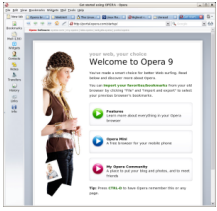


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By: Bogdan Radulescu, Editor, Linux Software Reviews



[Opera 9 Review](#)

Simply the best Internet experience!

Innovation is the first word that comes in my mind when I think of Opera. They always added new features into their browser and they created very powerful browsers for mobile devices and in a way, they reinvented the web browser, pushing it further into the future. Opera 9 is nothing less than what I expected. It brings a lot of new cool stuff and also improves some of the things that have been there for a long time. Opera 9 is by far the most full featured web browser. Perhaps you want to know what the new features are. The most notable are: support for BitTorrent, site preferences, widgets and thumbnail previews. The support for content blocker and for the favorite search engines is greatly improved and with the new features great versatility is added to Opera. BitTorrent is a great protocol that is expanding fast. Many users have the tendency to avoid torrents because the need of external software for downloading files through it. Opera 9 changes all that because it has integrated support for BitTorrent. The support is very basic but it's what most users need. It blends well in opera and it feels just like downloading a file the classical way. You can set the most important stuff like download, upload limit and the port. I managed to download without setting anything but then I had to modify the port because I'm behind a firewall and I want to make my contribution by uploading to other users. The conclusion is that BitTorrent support works well out of the box but remember that download/upload stops when you close Opera. Site preferences are great for customizing how a certain site behaves. Right-clicking on a web site and selecting site preferences allows you to block cookies or pop-ups only for that site. You can also select weather you want to enable java or javascript, plug-ins, sound or animations in that site. Actually you can modify many settings related to websites behavior because, based on your settings, Opera decides what code is ignored or not. Even though usually site preferences will not be used in some cases they can come in handy if you fully understand what they're about. The widgets are trendy these days and Opera made them available here. Widgets are supposed to be small web applications that make the desktop experience more fun. In Opera 9 widgets are not very useful and personally I consider them a waste of valuable time. They are supposed to blend nicely in the desktop but not all of them do. Installing them in Opera is very easy. You just have to go to widgets.opera.com, choose some of the many, click the download button and they get installed automatically. I can see their great potential but it in a real life situation I haven't found real use for them. The biggest problem with widgets is that they close when you close Opera and they also consume space in the panel. The bottom line is that widgets haven't yet reached their full potential but I'm confident that one day they will. There is a saying. A picture worth's a thousand words. Sometimes this is true and because of this, developers of Opera implemented a new feature that shows thumbnails of the websites opened in tabs. The title should be enough for knowing what site is opened in what tab but in some cases, generally when many tabs are opened, you might want to hover the mouse over a tab to see what content is there. Perhaps this is not the best practice, since you can click it and see a lot more, but definitely it is a nice feature to have. Since a lot of websites have many useless graphical elements you can block them with Opera so you can benefit from a faster loading of the page and a simpler one that doesn't distract you from the content. When blocking a picture with Opera it actually blocks everything from the directory where that picture comes from. Using this technique, Opera generally guesses what pictures you want to block and if something is not as it should it can be configured. Adding a new search engine is easier than ever. Actually I can't see how it can be easier. You have to right-click a search field and click the create search button. Now you just have to assign a keyword and

you're set. This feature is very useful if you often search through a forum or a favorite website or perhaps an online store. My advice is to assign a very short keyword because you can type it in the address bar followed by what you want to search and Opera will automatically display the page with results. This is so sweet that I'm almost addicted to it. But you should know that many changes were made to Opera's internals. One of the most significant is the rewriting of the SSL/TLS implementation from scratch. This new engine is supposed to be more flexible so in the future improvement can be done easier. TLS (Transport Layer Security) is now enabled by default and in case of secured sites with problematic implementation of security this will still work but it would take a little longer to detect the server's capabilities. In case of poor security with SSL/TLS, the security toolbar will not be yellow, but grey. Last but not least you should know that now Opera supports 256-bit encryption. This is excellent from a security point of view and I think that I can safely say that security will be better in Opera 9. Those presented so far are some of the latest features implemented in Opera 9. Don't be surprised if I left something out because there are so many features present in Opera that sometimes, they make your head spin. I'm not going to say much about the old features because this review will go on and on. I'll just add a few words about some of my favorite stuff in Opera that are not considered by most of us. Opera provides cool features for web developers. All major web standards are supported by Opera and if developers want to validate their code they can do it with the shortcut Ctrl+Alt+V and an online validator will analyze the source code of the page that should be validated. There is also a small screen mode for seeing how the page will look on a mobile phone but there was a big difference in what my phone displayed and what small-screen mode displayed on the computer screen. Perhaps I should install Opera mobile. Full screen mode is one of my favorite features and I use it sometimes when I want to concentrate on the content. I'm not proud to say this but I got used to the wing full screen mode from IE. Anyway in Opera is a lot cooler since I can use it with mouse gestures. The kiosk mode is a feature that will take Opera in the street. Information stands will benefit from a great browser that offers a lot of features for this environment. There are many switches to restrict users from a lot of actions that shouldn't be allowed in a kiosk and there is also a nice URL filtering feature for restricting access to certain sites or certain file types or to limit browsing only to some websites that revolve around a point of interest. In the end you should know that Opera amazed me again and that even though I've been a Firefox user for over six months I'll make the switch. I'm actually enthusiastic about Opera 9. **The Good!** It's hard to focus only on some things to put here. There are way too many good things about Opera. I am trying to pick some but the truth is that you should figure out which features are good for you. If I had to pick three I must say I appreciate a lot the possibility to easily add my own search engine, the mouse gestures and the keyboard shortcuts. **The Bad!** I really don't know what's bad in Opera 9. Could it be that it has too many features? Not for me! Could it be that I don't find this widgets very useful? Not really. At some point they could be useful. If I think better there is something that I don't like. When I close Opera my downloads stop. Perhaps they should make at least a warning message if not a download manager that docks and doesn't close with Opera. **The Truth!** Opera tries to integrate as many features as possible related to the Internet. Support for web pages is great. It can download files using the most common protocols. It can be a mail client, a news reader, an IRC chat and a lot more. It's actually more than I've ever imagined a web browser can be. It's the web at the fingertips of an application. As I said in the beginning... Innovation is the first word that comes in my mind when I think of Opera. *Below are some screen shots that show Opera in action but, if you haven't already did this, I recommend downloading.*