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ManDVD Logo

[ManDVD Review](#)

A good-looking and easy to use video DVD creator.

In the last couple of years, multimedia support in Linux has evolved quite nicely. Nowadays, modern distributions provide software for playing, editing or remastering video and audio files, several cool games with complex and modern graphics have already got released and I'm sure many more will follow. At this evolving rate, it shouldn't take very long until Linux will provide at least the same level of multimedia support as Windows or, why not, even excel it. The newest addition to my multimedia software collection is a tool for generating video DVDs from video files on the hard drive. It also supports various useful features such as DVD menu creator, subtitle management, several video effects and more. Let's see. Before anything, you'll need to install ManDVD. This isn't a hard thing to accomplish as the author has provided a binary package that should run on any distribution. Unfortunately, using ManDVD will require a pretty long list of requirements, which are listed at the top of this review. To enjoy all the features of this program, you'll need to open your distribution's package manager and start looking for each package, install it and only then run ManDVD. When running ManDVD for the first time, it will greet you with a dialog which asks you to choose a language. After selecting the language you know best from that list, you'll notice a second dialog. Unlike the first one, this will pop-up every time you run ManDVD and will ask you to choose a destination folder for the DVD project, where the AUDIO_TS and VIDEO_TS folders will reside, a video standard you want to use (PAL or NTSC) and size. The video size drop-down menu only provides four resolutions, 720x576, 704x480, 352x576 and 352x288. From the same dialog, you can load an existing project. After confirming the second dialog, ManDVD will show its interface in all its grace. In fact, its interface is really a large and complex wizard and this is the first step: adding media. The upper part of the window consists of the program's name and version in the left and a logo in the right. The rest of the window is divided in two sections: in the upper left, there's a slick preview box which looks like a small monitor bolted into the application. Underneath the preview will be listed the media files added for processing. Each file in this list will have an icon right next to it. What the icons mean is listed in the lower left part of the first step. If the file's icon is black and white, it means 'Video not reencoded', while the sepia icon points out a reencoded file. Now for the right part: it provides a menu divided in categories. The first category, 'Add or Modify Media Stream' contains buttons for adding a video, modify the title, remove the selected video and create the slideshow. Other categories include 'Editing and Adjustments' for cutting film parts, defining chapters, managing subtitles and video effects and 'Other' for adding an interactive video to the DVD. The lowest part of the step is reserved for various information, such as total file size, video format and in path. There are also two buttons, 'Save project' and 'NEXT' which guides us to the next step, 'Menu parameters'. In the next step, you'll customize the appearance of your DVD menu. You can create and modify the DVD menu background, buttons, fonts style and color. Moreover, you can choose a soundtrack for you main menu. The image set as background can be mirrored horizontally or vertically, or applied a negative or sepia color effect. Third step leads to menu creation. For each video and/or chapter created in the first step, you can add a button in the DVD menu. Each button can be resized and repositioned, or cleaned-up if you want to start over. Moreover, you can define the order in which the items are selected on your menu by clicking the 'Tab order' button in the lower right. Underneath it, there's another button named 'Mask edit' which leads to another screen. Here, you will be able to manage the selected or clicked mask by adding or removing lines or text. I'm not sure what this feature is for, but I think everything you add will appear on top of the button, in the DVD menu. In the

final step, your DVD will be generated. First, click the Options button at the bottom and choose a video bitrate and the subtitle font, size, location and charset. You can also choose whether to deinterlace the video and where to start reading the DVD from. Pressing the Options button again will return to the previous screen. Now from the right menu, select a format (4:3 or 16:9), the execution priority and you are ready to click the Generate DVD structure button. During encoding, you may press the show /hide console bottom to see a detailed output of what is going on under the hood. When the process is complete, several buttons will be revealed: Watch the result (using xine), Burn DVD, Burn DVD with K3b and Create an ISO image. **The Good**ManDVD is a multimedia application for creating video DVDs. Its interface is very clean and easy to use and allows creating a full-featured DVD in a very short time. Besides creating DVDs, ManDVD can also generate slideshows from images and provides basic features for editing the video file before encoding into the DVD structure. **The Bad**Unfortunately, ManDVD has a few downsides: it has no help system, the interface isn't totally translated in English and the red/green colors in Mask Edit can't be changed (or I didn't find out how) **The Truth**Well designed application. It's stable, very easy to use and has a clean, nice interface. Definitely worth trying!*Check out some screenshots below:*