

# Is Linux for you?

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I am writing this section to help you count the cost before attempting to move from Windows to Linux. There is a learning curve. Below are 12 points you should consider before downloading and installing Linux on your computer:

1. Unless you are a computer geek or a hobbyist who really likes to learn new procedures, and has the time to learn them, you may wind up highly frustrated when you run into snags!
2. You have to do some command line work to install certain plugins manually. Installing the Macromedia Flash plugin for Firefox is an example. Some people think it's a throw back to the MS-DOS days to do that. I think its fun because I used be a power user in DOS.
3. If you use encryption and need to open PGP files closed with the Idea algorithm, you will not be able to use the default GPG program but have to download the source and the Idea.c file and compile the program yourself! I have done this a few times already.
4. You may have to learn how to compile certain software that is not yet available in RPM format. I have had to do this from time to time. But it's fun to do – if you like to do command line work.
5. You may have to manually edit some system settings files like the fstab file if you install a second hard drive, or xconf.conf file to get your video card to work properly. I had to do that with my new Nvidia graphics display card to enable dual monitor support. The graphical setup in Fedora just couldn't do the job right! There was no way I could figure out how to do this on my own. I had to do a bit of Internet browsing to get the information on how to edit these files. (Info posted on this web site.)
6. You will not be able to play certain streaming video like Microsoft ASF files from the Internet. Thank God there are not so many web pages that use ASF or context that MS IE alone can play.
7. Unless you have a broadband ADSL or cable connection, Linux updates will be very slow to download and will use up your telephone line time and raise your phone bill. Linux was raised on the Internet. In the early days programs and updates were small and so a dial up network was no problem then, but in my opinion, it would be a problem today.
8. Though many Linux programs like the Gimp graphic editor are advanced and stable, some are still in the Beta stage and may crash from time to time. Your system as a whole, won't crash with it, however.
9. Your choice of applications is somewhat limited compared to what is

available in Windows. You may be able to get some Windows applications to work in Linux, however, but you will have to learn how to set up [Wine](#) to do that.

10. The only on line support you will have is from Internet forums like the [Fedora Forum](#) or your friendly Linux tech if you have a relationship with him by email.
11. Big programs like OpenOffice writer (similar to MS Word) are slow to open unless you have at least a Pentium 4 or equivalent processor. If you want to use bleeding edge software from Fedora, you need a machine that is not yet 3 years old or you will wind up frustrated.
12. If Linux doesn't recognize a certain device on your PC, or doesn't install the correct driver for it (example: video card lacking drivers for 3 D acceleration), you will have to do research from forums and driver web sites to learn how to find and install that driver. Either that, or you change devices like I had to do with buying a used PCI audio card because Linux didn't recognize the on-board sound card on my motherboard. It's much easier to find and install device drivers in Windows compared to Linux. Fortunately, however, the popular Linux distributions usually have everything you need. Moreover, if you have a choice of buying a graphic card, you should know that Nvidia GeForce cards are much better supported than ATI Radeon cards.