

Biff's Slackware Tips for Noobs

Introduction

I was going to call this page 'Slackware for Dummies' however there's a book of the same name on Amazon 😞. I've accumulated a few bits and pieces that I feel are useful for people starting out in Slackware but which are too small to warrant their own HOWTOs. If you feel I should break anything out into its own HOWTO please add comments in the discussion section. Please also be aware that some of this is about opinion, and just one person's opinion at that. Unless otherwise stated this guide refers to Slackware64 14.2.

Booting the Installer

1) How much memory does Slackware require?

To run the installer with the huge kernel you will require **206MB**, largely because of the ramdisk that the installer uses. Post-install (for first boot) you can reduce this requirement to **64MB** assuming you have no swap. **32MB** with no swap is achievable if you compile your own kernel (== much more work). Your applications will obviously require more. A HOWTO regarding compiling kernels for very low RAM systems will follow, watch this space.

2) The installer just dropped me into a shell. What now?

You need to create a partition on your hard disk before continuing. Assuming you have only a single hard disk and don't have any data you want to keep on this disk, create a single large partition on your hard disk with e.g.:

```
# echo start=2048 | sfdisk /dev/sda
```

This will give you no swap. Use fdisk if you want a more complicated partition table. Now run 'setup' and follow the instructions.

How much disk space do I need for a full install?

You will need just under 10GB if you include all disk sets and use the default file system (EXT4).

What is the minimum set of packages I need to install with?

Just install everything. A lot of third-party software will rely on all packages being there and you will regret not doing so (apart from the KDE i18n packages).

No, really, I don't want the bloat

OK, if you must. Only select the 'A' series, and choose these packages: `aaa_base aaa_elflibs bash bin coreutils devs e2fsprogs etc eudev glibc-solibs grep kernel-huge kernel-modules kmod lilo pkgtools sed tar xz shadow syslinux sysvinit sysvinit-scripts util-linux`

C'mon, I want my system to actually *do* something!

If you want a headless system with networking, select disk sets A, AP, L, N. This will require a more respectable 3GB of disk space, and avoid you having to select individual packages.

Which window manager should I use?

KDE.

No, KDE has too much bloat, which one should I use?

Fluxbox.

Do I need to create a rescue disk?

No. If you mess up your bootloader you can still recover your system using the install media, the DVD boot screen even tells you how, so there's not much point unless you have a specific reason of your own.

First Boot After Install

How do I stop Slackware taking 2 minutes to boot?

If you are using LILO, edit `/etc/lilo.conf`. Change the line

```
timeout = 1200
```

to

```
timeout = 20
```

Save the file and run 'lilo'. That will reduce the boot delay to 2 seconds. The default 120 secs gets boring rather quickly.

How do I add a user?

Adding a user is probably the first thing you need to do on a newly installed Slackware system because you don't want to do everything as root. This isn't because you give a stuff about security, it's because lots of programs (including Xorg) will complain if you run them as root.

Run the 'adduser' command:

```
# adduser bob
```

Keep hitting the 'enter' key and accept all defaults as if you're a Noob you're unlikely to change any of them.

Xorg

There's no GUI! How do I start X?

Once upon a time X had to be configured before it worked in Slackware. This is fortunately no longer the case and X now detects almost all your settings. Simply type 'startx'.

My keyboard doesn't work properly!

That bit I said about X now detecting almost all your settings? Well keyboard is one of the exceptions! Run:

```
setxkbmap <variant>
```

Where <variant> can be found in /etc/X11/xkb/symbols

Your Window manager recommendation sucks. I hate Fluxbox already!

You just need to change one link in /etc/X11/xinit:

- Login as root
- cd /etc/X11/xinit
- ls # to look at the WMs available.
- rm xinitrc
- ln xinitrc.<name> xinitrc

But I want X to start on boot, how?

Slackware already has a [great guide](#) for this. You need to change the runlevel in /etc/xinittab.

Networking

How can I see what's listening on my computer's ports?

```
# netstat -an | less
```

I changed my network card and now the new one comes up as eth1 instead of eth0

```
# rm /etc/udev/rules.d/70-persistent-net.rules
```

(reboot)

Slackware programs

How do I find which packages have been installed?

```
# ls /var/log/packages
```

How do I find out what libraries a program uses?

```
# ldd <exe path>
```

How do I find all the libraries on my system?

(as root)

```
# ldconfig -p
```

How do I find which Slackware package contains file XXX so I can install it on my system?

```
# wget  
http://ftp.slackware.com/pub/slackware/slackware-14.2/slackware/MANIFEST.bz2  
# less MANIFEST.bz2
```

(search for the file)

USB

I can only access my USB device as root

Create a new file in `/etc/udev/rules.d`. It should contain the following:

```
ATTRS{idVendor}=="<vendor>" ,ATTRS{idProduct}=="<product>" ,MODE="0666" ,GROUP="users"
```

For `<vendor>` and `<product>` put the values obtained from running `'lsusb'` when you inserted your usb device. Use `'lsusb -v'` to get the long form of the information.

Worked example:

```
# lsusb  
Bus 005 Device 003: ID 413c:2003 Dell Computer Corp. Keyboard
```

`/etc/udev/rules.d/80-mydellcomputerkeyboard.rules:`

```
ATTRS{idVendor}=="413c" ,ATTRS{idProduct}=="2003" ,MODE="0666" ,GROUP="users"
```

This will allow any users to access that device, which on a multi-user system could be considered insecure but will get you working.

CD/DVD-ROM drives

How do I write a CD/DVD, I don't understand cdrecord?

You're not the only one. To write the image `myimage.iso`, the command is:

```
# growisofs -Z /dev/dvd=myimage.iso
```

You may need to be root to run this.

Sources

* Originally written by [User Bifferos](#)

[howtos](#), [tips](#), [noobs](#), [dummies](#)

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