

Best alternative Linux desktops: 5 reviewed and rated

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The desktop on your Linux box used to stand for something very simple. If you were a KDE user, you valued control, power and the ability to customise.

In rough terms, if you used Gnome you wanted the desktop to get out of the way so you could get on with using your computer. If you used anything else, such as Xfce, LXDE or TekWM, you were running an ancient machine that would struggle with either of the big two of KDE and Gnome.

The change brought about by the release of KDE 4 changed all that. To compete, Gnome threw away its years of solidity for a new way of working; Unity arrived, with similar features to Gnome 3 but with the aim of tempting users away from Mac and Windows.

Brave as they were, these designs had much wrong with them, especially in the months following their release. Various products arrived to fill the gap.

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