Linux distributions without systemd

From Without Systemd

This article lists Linux distributions which :

1. have a default init system other than systemd
2. are open source (accessible source code available for the content of the distributed IMG or ISO)
3. are actively maintained and provide contact information of the developers
4. have a website and/or provide end user support via a well-established and maintained forum/mailinglist

General purpose

Independent

Name	Init	Package managers	amd64?	Desktops?	Details / Notes	Other ports
4MLinuxDW	BusyBox	?	no	JWM		i386, i686
Adélie Linux	OpenRC	apk	yes	KDE, Xfce, Fluxbox, i3, IceWM, Openbox	uses musl libc, currently in beta stage	arm, arm64, x86, ppc, ppc64 (See https://www.adelielinux.org/about.html for details)
Alpine LinuxDW	BusyBox + OpenRC	apk (custom)	yes	?	uses BusyBox + musl libc + OpenRC	i386, armhf
Bedrock Linux	BusyBox / any	any	?	?	Bedrock Linux can utilize any of a large number of init systems as provided by other distributions	?
CRUXDW	SysV + /etc/rc.*	tar.xz based	yes	Openbox		arm
Cucumber LinuxDW	SysV	from #Slackware	yes	Xfce	Kernel version 4.9 LTS, GNU Userspace utilities	i686
Dragora GNU/Linux LibreDW	SysV + perp	tar.xz based	yes	Xfce, IceWM, spectrwm	Linux Libre distro	i586, amd64, arm(64), microblaze, mips, powerpc(64), s390x
Fatdog64 LinuxDW	dumb-init	gslapt, SFS Loader	yes		(3)	FatDogArm for Raspberry Pi2 and Odroid-XU3/XU4
GentooDW	SysV + OpenRC[1]	Portage	yes	no	If Portage is pulling in systemd, please read this. Further suggested reading.	i486, i586, i686, alpha, arm, hppa, ia64, mips, powerpc, ppc64, sparc64

Name	Init	Package managers	amd64?	Desktops?	Details / Notes	Other ports
GoboLinuxDW	SysV + BootScripts	file system	yes	awesome	a source-based distribution which employs a unique file structure (not FHS)	no
GuixSDDW	Shepherd (pure Guile)	GNU Guix	yes	Xfce and GNOME	provides advanced package mgmt features such as transactional upgrades and roll-backs; FSF-approved	i686
januslinux	busybox + runit	npkg + prt-get	yes	XFCE, DWM, OpenBox, i3, Sway, TWM	Fast and compact Linux distribution which uses musl libc	aarch64, armv7h, armv6h, mips, mipsel
KaNaPi	bash script	file system	yes	XFCE and Sugar	educational + game apps	armhf and i686
Milis Linux (Beta)	SysV	MPS	?	?	created with LFS; has a few of its own tools	?
MisiProject	SysV + OpenRC	PISI	yes	MATE		armv7h
NuTyXDW	SysV	cards	?	?	inspired by LFS & BLFS; its “cards” pkg mgr can install individual or grouped binary packages, and can compile source pkgs from “ports”	?
OviOS LinuxDW	SysV	pacman	yes	?	(2) previously used systemd; was rebuilt around sysV init because systemd proved unsuitable for a stable storage system	no

Name	Init	Package managers	amd64?	Desktops?	Details / Notes	Other ports
PCLinuxOSDW	SysV	APT+RPM	yes	MATE and KDE		no
Plop LinuxDW	SysV		yes	?	(PXE/liveboot) designed to rescue data from a damaged system, or to backup and repair operating systems	armv6l and i486
Puppy LinuxDW	SysV	Puppy Package Manager	yes	LXDE	Puppy Linux's position on systemd	i386
SlackwareDW	SysV + /etc/rc.d/rc.*	installpkg, pkgtool, slackpkg	yes	KDE and Xfce		i586, s390, arm
Source Mage GNU/LinuxDW	simple-init	Sorcery	yes	?	source based	i386, i486, i586, i686
Void LinuxDW	runit	xbps	yes	LXQt	supported libcs: glibc, musl	armv6, armv7, i686

Non general purpose:

- RancherOSDW a minimalist Linux distribution designed to host Docker containers. Supported architecture: amd64
- TLD Linux for server environments (no desktop support except for running VNC/RDP sessions for virtual machine management GUI) ; amd64 and i686

Unclear what init system they use:

Name	Init	Package mgmt	amd64?	Desktops?	Details / Notes	Other ports?
Tiny Core LinuxDW	BusyBox	?	yes	FLTK/FLWM	; (also: “CorePlus”) (also “piCore” edition, for Raspberry Pi)	i486
Sanity Linux	BusyBox	pkgsrc	?	?	(formerly, “Pür Linux”), source-based, ports	?
LinuxConsoleDW	?	?	yes	MATE and LXDE	tailored to gaming / educational use	i686

Derivatives

- CruxEX (based on #CRUX) (2)(3) x86_64 available only as a zip file, no iso; LXDE desktop
- Uplos32 (2) (based on #PCLinuxOS) targets i386 machines; uses APT+RPM package mgmt

Arch Linux based

Arch Linux's package manager is Pacman.

Name	Init	Details / Notes
Artix LinuxDW	OpenRC/runit	eudev, replaces Arch-OpenRC and Manjaro-OpenRC
Hyperbola GNU/Linux-libre	OpenRC	(2) pacman pkg manager; “LTS Arch snapshot versions”; amd64, i686. Switches to OpenBSD, last Linux based release supported until 2022
Obarun	s6-rc	x86_64
Parabola nosystemd editionDW	OpenRC / GNU+Shepherd	[2],[3]; A part of the GNU project and FSF-approved; x86_64, armv7h, i686

Debian based

Debian's package manager is dpkg and APT. See DebianReleases.

Name	Debian version	Init	Details / Notes
antiX LinuxDW	10 Buster	SysV or runit	flexible remastering and persistence tools. Multiple WMs: JWM+iceWM+fluxbox; amd64, i486
TrisquelDW	9 Stretch > Ubuntu 16.04	upstart	LXDE and MATE desktops; amd64 and i386
DevuanDW	9 Stretch	SysV / OpenRC	XFCE desktop; supported architectures: amd64, i686, arm (see: /embedded
KNOPPIXDW	merge of stable, testing and unstable	SysV	(video: “Defying systemd”) employs systemd-shim
MX LinuxDW	10 Buster	SysV	(Mepis+antiX) XFCE desktop; includes antiX remastering n persistence tools; supported architectures: amd64, i386
GNUstep Live CDDW	9 Stretch	SysV	GNUstep using WindowMaker; amd64, i686

Devuan based

Name	Init	Details / Notes
Exe GNU/LinuxDW	SysV	features Trinity Desktop Environment; amd64, i686
Refracta	OpenRC	(2) (3) amd64, i386; also: (Refracta Devuan 2) Openbox, eudev

Void Linux based

Name	Init	Details / Notes
Project Trident	runit	was based on FreeBSD, switched to Void Linux base end of 2019

Gentoo based

- Adélie Linux uses Gentoo's Portage, Alpine's(?) APK package manager, and musl-libc amd64, i686, armv7, mips64, ppc64
- Calculate LinuxDW OpenRC init; Cinnamon, KDE Plasma, LXQt, MATE, or Xfce (wiki spamfilter block to project site: calculate-linux.org)
- Chromium OS (2) upstart init (boot-design doc)
- Funtoo LinuxDW FAQ (source-based; uses git-housed, distributed Portage tree and Funtoo overlay) OpenRC init; amd64, i486, i686, sparc64

    - Slontoo (based on Funtoo) OpenRC; XFCE 4.12, MATE 1.12
- Redcore LinuxDW OpenRC or SysV init; serves pre-built binary packages from repository; openbox window manager

NOTE: additional Gentoo/*BSD subprojects exist, providing ports to various BSD-derived operating systems. See: Gentoo/Alt

Puppy Linux based

- Legacy OSDWSF (previous name: TEENpup) focused on supporting Pentium 3 and 4 (Sept2017 release ships Linux kernel v2.6.18)

Other pages listing more Puppy Linux derivatives: [4][5][6]

Slackware based

- Absolute LinuxDW (based on Slackware64-current) IceWM+ROX; supported architectures: i686, amd64
- Salix OSDW i486, i686, amd64
    - SlackelDW (based on Slackware+salix) amd64, i486, i686
    - Slint (2) (3) (based on Slackware + Salix) accessible to visually impaired users (speech and braille device)
- SARPi (2) Slackware ARM on Raspberry Pi
- SlaXBMC (2)
- ZenwalkDW suported architectures: amd64, i486, i686

Available without standard GNU tools

- Alpine Linux
- EasyOS (2)(3)(4) aufs layered filesystem, containers; ROX desktop
- Sabotage Linux (musl libc + BusyBox init) i386, x86_64, MIPS, PowerPC32, ARM(v4t+)
- (xref) Void Linux
- XBian (based on Debian) media center distribution for the Raspberry Pi, CuBox-i, and other arm devices (init: Upstart)

Linux from scratch

Linux from ScratchDW is not a distribution, it's a book on how to build your own Linux system from source. It can be used with SysV. i386, x86_64; (also CLFS, aka Cross LFS supports additional architectures: mips, powerpc, ppc64, alpha, sparc, hppa, arm)

Special purpose

- IPFire (2)(3) (forked from IPCop, based on LFS) firewall distribution for x86 and ARM-based systems; armv5tel, i586, x86_64
- Maemo Leste (based on Devuan Ascii) for Nokia N900, Nokia N950, Nokia N9 and Motorola Droid 4 mobile phones, Allwinner tablets, and Raspberry Pi 2, 3 and Olimex Lime 2 SBCs[7] mainline Linux; OpenRC init; Hildon desktop; architectures: armel, armhf and amd64
- PicarOS “suitable for kids from 3 to 12 and teachers” ?; XFWM + LXDE desktop; i486, i686
- Porteus KioskDW BusyBox init; lightweight kiosk
- Smoothwall Express Community Edition firewall O/S, provides a web interface
- TinyPaw-Linux (based on CorePlus) a self-described “passive & aggressive WiFi attack distro”

Live-only distros

- AUSTRUMIDW bootable live CD, to be run from RAM (iso images via ftp)
- heads (based on Devuan) The Heads incognito live OS, intended as a systemd-free alternative to Tails, the Amnesia incognito live OS
- Liveslak Liveslak is the project which generates the ISO images for many variants of the *Slackware Live Edition*. Supported architectures: i486, i586, amd64.
- Minimal Linux Live (2)(3) Linux kernel, GNU C library, and BusyBox init; i386, x86_64
- Parted Magic ?what init system?, liveboot distribution providing disk partitioning and data recovery tools. Openbox WM; i486, i686, x86_64 FOSS? (licensed GPL)
- PentooDW Gentoo-based security-focused live CD; i686, x86_64
- PorteusDW (based on Slackware 14.2) lightweight modular live CD/USB; i486, amd64
- SliTaz GNU/LinuxDW BusyBox init, uses tazpkg, lightweight live CD/USB, supported architectures: armel, i386, x86_64
- SystemRescueCdDW (Gentoo/OpenRC based system rescue disk) JWM, Xfce; i586
- TAZ (2)(3) (SliTaz fork) (also: a gentoo-based version) runs entirely from RAM; openbox desktop
- ToOpPy Linux (2) (based on PuppyLinux) liveboot, operates completely in RAM; JWM desktop

Embedded devices

- ChibiOS/RTSF ARM7, Cortex-M0, Cortex-M3, Cortex-M4, PowerPC e200z, STM8, AVR, MSP430, ColdFire, H8S, x86
- DD-WRT W a Linux based alternative OpenSource firmware suitable for a variety of WLAN routers and embedded systems
- DevuanEmbedded (xref: Devuan GNU+Linux)
- Gargoyle work is underway to port Gargoyle to the latest version of LEDE
- LEAF (Linux Embedded Appliance Framework) xref: Bering-uClibc
- libreCMC (LibreWRT successor) supports a wide range of routers, plus some small single board computers. FSF-approved
- Moebius Linux ?what init system?, armhf changelog minimal (no X) distro currently focused on RaspberryPi v3
- OpenWrt (LEDE merged into OpenWrt) provides a fully writable filesystem, and package management.
- PiBox (BusyBox init) an embedded distribution for the Raspbery Pi
- postmarketOS (2)(3) a touch-optimized, pre-configured Alpine Linux tailored for smartphones and other mobile devices
- ProteanOS (2) (BusyBox init) an FSF-approved Linux-libre distribution for embedded systems

Non-English

- aldOS Spanish distro, uses upstart, eudev, ConsoleKit2[8]; MATE desktop
- mdrights live Chinese Liveslak-based distro, mdrights is a Chinese social rights movement; amd64
- Pisi LinuxDW Turkish distro (sysvinit + python init scripts) x86_64
- Plamo LinuxDW Japanese Slackware-based distro; i486, amd64
- Vine LinuxDW Japanese Debian-based distro, Kanji support across most applications; Japanese input support via FreeWnn or Canna input server; i686, powerpc, x86_64
- WifislaxDW(3) Spanish Slackware-based distro; i486

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Last update: **2020/01/16 19:13**