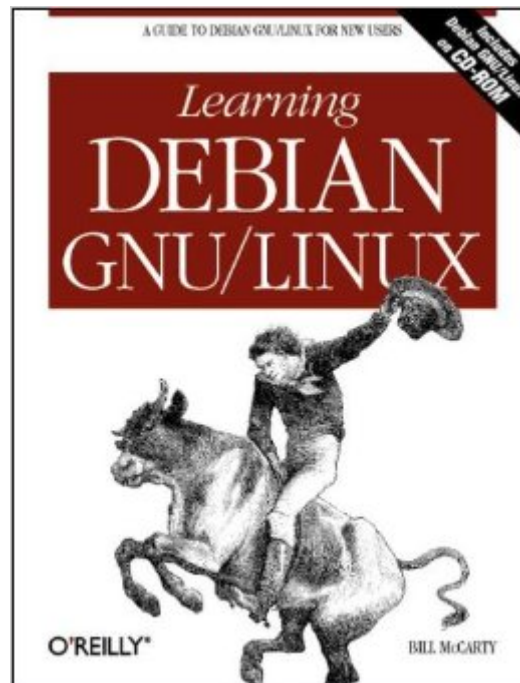


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# Learning Debian GNU/Linux



## Synopsis

Linux and Open Source are attracting unprecedented attention in the high tech world. Debian GNU/Linux is a remarkable demonstration of what the Open Source model can produce: Debian is an all volunteer organization, and their distribution contains only open-source software. This exciting new world can be intimidating for those whose primary computing experience is Microsoft Windows. In *Learning Debian/GNU Linux*, Bill McCarty has written a book for this new audience, aimed at introducing them to a Unix style operating system. *Learning Debian GNU/Linux* will guide any new user of Linux through the installing and use of Debian GNU/Linux, the entirely Open Source version of the Linux operating system. It demystifies Linux in terms familiar to Windows users and gives readers only what they need to start being successful users of Linux. *Learning Debian GNU/Linux* takes the reader step by step through the process of installing and setting up a Debian system, and provides a thorough but gentle introduction to the basics of using Debian GNU/Linux. Because the book is written specifically for the included CD, the reader needs nothing else to get started with this exciting new operating system.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is aimed for the very novice Linux user, who comes for the first time to the world of Unix. From that perspective this book could deserve one star more, but not more. The starting chapters cover the installation process with screen prints from the Debian installer and they can't get clearer than that. But, in my opinion they do not add any value to the book, because the Debian installation

dialogs are almost self explanatory and you don't need a book to show the pictures. The part of the installation could have better served on concentrating on setting up multi-boot system with various Win32 (Win9x, NT, 2000) combinations. THAT would have certainly deserved a star. Setting up the X server is not "piece of cake", and the book should definitely have devoted much more pages on it. You can almost bet that you can't get X server working properly from Debian installation with all those various video/3D cards and different monitors (just count how many combinations are there). This chapter is ESSENTIAL for any new Linux user that wants to see Graphical GUI. Well, there is not much information what to do if X fails to start. (Btw, GNOME window manager is presented, not KDE) Other Chapters in the book are average, mediocre treatment of the topics which are by no means specific to Debian system: User administration, system services, learn to use the basic shell commands. The Networking part may be appropriate in the US market, where Modem (PPP) connections are in majority, but for European users, the ISDN, LAN, WAN, Cable Modem are more for the present. The book only covers PPP and LAN.

I have to agree with the Reader from New York. I received the book as part of the boxed set from the VA Linux CD distribution. So, at a minimum, the price and material can't be beat! But, in addition to the "xf86config" misnomer, the reader is also told to use the SHIFT-ALT-+ key combination to reduce the size of the virtual desktop. Well, as a newbie to Linux, as well as Debian, I must have looked like a trained monkey hammering away on that key combination, until I thought, "Maybe there was a misprint or misquote." And yes, the CTRL-ALT-+ combination worked just fine. By the way, the monkey was, of course, rewarded immediately with a reduced virtual desktop and a banana. This is just one of several "small" errors in the book; however, to a Debian system newbie, the errors are annoying. Also, the flow throughout the book was choppy, at best. Although the book and its flow start out well, providing sufficient detail to install successfully the Debian system without too many problems, by Chapter 5 the book has lost any useful level of specificity. I understand that once you get into the X Window environment, your choices for a window manager are numerous but sticking with two or three window managers, throughout the remainder of the book, would have been beneficial to the reader. By the book's ending, the flow has jumped around so much that the reader can easily become overwhelmed and confused. Much like the middle of the book, the level of specificity is limited so that you can easily become lost in any LAN, WAN, or web server profile installation. I found myself constantly referring to the Debian "HOW TOs" for additional and more helpful information.

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