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Exploring the world of Ubuntu 8.10

# INTREPID IBEX

If you've been around IT for the past few years, you probably already know about Ubuntu. Recently, even casual home users are getting the word. Ubuntu is Linux, and Linux is a safe, secure operating system that is absolutely free. The Ubuntu project is built with the goal of making Linux accessible to everybody – a clear, comfortable desktop system that sets up easily and offers the full range of features available with closed, commercial systems.

You won't find Windows or Mac OS attached to a magazine – like the DVD you see opposite this page. But the cost of the operating system is only the beginning. What else is running on your system? Photoshop? Quicken? An office

suite? The price for just these three tools alone could easily be more than US\$1000, and later you might spend even more for an upgrade.

Ubuntu provides equivalents for all three of these tools at no additional cost. Just install the system and look around. You'll have access to hundreds of applications – compliments of the resourceful and ever-active open source development community.

## Discovering Ubuntu

The intuitive Ubuntu puts the whole system a couple of mouse clicks away. The designers limited the menus to a set of the most essential tools. (As you'll learn in later pages of this special edition, it is

easy to download additional tools from the thousands of applications in the Ubuntu online repositories.)

Get productive with the highly integrated OpenOffice suite. Manage your email, contacts, calendar, and task list with the Evolution mail client. The Orca screen reader offers access for the sight-impaired, and the Tomboy note-taking tool captures your best ideas when they happen. Along with its gallery of sensible desktop applications, Ubuntu also comes with a powerful collection of utilities for configuring, managing, and monitoring your system.

This Ubuntu Special Edition serves as an easy introduction to the world of Ubuntu. We'll show you how to install



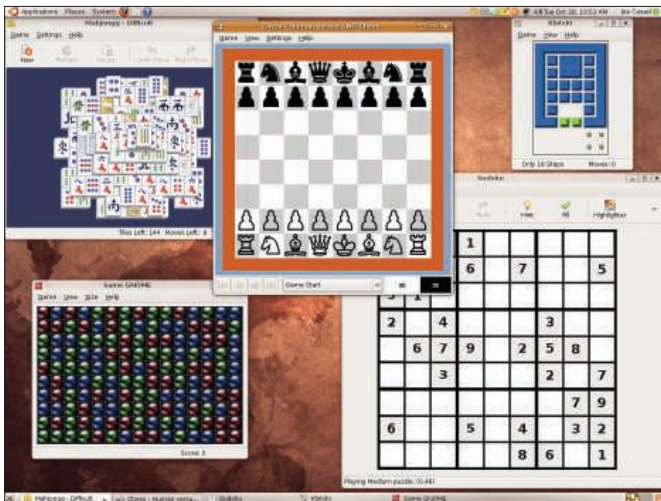


Figure 1: An assortment of popular games is within easy reach.

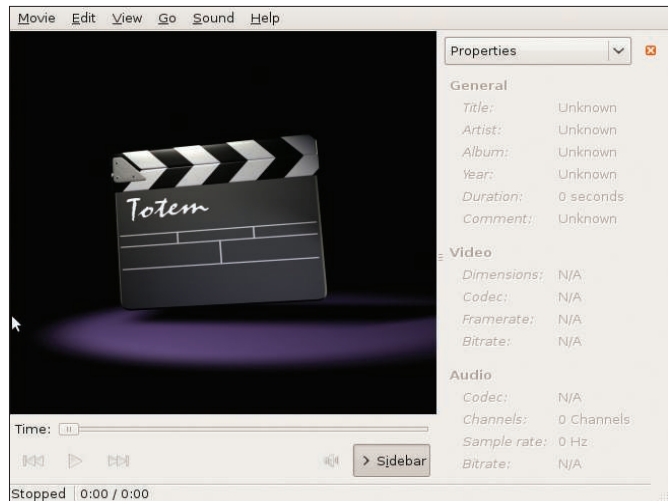


Figure 2: Watch movies with the Totem video player.

your Ubuntu system and how to configure network connections. We'll also tour some of the most important tools of the Ubuntu user interface. You'll learn how to organize your photos, burn DVDs, play videos, and listen to music. We'll examine the principal applications of the OpenOffice office suite – not just the word processor, but also the built-in spreadsheet, presentation, and database tools. We'll show you how to balance your checkbook with GnuCash, and we'll explore some techniques for touching up photos with the image manipulation tool known as GIMP. We'll even give you some tips for dual-booting your Ubuntu system with Windows Vista.

This single package provides all you need to get started with Ubuntu. The DVD enclosed with the Ubuntu Special Edition works on most Intel-based systems. If you aren't sure whether you want to install Ubuntu, you can boot from the disc and explore the system without disturbing your hard drive. Get acquainted with Ubuntu first – then decide whether you want to install.

The concise and accessible articles in this special edition will guide you through many of the most useful tools in the Ubuntu environment. Whether you are an Ubuntu beginner, or an experienced user looking for a new DVD and a report of the latest improvements, the

Ubuntu Special Edition provides a new look at the very refreshing and exciting world of Ubuntu. ■

### DOUBLE-SIDED DVD

This DVD is a double-sided disc. A DVD device always reads the side of the disc that is facing down. This DVD is labeled like a normal DVD – the label you see as you place the disk into the tray applies to the data on the opposite side. If you are installing the 32-bit version, the 32-bit label should be facing up in the tray.

### What's New in Ubuntu 8.10

This issue of the Ubuntu Special Edition is written for the Ubuntu 8.10 "Intrepid Ibex" release. "Intrepid" comes with lots of improvements and several new tools. Linux kernel 2.6.27 includes many enhancements, such as better hardware detection. The DKMS tool offers easier upgrades for kernel drivers. The NetworkManager utility provides better route management and support for 3G connections. The User Switcher panel applet now supports passwordless Guest sessions. Samba 3.2 offers easier encryption, new clustering features, and IPv6 support. Also appearing with this release is the innovative encryptfs-utils package, which lets the user hide a secret encrypted directory inside the Home folder.

Many more of the changes in version 8.10 result from the arrival of the Gnome 2.24 desktop. The new Gnome comes with the Ekiga 3.0 audio/video conferencing client, new sound themes, better digital TV, and improved accessibility tools. The Nautilus file manager, which is part of Gnome, offers new support for tabbed browsing.

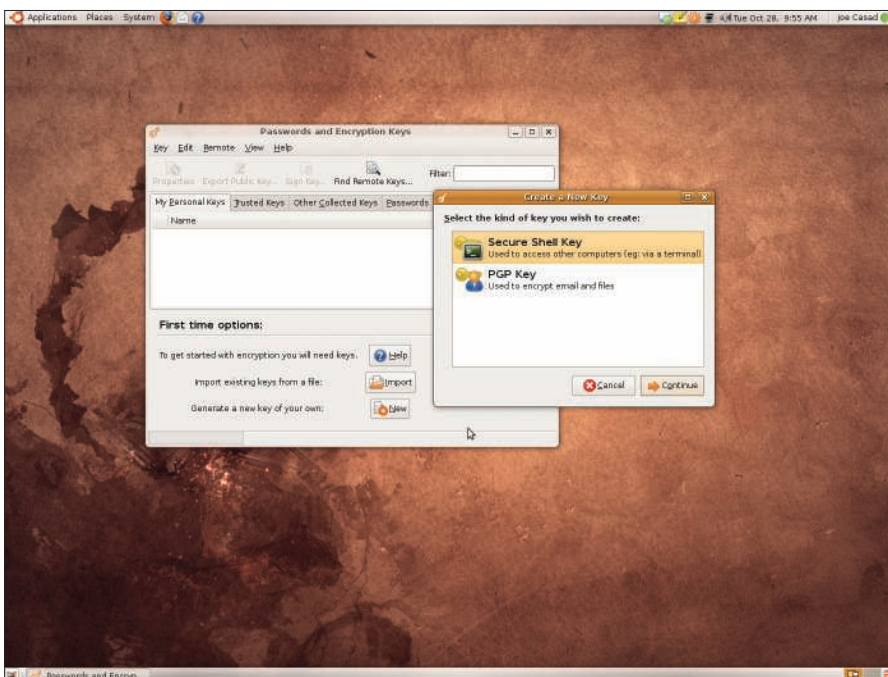


Figure 3: Safe and secure – keep your keys and passwords safe with the Seahorse encryption key manager.