

When your computer has finished booting up, and after entering your login data, you will arrive at the Black Lab Enterprise Linux desktop. It comes with many features designed to make your life easy, it is well worth taking the time to get to know it.

Desktop

The Black Lab Enterprise Linux desktop has a single panel located at the top of the screen with 4 preinstalled items; Desktop, Places, Settings, Search.

The Panel

The panel is used for starting and switching applications and for receiving information about your system. On the left side of the panel you will see the Desktop entry, that is your app menu, . Clicking on this icon will open the Menu, offering you many choices of applications. Along the bottom of the menu window are icons for Settings Manager, Lock Screen and Log Out.

The middle section of the panel is dedicated to Places, Setting, Search and the clock applications. On the far right is the Notification Area. Here you will see indicators which give you information on your system, including network connectivity, sound volume level, battery status (when appropriate), instant messages. Some notification icons only appear when needed, for instance when software updates are available., beside that is the "actions" menu, beside that is the task list which shows all running applications

The position of the panel, the items it contains and the Menu are all customizable.

The Desktop

The default desktop has no icons, when you minimize an application its tile is displayed on the desktop. You can customize your desktop by right-clicking in a blank area and choosing Desktop Settings. From here you can change the wallpaper and modify menu and icon behavior.

Files and directories

Black Lab Enterprise Linux comes with Xfce's file manager Thunar. For simplicity's sake, we will just refer to it as the File Manager. Load it from → Accessories → File Manager or by double-clicking the Home or File System icons on your desktop.

Navigation

The File Manager's default view consists of a shortcut pane on the left side, the main area on the right, and a pathbar above the main area. The shortcut pane provides shortcuts to different folders on your system. The first shortcut under PLACES will lead to your home directory, the directory where you store all your personal data, and will have the name of the current user. That directory will probably appear empty. The File System shortcut under DEVICES will take you to the root of your filesystem. You may want to explore it a bit, even though it may be confusing to you if you are new to Linux. Just click on the different folders and see what's inside. When you're done, return to your home directory by clicking on the top shortcut.

[Tip]

You can add your own shortcuts by simply dragging folders to the shortcut pane. This will allow you to access important folders instantly!

[Tip]

When using Thunar you will, in general, only have read rights to files you see while browsing under the File System shortcut.

The main area will always display the contents of the current folder. Double-click on folders to enter them, and right-click on files/folders to get a pop-up window offering you some choices of what to do with them. Select multiple files by dragging a rectangle over them with the mouse. Alternatively, select one file, hold down the Shift key, and increase/decrease the selection using the arrow keys.

To easily see the path you took to get to the current directory, you can change the default View options. From the File Manager menu, select View → Location Selector → Pathbar Style. Now you can click on any pathbar icon to change to the directory it represents. Note that right-clicking on pathbar icons will also bring up a pop-up window with some options.

Creating and deleting files and folders

To create a new document, right-click on some empty space in your home directory and select Create Document → Empty File from the pop-up menu. The File Manager will prompt you for a name. Just go with the suggested name for now. After this, you will see the new file in your home directory. Right-click on it and choose Properties. This will show you some details about the file. Right-click on the file once more and choose Move to Trash to remove it. The file will be put into the Trash.

[Tip]

If you ever want to undo the deleting of a file, open Trash, right-click the file and click Restore.

To create a new folder, right-click on the empty space, and choose Create Folder. You will be prompted for a name. Type something and hit Enter. You will see this new folder in your home directory. Double-click on it to enter it. To rename or remove the folder, right-click on it and choose the appropriate option from the pop-up menu.

Copying

To copy and move files on your computer, just click and drag files and folders to other folders.

Removable devices

When inserting CDs, USB sticks or other removable media into your computer, or inserting removable devices like a music player, Black Lab Enterprise Linux should automatically detect the new device. For example, after inserting a CD into your optical drive, you will see a new shortcut in the left pane of the File Manager representing the CD. Clicking on it will open the CD in the main area, just like clicking on a regular folder. To remove the CD, right-click on the shortcut, and choose Eject. The same applies for any other removable media.

[Note]

Please note that pressing the eject button on your CD drive may not work. This may be surprising to some users, but it is in fact the expected behavior. Before the CD can be ejected, it needs to be properly "released" (unmounted) by the system. To remove a CD, always right-click on its shortcut and choose Eject.

Customizing Thunar

There are many ways to customize the File Manager. If you do not like the way the icons are displayed, choose View → View as Detailed List to have the contents of the current directory displayed as a list.

You can have the File Manager display a location bar instead of the pathbar by selecting View → Location Selector → Toolbar Style. If you

prefer a tree view in the left pane, choose View → Side Pane → Tree.

Finally, you can add Custom Actions, which can add useful options to the menu. Many custom actions can be found at the [Ubuntu Wiki Thunar Custom Action page](#).

For more choices, explore the options under Edit → Preferences.