Creating a Knoppix Bootable CD

Standard Disclaimer: The Washington State Library can't guarantee that these instructions will work with every computer. In other words, we aren't responsible for any problems arising from the use of these instructions, though we'll try to help you if you work for a library in the state of Washington.

Overview

This article discusses the creation of a bootable CD (also known as a Live CD) containing the Knoppix operating system, which is a version of Linux, and various free troubleshooting tools. A Knoppix CD can be run entirely from the CD-ROM drive and RAM without installing itself onto the hard drive.
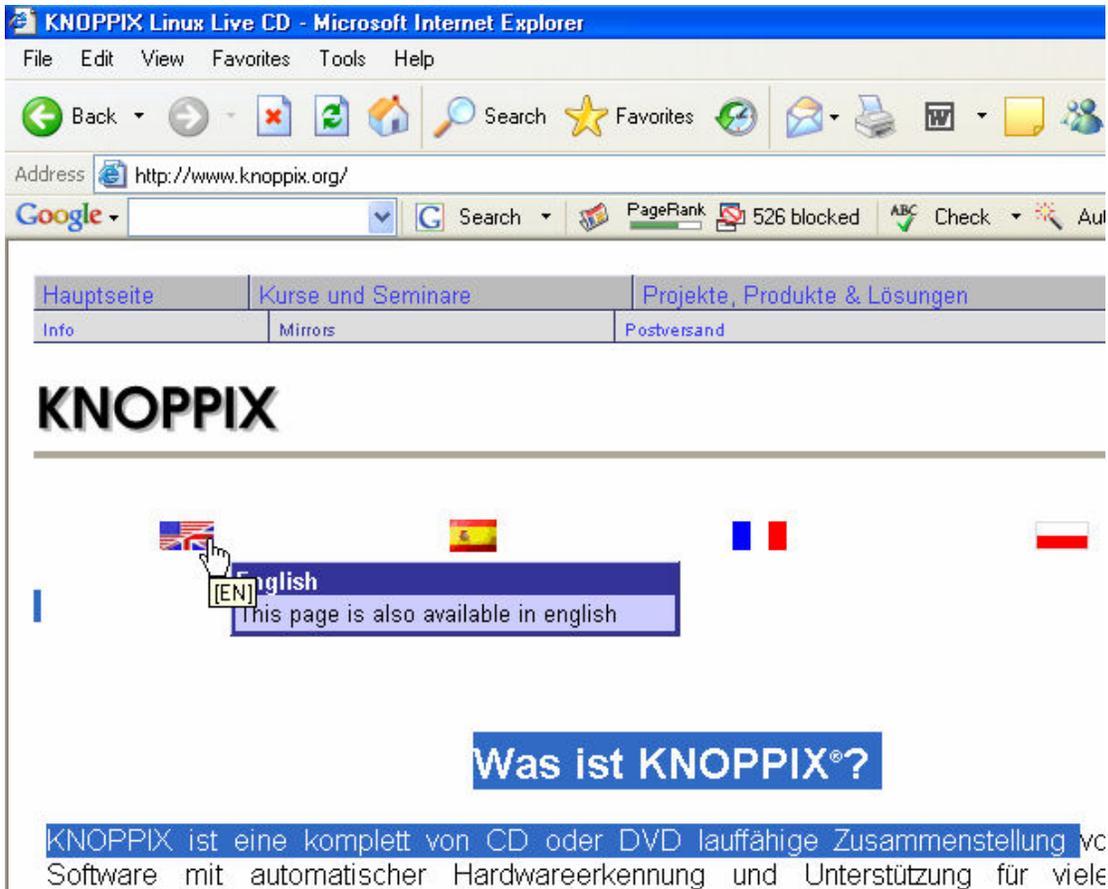
Prerequisites

On the computer where you plan to create your Live CD, you'll need a CD burner, and CD burning software. Also, the Knoppix file that you'll be downloading is nearly 700 MB, so if possible you should download the file on a computer with a high-speed Internet connection.

Why You Might Want a Knoppix CD

The Knoppix CD contains troubleshooting utilities that may help you fix a computer when you can no longer boot into the operating system. In addition, Knoppix contains utilities to help you resize your hard drive partitions and create backup copies.

Downloading Knoppix

Go to www.knoppix.org. In the upper left corner, you'll see a small icon representing a US flag crossed with a British flag. Click on this icon to translate the site into English.

At the bottom of the screen, click on the link that says "Download". The next page, titled "Knoppix Mirrors" can be confusing. There are usually twenty or thirty sites listed on this page. The sites listed may change over time, but in March, 2006, I found that Kernel.org out of California had a speedy connection.

If you're using a web browser, click on the link that says "http", and you'll be taken to a download agreement. Click on the "Accept" button, and you'll proceed to a list of files. Make sure to download the last file in the list that ends in "EN.iso". In other words, scroll to the bottom of the window, and begin scanning from the bottom of the list until you see a file that ends in "EN.iso" (usually about nine lines up). Ignore any files that end in "EN.iso.md5" or "EN.iso.sha1". For example, as of March 2, 2006, the most recent English version of Knoppix was found in the file "Knoppix_V4.0.2CD-2005-09-23-EN.iso".

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KNOPPIX_V3.9-2005-05-27-EN.iso.md5          01-Jun-2005 11:12    65
KNOPPIX_V3.9-2005-05-27-EN.iso.md5.asc      01-Jun-2005 11:14   301
KNOPPIX_V3.9-2005-05-27-EN.iso.sha1         01-Jun-2005 11:13    73
KNOPPIX_V3.9-2005-05-27-EN.iso.sha1.asc     01-Jun-2005 11:14   309
KNOPPIX_V4.0.2CD-2005-09-23-DE.iso          24-Sep-2005 00:53   694M
KNOPPIX_V4.0.2CD-2005-09-23-DE.iso.md5      24-Sep-2005 03:35    69
KNOPPIX_V4.0.2CD-2005-09-23-DE.iso.md5.asc  24-Sep-2005 03:59   305
KNOPPIX_V4.0.2CD-2005-09-23-DE.iso.sha1     24-Sep-2005 03:36    77
KNOPPIX_V4.0.2CD-2005-09-23-DE.iso.sha1.asc 24-Sep-2005 03:59   313
KNOPPIX_V4.0.2CD-2005-09-23-EN.iso          24-Sep-2005 00:58   694M
KNOPPIX_V4.0.2CD-2005-09-23-EN.iso.md5      24-Sep-2005 03:37    69
KNOPPIX_V4.0.2CD-2005-09-23-EN.iso.md5.asc  24-Sep-2005 03:59   305
KNOPPIX_V4.0.2CD-2005-09-23-EN.iso.sha1     24-Sep-2005 03:38    77
KNOPPIX_V4.0.2CD-2005-09-23-EN.iso.sha1.asc 24-Sep-2005 03:59   313
README                                      18-Aug-2005 01:52   267
knoppix-cheatcodes.txt                      16-Aug-2005 02:59   9.4K
packages-dvd.txt                            24-Sep-2005 02:12   257K
packages.txt                                24-Sep-2005 02:12   116K
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http://www.kernel.org/pub/dist/knoppix/KNOPPIX_V4.0.2CD-2005-09-23-EN.iso

The speed of the download varies greatly from site to site, so if the download window indicates that the download will take several hours, you may want to cancel the current download and try to use another site. When given the option, choose to save the file rather than open it or run it. When a "Save As" window appears, make note of the location that you save the file to.

Burning Knoppix to a CD

Insert a blank CD into your CD burner. Browse to the folder where you downloaded the Knoppix file, and double click it. Your cd burning software should pop up automatically. Usually, you can accept the default settings, and click on Burn. When the burning process is completed, you may have to click on Close to finish creating the CD.