

20 March 2008

By: Marius Nestor, Linux Editor



Ubuntu 8.04
www.softpedia.com

[What to Expect from Ubuntu 8.04 LTS](#)

aka Hardy Heron

Every two years, Canonical prepares an LTS (Long Term Support) release of one of the best desktop Linux distributions available today. Actually, this is the second LTS edition of Ubuntu, the first one was 6.06 (Dapper Drake), released on June 1, 2006. Now that the beta version of Ubuntu 8.04 (codename Hardy Heron) is at the door and since I've tested all the alpha releases, I think it's a good moment to introduce you to the good parts and bad parts that Canonical prepared for this Long Term Support release. Therefore, this article is here to inform Ubuntu veterans, people that have discovered Ubuntu recently and future Ubuntu users, about the things that they should expect from Hardy Heron, in April 2008!

Redesigned Boot Prompt, the one you will see when you first boot from the Live CD, automatically offers now the possibility to choose your desired language and two new options: *Try Ubuntu without any change to your computer*; *Install Ubuntu*. In previous versions, these two options were part of a single one, called "Start or install Ubuntu". Unfortunately, in this release you will not see a new or redesigned **Boot Splash**. It's the same as it was on Ubuntu 7.10, which I think it looks good! However, the developers say that they will change it in the next version, Intrepid Ibex (due for release in October 2008). Cheer up, folks, because the **Revamped Installer** to be found in Ubuntu 8.04 will offer you a contracted window, which can be viewed in full on lower resolutions (that means you will no longer be forced to hold the ALT key and drag the window to see the buttons), a modern "find your country" screen, some extra options to choose where to install the boot loader and the possibility to use a network proxy during the installation. Moreover, on the hard drive partitioning screen, the "mouse dragging" option, for hard driver resizing, is now more eye candy. Below are the first screenshots of the redesigned Ubuntu installer: Now comes the moment that everybody, especially Ubuntu veterans, expected: the **New Look** of Ubuntu Hardy Heron! Let's start with the **Login Manager**, which has a new background and it looks more funky. Then, you'll notice a brand **New Wallpaper**, featuring none other than "The Heron". The wallpaper looks like a work of art, like a painting, and I personally think it's kinda cool, and if you take a look in "Appearance Preferences -> Background" you will notice that there is a version without "The Heron", for those of you that will not enjoy the default one. Moreover, a **New Theme** pleases the eyes of Ubuntu users in Hardy Heron, with a new Human-Murrine modern look. Click the image on the right to see what I've just described! In Ubuntu 8.04, you will discover brand **New Applications**. Some of them are replacing old ones and the new ones are here to make your life easier (and that's mostly because you, the users, asked for them). There are also drastic changes, such as the replacement of Firefox 2 with the new Beta 4 of Firefox 3. Yes, that means no more Firefox 2, but you can install it from repositories if you want to! Let's have a quick look at the new applications: **Seahorse** - the new "sheriff in town", set to manage your encryption keys; **Transmission** - the default BitTorrent client; **Firefox 3 Beta 4** - replaced Firefox 2 and it is now the default web browser in Ubuntu 8.04, but most likely Firefox 3 Beta 5 will be available in the final release; **Vinagre** - a brand-new VNC client, set to replace the old xvnc4viewer; **Brasero** - the new CD/DVD burning tool in Ubuntu Hardy Heron. Beside new applications, there are (as usual) **Updated Applications**. Here is a list with the most important ones: **GNOME 2.22.0**; **Wine 0.9.57**; **The GIMP 2.4.5**; **Pidgin 2.3.1**; **Filezilla 3.0.7.1**; **Avidemux 2.4.1**; ...and many many more! Please note that not all the above listed applications are part of the default Ubuntu installation, but they are available in the standard repositories! It is time now to talk a little about the **New**

Technologies that can be found in this April's release of Ubuntu. Looking under the hood, we found that: **Xorg 7.3** - offers improved autoconfiguration of your graphics card and monitor; **Linux kernel 2.6.24.3** - comes packed with the "Completely Fair Scheduler" for improved interactive performance and dynticks support for power savings on both desktop and laptop computers; **PulseAudio** - is the new sound server; the newly introduced **iSCSI support** - allows Ubuntu to mount iSCSI targets as block device; **Memory Protection** - will help defend against rootkits and other malicious code; **Active Directory Integration** - allows Linux authentication on a Microsoft network. What else can be found in Ubuntu 8.04? Well, beside some nice "wave" effect when you click an application's shortcut from the panel and the already popular [GNOME 2.22 features](#), you'll notice that when you drag an image or video file over the desktop, it becomes transparent (see the thumbnail in the left). Be aware that these effects are available as long as you've properly set your video card's driver and Compiz Fusion is running. Moreover, the Add/Remove application is a little bit different. There is also an annoying feature in Ubuntu 8.04, part of the new GVFS technology introduced in GNOME 2.22, when you copy or move some files you'll notice an icon in the system tray area during the copy/move process. I think that this icon is completely useless and can confuse some people, especially that right click on it does nothing and left click hides the copy/move window (which is already on the panel). I hope that this useless tray icon will be removed in the final release of Ubuntu 8.04. Some will love it, some will hate it, but this is what the Ubuntu developers prepared for the second LTS (Long Term Support) release of their 100% FREE operating system, Ubuntu Linux. I know that many of you expected a completely revamped Ubuntu desktop, with that Mac-like dock and other "bling bling", but don't despair because in October 2008 you will definitely enjoy such an Ubuntu desktop. Until then, let's wait for the final release, due for release on April 24, and if you feel the need for a Mac-like dock, always remember that you can [make your own "sexylicious" Ubuntu desktop](#) or watch for our step-by-step tutorial about how to install the latest AWN from sources (Avant Window Navigator - see the image on the right) on Ubuntu 8.04, which is coming soon!