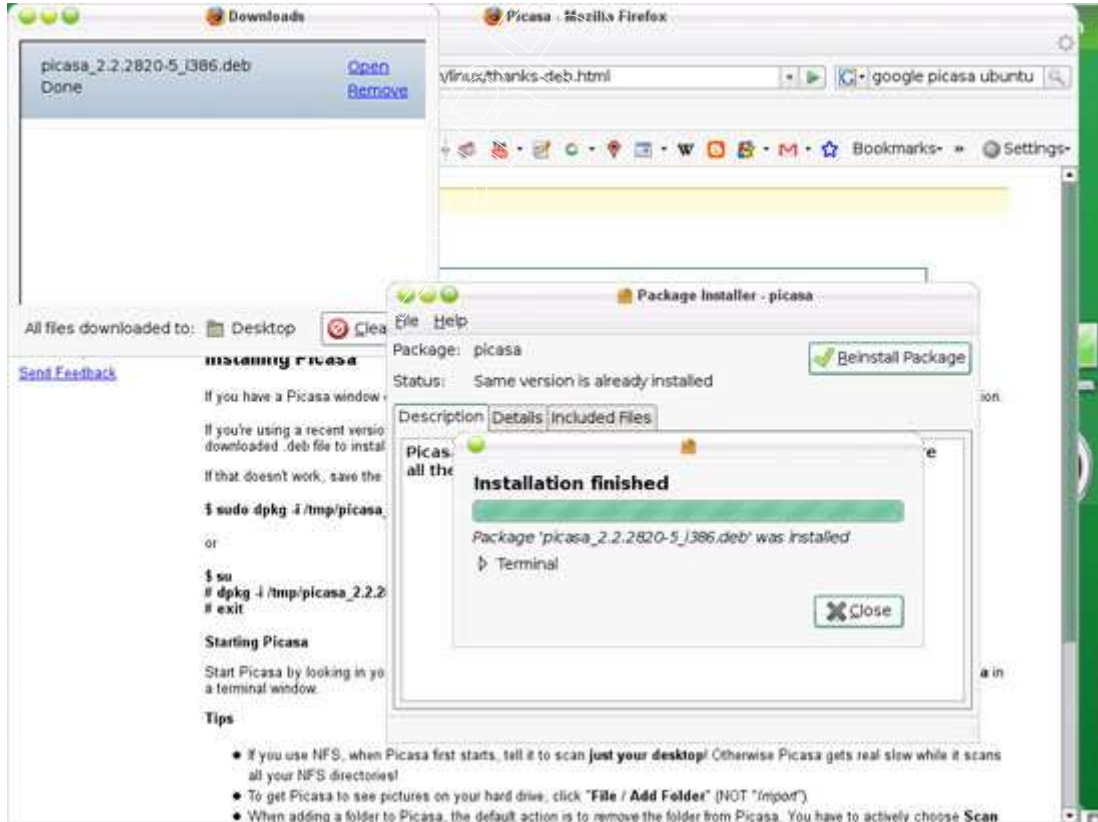
You must provide your password to start the installation:



The installation begins:



Afterwards, you can close the Package Installer window:



11 Inventory (III)

Browse the Applications menu again and check what you've got installed so far.

Your list should look like this now:

Graphics:

- [x] The GIMP
- [x] F-Spot
- [x] Picasa

Internet:

- [x] Firefox
- [x] Opera
- [x] Flash Player
- [x] FileZilla
- [x] Thunderbird
- [x] Evolution
- [x] aMule
- [x] BitTornado
- [x] Azureus
- [x] Pidgin
- [x] Skype
- [x] Google Earth
- [x] Xchat IRC

Office:

- [x] OpenOffice Writer
- [x] OpenOffice Calc
- [x] Adobe Reader
- [x] GnuCash
- [x] Scribus

Sound & Video:

- [x] Amarok
- [x] Audacity
- [x] Banshee
- [x] MPlayer
- [x] Rhythmbox Music Player
- [x] gtkPod
- [x] XMMS
- [x] dvd::rip
- [x] Kino
- [x] Sound Juicer CD Extractor
- [x] VLC Media Player
- [x] Helix Player
- [x] Totem
- [x] Xine
- [x] GnomeBaker

- [x] K3B
- [x] Multimedia Codecs

Programming:

- [x] KompoZer
- [x] Bluefish
- [x] Quanta Plus

Other:

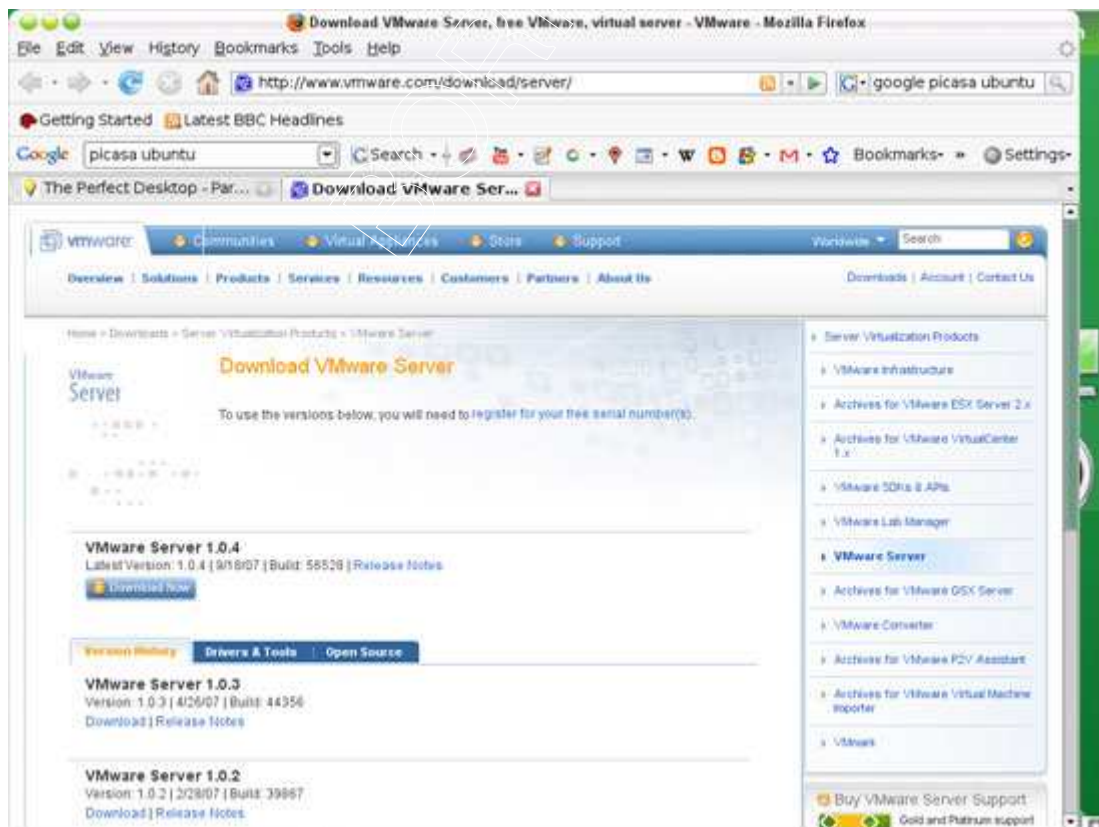
- [] VMware Server
- [x] TrueType fonts
- [x] Java
- [x] Read-/Write support for NTFS partitions

So everything is installed except for VMware Server...

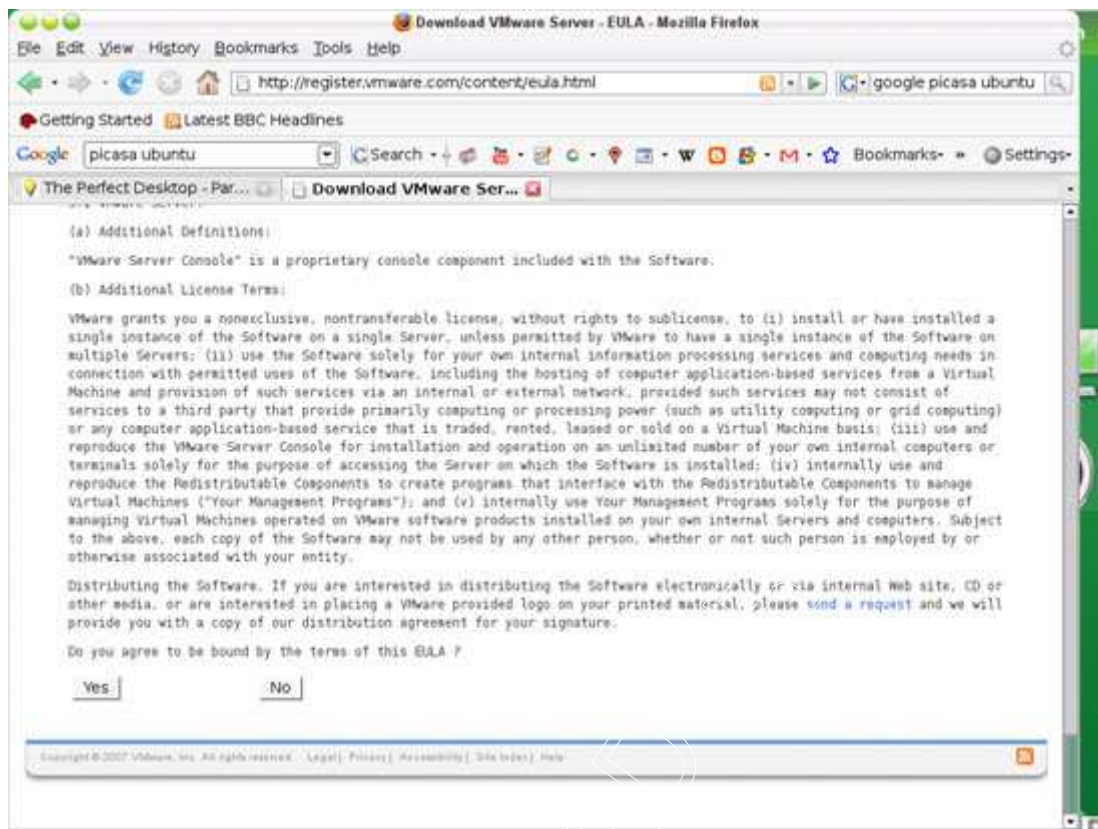
12 VMware Server

With [VMware Server](#) you can let your old Windows desktop (that you previously converted into a VMware virtual machine with [VMware Converter](#), as described in this tutorial: http://www.howtoforge.com/vmware_converter_windows_linux) run under your gOS desktop. This can be useful if you depend on some applications that exist for Windows only, or if you want to switch to Linux slowly.

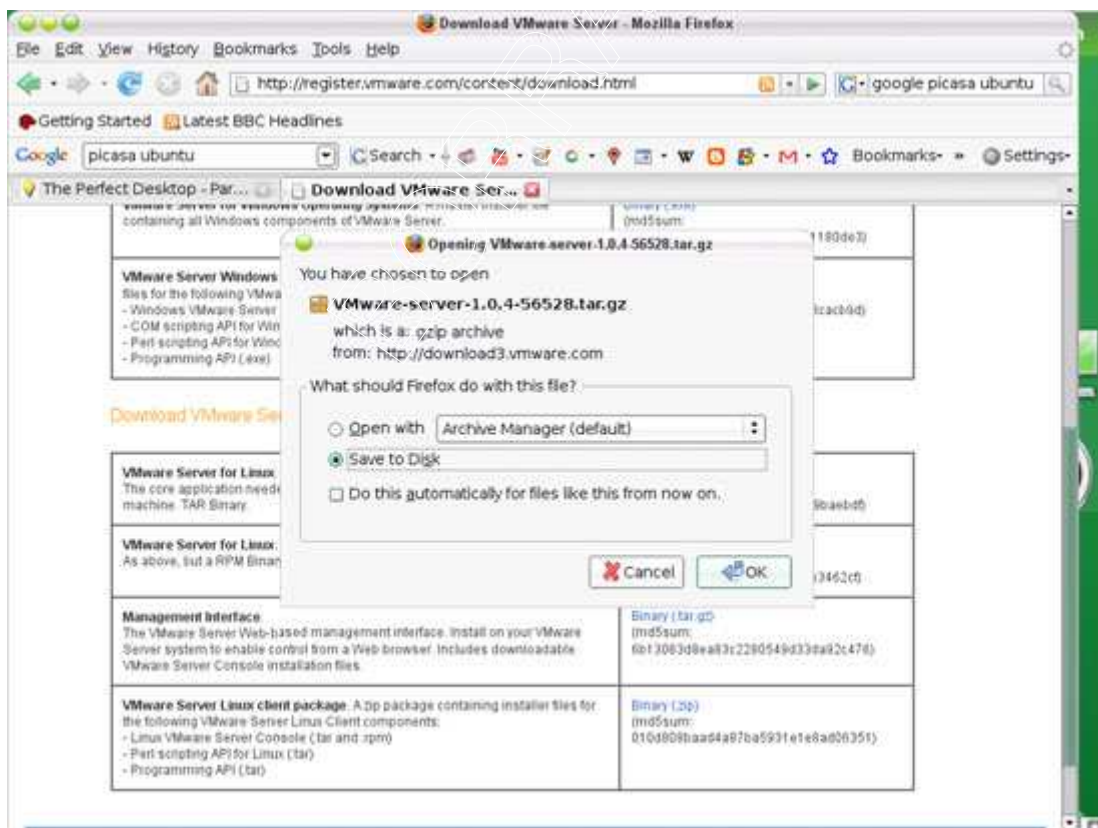
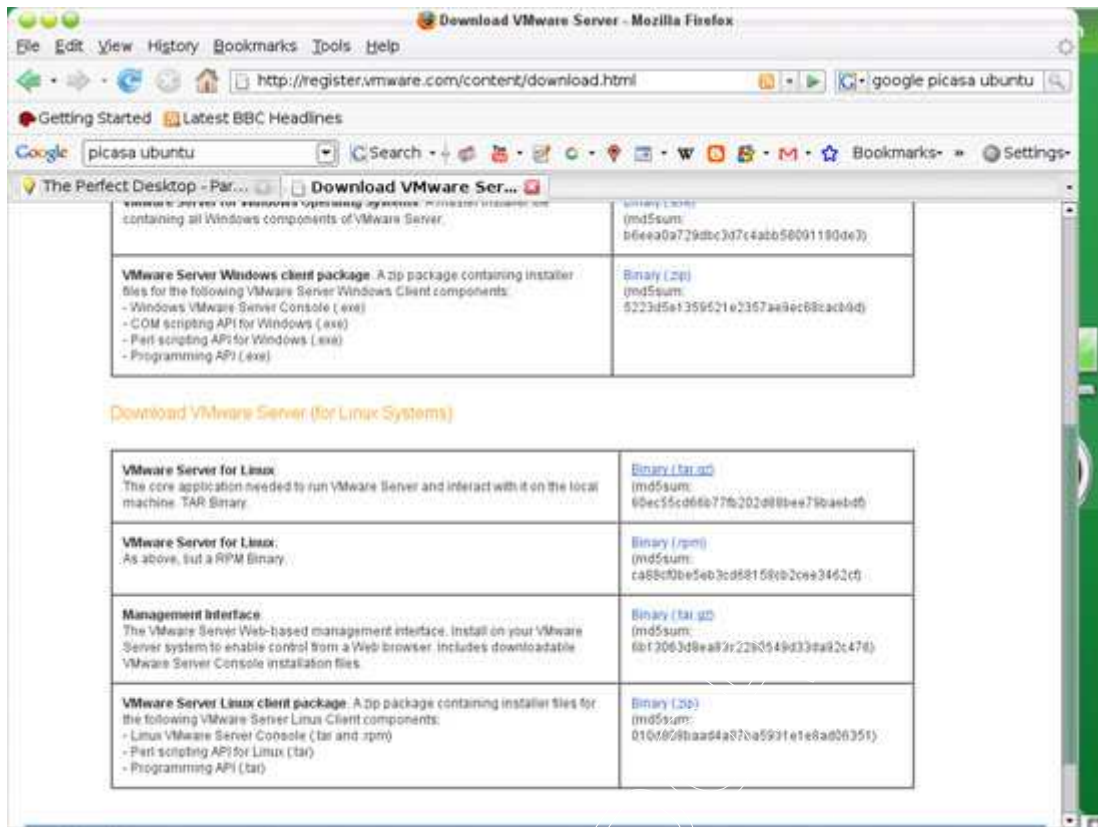
To download VMware Server, go to <http://www.vmware.com/download/server/> and click on Download Now:



Accept the license agreement by clicking on Yes:

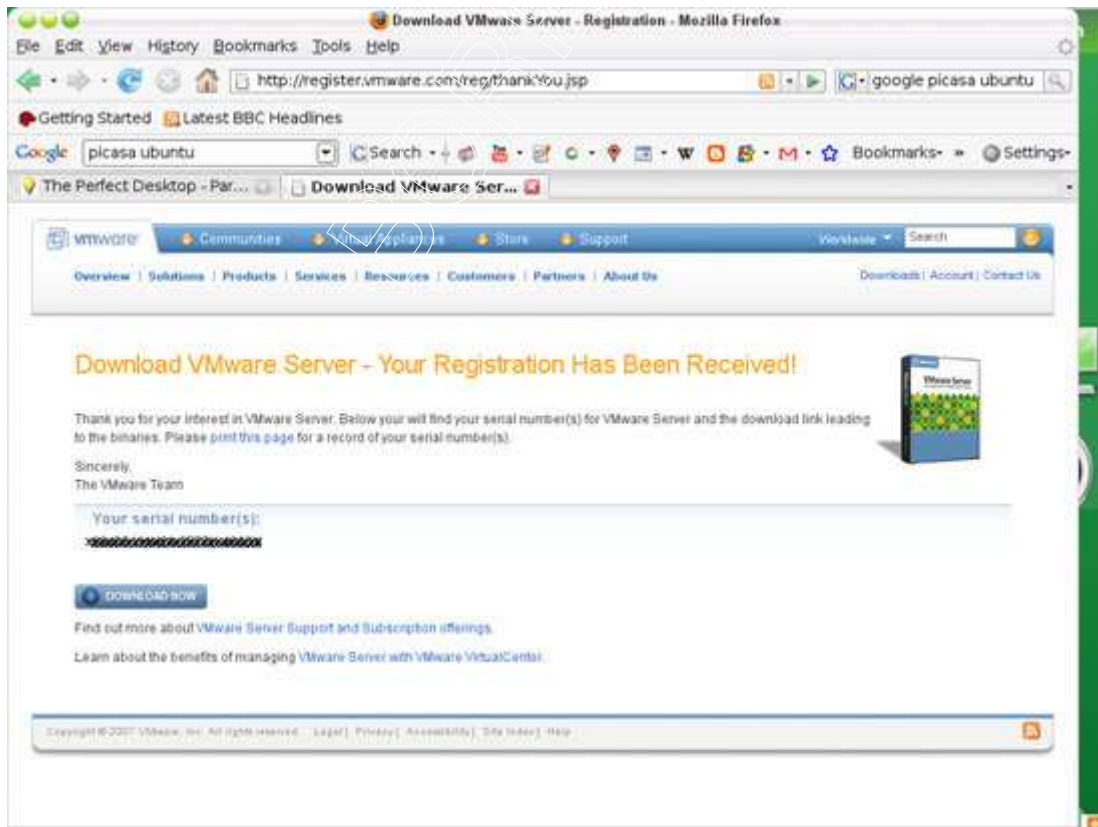
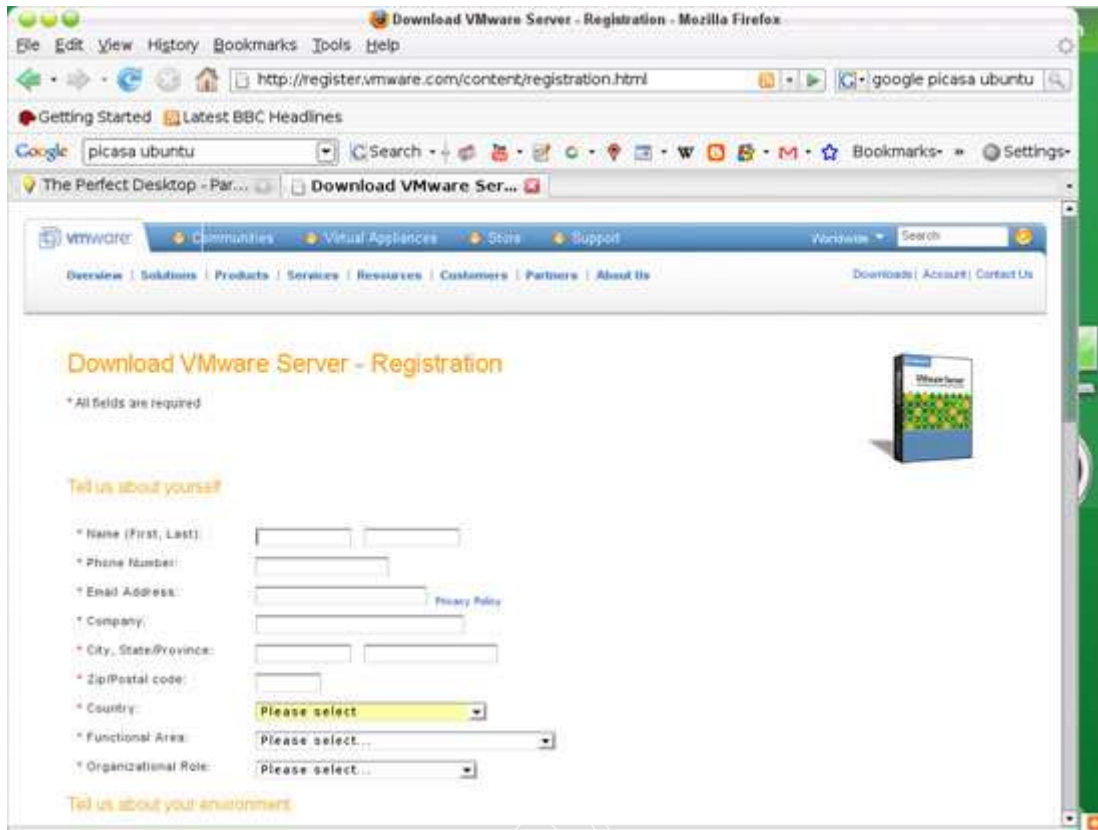


Then download the VMware Server for Linux .tar.gz file (not the rpm file!) to your desktop (e.g. to /home/falko/Desktop):



To get the serial number you need to run VMware Server, go to <http://register.vmware.com/content/registration.html>. Fill in your personal details.

Afterwards you will get a page with a serial number for VMware Server. Write it down or print it out:



To install VMware Server, open the GNOME Terminal again. Go to Run Command...



... and run

`gnome-terminal`

to open the GNOME Terminal:



Run the following command to install some necessary packages:

```
sudo apt-get install linux-headers-`uname -r` build-essential xinetd
```

Then go to the location where you saved the VMware Server .tar.gz file, e.g. /home/falko/Desktop (replace falko with your own username!):

```
cd /home/falko/Desktop
```

Unpack the VMware Server .tar.gz file and run the installer:

```
tar xvfz VMware-server-*.tar.gz  
cd vmware-server-distrib  
sudo ./vmware-install.pl
```

The installer will ask you a lot of questions. You can always accept the default values simply by hitting <ENTER>.

At the end of the installation, you will be asked to enter a serial number:

Please enter your 20-character serial number.

Type XXXXX-XXXXX-XXXXX-XXXXX or 'Enter' to cancel:

Fill in your serial number for VMware Server.

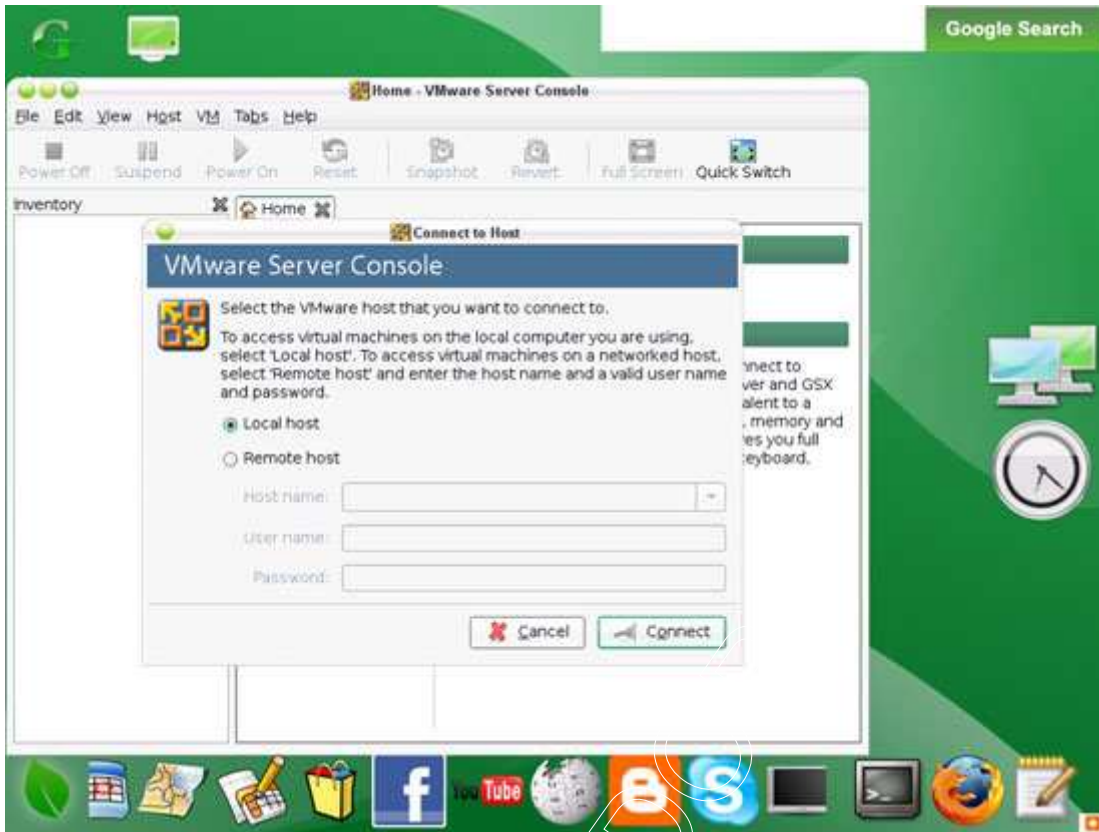
After the successful installation, you can delete the VMware Server download file and the installation directory:

```
cd ../  
rm -fr vmware-server-distrib/  
rm -f VMware-server*.tar.gz
```

You will now find VMware Server under Applications > System Tools > VMware Server Console:



When you start it, select Local host:



Afterwards, you can create virtual machines (or import your virtual Windows machine that you created with [VMware Converter](#)):



13 Inventory (IV)

We have now all wanted applications installed:

Graphics:

- [x] The GIMP
- [x] F-Spot
- [x] Picasa

Internet:

- [x] Firefox
- [x] Opera
- [x] Flash Player
- [x] FileZilla
- [x] Thunderbird
- [x] Evolution
- [x] aMule
- [x] BitTornado
- [x] Azureus
- [x] Pidgin
- [x] Skype
- [x] Google Earth
- [x] Xchat IRC

Office:

- [x] OpenOffice Writer
- [x] OpenOffice Calc
- [x] Adobe Reader
- [x] GnuCash
- [x] Scribus

Sound & Video:

- [x] Amarok
- [x] Audacity
- [x] Banshee
- [x] MPlayer
- [x] Rhythmbox Music Player
- [x] gtkPod
- [x] XMMS
- [x] dvd::rip
- [x] Kino
- [x] Sound Juicer CD Extractor
- [x] VLC Media Player
- [x] Helix Player
- [x] Totem
- [x] Xine
- [x] GnomeBaker

- K3B
- Multimedia Codecs

Programming:

- KompoZer
- Bluefish
- Quanta Plus

Other:

- VMware Server
- TrueType fonts
- Java
- Read-/Write support for NTFS partitions

14 Links

- gOS: <http://www.thinkgos.com>