Freshly Squeezed Debian: Installing from Live DVD

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Last month, the [Debian Live Project](#) [2] released [live CD and DVD images](#) [3] of the next version of Debian, codenamed "Squeeze." (For an overview of the various Debian repositories and codenames, see this [Wikipedia article](#) [4].) They included an installer that uses the live filesystem rather than packages, so it has the advantages of being fast and allowing you to preview on the live media, what you eventually get on your hard drive. This may not seem like a big deal, since most modern Linux distributions use this installation method, but it's still [fairly new](#) [5] for Debian.

I [downloaded](#) [6] and installed the 64-bit GNOME version.

Installation

A graphical, wizard-like installer (like Ubuntu's) is not available; the installer runs in a terminal. (Other than nice anti-aliased fonts, there's not much difference between the current [graphical installer](#) [7] and the traditional ncurses-based installer anyway, so you're not missing much.)
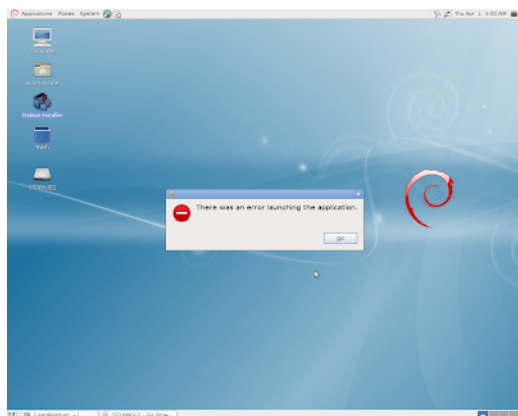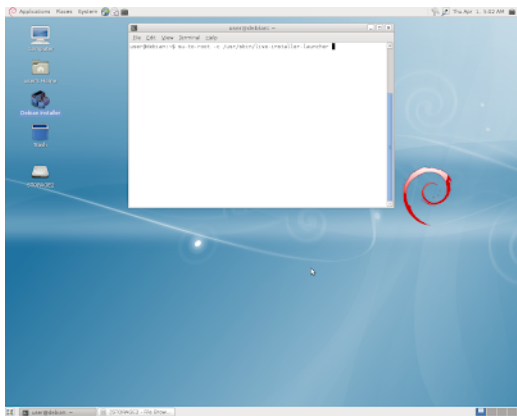

[8]
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Since it's an alpha release, bugs are to be expected. They weren't hard to find, starting off with the desktop icon that's
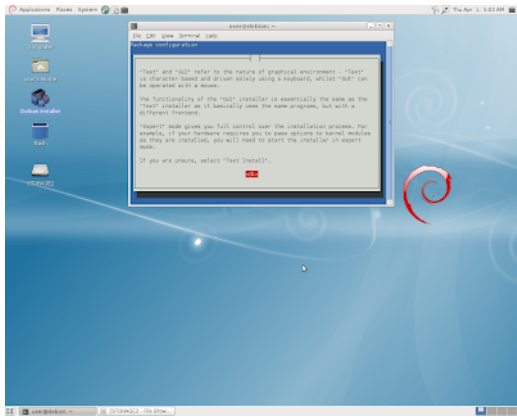
supposed to launch the installer. The *.desktop file is apparently malformed and threw up an error message.
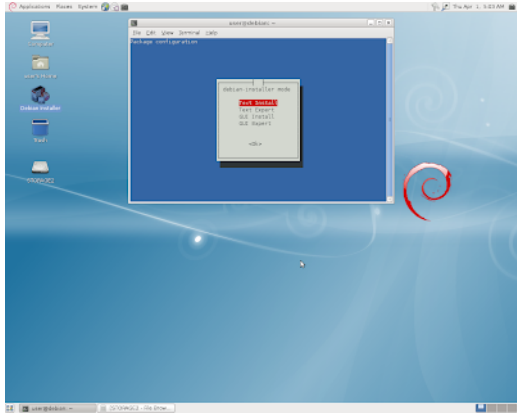

[10]

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However, it's easy enough to copy the installer's command line from the icon's properties and launch it using the terminal, which is where we would end up anyway.
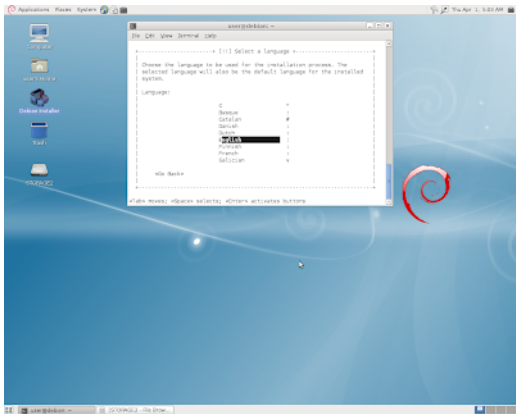

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[12]

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The next two screens that came up in the terminal explained the difference between the text-based installer and the GUI

installer. Since a GUI installer isn't available, they seemed to be leftovers from the regular installation program.
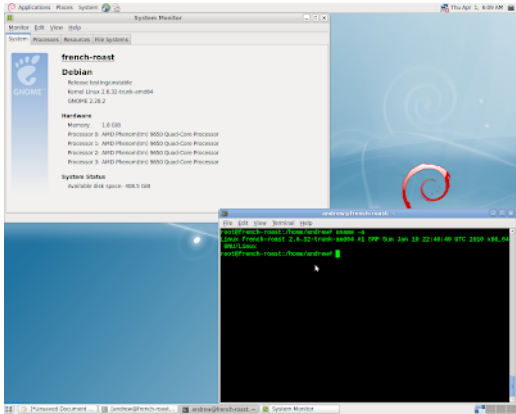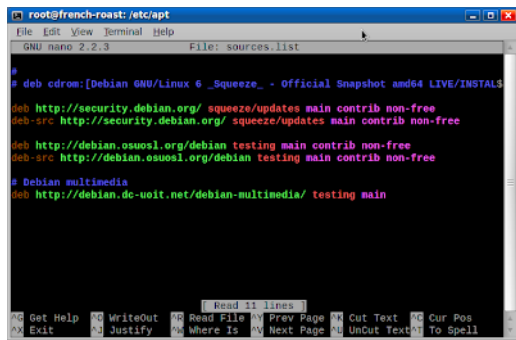

[13]

From [Debian Squeeze from Live DVD](#) [9]

The installer looks and feels just like the regular Debian installer. (Speaking of bugs, somewhere during the installation process, my ability to run applications, including gnome-screenshot, went away, for some unknown reason.) Perhaps the biggest change in Squeeze is that it now uses [GRUB 2](#) [14] as its bootloader.

Post-install

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[16]

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Amazingly enough, after installation was finished and the system rebooted, it looked exacly like it did when running from the live DVD. One problem: "/etc/apt/sources.list" was empty except for the Debian security repository. Regular repositories had to be added manually.

Installed applications included the following:
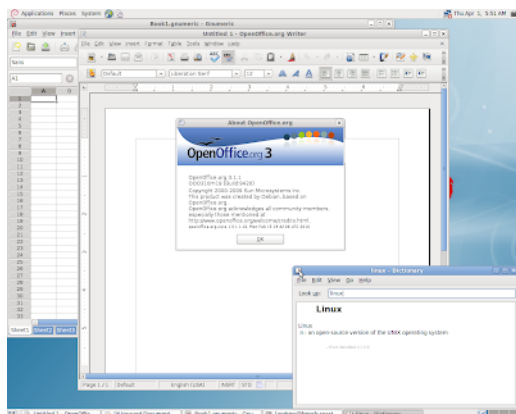
[17]

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Office-related applications:
OpenOffice.org 3.1.1
Gnumeric spreadsheet 1.10.0
AbiWord (Note: It wouldn't run from the Live DVD due to an error about a missing library. This was automatically fixed via a dist-upgrade.)
Evolution 2.28.2
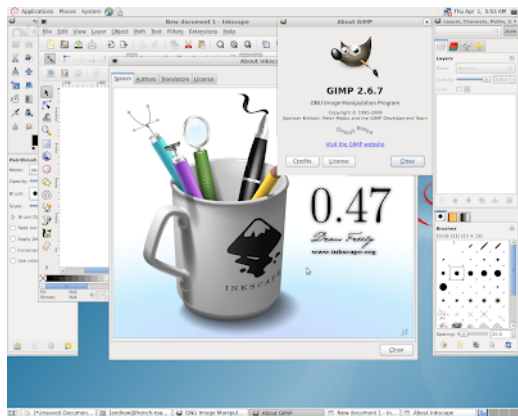
[18]

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Graphics-related applications:
GIMP 2.6.7
Inkscape 0.47

[19]

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Multimedia-related applications:
Totem Movie Player 2.28.5
Brasero CD burner 2.28.3
Rhythmbox 0.12.6

[20]

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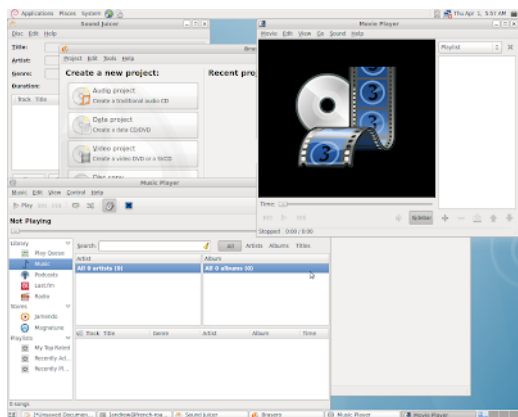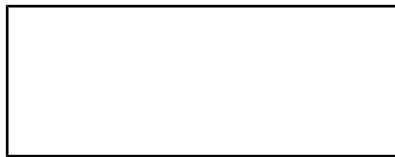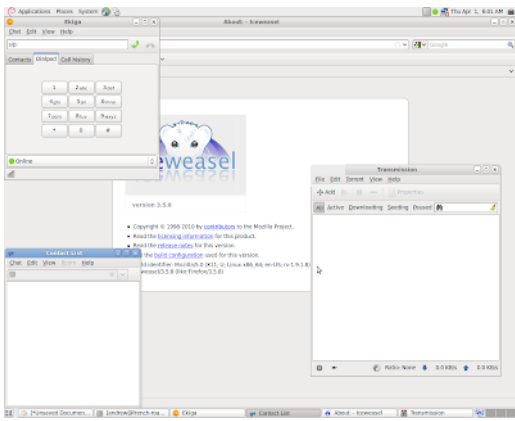| Internet-related applications: |
| --- |
| ekiga 3.2.6 |
| Empathy 2.28.2 |
| Transmission bittorrent client 1.9.1 |
| Iceweasel (debranded Firefox) 3.5.8 |

| Other: |
| --- |
| GNU make 3.81 |
| Kernel 2.6.32-trunk-amd64 |
| GNOME 2.28.2 |

And Finally...

Your experience and my experience will differ based on the hardware we have. Personally, I found that Debian Squeeze didn't support my motherboard's on-board audio chipset (Via VT1708B). Apparently it's only supported by ALSA v1.0.22.1 and above, and so far the only distro I've found that supports it out of the box is Fedora 13. Also, I still haven't been able to install the proprietary NVIDIA drivers the ["Debian way"](#) [21] using a stock Debian kernel. Instead, I have to use the NVIDIA installer. This means that every time there's an update to one of X.org's components, or a new kernel's installed, I have to reinstall the NVIDIA driver. Finally, GRUB 2 is not very user-friendly, and it doesn't seem to "play nice" with the NVIDIA driver. I've found that switching from GRUB 2 to gdm (the GNOME display manager) won't necessarily work when GRUB 2's running in any mode other than 640x480.
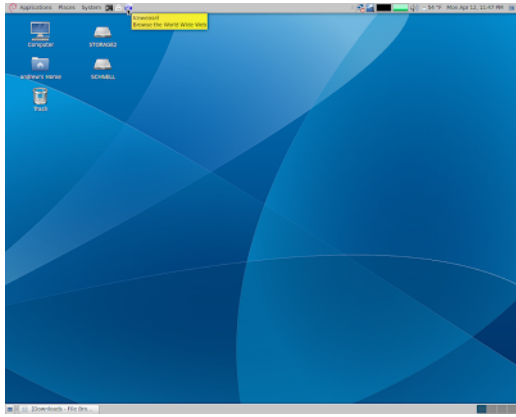
[22]

From [Debian Squeeze from Live DVD](#) [9]

And then there's Debian's default look 'n' feel, which, in my opinion, could use some polish.
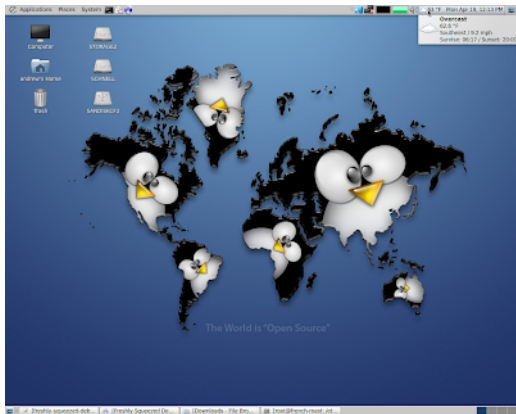
[23]

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I don't want to seem overly critical, though. My impression is that Debian values stability and functionality over looks and release schedules. You can look at this alpha version as a preview of Debian's next stable release, or you could simply run Debian Testing as a constantly-updated "rolling release." Despite the "testing" moniker, it's a pretty good balance between the stablity of Debian Stable and the more up-to-date applications in Debian Unstable. It's also got a huge repository of over 25,000 available packages and an excellent package management system going for it.

? Andrew Heil, 4/19/10

[Reviews](#)

Source URL: http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/44625

Links:
[1] http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/57
[2] http://live.debian.net/
[3] http://cdimage.debian.org/cdimage/squeeze_live_alpha1/
[4] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Debian#Releases
[5] http://live.debian.net/devel/live-installer/
[6] http://cdimage.debian.org/cdimage/squeeze_live_alpha1/amd64/iso-hybrid/
[7] http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d0/Debian_Installer_graphical_etch.png

[8] http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/TIE-rT-k58tLBNLrXD2Shw?feat=embedwebsite

[9] http://picasaweb.google.com/heilandrew/DebianSqueezeFromLiveDVD?feat=embedwebsite

[10] http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/gl6XPegISDXIUg1OGXfzGg?feat=embedwebsite

[11] http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/Noxg0_g1NliV3UdfB95Y0w?feat=embedwebsite

[12] http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/FrKa8f3SsXsvHAGqdMaDPw?feat=embedwebsite

[13] http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/aBg9G3QqL80wx4VcV9JpKQ?feat=embedwebsite

[14] https://help.ubuntu.com/community/Grub2

[15] http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/fqjZvWA5jIcUsYeLhlBybA?feat=embedwebsite

[16] http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/I_pJ1VQwnE4iBIA0X8eAvw?feat=embedwebsite

[17] http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/1tmBBzc33UrzKtbiyzVokg?feat=embedwebsite

[18] http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/2yWkKf2rQ4IDL6GxRUmOsQ?feat=embedwebsite

[19] http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/1fa0ZzB9rOsAnsviuaseMA?feat=embedwebsite

[20] http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/CMZiIw4dGTKa8mz-AU4o1Q?feat=embedwebsite

[21] http://wiki.debian.org/NvidiaGraphicsDrivers#WhyuseaDebian-specificmethod.3F

[22] http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/DmHNRRyQOrzLyf4lbCUmcg?feat=embedwebsite

[23] http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/gqc0PZXaGX04QavaXWsBCg?feat=embedwebsite