

# Installing Ubuntu 12.04 LTS – a short guide

## Introduction

Ubuntu 12.04 LTS is the latest version of Ubuntu. “LTS” means that this version of Ubuntu is a Long-Term Support release - software support and updates will be available until 2017.

The minimum requirements to run Ubuntu 12.04 are a computer with 384MB RAM and a CPU with what is called “PAE” support<sup>1</sup>. In general, Ubuntu will be more responsive than Windows on the same hardware. Good results will be had from a system with a single core CPU of 2.0GHz or better, or any dual core CPU. If you like to run a number of applications at once, increasing the RAM up to 2GB or more will bring noticeable improvements. The biggest improvement you can make to an older computer is to fit a SSD drive<sup>2</sup>. This can drastically speed up system start-up and application start-up times.

If your computer does not meet these minimum requirements, you can also consider using a variant of Ubuntu called Xubuntu. This uses much of the same underpinning software as Ubuntu, but will be more responsive on older computers. Xubuntu can run the same applications as Ubuntu, but the graphical environment for launching programs, managing files and configuring the computer is not as sophisticated as that in Ubuntu.

## Preparation

Obtain a copy of the installation media for Ubuntu. You can download the most up to date version from <http://releases.ubuntu.com/12.04/> Most people will want to use the “PC (Intel x86) desktop” version. See note for other sources<sup>3</sup>.

When you have downloaded the relevant .iso file, you will need to burn this to DVD (or CD if the image is below 700MB). There is a helpful guide on how to do this at <https://help.ubuntu.com/community/BurningIsoHowto>

Before installing, make sure your computer is connected to the Internet. A wired connection is recommended.

Make sure you know how to get your computer to boot from the installation DVD. On some computers there is a key to press on startup to give you a boot menu. On others, you may need to change a BIOS setting.

If you will be installing Ubuntu on a computer running Windows and want to keep the ability to use Windows, make sure there is at least 10GB free space on your hard drive (preferably 20GB or more). You should also make sure you have tested backups of all important files in case you make a mistake during the installation process.

## Installation

Start the computer, making sure it boots from the optical drive and not from the internal hard drive.

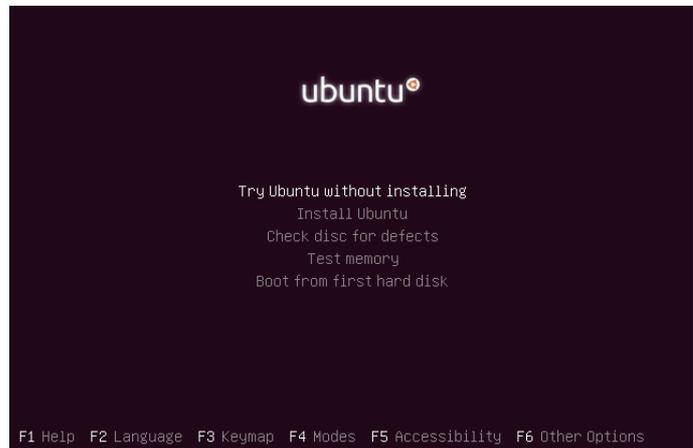
After a short pause you should see a dark screen with symbols for keyboard and accessibility at the bottom. Press any key while this image is displayed to change the default startup options (for example to change the language or accessibility settings for installation). Most users can just wait a few seconds for Ubuntu to start with default settings.



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- 1 PAE support is provided in most CPUs made since the late 1990's, but was not included on Pentium M processors (as used in laptops) until 2005 or later. If you have a Pentium M processor without PAE support you can still install Ubuntu but will need to use a custom version of the installation disc.
  - 2 Solid State Disk drives are more suitable for computers which can use SATA disk drives. You can get SSD drives with the older type IDE connection, but these may not show the same performance gains.
  - 3 Xubuntu can be downloaded from <http://xubuntu.org/getxubuntu/> Most people will want to use the 32-bit desktop version.  
A version of Ubuntu 12.04 for computers with a CPU lacking PAE support can be downloaded from <http://people.canonical.com/~diwic/12.04-nonpae/ubuntu-12.04-desktop-i386-nonpae.iso>

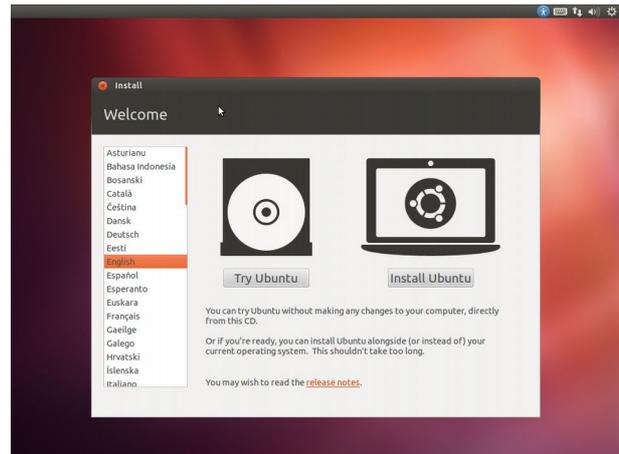
If you choose to change the default settings, the screen to the right will be displayed. Use the function keys to show the option menus.

When you have finished making changes, press the “Return” key to select “Install Ubuntu”. In due course you will see a screen similar to the one shown below. Choose the language you want to use and then click on the option to “Install Ubuntu”



If you just let the installer disc start up without making any manual changes, you will in due course see the screen to the right. Choose the language you want to use and then click on the option to “Install Ubuntu”.

*(These screenshots are from the Ubuntu installation, but the Xubuntu installation is very much the same.)*



You will now see a series of pages that will guide you through the installation process.

If the first two entries are not ticked (ie the computer does not have an internet connection or have sufficient hard drive space) you can not continue with the installation.

Also on this screen it is recommended to tick both of the option boxes for downloading updates and installing third-party software.

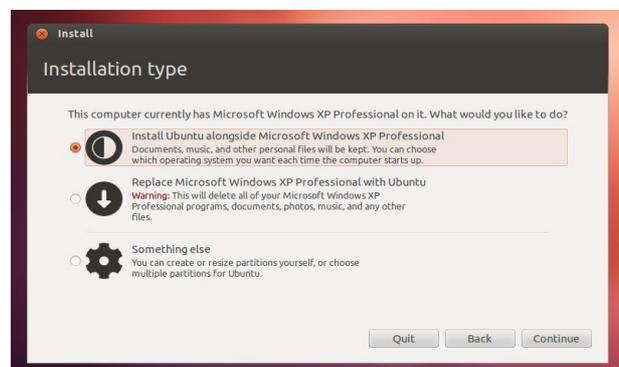


The options in the next screen depend on what is currently on your hard drive. The simplest choices are to **Replace** your current operating system, or to **Install Ubuntu alongside** your current operating system.

If you are using an unformatted disk, or one with contents that are not recognised, you will also see the option **Erase disk and install Ubuntu**

Other options are beyond the scope of this guide.

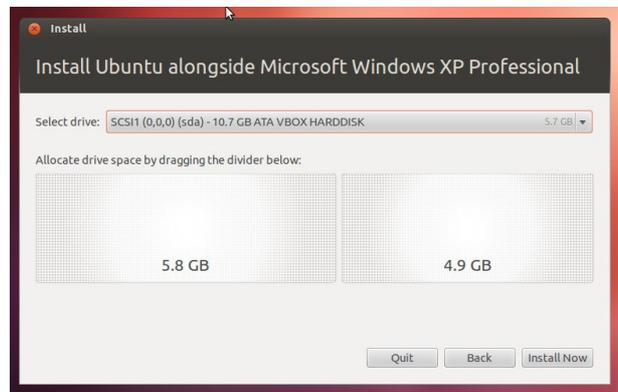
Choose the option you want. If you are not sure which option to choose, do not continue with the installation!



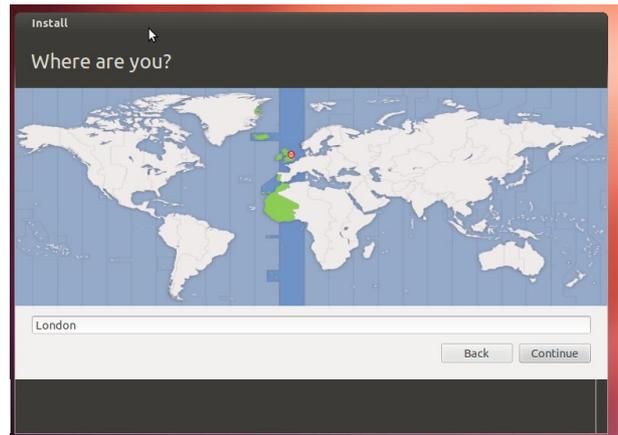
If you install alongside an existing operating system, you will be given the option of choosing how the hard disk space is shared between the two systems.

The amount of disk space available to your current operating system will be reduced to make space for Ubuntu to be installed. If there is enough space, allow at least 10GB for Ubuntu, and preferably a lot more.

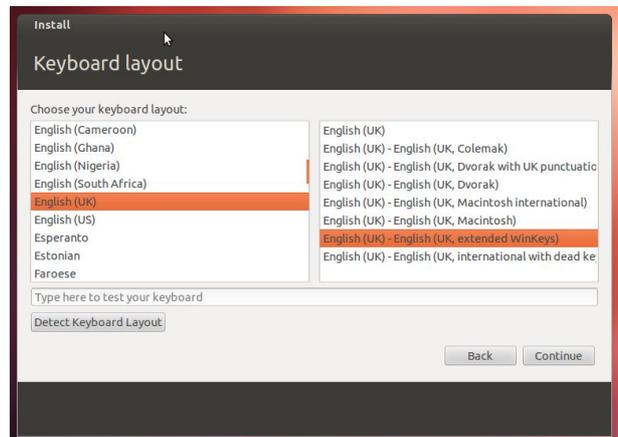
You will be asked to confirm you want the disk resized. This process can take a considerable time on machines with large hard drives. Do not interrupt this process!



The next step is to set your time zone. The installer software will attempt to guess where you are from your Internet IP address.



If you have a keyboard which has the “Windows” keys, choose the appropriate option, else choose the standard English (UK) option.



Finally, provide the details to create an account on the computer for you to use. (You can add other users later).

The main use for the computer's name is to identify the computer when using Windows networking connections to share files with other computers. You can change the entry automatically generated for you.

After this screen, there is no more to do except to wait for the installation to finish. This typically takes about ten minutes, but may take a lot longer depending on your computer and the speed of your internet connection.



When installation has completed, you will be prompted to restart the computer. Remember to remove the installation media.

## Post-installation setup

If you have installed Ubuntu alongside another operating system, you will be given a menu with a choice to systems when you start the computer.

The first entry in the list will be the new Ubuntu system.

(Note that the installer also provides you with an option to run the MemTest memory diagnostic tool which can identify any problems with your computer's memory.)

Log in using the username and password you provided during the installation process.

The first thing to do is to install all available software updates.

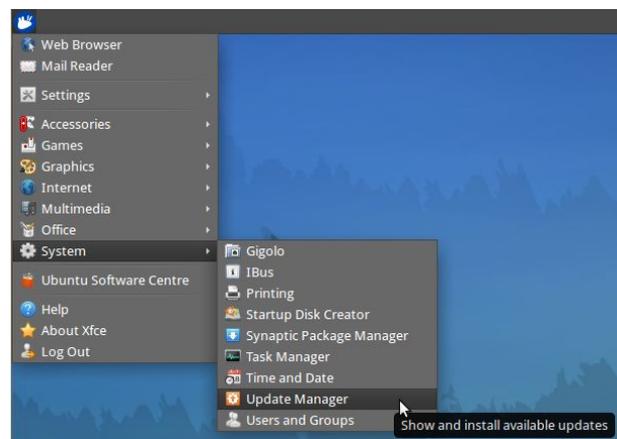


**If using Ubuntu**, click the Ubuntu button at the top of the dash and start typing **update** to find the Update Manager program.

Then click on the Update Manager icon.



**If using Xubuntu**, choose Update Manager from the System menu.



The Update Manager will show a list of updates available from the internet. It is worth clicking on the "Check" button to make sure the list is fully up to date.

Click the "Install Updates" button, and provide your password when prompted.

The process may take some time depending on how many updates are available and the speed of your internet connection.

When the updates have all been installed you may be advised to restart your computer.

