

No. 263: Update Your Linux Installation

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The world's most popular Linux installation is 19.2, Cinnamon, "Tina", and most ORC members with Linux are using it. Well, 19.3 is out, and the Linux Team has made it easy to upgrade from any version 19 release (19, 19.1 or 19.2). That means you do not have to erase or overwrite an old version or reformat your hard drive. Rather, in the space of a few minutes, you can simply upgrade to 19.3 while still running your old version. Here is how I did it on 3 computers, which worked perfectly well and quickly, even if it did deviate a bit from the "official" way listed at the Linux Mint Blog (<https://blog.linuxmint.com>).

1. If you use system snapshots, use Timeshift to create one before the upgrade. Timeshift takes snapshots of the system at intervals of your choosing (mine is set to daily). If anything goes wrong, you can use Timeshift to restore your system to a previous state. Obviously, if you don't use system snapshots, ignore this Timeshift step.
2. Temporarily disable your screensaver, because, if it kicks in during the update, it will stop the process. You can enable it again when the update is done. If you plan on staying in front of the machine during the update so that you can monitor progress and wiggle the mouse if the screensaver clicks in, you can skip this step.
3. Make sure your Cinnamon spices (applets, desklets, extensions and themes) are all updated. Use the System Settings to make sure of this.
4. Find the Update Manager icon in the tray and left-click it. Click the refresh option at the top of the ensuing screen and download/install any updates to your (old) Linux operating system. If there were any really heavy duty updates, you may be asked to reboot. This is rare, but do it if asked. Get back into the Update Manager screen if you did need to reboot. In any case, when finished making sure updates are done, click the Edit button and select the "Upgrade to Linux Mint 19.3 Tricia" sentence. You are on your way. Follow any on-screen instructions. If asked whether to keep or replace configuration files, choose to replace them.
5. Add any packages you might want. For example, celluloid, gnote, drawing and neofetch were added to 19.3, so if you want to install them (probably a good idea), open a terminal (usually the 3rd icon in the tray) and type: `apt install celluloid gnote drawing neofetch`. Hit return and type exit when the machine is done, to close the terminal. You can then reboot to completely activate your upgrade, necessary because this is a major system change. You are done. I bet you can do it in under 20 minutes!

By the way, in reading dozens of comments in the Linux Mint Blog (referenced above in the first paragraph; just hit ctrl-click to follow the link), it is clear that this release is a winner and generally easy to install. This release (19.3) is guaranteed to be supported to 2023, so you don't need to worry about it being replaced in a month! Happy Computing!