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Debian's KDM theme  
Marius Nestor

By: Marius Nestor, Linux Editor

## [Debian 4.0: Not for the Average User](#)

### *Debian Etch first impressions*

Yeah, you have (probably) already heard about the new stable release of one of the oldest Linux distributions around, Debian 4.0 (codename "Etch"), a distribution that inspired many of the popular Linux operating systems you (probably) use today, like Ubuntu, Xandros or MEPIS for example. Now, you may wonder what it brings new to the Linux world, right? Well, I am sorry to say this, but I really don't see anything new in this version of Debian; and when you think it cross my mind to ditch Ubuntu for it, shame on me for having such treacherous thoughts! Now seriously, this release brings new features, new software and a lot of improvements over the previous version, Sarge. **Highlights of this release:** Linux kernel 2.6.18-4; GNU C library 2.3.6; GCC 4.1 as default compiler; Python 2.4; PHP 5.2; Exim 4.63 as default email server for new installations; Postfix 2.3; Courier 0.53; Cyrus 2.2; Apache 2.2; fnord 1.10; MySQL 5.0.32; PostgreSQL 8.1; OpenSSH server 4.3; Bind 9.3; maradns 1.2; OpenLDAP 2.3. Now, let's have a look at the new Debian installer (GUI), which (for my disappointment) you can use if you type "expertgui" at the command line when the CD/DVD first boots. I must admit that I was very disappointed when I saw the old text-based installer (which I've used to install Etch), and later I found out how to activate the new GUI-based installer. Overall, the installer is not as easy as it looks, it has a lot of options and questions along the installation process (if I am not mistaken, it has the same options as the text-based one). Enough said, please take a look over some screenshots of the GUI-based installer: Good thing though, they've released a single KDE installation CD for those who really want to see or just explore the Debian system (like me). On the other hand, the 19 to 23 binary CDs (depending on the architecture) or the 3 DVD ISO images thing is really getting too old, now when all the major distributions have only one Live CD/DVD (hard drive Installer included), but that's Debian again: NOT for Linux beginners. The KDE desktop looks clean and productive, Debian's one is not the "bling bling" type, and overall, it's pretty damn fast. It includes a lot of software for daily tasks such as e-mail, Internet browsing, chatting or Office productivity. I have to mention though that you will not find Firefox, Thunderbird or Seamonkey applications. Instead, you will see replacements created by Gnuzilla (Free Software Foundation's GNU Project) called Iceweasel, Icedove and Iceape; that is once again Debian's free software policy. With all this in mind, Debian Etch is NOT the Linux distribution for the average user (definitely not for the new Linux users) and it will never be (just like Slackware). It's a very stable, mostly server related operating system. So, if you ran a server based on Debian Sarge, you should definitely consider for an upgrade to Debian Etch, but if you want to use it as a workstation, I think you should get Ubuntu or Freespire. You can download Debian 4.0 now from [Softpedia](#).