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	arch	Desktops?	Details / Notes	Security Fixes
Ataraxia Linux	OpenRC	neko (compatible with CRUX)	amd64, x86, ARM, MIPS, PowerPC64 (big and little endians) and RISC-V	XFCE, DWM, OpenBox, i3, Sway, TWM	source based, rolling	through rolling
4MLinuxDW	BusyBox	none, “addons”	i386, i686	JWM	binary “addons”, fixed	no
Adélie Linux	OpenRC	apk	amd64, arm, arm64, x86, ppc, ppc64	KDE, Xfce, Fluxbox, i3, IceWM, Openbox	fixed releases, source based, rolling(?), musl libc, beta	through rolling(?)
Alpine LinuxDW	BusyBox + OpenRC	apk (custom)	amd64, i386, armhf	?	binary packages, fixed, BusyBox, musl libc	yes
CRUXDW	SysV + /etc/rc.*	tar.xz based	amd64, arm	Openbox	fixed releases, source based ports, partly rolling	no
Dragora GNU/Linux LibreDW	SysV + perp	tar.xz based	i586, amd64, arm(64), microblaze, mips, powerpc(64), s390x	Xfce, IceWM, spectrwm	fixed releases, source based, libre	no
Fatdog64 LinuxDW	dumb-init	gslapt, SFS Loader	amd64, arm		binary packages, fixed	no

Name	Init	Package managers	arch	Desktops?	Details / Notes	Security Fixes
GentooDW	SysV + OpenRC[1]	Portage	amd64, i486, i586, i686, alpha, arm, hppa, ia64, mips, powerpc, ppc64, sparc64	no	Source based, rolling	yes
GuixSDDW	Shepherd (pure Guile)	GNU Guix	amd64, i686	Xfce and GNOME	binary packages, fixed	yes
KaNaPi	bash script	file system	amd64, armhf, i686	XFCE and Sugar	educational + game apps	
KISS	busybox runit	KISS source packages	amd64			
NuTyXDW	SysV	cards	?	?	fixed releases, binary packages rolling	through rolling
PCLinuxOSDW	SysV	APT+RPM	amd64	MATE and KDE	fixed releases, binary packages	yes
Plop LinuxDW	SysV	none	amd64, armv6l, i486	?	fixed releases, no packages	no
Puppy LinuxDW	SysV	Puppy Package Manager	amd64, i386	LXDE	fixed releases, binary packages	no
SlackwareDW	SysV + /etc/rc.d/rc.*	installpkg, pkgtool, slackpkg	amd64, i586, s390, arm	KDE and Xfce	fixed releases, binary packages	yes
Source Mage GNU/LinuxDW	simple-init	Sorcery	amd64, i386, i486, i586, i686	?	snaphsot releases, source based rolling	through rolling
Void LinuxDW	runit	xbps	amd64, armv6, armv7, i686	LXQt	binary packages, rolling	through rolling

Non general purpose:

- OviOS LinuxDW, Storage server, uses pacman, amd64
- 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	arch	Desktops?	Details / Notes
Tiny Core LinuxDW	BusyBox	?	amd64, i486	FLTK/FLWM	; (also: “CorePlus”) (also “piCore” edition, for Raspberry Pi)
Sanity Linux	BusyBox	pkgsrc	?	?	(formerly, “Pür Linux”), source-based, ports
LinuxConsoleDW	?	?	amd64, i686	MATE and LXDE	tailored to gaming / educational use

Derivatives

- CruxEX (based on #CRUX) (2)(3) x86_64 available only as a zip file, no iso; LXDE desktop

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

Name	Init	Details / Notes
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	OpenRC	source-based; uses git-housed, distributed Portage tree and Funtoo overlay. amd64, i486, i686, sparc64
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

Slackware based

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