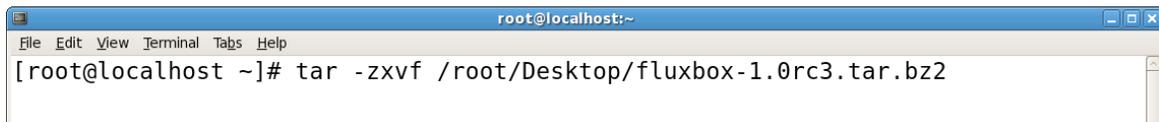


Fluxbox and Customizations

Everyone wishes at some point or another they could change that annoying menu or change the way their desktop operates. Well you can using program called Fluxbox which I will try explain how to use in the following “how to”.

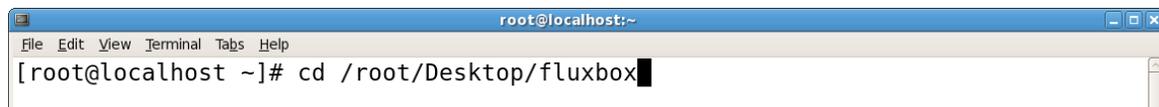
You can download the program from many different places, I used (<http://fluxbox.sourceforge.net/download.php>) and extracted it (Right click>Extract or type “tar -zxvf /root/Desktop/fluxbox-1.0rc3.tar.bz2” into the terminal “tar”



```
root@localhost:~
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help
[root@localhost ~]# tar -zxvf /root/Desktop/fluxbox-1.0rc3.tar.bz2
```

being the command to extract and “-zxvf” being extraction options

(“/root/Desktop/fluxbox-1.0rc3.tar.bz2” is the directory for the file you wish to extract). For this example I will have the file on the desktop and name it “fluxbox” (Right click>Rename) . Once it is installed you need to input the installation into the terminal (Applications (top menu)>System Tools>Terminal). You will need to change the directory, to do this the command is “cd /root/Desktop/fluxbox”. “cd” is the command to change the



```
root@localhost:~
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help
[root@localhost ~]# cd /root/Desktop/fluxbox
```

directory and “/root/Desktop/fluxbox” is where the folder containing the uninstalled program is (the one you just extracted). From here you will need to now prepare the files to be installed, to do this type “./configure” and press enter. Then you will need to enable it in the GUI, the code for this is “./configure -enable-gui” and press enter. “make” is

next, this determines automatically which pieces of a large program need to be recompiled, and issue the commands to recompile them (I got that from the manual that is in the terminal, made



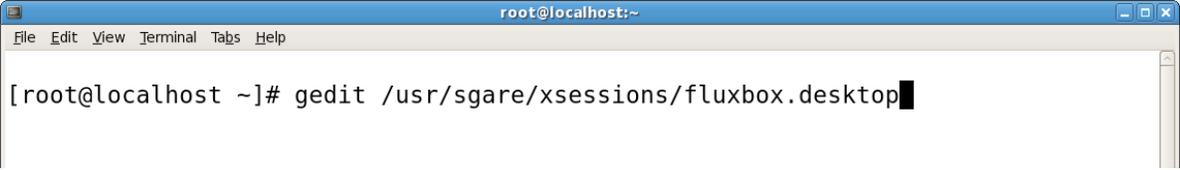
```

root@ohs-room311-g:~/Desktop/MPlayer-1.0rc1
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help
Please ignore the directory, it should be the directory for fluxbox
[root@ohs-room311-g MPlayer-1.0rc1]# ./configure
[root@ohs-room311-g MPlayer-1.0rc1]# ./configure --enable-gui
[root@ohs-room311-g MPlayer-1.0rc1]# make
[root@ohs-room311-g MPlayer-1.0rc1]# make install

```

by GNU). And Finally you need to actually perform the install, the code for this is “make install”.

Now you have it installed but how do you use or run it. To use it it has to appear in the sessions menu at the login. To do this you need to write a little code. To create and open the file you need type “gedit /usr/share/xsessions/fluxbox.desktop”. “gedit” is



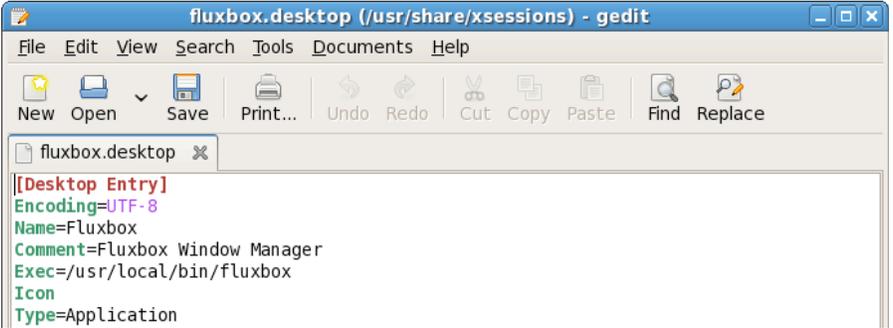
```

root@localhost:~
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help
[root@localhost ~]# gedit /usr/share/xsessions/fluxbox.desktop

```

the command to edit the file, you can also use any other type of editor (ex. “nano”) but I prefer “gedit”. “/usr/share/xsessions/fluxbox.desktop” is the directory of the file you

are making, yours should be the same directory as mine so don’t think this is one of those things you



```

fluxbox.desktop (/usr/share/xsessions) - gedit
File Edit View Search Tools Documents Help
New Open Save Print... Undo Redo Cut Copy Paste Find Replace
fluxbox.desktop x
[Desktop Entry]
Encoding=UTF-8
Name=Fluxbox
Comment=Fluxbox Window Manager
Exec=/usr/local/bin/fluxbox
Icon
Type=Application

```

have to figure out what it is.

Type in this file the code from the screenshot above/below.

This is the actual code that tells the sessions menu at login that fluxbox is a option. After typing it in now save and close (for gedit click “Save” then close the window, for nano click”control x” then “y” then “enter”). Print this out because you cant see it in the next few steps. Now its time to start it, you need to log out and at the login screen find where the sessions menu is (its

different with different logins) (sometimes its under the “options” button) and select Fluxbox as

the session. Login and click “Just for this Session” just to be safe. If it has any problems

opening up it will revert to your last session. The most common problem is that you may have

typed that code in the “fluxbox.desktop” file wrong. If all went well you should have the

Fluxbox up and running. Even though it doesn't look like much now, you will see how awesome

it is in the next few paragraphs.

```

root@localhost:~
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help
[root@localhost ~]# nano /usr/share/xsessions/fluxbox.desktop

```

```

root@localhost:~
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help
GNU nano 2.0.3 File: /usr/share/xsessions/fluxbox.desktop Modified

[Desktop Entry]
Encoding=UTF-8
Name=Fluxbox
Comment=Fluxbox Window Manager
Exec=/usr/local/bin/fluxbox
Icon
Type=Application

^G Get Help ^O WriteOut ^R Read File ^Y Prev Page ^K Cut Text ^C Cur Pos
^X Exit ^J Justify ^W Where Is ^V Next Page ^U UnCut Text ^T To Spell

```

```

Save modified buffer (ANSWERING "No" WILL DESTROY CHANGES) ?
Y Yes
N No ^C Cancel

```

```

File Name to Write: /usr/share/xsessions/fluxbox.desktop
^G Get Help ^T To Files M-M Mac Format M-P Prepend
^C Cancel M-D DOS Format M-A Append M-B Backup File

```

Before I start telling you how to customize your fluxbox I am going to tell you how to do some things to use as reference later. To get into the terminal in fluxbox right click and click “xterm” (it should be the first one). To get into the “init” file type “gedit .fluxbox/init” and to get into the menu file type “gedit .fluxbox/menu” and press enter. One of the cool



```
[begin] (Fluxbox-1.0rc3)
  [exec] (Terminal) {gnome-terminal}
  [exec] (Firefox) {firefox}
  [exec] (File Browser) {nautilus --no-desktop --browser}
  [exec] (Root-Tail) {root-tail -g 1000x800-200-30 -font fixed /var/log/
messages,blue}
  [separator]
[submenu] (Commands)
  [exec] (Edit Menu) {gedit .fluxbox/menu}
  [exec] (Edit Init) {gedit .fluxbox/init}
[end]
[submenu] (Games)
  [exec] (gnibbles) {gnibbles}
  [exec] (gnobots2) {gnobots2}
  [exec] (glines) {glines}
  [exec] (gnect) {gnect}
  [exec] (mahjongg) {mahjongg}
  [exec] (gnomine) {gnomine}
  [exec] (gnotravex) {gnotravex}
  [exec] (gnotski) {gnotski}
  [exec] (iagno) {iagno}
  [exec] (gtali) {gtali}
  [exec] (xeyes) {xeyes}
  [exec] (same-gnome) {same-gnome}
  [exec] (sol) {sol}
  [exec] (blackjack) {blackjack}
[end]
#
[submenu] (fluxbox menu)
  [config] (Configure)
[submenu] (System Styles) {Choose a style...}
  [stylesdir] (/usr/local/share/fluxbox/styles)
[end]
[submenu] (User Styles) {Choose a style...}
```

things about fluxbox is you can actually alter the menu to your personal liking. To change the menu get into the menu file explained earlier, then you can move, add, or remove items that you wish. A few helpful hints: “ [] ” inside these gives commands. “ () ” inside these is what you will see in the menu itself. “ { } ” inside these I

found are used for terminal commands. “ [exec] ” is the command used if you need to put in a

terminal command (ex. terminal command: “[exec] (Menu Edit)

{gedit .fluxbox/menu}” displays “Menu Edit” in the menu and opens this menu file

when you click on it. Regular command: “[exit] (Logout)” displays “Logout” and it logs you out when you click on it.). “[separator]” puts a line/separator in the menu.

“[submenu] (Games)” makes a submenu that shows up as “Games” in the menu, at the end of the content for this menu you must put “[end]” command to tell the computer to end the menu. Make sure you put the “end” commands in the right place or it will not look the way you want. You can make fluxbox execute commands in the background when you start up, to do this open the “init” file explained earlier and find the line that says “

session.screen0.rootCommand:” If there is not one there you can add it pretty much

anywhere as long as it is on its own line. You can only have one of these commands in this file

but you can put two commands on this line by putting “ && “ between the commands and “ & “

after the second command. In case you are wondering it will not work with more than two

commands. The final thing that I will teach you before we get into third party programs is how

to set the desktop picture. You will need to download the picture and make sure you know where

it is. To add a Desktop just for the session (if you log out and log back in it will be gone) then

you can type “fbsetgb /root/Desktop/think.jpg” into the terminal. “fbsetgb” is

```
session.screen0.tabFocusModel: ClickToTabFocus
session.screen0.rootCommand: fbsetgb /root/Desktop/cubepaper.png
session.screen0.windowScrollReverse: false
session.screen0.windowPlacement: RowSmartPlacement
session.screen0.menuMode: Delay
session.screen0.followModel: Ignore
session.screen0.clickRaises: true
session.screen0.windowMenu:
session.screen0.decorateTransient: true
session.screen0.fullMaximization: false
session.screen0.opaqueMove: false
session.screen0.defaultDeco: NORMAL
session.screen0.workspaceNames: Shawn, sHawn, shAwn, shaWn, shawN
session.screen0.menuDelayClose: 0
session.screen0.resizeMode: Bottom
session.screen0.focusModel: ClickFocusJ
session.screen0.focusLastWindow: True
session.screen0.workspacewarping: true
session.screen0.rowPlacementDirection: LeftToRight
session.screen0.menuDelay: 0
session.screen0.workspaces: 5
session.screen0.strftimeFormat: %k:%M
```

the command to set the desktop

picture (FluxBox SET

BackGround),

“/root/Desktop/” is where I

downloaded it to (“right click,

properties, next to location” is where the directory is), and “think.jpg” is the name of the picture. That’s just using the terminal if you want to make it come up when you startup the best way I found was to just put that very same command into the “init” file explained earlier (next to “session.screen0.rootCommand:” highlighted yellow in the picture above). Just for another example I will give you the code to put it into the menu. It is a terminal command so you need to use “[exec]” command. It should look something like this

“[exec] (Desktop) {fbsetbg /root/Desktop/think.jpg}”. The only things that would be different possibly is the directory and/or the file name

“/root/Desktop/think.jpg”. There are a lot of other things that you can play around with like in the “init” file you can change the number of workspaces you have and there names (Blue in the picture above).

Now on to the third party programs. The first thing that I downloaded was “root tail” I pretty much did this using Nathan’s how to (http://wiki.linuxquestions.org/wiki/Fluxbox_Install). Root tail was really the only add-on that I installed from source, the rest I couldn't get to install from source so I just used the RPM’s which I will explain later. To install root tail you first need to download it, as always there are many sites to download it from but I used (<http://www.goof.com/pcg/marc/root-tail.html>). You then need to unarchive it, you can right click and then click extract or you can use the terminal method explained earlier. Now like your installing most other things you need to change the directory to the file, you can use this command “cd /root/Desktop/root-tail-1.2”, “cd” is the command to copy, “/root/Desktop/” is the directory, and “root-tail-1.2” is the name of the file. If you used the extrack command in the terminal (tar -zxvf) then it will put it just in “file system” so all

you need to type is “`cd root-tail-1.2`”. Now this part is where it gets different instead of the normal install command (`./configure`) you need to put “`xmkmf -a`” in. “The `xmkmf`



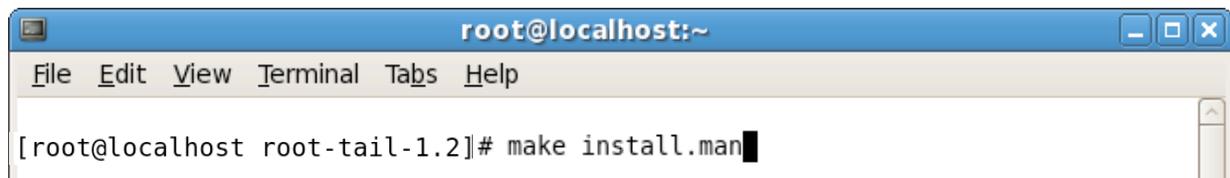
```

root@localhost:~/root-tail-1.2
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help

[root@localhost ~]# cd root-tail-1.2
[root@localhost root-tail-1.2]# xmkmf -a

```

command is the normal way to create a Makefile from an Imakefile shipped with third-party software” (http://www.linuxcommand.org/man_pages/xmkmf1.html). So pretty much the same thing that “`./configure`” does. Then you do your “`make`” and then “`make install`” commands. the last command is “`make install.man`” which installs the manual. now that



```

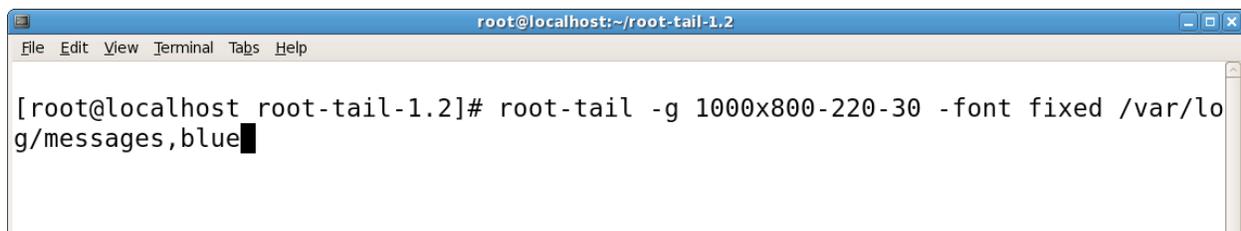
root@localhost:~
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help

[root@localhost root-tail-1.2]# make install.man

```

that is done you need to know how to use it. the command that you need to know is

“`root-tail -g 800x250-220-30 -font fixed /var/log/messages,green`”.



```

root@localhost:~/root-tail-1.2
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help

[root@localhost root-tail-1.2]# root-tail -g 1000x800-220-30 -font fixed /var/log/messages,blue

```

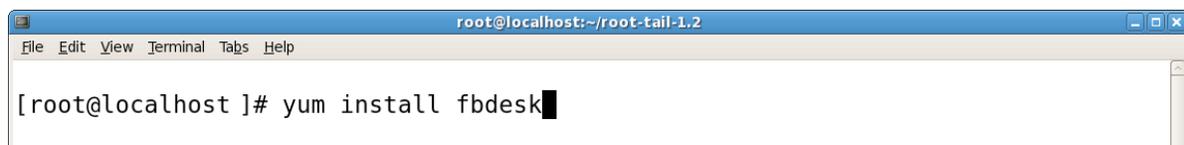
“`root-tail`” is the name of the program you are running, “`-g`” is a option that allows you to give the size and position, “`800x250`” is the size of the display area, “`-220-30`” is the position of the display on the screen, “`-font fixed`” means the font doesn't change, “`/var/log/messages`” is the log file that you wish for it to display (you can change this to any log file you wish), and “`, green`” is the color you want the text. As before you can put this

in the menu (explained above) or you could put it as a startup item in the “init” file (also explained above) and of course you can just type it in in the terminal. As I said before that was the only third party program I got to install with source so for the other programs I talk about I will use the “yum” RPM. one of the other programmes i installed was “torsmo” torsmo is a program that displays system data on your desktop. To install it all you have to do is type “yum install torsmo” into the terminal. “yum” is a program that downloads other



```
root@localhost:~/root-tail-1.2
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help
[root@localhost]# yum install torsmo
```

programs and updates off the internet and installs them, “install” is telling yum what you want it to do, and “torsmo” is the name of the file that I want to install. yum automatically goes on the internet, downloads the install files, installs it, and makes gets it ready for you to use. You can run torsmo by simply typing in “torsmo” into the terminal. torsmo will automatically update every ten seconds but you can change that with this option “-u”. ex. “torsmo -u 1” means that it will refresh every second, simerly “torsmo -u .1” means it will refresh every .1 of a second. The other program I installed was fbdesk witch I didn't care for really but i will tell you how to install it anyways. “yum install fbdesk” is the command to install it. All

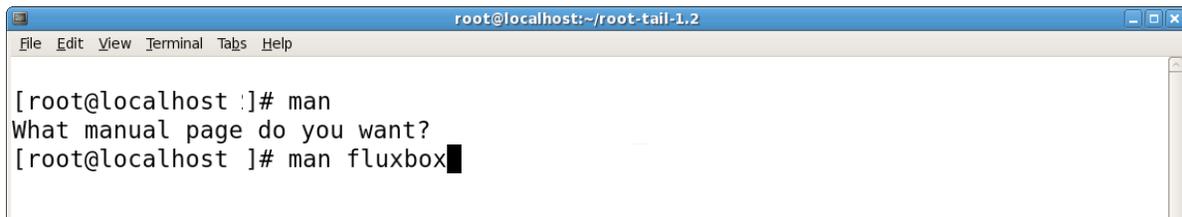


```
root@localhost:~/root-tail-1.2
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help
[root@localhost]# yum install fbdesk
```

this program really does is allow you to place files and shortcuts on the desktop. Just type “fbdesk” into the terminal to start. I didn't mess with it to much, to be honest it didn't seem very useful, if I need a shortcut I think I would rather put it in the menu. Keep in mind that for

any command you can put in the terminal, you can make it a button in the menu bar or a startup item.

That is the basics of fluxbox and a few cool things you can do with it. If you spend some time with this you can make a interface thats perfect for you. If you need more info the readme files are a big help and also the manual command (type “man” then a program or command you want options or other info on into the terminal, ex. “man fluxbox”).

A screenshot of a terminal window titled "root@localhost:~/root-tail-1.2". The window has a menu bar with "File", "Edit", "View", "Terminal", "Tabs", and "Help". The terminal content shows the following sequence of commands and output:

```
[root@localhost :]# man
What manual page do you want?
[root@localhost ]# man fluxbox
```