



## Computers and Stuff.

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### FANBOX SCAM.

There is every chance that you will receive an email from a mob called FanBox saying something like:- *“On March 15 you earned \$2.75 and your all time earnings are \$234.40”*. This is nothing but a phishing attempt through a spam mail. Delete it immediately.

Fanbox is a shady company that was fined and banned in the UK for operating misleading SMS services, now they’ve turned to a web-based service and are flooding the web with spam.

The spam mail sent by Fanbox claims that “you were invited by (someone you know) to the FanBox Beta product launch of IPL (I’ll Pay Later) and you can earn by advertising your product, service or blog now and pay later”.

In case you do not have a product, service or blog, then it offers you to participate in the profits from other people’s sales now and pay later, something it termed as ‘boosting’.

The service (of Fanbox) tricks people into giving up their email addresses, passwords and mobile phone numbers and then spams them relentlessly. The spam messages have a *‘to stop receiving emails click here’* link but all that does is let FanBox know that your email address is live. Don’t do that either.

So what’s in it for FanBox??

First, it collects your email ID, data and contacts and then uses that for marketing (spamming) and may also be selling it to some other interested parties. Secondly, after a few emails, Fanbox sends a mail asking for a ‘maintenance fee’ for an account that may not even exist. Here is a sample mail Fanbox sends for the maintenance fee...

*“Hi,*

*As of Nov. 7, 2012, you had utilized \$371.58 of your “I’ll Pay Later” funds, and have earned \$309.91 since you started utilizing IPL.*



Post what’s in your head  
... and get paid!

**SIGN UP NOW**

*Your October processing fee of \$5.69 became due on Nov. 12, 2012. You'll want to pay your processing fee immediately to protect your account and money. Please note that if your processing fee has not been paid by 22 Nov. 2012, a late fee will be added to your processing fee.*

*Amount due if paid before 22 Nov. 2012: \$5.69*

*Amount due if paid on or after 22 Nov. 2012: \$15.69*

*Regards,*

*The FanBox Account Protection Team”*

So what is the remedy to avoid getting trapped into Fanbox spam scam? In your mailbox, mark the mail from Fanbox as spam (for Gmail, you can also report it for phishing). If necessary create a filter that can automatically sends any mail from Fanbox to trash.

And most important, do not click on any link in the mailer.

## **Why continuing support for XP is bad maths.**

More than a few Windows XP users are willing to pay Microsoft for more updates to the now effectively obsolete OS and in theory, doing so could produce billions in revenue for Microsoft. Here's why it's not going to happen.



A lot of people who are happy with XP say they would be more than willing to pay Microsoft a perpetual fee to continue supporting Windows XP. To gain significant traction, the subscription would have to be priced reasonably for the average PC user, perhaps U.S. \$25 a year. It's an interesting concept but how much money could Microsoft rake in for ongoing XP support? Let's take a quick look at the math.

There are roughly 300 to 500 million PCs in the world still running Windows XP; let's split the difference and say there are 400 million some of whom are government agencies and major corporations that are already paying Microsoft significant fees for extended XP support. So let's cut the number in half and say there are 200 million consumers still using the now unsupported Windows XP and assuming most of those individuals would be willing to pay \$25 per year to avoid upgrading to a more modern operating system, Microsoft might see roughly \$4 billion in annual revenue.

That's hardly chump change, especially given that Microsoft's entire net income for the most recent fiscal quarter was \$5.66 billion and there would be almost no cost to Microsoft as it's already investigating flaws and developing patches for the supported versions of Windows. At face value, it seems like a win for both Microsoft and Windows XP users.

It isn't — and Microsoft knows that. There's almost no chance that the company will implement any consumer-based, pay-for-support program for XP and we should all be thankful for that.

The issues with Windows XP run much deeper than just patching known vulnerabilities on the second Tuesday of each month. Moreover, Microsoft has motives and concerns that go beyond patching XP vulnerabilities and fighting off exploits.

Windows XP wasn't built to be vulnerable; but its architecture has made it so over time. Back when the Internet was relatively new, XP was a great operating system and it's still a perfectly functional OS for applications that do not require a network or Web connection. But from a security standpoint, XP is now simply too archaic. Connecting the OS to the Internet is like speeding down the highway in a car with no seat belts. It's not only dangerous for you but today's malware makes it hazardous for every other PC with a shared network or Internet connection.



Patching XP won't provide the security tools introduced with Windows Vista and enhanced with Windows 7 and Windows 8. Current versions of Windows also include User Account Control (UAC), which helps protect users running in administrator mode, which on most machines is the default. UAC forces you to approve specific changes to Windows, such as installing or updating applications. XP lets an attacker run malicious code with full administrator privileges.

Windows XP is almost always at significantly greater risk than newer versions of Windows

The liabilities of XP are not limited solely to Microsoft. Third-party hardware and software vendors are also affected. As long as Microsoft supports a legacy operating system, hardware and software vendors typically feel obligated to do so, too. If Microsoft initiated a paid-support subscription for individual XP users, the makers of monitors, keyboards, webcams, and software would also have to continue investing resources to keep their products compatible with Windows XP. So the cost equation isn't limited just to Microsoft. Adding in the many hardware and software vendors tied to a PC makes the math far more complicated and if you factor in the entire Windows XP ecosystem, that \$4 billion of revenue for Microsoft could be offset by many more billions spent by other vendors.

Not to be facetious, but there were probably people who would've paid for continued support of eight-track tapes or 5.25-inch floppy drives. Technologies evolve, and so do threats to those technologies and in most cases, the older the technology, the greater the hazard. Most of us are very happy that our cars have seat belts, crumple zones, airbags, and more cup holders.

Windows XP users are still welcome to continue using the aged OS just as there are those who will still get some use from their effectively obsolete 3.5-inch floppy drive. But all security experts strongly recommend limiting the use of XP to standalone applications. Don't connect it to the Internet, especially if it shares a network with other PCs. A successful infection on an XP system could easily spread to other machines.

Regardless of whether and how you choose to continue using Windows XP, the concept of paying for support just doesn't add up. Not for users and not for vendors — not even for \$4 billion a year.

## There is an alternative – and it's FREE.

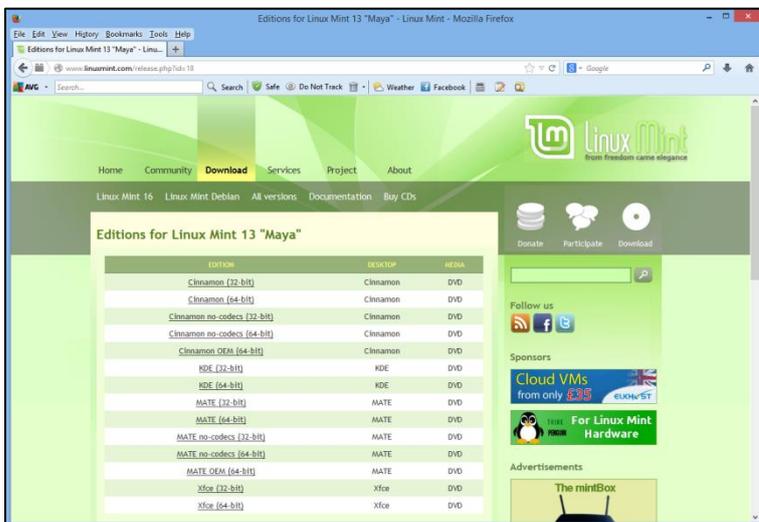
If your computer hardware is still good you may want to consider replacing Windows XP with Linux Mint to be able to safely use the PC now that Microsoft has stopped their support for Windows XP.

Linux is a free, very secure, open source (like Firefox) operating system which is available in a variety of 'distributions'. The appearance and method of operation are the obvious things that distinguish different distributions. Linux Mint is one of the distributions that has the shortest learning curve for Windows XP users.

The series of pictures and commentary below show what to do to get Linux Mint working on a computer that originally came with Windows XP. The installation process as described is non-reversible so be careful, although if you replace your hard drive with another one you can then keep your Windows XP hard drive as a backup. When you install Linux Mint, the hard drive in your PC should be in good condition and probably at least 10 gigabytes, but it doesn't have to have a functioning operating system on it to start the installation.

So, if you have XP on your machine and you don't want to spend money on a newer version of Windows, this will do everything Windows 7 and 8 will do and you can download it for free. You will need a good internet connection, as it's about one gigabyte and will take around 15-20 minutes to download on Bigpond cable.

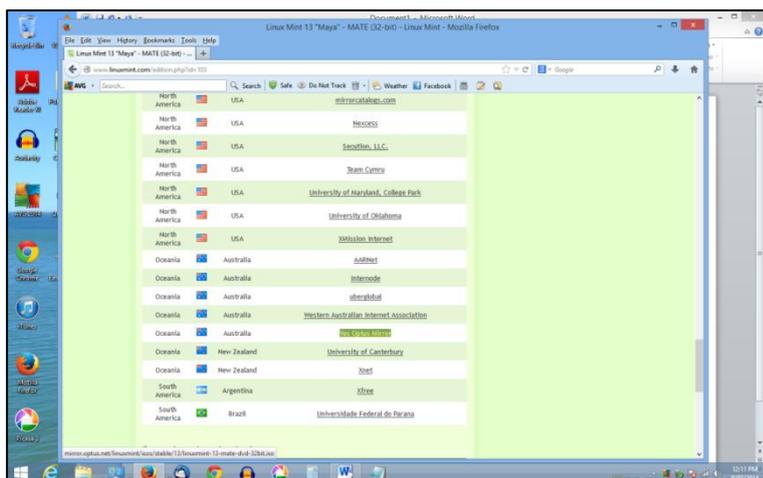
Here's how:



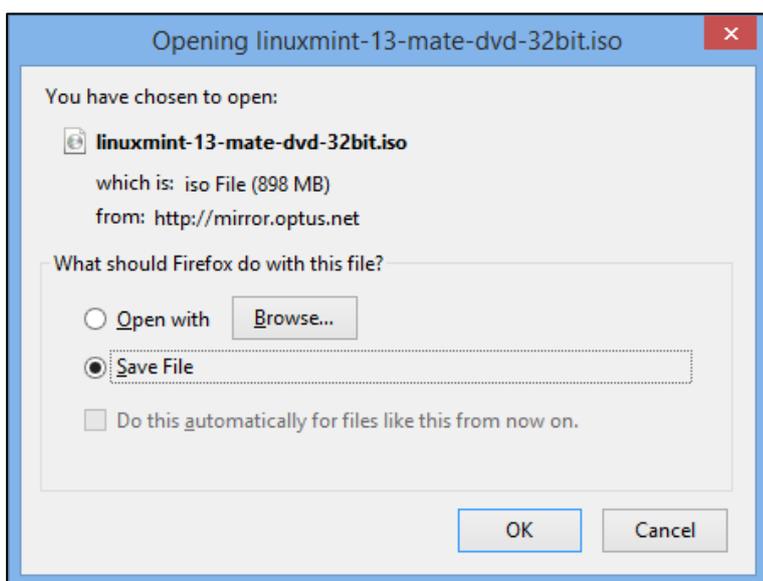
Go to:

<http://www.linuxmint.com/release.php?id=18>

which will take you to the page at left. Click on the MATE program. You will need to select either the 32 bit or 64 bit version, depending on your computer. If you have been running XP odds on you have a 32 bit machine.



This takes you to a page at left which will have a lot of possible download sites. Somewhere near the bottom you'll find the Australian sites in 'Oceania', pick one that looks like it might work well for you (they will all work but some may be quicker than others depending on your location and internet provider.

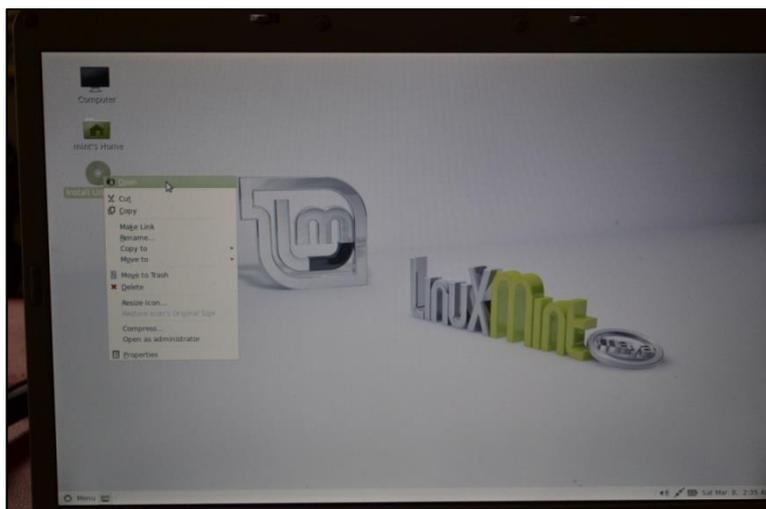


Depending on your browser, you will get something like the prompt at left, so save the iso file somewhere on your PC and burn a DVD from it.

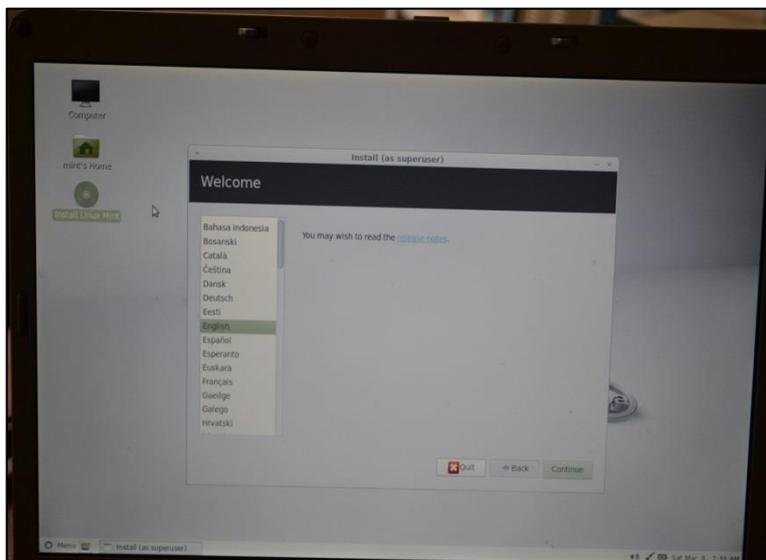
How you do that depends on how your PC is set up, you could right click the file after it has downloaded and be presented with an option to burn, otherwise do some googling and find out how to burn the DVD. If that's too difficult for you, you should probably not proceed with the installation of Mint, however, conversely, if you manage to do that successfully you'll quite likely be ok.

At this point make sure you have everything backed up from your XP machine in a form which is easy to read. Copying your documents, pictures etc to a USB drive or a large USB flash drive will be easy to work with. Or you may want to burn to a CD or DVD. If you have any doubts at all about the quality of the backup medium, backup to two different places.

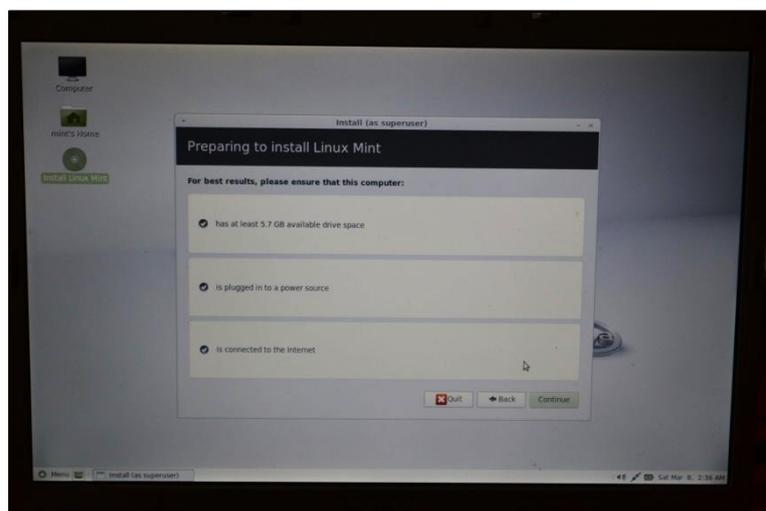
Although it is possible to install both Linux Mint and XP on the same hard drive so that you select which operating system to use at startup, I do not recommend this. If you want to keep your old Windows hard drive as a backup, see if you can find a different hard drive to put in your PC instead of the Windows one, this is normally just a screwdriver and plug job, the hard thing might be finding a suitable IDE drive. If you do find such a drive, use it INSTEAD of the Windows drive, not AS WELL as the Windows drive.



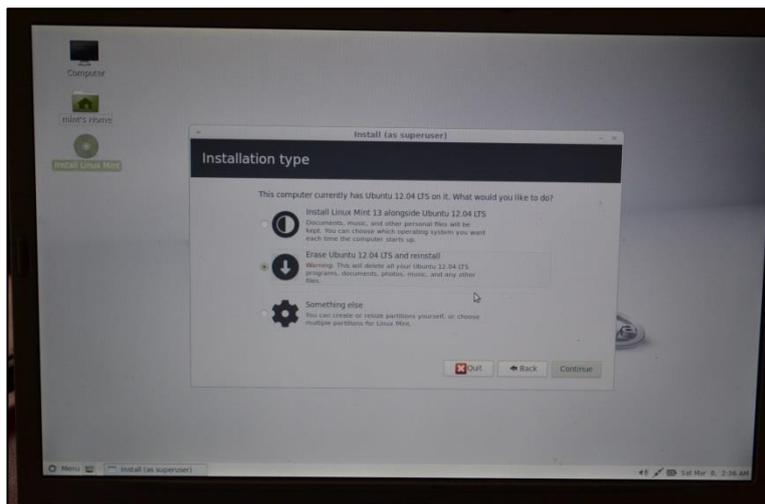
Once your backups are sorted out, put the Linux Mint DVD in the PC's DVD reader, power off your PC, make sure what you plan to use in the way of speakers, mouse, internet cable, webcam etc are plugged in then restart. Most built in or USB WiFi devices are supported, if you don't have an internet cable you can click networking icon on the bar at the bottom and connect to WiFi. A cable is usually quicker. You will get the screen below, right-click the Install Linux Mint icon and select open:



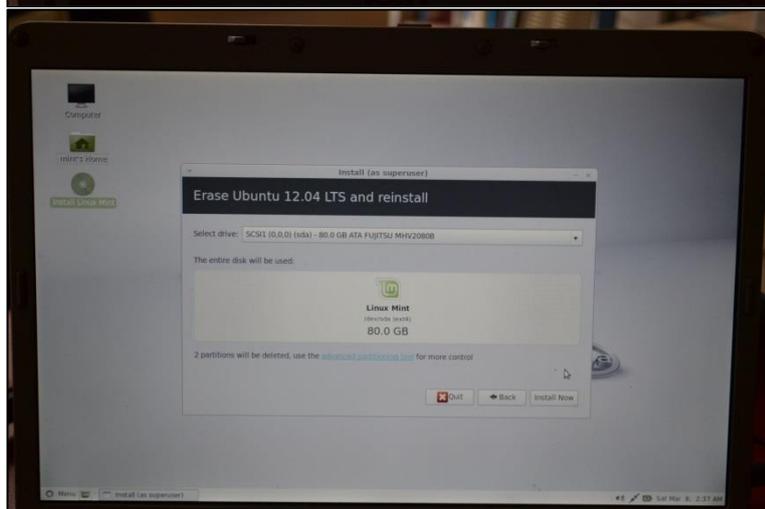
On the resulting screen (left), assuming you want English, just click Continue:



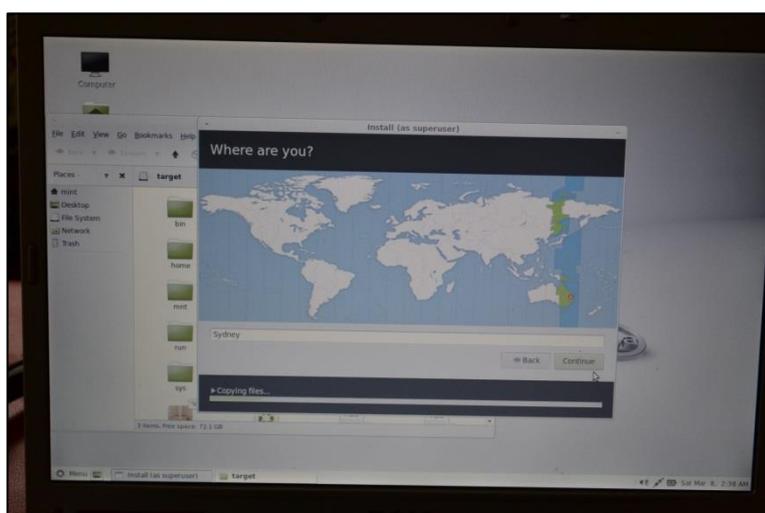
When this screen appears, click Continue:



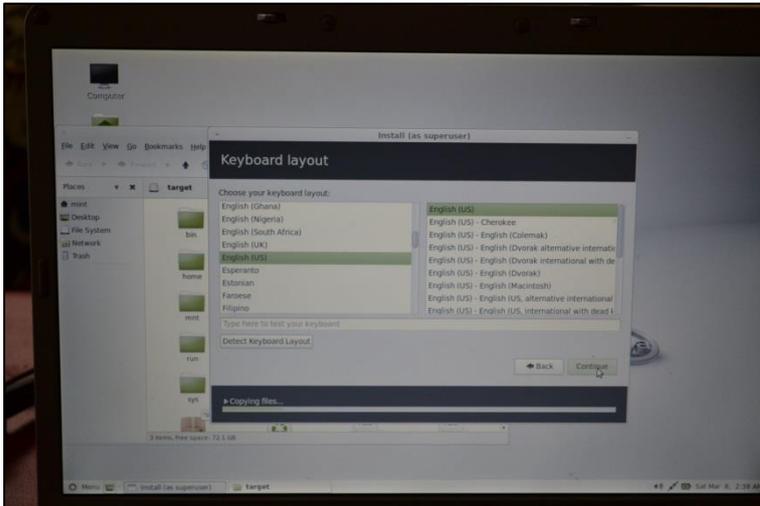
On this screen, the default selection may be to install Linux Mint alongside the other operating system, which will normally be Windows XP. **CHANGE THIS** to 'Erase Windows XP and reinstall' (or similar), which will probably be the second option, then click Continue:



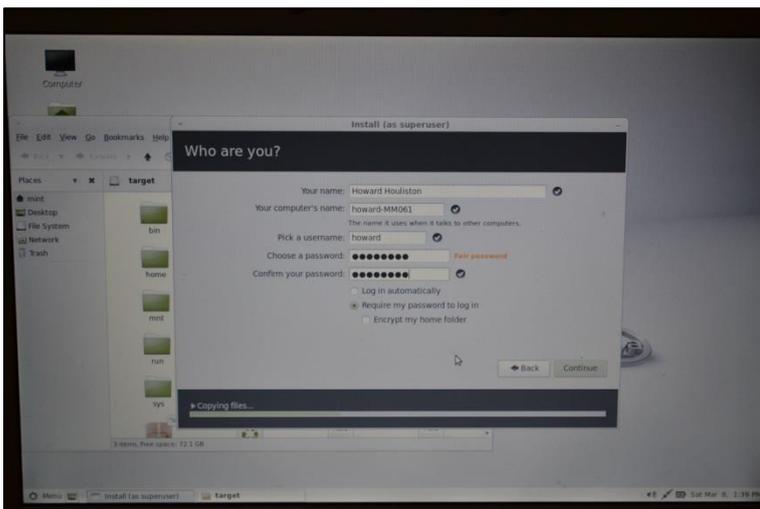
On this next screen, click Install Now:



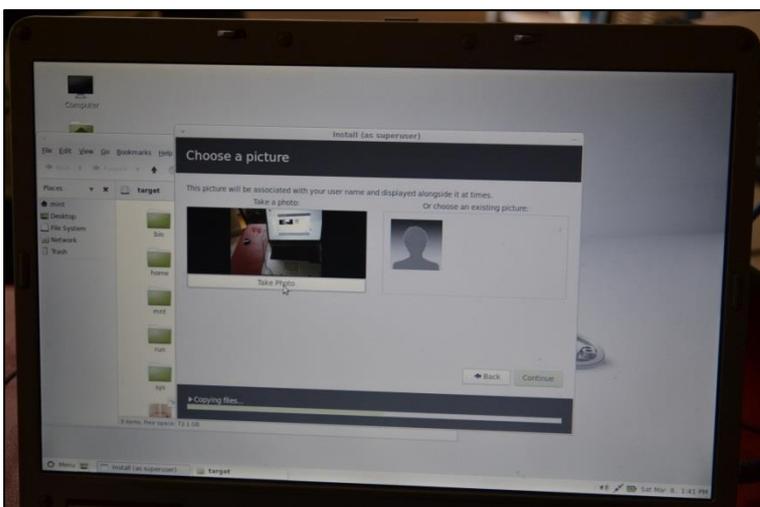
On the next screen, it should have worked out a suitable location for your time zone setting, so just click Continue:



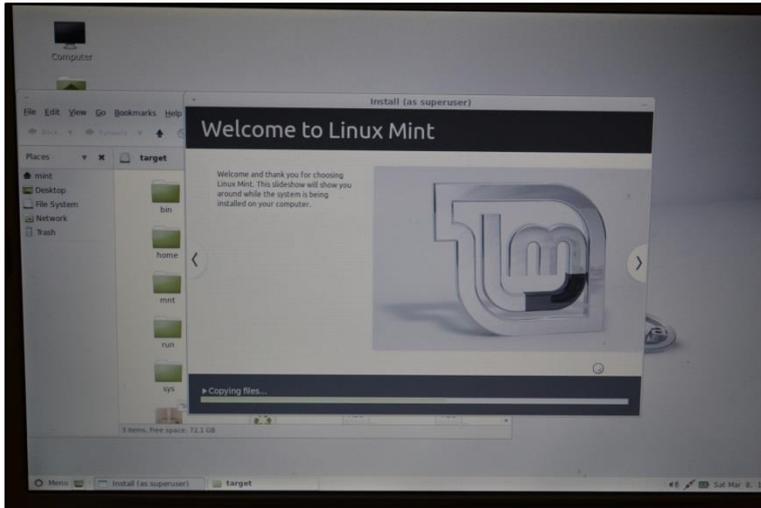
On the next screen it should have worked out what keyboard you use, so just hit enter:



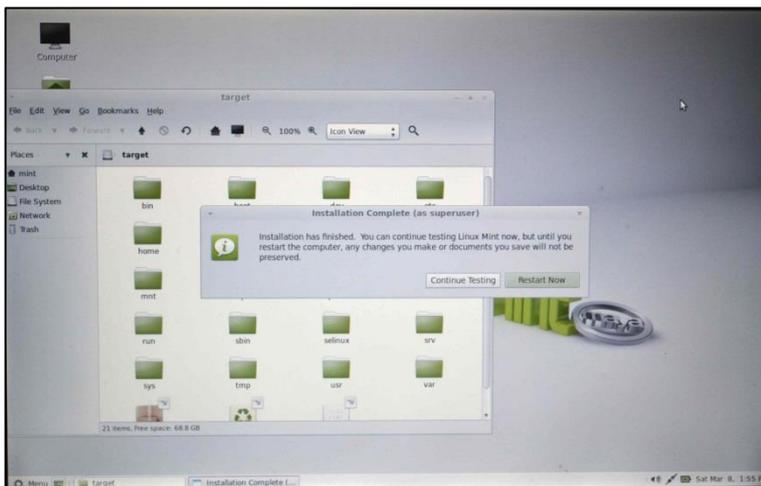
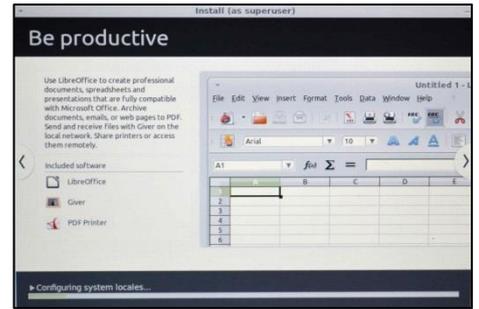
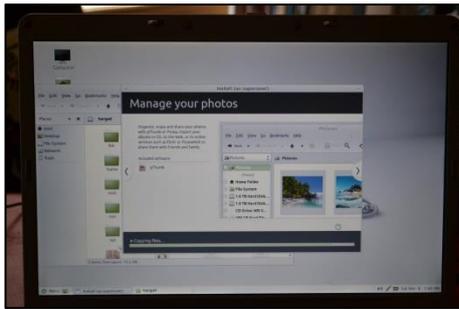
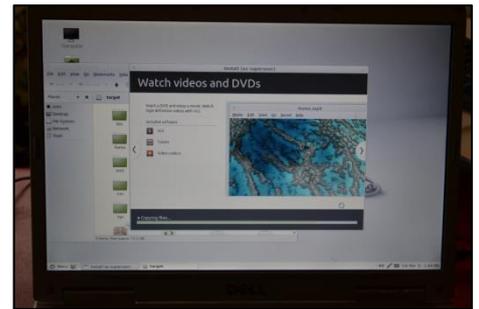
This screen will ask for your name, pick a user name and password, I've found it's best not to alter the computer name here (it's ok to change it after installation). It's best not to select Log in automatically:



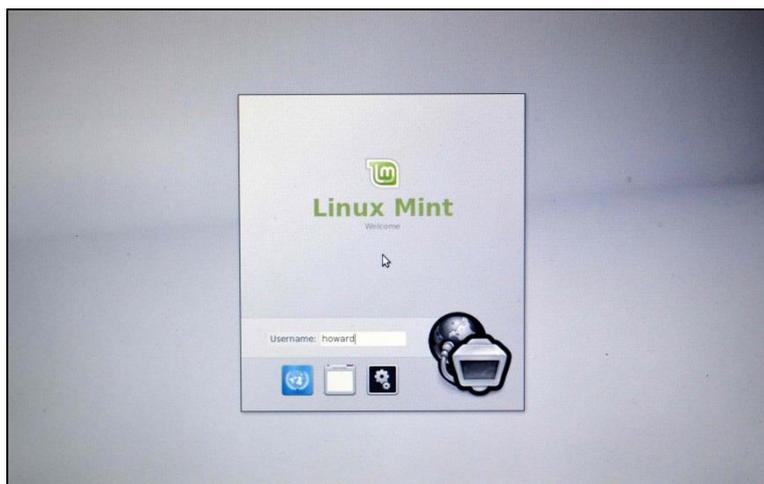
The next screen gives you the option of taking a pic with your webcam, I've never tried it but you could probably put a pic on a USB stick and select that to be associated with your login. When done click Continue:



Then file copying starts, followed by a few screens describing the capabilities on Linux Mint:



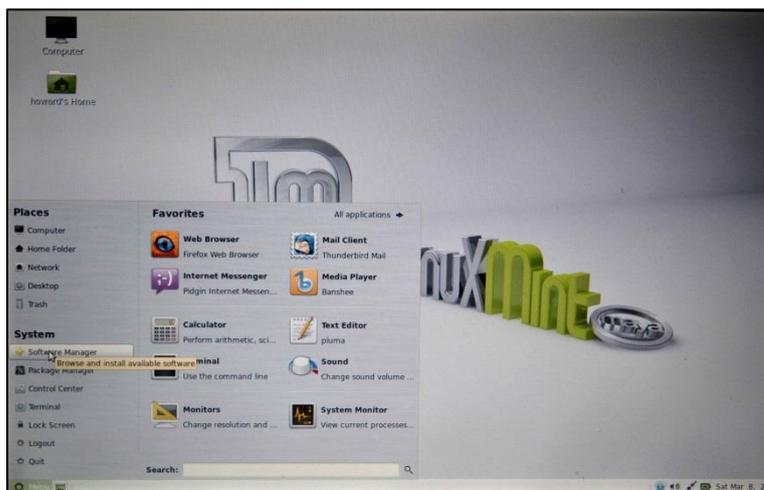
Finally it ends and you get this screen, click Restart now to start up your new operating system:



On startup you should get this screen, asking for your user name, followed by an almost identical screen asking for your password:



The first time you start up and log in, you will see a screen like this:



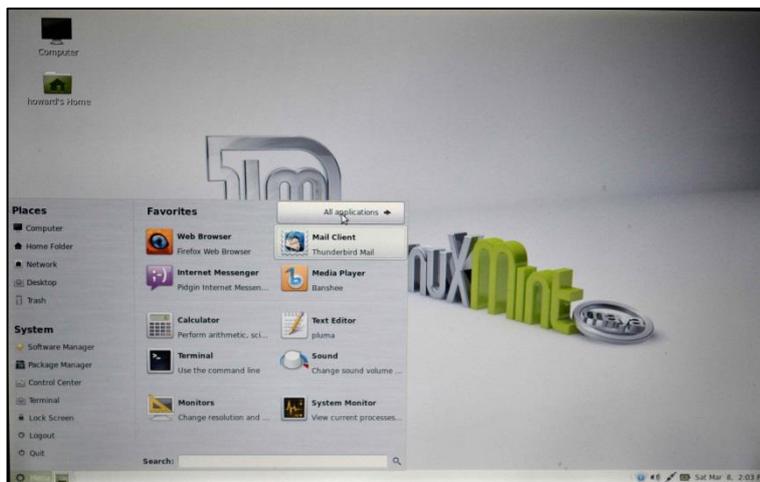
To make it look a bit more familiar, close the Welcome window, click the Menu button and select Software Manager:



This opens Software Manager, type gnome-colors in the search box at the top right to get a window like this:



Click on gnome-colors in the list above to get this window, where you should click Install, this will install gnome-colors (but the 'not-installed' text stays the same for now, so don't be fooled after it is installed.

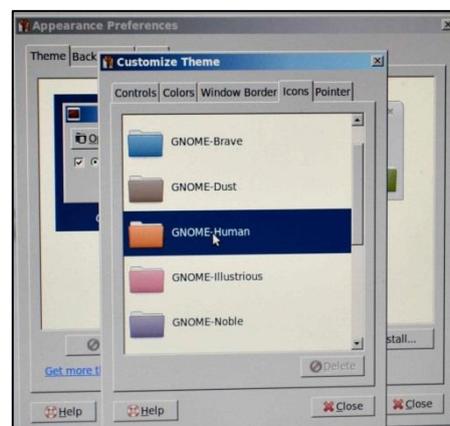
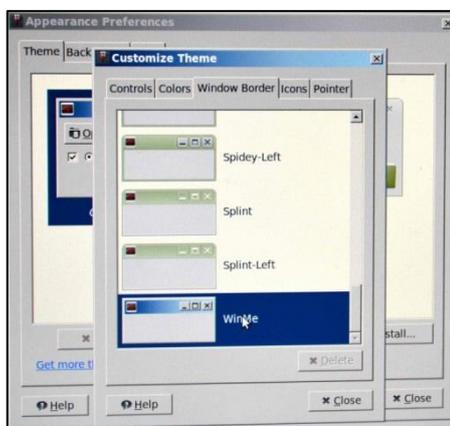
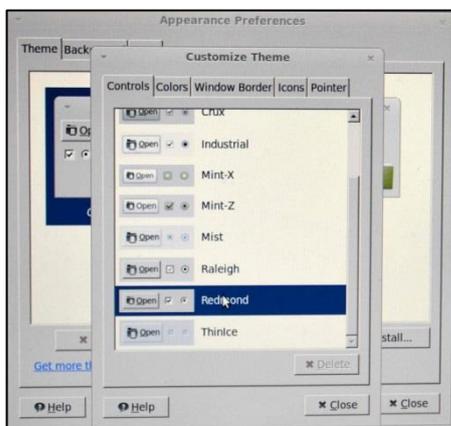


Close Software Manager and go back to the Menu button, from the menu click All applications at the top right:

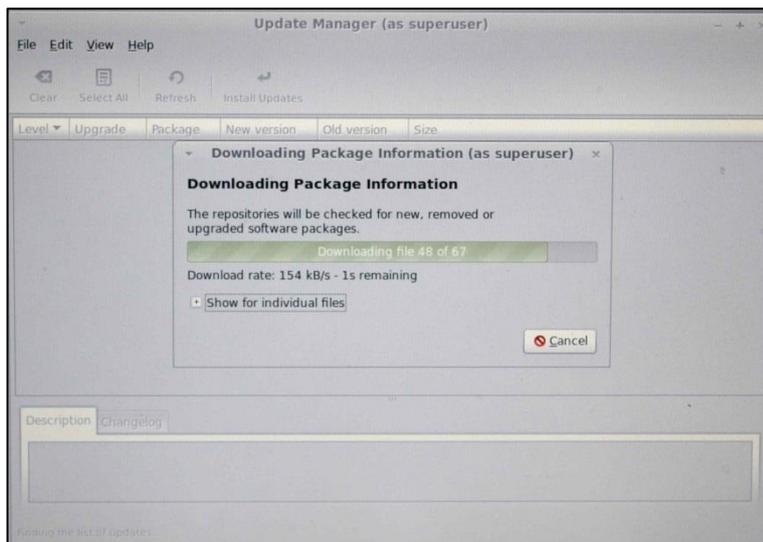


From the All Applications menu select Preferences then Appearance as shown:

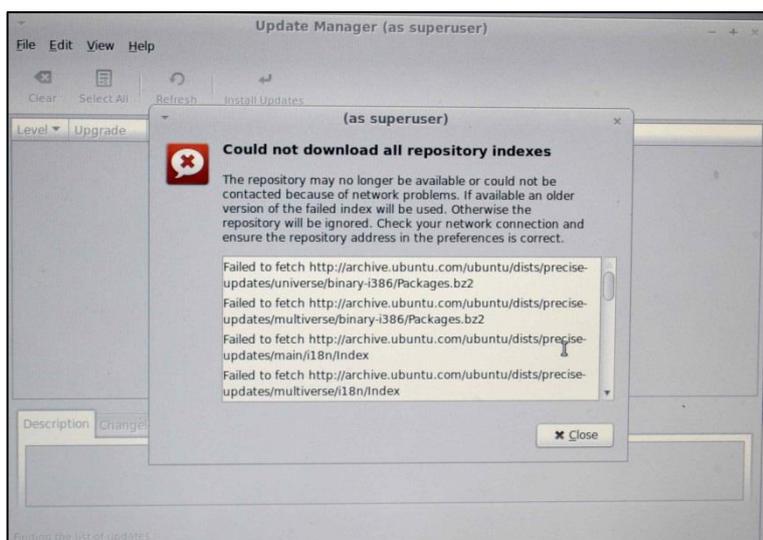
On the resulting window, click the customise button and make the selections shown on the tabs 'Controls', 'Window Border' and 'Icons', then close all of the windows associated with 'Appearance Preferences'



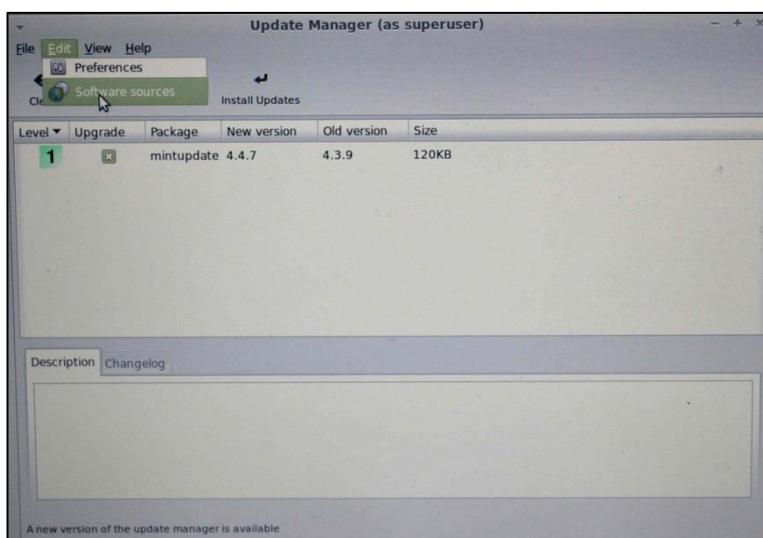
At this stage you should have a reasonably familiar looking operating system, the main thing that needs to be said now is about operating system updates. A small change may need to be made to the update settings because two of the software repositories containing updates etc have been merged and one of them has been deleted. The DVD used for the install was a few months old, more recently downloaded DVDs may not have this problem There is information on this on the Linux Mint web site on how to deal with the disappearance of Medibuntu, but here are some quick notes to get this resolved:



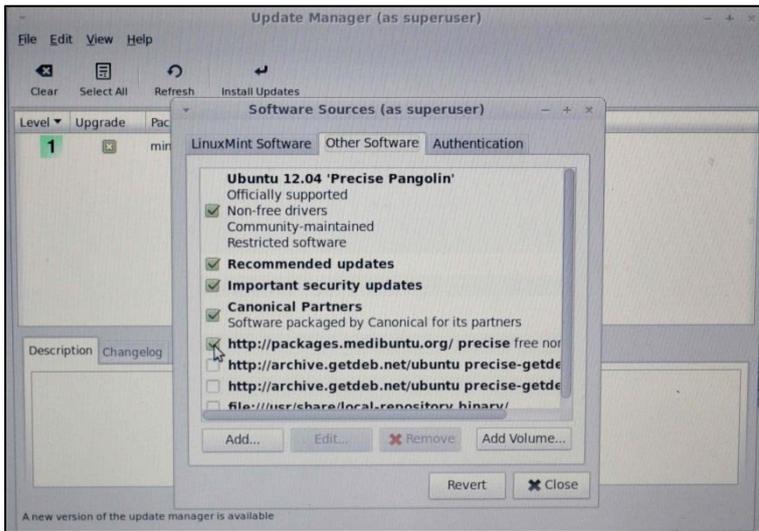
To start the update manager, click the shield on the bar at the bottom which contains and 'i' (or a green tick if up to date), this will bring up the next screen, click Cancel which will then bring up the subsequent slightly alarming screen (but don't be alarmed!).



Just click Close on the error window, we will now edit the Update Manager preferences and un-tick one check box.



From the menu bar, select Edit -> Software Sources as shown:



From the resulting display, remove the tick alongside [http://packages.medibuntu...](http://packages.medibuntu.org/)

Then close all of the Update Manager Windows. Update Manager will now work normally, to run it just click the shield at the bottom, the use of it is pretty obvious.

When up to date as at the last check, the shield on the bar at the bottom will contain a green tick. It will have a red cross if it needs updating. If it has an 'I' inside there are updates available, but you're reasonably up to date.

Have fun with Linux Mint!

