

KDE Frequently Asked Questions

The KDE Team



KDE Frequently Asked Questions

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Abstract

This is a compilation of the most frequently asked questions about the K Desktop Environment. Please report any bugs, inconsistencies, or omissions you find in this FAQ to kde-doc-english@kde.org. Please do not mail your questions to this list. Post them to the KDE mailing lists and newsgroups instead. They are monitored for this FAQ.

Chapter 1

About this FAQ

1. *What can I do to help out with this FAQ?*

First, send us any errors that you may find. Also, any suggestions that you might have, are appreciated. Better yet, send us everything that you think is unclear, and if possible, send us what you think would be a clearer solution. The email address of the current maintainer is jhall@kde.org. Second, send us your solutions of those frequently-asked questions which are still not in this FAQ. We will put them in as soon as possible. Last but not least, please make full use of this FAQ. Read this FAQ (and other relevant documentation) well before asking questions on the various KDE mailing lists or newsgroups.

NOTE

You might also want to consider becoming a FAQ maintainer. Please refer to Q: ?? for more details.

2. *How do I become a FAQ maintainer?*

Actually, it is very easy to become an FAQ maintainer, and we are always in need of fresh blood. :-) Just send us an email at kde-doc-english@kde.org.

Chapter 2

Introduction

1. *What is KDE?*

KDE is the K Desktop Environment. It is a project initiated by [Matthias Ettrich](#) in 1996. The aim of the KDE project is to connect the power of the UNIX® operating systems with the comfort of a modern user interface. In short, KDE will bring UNIX® to the desktop! If you want further information about KDE, have a look at [What is KDE?](#)

2. *On which platforms can I expect KDE to work?*

KDE is a Desktop Environment for all flavors of UNIX®. While it is true that most KDE developers use Linux®, KDE runs smoothly on a wide range of systems. You may, however, need to tweak the source code a bit to get KDE to compile on a not-so-popular variant of UNIX®, or if you are not using the GNU development tools, in particular the `gcc` compiler.

3. *Is KDE a window manager?*

No, KDE is not a window manager. While KDE includes a very sophisticated window manager (KWin), KDE is much more than that. It is a full-blown Integrated Desktop Environment. KDE provides a complete desktop environment, including a web browser, a file manager, a window manager, a help system, a configuration system, uncountable tools and utilities, and an ever increasing number of applications, including but not limited to mail and news clients, drawing programs, a PostScript® and a DVI viewer and so forth.

4. *Is KDE a CDE, Windows® or Mac® OS clone?*

No, KDE is not a clone. Specifically KDE is not a CDE or Windows® clone. While the KDE developers have and will continue to glean the best features from all existing desktop environments, KDE is a truly unique environment that has and will continue to go its own way.

5. *Is KDE free software?*

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Yes, KDE is free software according to the GNU General Public License. All KDE libraries are available under the LGPL making commercial software development for the KDE desktop possible, but all KDE applications are licensed under the GPL. KDE uses the [Qt C++ crossplatform toolkit](#), which is also released (since version 2.2) under the GPL and since version 4.5.0 also under the LGPL. It is absolutely legal to make KDE and Qt™ available on CD-ROM free of charge. No runtime fees of any kind are incurred.

Chapter 3

Getting KDE

1. *Where do I get KDE?*

The main distribution site for KDE is ftp.kde.org. However, this site is often under heavy load, so you might prefer to use download.kde.org which automatically redirects you to the mirror nearest to you. You can also have a look at the list of [KDE mirror sites](#).

2. *Are there Linux® distributions that include KDE?*

Yes, major Linux® distributions already ship KDE. As building a distribution takes some time, they might not always contain the latest version, but for a start or to avoid downloading from the Internet, they do provide a good starting point. You can find an up-to-date list of distributions that ship with KDE [here](#).

3. *What is the current version?*

Currently, the latest stable version is 4.2.1The [KDE 4.2.1 Info Page](#) contains a lot of information specific to this release.

4. *Where do I find KDE snapshots?*

You can get the latest snapshots from <ftp://ftp.kde.org/pub/kde/unstable/-snapshots>. You might also want to consider setting up your own SVN client in order to maintain the latest snapshot at all times. Please refer to [Anonymous SVN and KDE](#) for further information.

5. *Where do I get Qt™?*

Qt™ is a product of the Norwegian company Trolltech. You can always get the latest Qt™ version from their [FTP server](#). And with most up-to-date Linux® distributions, Qt™ is already included. Please see [Q: ??](#) for the version of Qt™ you need.

Chapter 4

Installation instructions

These are the generic installation instructions for the K Desktop Environment. Please complement your reading with the `READMEs` and `INSTALLs` that come along with the package. Please read them carefully and try to help yourself out if anything goes wrong. If you need further assistance, consider joining the KDE mailing lists (see our web site instructions for joining the KDE [mailing lists](#)) or newsgroups.

1. *To the would-be converts*

So you have heard the rumors. Or you have seen the screenshots. And you are dying to get hold of KDE. But you know next to nothing about this whole 'alternative OS' business. Don't worry! You only need to do some (well, maybe not some) reading, that's all! KDE does not run on any version of Microsoft® Windows® or OS/2 (yet). To run KDE, you need to have a UNIX® system. Please refer to Q: ?? for more details. Decide on a platform and set it up for your system. This FAQ can not help you with this, since KDE runs on many UNIX platforms. Finally, you are ready to commence the KDE installation. Please start reading from the next section. To get KDE, please refer to Q: ?. Last but not least, if you encounter any problems while installing KDE, please do not hesitate to make use of the KDE [mailing lists](#) and [newsgroups](#). But do bear this in mind: no question is too silly to ask, but some are too silly to answer, especially when they are already answered in this FAQ. Good luck and have fun!

2. *What kind of hardware do I need to run KDE ?*

To run KDE it is recommended that you have at least a pentium II processor, 64MB of memory and 500MB of free disk space for a basic installation. While KDE may run on slower configurations than this, performance can be severely impaired. Generally, if your computer runs an X-Server already with other desktop environments or window managers it's probably fast enough to run KDE.

3. *Available package formats*

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You can find several kinds of binary and source packages for different distributions and operating systems on the <ftp://ftp.kde.org/pub/kde/>. The binary packages are not made by the KDE Team, but by the distributors themselves, or some dedicated individuals. Please refer to [KDE Package Policy Explained](#) for information about the KDE Package Policy. The only 'official' release is the source tar.bz2 packages. Please refer to the `READMEs` and `INSTALLs` in the several binaries folders. For a list of the available packages for a release, refer to the relevant info page. For the latest release this is the [KDE 3.4.1 Info Page](#).

4. Prerequisites

For KDE 3.4.1, you need the Qt™ library version 3.3 or greater. Please make sure you download the correct Qt™. You will also need the header files, if you want to compile KDE yourself. They are all available, at no cost, from <http://www.trolltech.com/download>. In addition, there are optional libraries that might improve KDE if installed on your system. An example is OpenSSL which will enable Konqueror to browse web pages securely and is needed in a version $\geq 0.9.6$. These should be provided by your distributor; if not, ask for an update.

5. Description of the base packages

The base distribution currently consists of twenty packages. Some are required, while others are optional. Each package is available in each of the aforementioned package formats.

kdelibs Required

This package contains shared libraries that are needed by all KDE applications.

kdebase Required

This package contains the base applications that form the core of the K Desktop Environment like the window manager, the terminal emulator, the control center, the file manager, and the panel.

aRts Required

The aRts sound server. A powerful, network transparent sound server.

kdeaddons Optional

Various plugins for Kate, Kicker, KNewsTicker, Konqueror and Noatun

kdeartwork Optional

Additional wallpapers, themes, styles, sounds ...

kdebindings Optional

Various bindings for other languages, including Java™, Perl, Python, ...

kdegames Optional

Various games like KMahjongg, KSnake, KAsteroids, and KPatience.

kdegraphics Optional

Various graphics-related programs like PostScript® previewer, DVI previewer, and a drawing program.

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kdeutils Optional

Various desktop tools like a calculator, an editor and other nifty stuff.

kdemultimedia Optional

Multimedia applications like a CD player and a mixer.

kdenetwork Optional

Network applications. Currently contains the instant messaging client Kopete, the download manager KGet, and several other network-related programs.

kdepim Optional

Personal information management tools. Contains the email client KMail, the newsreader KNode and other related programs.

kdeadmin Optional

System administration programs.

kdeedu Optional

Educational and entertaining applications for KDE's younger users.

kdeaccessibility Optional

KDE accessibility programs such as a screen magnifier and speech synthesizer front end.

kdetoys Optional

Toys!

kdevelop Optional

A complete Integrated Development Environment for KDE and Qt

kdewebdev Optional

Web development applications. Contains such applications as Quanta, an integrated web development environment and other applications useful in web development

kdesdk Optional

KDE Software Development Kit. Contains a collection of applications and tools used by KDE Developers.

aRts and then kdelibs should be installed before everything else, and kdeaddons last. The other packages can be installed in any arbitrary order. Most package management tools will let you put all these packages in one folder and install them all at once, figuring out the dependencies as they go.

6. *Installation instructions for the different package formats*

IMPORTANT

Please do not forget to read the `README` and `INSTALL` files if they are available.

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Installation of the Debian packages The Debian packages install in accordance with the upcoming FHS (File Hierarchy Standard).

- (a) become superuser
- (b) run `dpkg -i packagename.deb` for every package you want to install.

Installation of the RPM packages (a) become superuser

- (b) execute `rpm -ivh packagename.rpm`

Installation of the source .tar.bz2 files Since there are always changes and updates to the way KDE is compiled, please refer to [Download and Install from Source](#) for the most up to date installation instructions for the source packages.

The general approach should work in most cases though.

The source .tar.bz2 package installs into `/usr/local/kde` by default. You can override this setting by using the `--prefix` option of the `configure` script.

- (a) unpack the packages with `tar jxvf packagename.tar.bz2`
- (b) change folder to the package folder: `cd packagename`
- (c) configure the package: `./configure`

NOTE

Some packages (notably kbase) have special configuration options that might be applicable to your installation. Type `./configure --help` to see the available options.

- (d) build the package: `make`
- (e) install the package: `su -c "make install"` (if you aren't already root). If you already are, just type `make install`.

7. Post-installation procedures

First of all, please make sure that you have added KDE's binary installation folder (e.g. `/usr/local/kde/bin`) to your `PATH` and KDE's library installation folder to your `LD_LIBRARY_PATH` (only necessary on systems that do not support `rpath`; on Linux® ELF, it should work without). This environment variable may be called differently on some systems, e.g. it is called `SHLIB_PATH` on IRIX®. Then set the environment variable `KDEDIR` to the base of your KDE tree, e.g. `/usr/local/kde`.

CAUTION

Please bear in mind that it is unwise to set `LD_LIBRARY_PATH` blindly. In the vast majority of cases it is unnecessary and can do more harm than good. There is a web page written by [Dave Barr](#) explaining the evils of `LD_LIBRARY_PATH` and it can be found at <http://www.visi.com/barr/ldpath.html>.

Even though you can use most of the KDE applications simply by calling them, you can only benefit fully from KDE's advanced features if you use the KDE window manager and its helper programs. In order to make

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it easy for you, we have provided a simple script called `startkde` which gets installed in `$KDEDIR/bin` and is therefore in your path. Edit the file `.xinitrc` in your home folder (make a backup copy first!), remove everything that looks like calling a window manager, and insert **startkde** instead. Restart the X-Server. If you use `kdm/xdm`, you will have to edit the file `.xsession` instead of `.xinitrc`. And if there is no `.xinitrc` or `.xsession` in your home folder, simply create a new one with just one line containing **startkde**.

NOTE

Some systems (notably Red Hat® Linux®) use `.Xclients` instead.

This should present you with a new shining KDE desktop. You can now start to explore the wonderful world of KDE. In case you want to read some documentation first, there is a highly recommended [Quick Start guide](#) available. Furthermore, every application has an online help that is available via the help menu.

8. *Should I remove old version xyz before installing a new one?*

In principle, this is not necessary. RPM and Debian packages should take care of all dependencies. If you compile the source code yourself, you should take more care. Instructions for running two different versions of KDE on the same system are given at <http://developer.kde.org/build/-kde2-and-kde3.html>. However, please note that running two different versions of KDE from source can lead to problems if you are not careful.

9. *How do I start KDE?*

The most comfortable method to start KDE is to use the `startkde` script. Simply put the line **startkde** at the end of your `.xsession` file (or your `.xinitrc` or `.Xclients` file if you are not using `kdm` or `xdm`). Please also remove the lines that start your previous window manager. If there is no `.xsession`, `.xinitrc`, or `.Xclients` in your home folder, simply create a new one that contains just one line: **startkde**.

10. *Is it possible to install KDE in a user folder?*

Yes, you can install KDE in any folder you want. What you have to do depends on the kind of packages you want to install:

- Configure and install the package using **configure --prefix=/users/myhome/kde; make; make install** to install into `/users/myhome/kde`.
- Add the following to your init files. Please note that if it is not necessary for you to set `LD_LIBRARY_PATH`, it is better to leave it out. For `csh` or `tcsh`:

```
setenv KDEDIR /users/myhome/kde

if ( $?LD_LIBRARY_PATH ) then
  setenv LD_LIBRARY_PATH $KDEDIR/lib: ←
  $LD_LIBRARY_PATH
```

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```
else
    setenv LD_LIBRARY_PATH $KDEDIR/lib
endif

if ( ! $?LIBRARY_PATH ) then
    setenv LIBRARY_PATH $LD_LIBRARY_PATH
endif
```

For bash:

```
KDEDIR=/users/myhome/kde
PATH=$KDEDIR/bin:$PATH
LD_LIBRARY_PATH=$KDEDIR/lib:$LD_LIBRARY_PATH
LIBRARY_PATH=$LD_LIBRARY_PATH
export KDEDIR PATH LD_LIBRARY_PATH LIBRARY_PATH
```

- (a) **rpm** allows you to use the `--prefix` option to select the folder you want to install to. For example, executing **rpm -i --prefix=/users/myhome/kde package.rpm** will install the package to `/users/myhome/kde`.

NOTE

Although KDE will run from a user folder, there are some problems with programs that require `sudo`, e.g. the programs in the `kdeadmin` package. But since they are not meant to be run by users in the first place, this is nothing to worry about.

However, on systems using shadow passwords, the screensavers have to be `sudo` to enable password access for unlocking the screen, so this option will not work.

11. *startkde fails with can not connect to X server. What is wrong?*

You probably tried to start the X server with **startkde**. The X server is started with **startx**. **startkde** is the script that should be run from your `.xinitrc`, `.xsession`, or `.Xclients` to activate the window manager and the necessary server daemons for KDE. See also Q: ??.

12. *KDE on AIX®?*

IBM now officially support KDE on AIX®. You can find details at <http://www.ibm.com/servers/aix/products/aixos/linux/index.html>. There is also some older information at <http://space.twc.de/stefan/kde/aix.html>.

13. *KDE on a laptop?*

If you can get X Window System® to run on your laptop, you should not have any problem getting KDE to run on it. In addition, you might find the following links helpful:

- <http://www.linux-laptop.net/>

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- <http://www.sanpei.org/Laptop-X/note-list.html>

14. *I do not like the default KDE folder after installation. How do I move it without breaking anything?*

Assuming the default is `/opt/kde` and you want to move it to `/usr/local/kde`, here's what you have to do:

- (a) change to superuser if you aren't already
- (b) **`mv /opt/kde /usr/local/kde`**
- (c) **`ln -s /usr/local/kde /opt/kde`**

This will put all your KDE files in `/usr/local/kde` but everything is still accessible from `/opt/kde`.

15. *What files can I delete from my KDE install folder? Can all the *.h, *.c and *.o files be safely removed?*

There should not be any need to keep the `.c` and `.o` files, but you might want to keep the `.h` files, as they are used by includes if you ever want to compile your own KDE programs. But if you wish to add patches to the source programs as they become available (rather than downloading everything again), then they should stay.

16. *Will I lose my current settings when I upgrade KDE?*

No. In most cases KDE will be able to transport your settings intact. You may need to reenter passwords in some applications (such as KMail or KNode) but most other settings will be safe. There were mixed reports of results between some previous versions of KDE. To be safe, you may like to back up your entire KDE configuration. Settings are kept in the `$HOME/.kde` or `$HOME/.kde2` subfolder in your home folder. Copy your old `.kde/.kde2` folder to a backup location, install KDE 3.2, and then copy back any necessary mail and news settings. That said, most people can make a direct upgrade, without removing the old `.kde` folder, without a hitch. You can override the use of `$HOME/.kde` by setting the `$KDEHOME` variable.

17. *I upgraded KDE and it seemed to go fine, but when I start it, I get a blank gray screen, and nothing happens. There are errors in the console about DCOPserver. What's going on?*

KDE uses several temporary files during its operation. These are usually to be found in the following locations:

- `/.DCOPserver-*` (there are usually two of these; one is a symlink to the other)
- `/.kde/socket-hostname`
- `/.kde/tmp-hostname` which is normally a symlink to the next file:
- `/tmp/tmp-kde-USER`
- `/.kde/socket-hostname` which is also normally a symlink to:
- `/tmp/ksocket-USER`

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If the symlinks get broken, usually because a **cron** or shutdown script is emptying out the `/tmp` folder, then strange things will happen. These files, and the symlinks, will all be created automatically at the start of KDE so you can safely remove them *while KDE is not running*. If you are only getting a gray screen when you start KDE, or if you get an error message telling you to Check your installation, then shut down X and delete all the files listed above, then try to restart X. Normally (i.e. when not upgrading between KDE versions) it's quite safe to leave these files intact, and you may shave a few seconds off your KDE startup time by doing so.

18. *Compiling kdebase gives me a bin/sh: msgfmt: command not found error!*

You need the GNU msgfmt which is part of the GNU i18n package gettext. You should be able to download it from any GNU mirror.

19. *How do I uninstall KDE applications compiled from source?*

You can uninstall your programs by typing **make uninstall** in the folder where you did **make install**. If you have already deleted that folder, then there is only one way, and it is not good: go to `$KDEDIR/bin` and start deleting files one by one. If you expect to find yourself in this situation, you might want to consider a program such as GNU stow, found at <http://www.gnu.org/software/stow/stow.html>.

20. *What is up with GIF support?*

This has to do with issues with Unisys' LZW patent. GIF support is turned off from Qt™ 1.44 onwards by default. When you want to use GIFs and have the relevant license, recompile Qt™ with GIF support. **`./configure -gif`**.

Chapter 5

The panel

1. *How do I add applications to the KDE panel (Kicker)?*

There are several ways to add an application to the panel, of which the easiest is to right-click on the panel, and from the context menu which appears, select Panel Menu → Add to Panel → Application Button and then the application for which you want to add a link. For more ways of adding buttons to the panel, refer to the Kicker Handbook.

2. *Is it possible to change the K button of the panel to another picture?*

The simplest way is to download a new icon theme with a K menu icon you prefer from <http://www.kde-look.org> and install it using the KDE Control Center. In order to change only the K menu icon you can overwrite the `kmenu.png` image for every size in an icon theme set. So, for KDE default icons this would be `$KDEDIR/share/icons/default.kde/size/apps/kmenu.png`, where `size` is one of the sizes included in the KDE icon theme. To see your new icon, either log out of KDE and back in again, or run the command `dcopkicker kicker restart` to restart the panel.

3. *After an upgrade my K menu appears to be empty! How can I get my menu back?*

In KDE 3.2 and later local modifications to the K menu are stored in `$HOME/.config/menus/applications-kmenuedit.menu`. Try moving this file out of the way and then issuing the command `kbuildercoca4 --no-incremental`. This should restore you to the default system menus.

4. *My desktop panel has disappeared. How can I get it back?*

The panel disappearing is usually due to it crashing. This is most often caused by loading an applet that has a fatal bug or due to a bad installation of KDE and/or the panel. The easiest way to get the panel back is to launch the Run Command window by pressing `Alt+F2` and entering `kicker` and then pressing the OK button. If the panel continues to

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disappear, you may wish to either remove or edit by hand your `$(KDEHOME)/share/config/kickerrc` file, where `$(KDEHOME)` is usually `/.kde`. If you choose to edit it by hand, start by removing the applet entry groups.

5. *Where did the Icon Zooming option that used to be in Kicker go?*

Icon zooming was not actively maintained and had caused severe bugs and usability issues. It was replaced in KDE 3.4 by the new mouse over effects, which combine esthetics with useful information.

6. *How can I start an application minimized to the system tray?*

Use `ksystraycmd`. For example, to start a Konsole hidden in the system tray, run `ksystraycmd --hidden konsole`. For more information about `ksystraycmd`, see the section 'Advanced Window Management' in the KDE User Guide.

7. *How do I use the Windows® key to open the K menu?*

Previous versions of KDE provided a trick to allow you to use the Windows® key both as a modifier (so you could have shortcuts like Win+R), and as a regular key (so that pressing Win on its own could open the K menu). This feature was removed for reasons of usability and accessibility, as well as keeping the code clean. For current versions of KDE, you have two options: either use a different shortcut to open the K menu (the default is Alt+F1), or remap the Win key to be a regular key, rather than a modifier. If you choose to do the second, here's one way:

- (a) Find the keycode for your Win key using `xev`: Run the command `xev` in a Konsole, and press the Win key. Look in the output of `xev` for `keycode n`, where `n` is the keycode of the Win key.
- (b) Use `xmodmap` to remap the Win key. An appropriate command is `xmodmap -e 'keycode n=Menu'`.
- (c) In the KDE Control Center, go to Regional & Accessibility → Keyboard Shortcuts and set the shortcut for Popup Launch Menu to the Win key. You should now be able to popup the K menu by pressing the Win key.
- (d) One more step is required to save the changes across settings: Create a file `/.kde/env/win-key.sh` (create the directory if it doesn't exist), and add the `xmodmap` command you used previously to it. The change should now be applied every time you start KDE.

Chapter 6

The desktop

1. *How do I add an application to the desktop?*

Just choose the desired application from the K menu and drag and drop it to the Desktop. For applications not listed in the K menu, use the right mouse button on the desktop and choose Create New → Link to Application... and fill in the configuration for the application you want to link to.

2. *How do I mount/unmount a device from the desktop?*

First, make sure you are allowed to **mount/unmount** the relevant device as a user. Then you can add any device by clicking on the desktop with the right mouse button and then choosing Create New → Link to Device. Select the device of the type you wish to control. Fill in the settings for the device in the dialog that appears and click OK. You can use the resulting desktop icon to mount/unmount the device from the desktop.

3. *Where are the icons kept?*

The icons can be found only in `$KDEDIRS/share/icons` or `$HOME/.kde/share/icons`. To use icons stored in other locations, you must either copy them into one of the above-mentioned fixed KDE locations or make symlinks.

4. *How do I use the mouse scroll wheel in KDE?*

Mouse wheel support comes with Qt™ 2.0 and above, so KDE based on that will automatically support the use of the mouse scroll wheel if your system is configured correctly. Check that your X-Server settings support the use of a scrollwheel if it is not working.

5. *How do I launch applications in a particular desktop?*

KDE comes with a program called `kstart`. To start an `xterm` on the second desktop and then activate it use: `kstart --desktop 2 --activate --window "xterm" xterm`. Note that the `--window` option is important. It takes an argument which is a regular expression matching the title of the window to apply the settings to. Please read `kstart --help-all` for more magic available with `kstart` (and there is an abundance).

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6. *Where do I save my files if I want them to appear directly on the desktop?*
\$HOME/Desktop. You might need to refresh your desktop after you have saved your files.
7. *I've deleted the Trash icon on my desktop. How can I get it back?*
Right-click on the desktop and in the context menu that appears, choose Create New... → Link to Location (URL)... Set the File name to Trash and the location to trash:/. Click on OK and you're done.

Chapter 7

The window manager

The default window manager provided by KDE is the K Window Manager (KWin). Please read 'The K Window Manager Handbook' (which should be accessible from the KDE Help Center) for usage information.

1. *Are there keyboard shortcuts for KWin operations?*

Yes. Please refer to "The K Window Manager Handbook" for the list of shortcuts available.

2. *Can I define my own set of keyboard shortcuts?*

Yes. Launch the KDE Control Center and select Regional & Accessibility → Keyboard Shortcuts to configure window manager bindings like maximizing windows, etc..

3. *When I "iconify" a window, it disappears. Where does it go?*

With many X Window System® GUIs, the minimize button (a little dot) will erase the window that the program is running in and create, instead, an icon on the desktop. KDE does not do this. Instead, when a window is iconified it is simply hidden (but the program is still running). There are a few ways to access 'disappeared' windows:

- If you are running the taskbar part of Kicker, you can choose to have a list of tasks displayed on your desktop. Iconified tasks will have their names displayed in gray.
- If you click the middle mouse button on the root window (i.e., the background of the desktop), KWin will give you a list of all available tasks.

4. *How do I maximize windows only vertically or horizontally?*

Provided your window is not already maximized, clicking on the maximize button with the left mouse button/middle mouse button/right mouse button will maximize fully/vertically/horizontally respectively.

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5. *What is 'shading' a window?*

By 'shading' a window we mean 'rolling up' the window leaving just the title bar visible. You can do this by double clicking on the window title bar.

6. *How can I start an application with special window options, like maximized/minimized/to stay on top?*

Use the **kstart** command. As an example, to open KCalc with the 'Stay on Top' option, use:

```
% kstart --ontop kcalc
```

For maximized windows, use the `--maximize` option, for minimized windows, use `--iconify`. You can see a full list of **kstart** options with **kstart --help-all**.

WARNING

If you're using **kstart** to start applications at KDE startup, you should use the `--window` option. See the KDE User Guide, section 'Advanced Window Management' for more information about this feature.

Chapter 8

The File Manager

KDE's file manager is Konqueror. The Konqueror home page is located at <http://www.konqueror.org> where a Konqueror specific FAQ can be found.

1. *How can I change the appearance of a folder in Konqueror?*

Right-click the folder, select Properties, click on the large icon in the dialog which appears, and choose another icon. To change the icon displayed for entries in the K Menu, use the Menu Editor, accessed by clicking with the right mouse button on the K menu icon and selecting Menu Editor from the menu.

2. *How can I do non-anonymous FTP transfers with Konqueror?*

Normally, if you enter a URL like `ftp://ftp.example.com`, Konqueror will attempt an anonymous login to the FTP server. If you want to login as a particular user, enter a URL like `ftp://username@ftp.example.com` instead. Konqueror will ask for your password and connect to the server.

3. *How do I specify the startup folder for Konqueror?*

Using the right mouse button, click on the Home icon and choose Properties. Under the Application tab you will probably find something like **kfmclient openProfile filemanagement**; just append `file:/whereever-/you/want` with the folder you would like Konqueror to start in.

4. *How do I rename files?*

Simply right click on the file and select Rename or press the keyboard shortcut **F2** with a file selected.

5. *Where did the delete entry from my right-click context menu go?*

In KDE 3.4 the delete context menu entries that bypass the trashcan are no longer displayed by default. To enable them, go to Settings → Configure Konqueror and select Behaviour in the iconbar to the left. Tick the checkbox Show 'Delete' context menu entries which bypass the trashcan.

KDE Frequently Asked Questions

6. *How do I configure the programs that Konqueror uses to open different types of files?*

In order to configure file associations, you should go to the KDE Control Center and choose the item File Associations under the category KDE Components. Suppose the default PDF viewer is now KGhostView and you would prefer to use KPDF as a viewer. You would simply type pdf in the search box at the top of the dialog, choose pdf in the application group and move KPDF up. In the Embedding tab you can also choose which component other applications will use to display files (for example, when viewing files in Konqueror or using Ark's embedded viewer).

7. *How can I configure Konqueror to open files with double-click instead of single-click?*

In the KDE Control Center, go to Peripherals → Mouse and in the General tab, select Double-click to open files and folders.

8. *When I try to click on a folder in Konqueror, I get the message: 'There appears to be a configuration error. You have associated Konqueror with inode/directory, but it cannot handle this file type.'*

You need to make sure that the embedding settings for inode/directory are correct:

- (a) In Konqueror, go to Settings → Configure Konqueror and then to the File Associations page.
- (b) Open inode->directory in the tree view.
- (c) Click on the Embedding tab. Make sure that Left Click Action is set to Show file in embedded viewer, and by default Icon View (konq_iconview) is at the top of Services Preference Order.

9. *What are %i and %m in the Execute line?*

They are used by all KDE applications (since they are implemented in KApplication and all good KDE programs create a KApplication object before they even look at the command line arguments). A standard line for a KDE application looks like this: `foo ... %i %m -caption \-%c\`. Pretty confusing, -but it has been designed in that way so that it can integrate legacy, non-KDE applications as smoothly as possible. Konqueror, when executing the line above, will extend the command to `foo -icon something.png -miniicon something_mini.png -caption \The Foo\`. Both the icon and the mini-icon as well as "The Foo" are properties defined in the .desktop file. If the icons are not defined, they simply default to the executable name `foo`. This way a user can change these things in KMenuEdit for his or her applications. The `-caption` option is important, because no user will accept that the menu item Editor starts something called `kedit-0.9pl4-build47`. Instead, he expects a window called Editor. Furthermore these names are localized, i.e. an American user launches CD-Player and gets a window called CD-Player while a German user launches CD-Spieler and gets a window called CD-Spieler.

10. *How do I make Konqueror start up without a menu bar? I can't save a view profile when the menu bar is invisible!*

KDE Frequently Asked Questions

The easiest way to do this is to edit Konqueror's configuration file manually. Add the following lines to `/.kde/share/config/konquerorrc`:

```
[KonqMainWindow]
MenuBar=Disabled
```

On restarting Konqueror, the menubar should be hidden.

11. *JPEG files no longer show previews in Konqueror (and I've installed CrossOver Office)*

CrossOver creates new MIME types that will override the default `image/jpeg` and `image/jpg` types. In Konqueror, go to Settings → Configure Konqueror, and then to File Associations. Find the `application/x-crossover-jpg` and `application/x-crossover-jpeg` entries, and remove them. Then hit OK. This problem is reported fixed in the latest version of CrossOver.

Chapter 9

Webbrowsing with Konqueror

Konqueror is KDE's open source, standards compliant webbrowser. It's home page is <http://www.konqueror.org> where a Konqueror specific FAQ can be found.

1. *Where does the name Konqueror come from?*

It's a word play on the other browsers' names. After the Navigator and the Explorer comes the Conqueror; it's spelled with a K to show that it's part of KDE. The name change also moves away from 'kfm' (the KDE file manager, Konqueror's predecessor) which represented only file management.

2. *Can I run Konqueror without running KDE?*

Yes. Just install Qt™, kdelibs and kbase, and from your favorite window manager just launch Konqueror. It should work just fine, but if it doesn't (KDE developers don't test that case often), report it to <http://bugs.kde.org> and try running "kdeinit" before running Konqueror, it usually helps. This is of course the same for any other KDE application.

3. *Why doesn't Konqueror show the contents of an image's ALT attribute in a tooltip?*

There is no standard that states the ALT attribute should appear as a tooltip. The specification calls for ALT to be displayed in place of the image, as in text-mode only browsers such as lynx or w3m. Abusing the ALT attribute is bad for accessibility. Tooltips are supposed to come from the TITLE attribute and this is implemented in Konqueror

4. *How do I use Konqueror as a web browser with a proxy?*

Konqueror can be used with HTTP and FTP proxies. To set up the proxy server in Konqueror, just select Settings → Configure Konqueror... from the Konqueror menu and go to the Proxy tab.

KDE Frequently Asked Questions

5. *How do I import bookmarks from another browser into Konqueror ?*

To import bookmarks from another browser into Konqueror select Bookmarks>Edit Bookmarks and then in the Bookmark Editor select FileImport. Then select the browser you would like to import bookmarks from. In the Open dialog, navigate to the location of the folder or file your bookmarks are contained in and click Open

6. *How can I make Konqueror only show certain bookmarks in the bookmarks toolbar?*

In Konqueror go to Settings → Configure Konqueror.... Then select Web Behaviour from the icon list. Under the Bookmarks heading, place a check in the box next to Show only marked bookmarks in bookmark toolbar. Now in the Bookmark Editor an option to Show in Toolbar appears on clicking with the right mouse button on any bookmark entry or in the Edit menu when the entry is highlighted. Folders can also be shown in the bookmarks toolbar in much the same way.

7. *How do I fool a site into believing Konqueror is Netscape® or some other browser?*

In Konqueror, select Settings → Configure Konqueror... and in the configuration dialog, select Browser Identification. Default and site-specific browser identifications can be set from here.

8. *Konqueror is taking a really long time to load webpages, what could cause this?*

Quite often Konqueror loading webpages slowly is caused by DNS servers with broken IPV6 support. Adding the following to `/etc/profile` or any other script that is sourced on login should solve this problem:

```
export KDE_NO_IPV6=true
```

for bourne compatible shells, and for C-style shells:

```
setenv KDE_NO_IPV6 true
```

9. *How do I configure Konqueror to run Java™ applets?*

Choose Settings → Configure Konqueror... from Konqueror's menubar and then select Java & Javascript. Set the Path to Java executable correctly. If it doesn't work, please check the [Konqueror + Java HOWTO](#).

10. *How do I block unrequested popup windows in Konqueror?*

Konqueror has a new 'smart' policy for JavaScript popups. From the Konqueror main window, select Settings → Configure Konqueror... and then Java & JavaScript. On the JavaScript tab, under Global JavaScript Policies set the radio button beside Open new windows: to Smart.

11. *Why doesn't my banking site work with Konqueror? It pops up a new window with the login screen in other browsers, but not in Konqueror.*

Make sure you have Javascript enabled, and the default JavaScript web popups policy set to Ask or Allow. The Smart policy is not always sufficient for some banks. Many banks also require Java™ support. You can find more help on enabling this at <http://www.konqueror.org/>.

KDE Frequently Asked Questions

12. *Can Konqueror use user-specified stylesheets, like those in the Firefox adblock extension?*

Yes, you can set Konqueror to use any kind of valid css stylesheet to filter webcontent or improve accessibility. From the Konqueror main window simply click Settings → Configure Konqueror... and select Stylesheets. Set the radio button to Use user-defined stylesheet and browse to where the stylesheet you want to use is located. Alternatively, you can select Use accessibility stylesheet defined in "Customize" tab and then set your own options. An example of css rules that implement ad blocking can be found at: <http://www.mozilla.org/support/firefox/adblock>.

13. *Why does Konqueror display a plain grey square when I try to view flash animations, even though the flash plugin is installed?*

Under the latest versions of X.org, having the composite extension loaded can cause problems with the flash plugin. Try disabling the composite extension and see if normal flash operation is restored.

14. *Why can't Konqueror render GIF images?*

It is because you did not enable GIF support in Qt™. Please see Q: ?? for more details.

15. *When I try to open a web page with Konqueror, I get the message: 'There appears to be a configuration error. You have associated Konqueror with text/html, but it cannot handle this file type.'*

You need to make sure that the embedding settings for the text/html MIME type are correct:

- (a) In Konqueror, go to Settings → Configure Konqueror... and then to the File Associations page.
- (b) Open text->html in the tree view.
- (c) Click on the Embedding tab. Make sure that Left Click Action is set to Show file in embedded viewer, and that KHTML (khtml) is at the top of Services Preference Order.

Chapter 10

Configuring KDE

1. *How do I set the language used by KDE?*

There are two ways to set the language KDE uses in the messages it will display:

Using the KDE Control Center Fire up the KDE Control Center and select **Regional & Accessibility** followed by **Country/Region & Language**. You can select your language and location here. If KDE cannot find a translation in the first language chosen, it will fall back on the default language. This is usually (American) English by default.

NOTE

Using the KDE Control Center is the preferred way of choosing languages in KDE.

Using the KDE_LANG environment variable The second method uses the standard locale setting on your system. To change the language, simply set the environment variable `KDE_LANG` accordingly. For example, if your shell is `bash`, execute **export** `KDE_LANG=de` to set German as the language used.

2. *Is there any keyboard switcher for international keyboards for KDE?*

Yes, you can configure it using the KDE Control Center **Regional & Accessibility Keyboard Layout** configuration page.

3. *How do I replace the standard text login screen with the KDE login screen?*

NOTE

Your distribution/UNIX® flavor may have its own setup tools to change this (e.g. YaST on SuSE® Linux®). This will be the safest way to enable the KDE login screen. However, if for some reason you do not wish to use these tools, the following instructions may be useful.

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First, you need to change to the 'xdm runlevel' (runlevel 5 on Red Hat® and SuSE® systems) by editing your `/etc/inittab` file. In the file, you should have a line saying `id:3:initdefault:.` Change it to `id:5:initdefault:.` Now, at the end of the file, comment out the following line: `x:5:respawn:/usr/bin/X11/xdm -nodaemon` and replace it with `x:5:respawn:/opt-/kde/bin/kdm -nodaemon.`

NOTE

The location of `kdm` may differ on your system.

For changes to take effect immediately, type **init 5** (for Red Hat® systems) at the shell prompt.

CAUTION

It is risky to initiate a graphical login without checking beforehand whether it works. If it fails to work, you would be in for a hard time getting back....

For FreeBSD, you should edit the file `/etc/ttys` and change one of the lines that look like

```
ttyv8  "/usr/X11R6/bin/xdm -nodaemon"  xterm  off  ←  
secure
```

to instead say `ttyv8 "/usr/local/bin/kdm -nodaemon" xterm off secure.`

4. Where do I find information regarding KDE themes?

Visit <http://www.kde-look.org> for a wide range of KDE themes and theming resources.

5. How do I change MIME Types?

If you are using Konqueror, do this instead: first, open a Konqueror window and choose Settings → Configure Konqueror, then File Associations. Find the type you want to change (e.g. `text/english` or `image/gif`), and set the application preference order to whatever you want.

6. KDE (*kdm*) does not read my `.bash_profile`!

The login managers `xdm` and `kdm` do not run a login shell, so `.profile`, `.bash_profile`, etc. are not sourced. When the user logs in, `xdm` runs **Xstartup** as root and then **Xsession** as user. So the normal practice is to add statements in `Xsession` to source the user profile. Please edit your `Xsession` and `.xsession` files.

7. How do I use TrueType® fonts in KDE?

You need to install TrueType® font support into your X Window System® configuration. Please take a look at x.themes.org for the fonts, and [xfstt: TrueType Font Support For X11](#) or [X-TrueType Server Project Home Page](#) for the font servers. If you have a bunch of TrueType® fonts from Microsoft® Windows®, edit the `xorg.conf` file to get the fonts from the font folder. Then just tell KDE to use these new fonts with the font administrator utility.

KDE Frequently Asked Questions

8. *Is it possible to enter, show and work with the Euro Symbol in KDE?*

Yes and no. For details, look here: <http://www.koffice.org/kword/-euro.php>.

9. *How do I run a program at KDE startup?*

There are many ways to do that. If what you want to do is to run some scripts that would set some environment variables (for example, to start **gpg-agent**, **ssh-agent** and others), you can put these scripts into `$KDEHOME/env/` and make sure their names end in `.sh`. `$KDEHOME` is usually a folder named `.kde` (note the period at the beginning) in your home folder. If you want scripts to be executed for all KDE users, you can put them under `$KDEDIR/env/`, where `$KDEDIR` is the prefix KDE was installed to (you can find this out using the command **kde4-config --prefix**). If you wish to start a program after KDE has started, you may want to use the `Autostart` folder. To add entries to the `Autostart` folder:

- (a) Open Konqueror.
- (b) Select `Go → Autostart` from the menubar.
- (c) Right-click in the window view area and select `Create New → File → Link to Application`
- (d) Click on the `Application` tab in the window that appears and enter the name of the command to run in the `Command` text box.

10. *How can I allow more than one user to be logged in at a time? Can KDE do 'fast user switching'?*

To enable more than one user to log in at one time on the same computer (sometimes referred to as 'fast user switching') you need to tell the program that logs you in that it can use more than one session (or, in X Window System® terms, 'display') at a time. In KDE, this program is called `kdm` which stands for 'KDE Display Manager'. If you are not using `kdm` as your login screen then you will need to consult the documentation for the software you are using on how to accomplish multiple sessions. By default, this will be configured at installation time automatically if `kdm` supports virtual terminals on your system (currently Linux only). If it was not configured automatically, consult the `kdm` manual, section [Specifying permanent X-Servers](#). After modifying `kdmrc`, you will have to let `kdm` know about it; just invoke **killall -HUP kdm**.

Chapter 11

KDE applications

1. *KPPP*

Many KDE users report problems using KPPP. But before you complain about KPPP, make sure you have already checked the following:

- Can you dialup to your ISP without using KPPP? If you cannot, then perhaps KPPP is not the culprit after all.
- Have you gone through the KPPP documentation at least three times and followed its instructions and trouble-shooting suggestions?

The KPPP documentation can be accessed through the KDE Help Center. Last, but not least, the KPPP homepage is at <http://ktown.kde.org/~kppp/>. Now, if you still encounter problems, here's what might help you solve them:

How do I change the MTU setting in KPPP? Open up the KPPP dialog box and select Setup. Choose an existing account and click Edit, or New to create a new dialup account. Select the Dial tab and click Arguments. Type what you want to change in the Argument textbox (e.g. `mtu 296`) and click Add. When you are satisfied, click Close.

To check whether the options 'took', do one of the following:

- In a terminal window, run `/sbin/ifconfig ppp0` and look at the reported MTU in the output. It should match your request.
- Add `debug` and `kdebug` (each on a separate line) to your `/etc/ppp/options` file and restart your PPP session. You will find debugging messages in `/var/log/messages`, including MRU and MTU settings.

If you want, the MRU and MTU settings can be added to the `options` file, one complete setting per line, no quotes or dashes.

KPPP connects at a slower speed than normal. The following might do the trick:

- Try executing `setserial spd_hi`.

KDE Frequently Asked Questions

- The default MTU value is 1500, which maybe too large for a dialup connection. Try changing it to a smaller value like 296 or 576.
- Check in your `$HOME/.kde/share/config` for the `kppprc`. Ensure the correct modem speed is actually defined there.

2. *Konsole*

How do I page-up or page-down? Use Shift+Page Up and Shift+Pg Dn.

How do I perform a simple 'copy' from Konsole to anything else? When I do a `ls`, first I select with the mouse the desired text, press Ctrl+C, then I make the target application active, point the mouse to the relevant part and press Ctrl+V. Alternatively, highlight the text by dragging with the left mouse button down and paste by clicking with the middle mouse button (or both buttons if you are using a 2 button mouse with 3 button emulation).

Why can't Konsole find the '9x15' and the 2 'console' bitmap fonts installed with KDE?

FontConfig must find the three fonts installed in: `$KDEDIR/share/fonts`.

If the KDE install does not install these fonts in a directory that already exists (e.g. `/usr/share/fonts`) then you must add this directory to the configuration file `/etc/fonts/local.conf`. This should be the first line after '`<fontconfig>`'. For example:

```
<fontconfig>
<dir>/usr/kde3/share/fonts</dir>
</fontconfig>
```

After adding the directory, run (as root): `fc-cache -v` and check that it found the directory.

3. *KMail*

KMail has its own home page at <http://kmail.kde.org> where a FAQ is available.

Chapter 12

Troubleshooting sound problems

KDE uses the aRts sound system which is complex and powerful, making it difficult for some users to troubleshoot when things go wrong. Here are some tips to help you diagnose what it's doing when your sound misbehaves :

1. *How can I troubleshoot sound related problems in KDE?*

To check that sound is working independently of aRts, make sure that **artsd** isn't running and then try playing sound through XMMS or another multimedia application that isn't a part of KDE. If that application doesn't play sound, then your general sound setup is probably broken and it's not a KDE problem. Try playing sound with **artsplay** */path/to/some/soundfile*. Try various formats, ogg, mp3 and wav. Any error messages there might be useful in pointing you in the right direction. Try setting the aRts output method to OSS. In the KDE Control Center go to Sound & Multimedia → Sound System. On the Hardware tab, under Select the audio device choose Open Sound System. If you are running also this will use the OSS emulation, which may give better or worse results. Running **artsd**-l 0 from a terminal will give you a lot of debug output, some of which might help you to diagnose the problem. Trying this in conjunction with using **artsplay** in a second terminal can give a wealth of information. If an artsd instance is already running, exit it with **artsshell** *terminate*

2. *I've upgraded to the latest version of KDE keeping my old configuration, and my system sounds don't work anymore!*

Assuming you've installed aRts correctly and you still have the codecs installed your previous KDE installation needed, chances are this is a small problem with your `notifyrc`. To confirm this, try creating an entirely new user and seeing if system notifications work under the new account.

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If they do, try moving your `$KDEHOME/share/config/knotifyrc` out of the way for your original user to see if this solves the problem.

Chapter 13

KDE with non-KDE applications

1. *My non-KDE applications like Emacs and kterm are running amok with strange colors!*
Start the KDE Control Center and in Appearance & Themes → Colors uncheck the Apply colors to non-KDE applications checkbox and click Apply.
2. *How can I set my default web browser to be something other than Konqueror?*
If you are using KDE 3.3 or later, open up the KDE Control Center and navigate to the KDE Components → Component Chooser panel. Select Web Browser from the list on the left, then select Open http and https URLs in the following browser: and type in the name of the browser (e.g. mozilla, firefox, opera, etc.) in the textbox.
3. *How can I configure the style and fonts of GTK applications within KDE ?*
The simplest way to achieve this is to download and compile the gtk-qt theme engine from <http://www.freedesktop.org/Software/gtk-qt>. This theme engine makes your GTK applications look like your KDE widget style by calling functions from Qt™ instead of drawing the styles itself. Once the theme engine has been installed, there will be a KDE Control Center module under Appearance & Themes → GTK Styles and Fonts.

Chapter 14

Useful tips

1. *Reading documentation in KDE*

Pop up the Run Command window (Alt+F2 by default) and type:

- **man:command** for man pages. It even unpacks on the fly if the man pages are gzipped.
- **info:command** for info pages.
- **help:kdeappname** for KDE application help pages.

You can also enter any of these in the Location text box in Konqueror. Or you can use the KDE Help Center if you are using KDE 2. Simply start the KDE Help Center by clicking on the icon (the blue book with the yellow key) on the toolbar. Once the KDE Help Center has loaded, the window on the left will contain an entry called Unix manual pages. Click once on this entry, and you can browse through all the installed manual pages on your system.

2. *Move or resize windows quickly*

To move a window, use Alt+left mouse button. Alt+right mouse button will resize the window. Last but not least, Alt+middle mouse button raises/lowers the window. The KDE Control Center allows you to change these mouse bindings.

3. *Killing windows in KDE*

There is a standard keybinding (Ctrl+Alt+Esc) that gives you a skull & crossbones cursor. Click that cursor on a window to kill it. The keybindings are viewable/changeable from the KDE Control Center.

CAUTION

Using this option kills the program forcibly. Data may be lost, and some processes related to the program may remain active. Use only as a last resort.

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4. *What if something is so wrong that I can't even get the skull & crossbones cursor? How do I get out of a total lockup?*

These kind of locks tend to occur when an application locks up while it has a so called 'mouse/keyboard grab'. When that happens you can try to select a virtual text console with Ctrl+Alt+F1 and login. With the following command you will get a list of all running processes:

```
ps -aux | more
```

By killing the process that has the mousegrab, your desktop will come to life again. Unfortunately you can't see which process that is, so you will have to find out through trial and error. To kill a process use:

```
kill -9 pid
```

Here *pid* is the process id of the process, which is the first number on each line reported by `ps -aux`. You can switch back to the desktop with Ctrl+Alt+F7 (or F8 through F9 depending on your operating system) to see if things work again. When you press Alt+Tab you should get a response from the window manager. If not, you need to get back to the text console and try to kill another process. Good candidates to kill are: the application you were working with, Kicker, Klipper and KDesktop.

Chapter 15

Miscellaneous questions

1. *Does KDE support transparency and other visual effects provided by the new composite extension to X.org?*

Yes! An exciting new feature in KDE 3.4 and greater is support for the new X composite extension. This allows for effects such as translucency and drop shadows for all windows, easily configurable through KWin's configuration dialog. This requires you to be using X.org version 6.8.0 or newer and have:

```
Section "Extensions"  
Option "Composite" "Enable"  
EndSection
```

In your `xorg.conf`. If you have an nvidia graphics card and use the nvidia driver you can improve the performance of these effects by also adding the `RenderAccel` option to the `Device` section for your graphics card:

```
Section "Device"  
    Identifier "nvidia-fx5200"  
    Driver "nvidia"  
    Option "RenderAccel" "true"
```

Once you have configured X.org correctly, transparency and other effects can be enabled through the Desktop → Window Behavior KDE Control Center module, under the Translucency tab.

2. *What about KDE programs that do not have icons? How do I get them into the menu?*
Use `KMenuEdit`. To access it use the right mouse button on the K button and select `Menu Editor`.
3. *Does KDE have a graphical FTP client?*

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Yes, and it is none other than your favorite file manager, Konqueror. You can drag and drop remote files into local folders.

4. *How do I exit KDE?*

Simply click on the K button and select Logout. In addition, if you right click on an empty area of the desktop, you will be presented with a menu containing logout as one of the options.

NOTE

Depending on your configuration of the X Window System®, Ctrl+Alt+Backspace might also do the trick by killing the X server, but its use prevents session management and cannot be recommended.

5. *Is there a program that checks for new mails at my ISP if and only if I am online?*

KOrn will do the job. If you are not connected, it will just sit there (idling).

6. *Is it really necessary to upgrade to the latest version?*

We recommend to always use the latest stable release. If you don't, it will probably be difficult to get answers to your questions. If you have a problem with an old version, the answer will probably be 'Please upgrade and try again'. Note that new versions also sometimes fix security problems.

7. *How do I copy and paste in KDE?*

The simplest method is to use your mouse:

- (a) Highlight the text you want to copy by holding down the left mouse button and dragging across the text. This adds the selected text to the clipboard.
- (b) Go to the destination area; depending on your configuration, you might need to click it using the left mouse button to give it focus.
- (c) Click the middle mouse button to paste. If you have a two button mouse and are emulating a three button mouse, push both buttons simultaneously.

For more information about using the clipboard in KDE please see the Klipper hand book, accessed by typing **help:/klipper** into the Konqueror address bar.

8. *How do I convert the default Red Hat® menus into a menu in the K menu?*

Click on the K button and select System → Appfinder.

9. *What isSVN?*

It stands for Subversion, and is a version control system. It is similar to CVS, but improves on it in many ways. It is used to maintain source code under development. It will keep multiple versions of things (handy if you broke something and have to back up and get a clean old version), and allows people remote access over the internet to pick up the latest

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source code and even to check in new files if they have permission. It is also open source (you pay for support if you want it), and since it is free it is the system of choice for people writing more free products, such as KDE.

10. *Does KDE support dual screen (Xinerama)?*

Yes, you need to have a multi-headed X server (e.g. MetroX or XFree86 4.0 and above) and a KDE \geq 2.2.1

11. *How do I check which version of KDE I am using?*

Fire up the KDE Control Center. It comes up with an Info Screen including the version of KDE The KDE version is also included in the application's About dialog. You can also check from the command line with the command `kde-config--version`

12. *How do I go about creating themes and icons?*

Go see <http://kde-artists.org>. There is also a more informal community of KDE related artists and artwork at <http://kde-look.org>.

13. *How can I get to know about development updates?*

You might want to subscribe to the various KDE mailing lists available, especially kde-cvs, which lists all commits done to the KDE CVS repository. Check <http://lists.kde.org> if you want to read without subscribing.

Chapter 16

Qt™ and Licensing questions

1. *What is Qt™, by the way?*

Qt™ is a C++-based class library to build user interfaces. It also includes many utility classes like string classes and classes to handle input and output. It provides most of the widgets you will see in a KDE application: menus, buttons, sliders, etc.. Qt™ is a cross-platform library that allows you to write code that will compile on UNIX® systems as well as Windows® and embedded devices. You can learn more about Qt™ at <http://www.qtsoftware.com>.

2. *Why does KDE use Qt™?*

Qt™ is a very sophisticated toolkit that provides everything that is needed to build a modern user interface. Qt™ is written in C++, thus allowing object-oriented development which ensures efficiency and code reuse in a project the size and scope of KDE. In our opinion there is no better toolkit available for UNIX® systems and that it would have been a grave mistake to try to build KDE on anything but the best.

3. *Why does KDE not use GTK, XForms, Xlib, whatever?*

There are a number of toolkits available. To provide a consistent user interface and to keep used resources such as memory to a minimum, KDE can use only one of them. Qt™ was selected for the reasons mentioned above.

4. *But Qt™ isn't free, is it?*

It is! As of September 4, 2000, version 2.2 of the Qt™ libraries were licensed under the GPL, thereby fulfilling all aspects of 'free software'. Since version 4.5.0 Qt is also available under the LGPL.

5. *Can I write commercial software for KDE?*

You can use the KDE libraries to write 'commercial and closed source' as well as 'commercial and open source' software. If you want to write

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open source software you can use the Qt™ free edition. But if you intend to write closed source software you may not use the Qt™ free edition; you need to obtain the Qt™ professional edition from Qt Software. If you want more information, please contact [Qt Software](#) directly.

Chapter 17

Getting more information

1. *Where is the KDE homepage?*

The KDE homepage is located at <http://www.kde.org>. If you prefer a local mirror, there are several to choose from. For a current list of web site mirrors sorted by location, please visit <http://www.kde.org/mirrors/-web.php>.

2. *Is there a KDE mailing list?*

There are several KDE mailing lists. Each focuses on a different aspect of KDE. Some are for developers, so they are not discussed in detail. Some of the more important lists that users might be interested in are:

kde This is the main KDE mailing list for general discussions.

kde-announce This list is used to announce new versions of KDE as well as new tools and applications.

kde-look This is the list that deals with questions about look and feel, and general user interface considerations.

For the complete list of mailing lists available, please refer to <http://www.kde.org/-mailinglists/>. Please note that it is not a good idea to ask questions which are already answered in this FAQ.

3. *How do I subscribe/unsubscribe to these lists?*

To subscribe, send an email to list-request, that is:

- kde-request@kde.org
- kde-announce-request@kde.org
- kde-look-request@kde.org

The email must contain `subscribe your_email_address` in the subject. To unsubscribe, send an email to list-request, that is:

- kde-request@kde.org

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- kde-announce-request@kde.org
- kde-look-request@kde.org

The email must contain `unsubscribe your_email_address` in the subject.

IMPORTANT

Never send subscribe/unsubscribe request to the mailing lists directly! Use the list-request instead.

There is also a complete list of all KDE-related mailing lists, and a web interface for subscribing and unsubscribing located at <http://master.kde.org/-mailman/listinfo>.

4. *Is there a mailing list archive?*

Yes, there is a searchable mailing list archive hosted by [Progressive Computer Concepts](http://lists.kde.org). The URL is <http://lists.kde.org>. There you will see a folder listing of the mailing lists. Note that you can only do a subject/author search at this level. You probably will not find what you want doing this kind of search. To do a body search, you have to enter one of the mailing lists. Just click on the folder you want to search (e.g. 'kde' or 'kde-devel') and then the pull-down menu by the search box will default to 'Body' searches. To be thorough, you should probably search the 'kde', 'kde-linux', and 'kde-devel' folders.

5. *Is there a newsgroup about KDE?*

Yes, there is! It is at `comp.windows.x.kde`. In addition, there is also a German newsgroup at `de.alt.comp.kde`. Please note that it is not a good idea to ask questions which are already answered in this FAQ.

6. *Are there any other KDE-related FAQs?*

Yes. Here is a list of them:

- [KDE FAQ](#)
- [Konqueror FAQ](#)
- [aRts sound server documentation](#)

Chapter 18

Asking Questions

Chances are, you have been linked to this document from IRC or a mailing list. You've asked a question, and someone has told you that you need to learn how to ask more effectively. In order to get an appropriate, clear answer you need to ask an appropriate, clear question in a manner that's going to provide an incentive for people to take their time to help you. If you appear to be rude, lazy or use bad or unclear language then chances are your question will be ignored

1. *What do I do before I ask?*

Read the documentation and FAQ for the application. There is a wealth of KDE documentation available both in the help center and online. A lot of time and effort has gone into this documentation, and quite often the answer to your question is here. The general KDE userguide can be found by typing **help:/userguide** into your Konqueror addressbar. Search the web: Usually googling for a specific error message or searching mailing list archives can come up with a solution for you. Try it and see! Look through all the application options, read the What's this? and tooltips for the ones you're not sure about. If you're really unsure about an option save your data and then try it. As long as you use some common sense, you are very unlikely to break anything by clicking buttons. Above all, don't be lazy. If you show the people who you are asking that you are able to troubleshoot and research in a logical manner, you're showing them you're a reasonable person who is worth their time to help. It's your problem and not theirs so the legwork is yours to do. Save your helpers as much time as you can, they're busy people.

2. *Where do I ask?*

Usually the best place to ask a question is on the IRC channels and mailing lists devoted to user questions. Don't post simple questions about using KDE to the devel channels and mailing lists, these are for technical discussions. Some good places are #kde on irc.freenode.net, and the KDE mailing lists.

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3. *How do I ask?*

Try to word your questions in a manner that gives the most information possible and is polite and courteous. Don't ask to ask, just ask!Q: KDE sucks, it's being slowIs not a question that is likely to get you a useful answer. It does not give any useful information about troubleshooting the problem, and it starts out attacking the software in a way that isn't productive.Q: Since upgrading KDE on Slackware Linux® from version 3.2.3 to 3.3.2 using sources, I have noticed it's being really slow — sometimes applications take up to 20 seconds to launch. I am using the same user configuration as I had with the previous version, and I have tried creating a new user — but that account has the same problem. I can't find anything about this on the mailing lists or by a google search. Could anyone point me to some information that could help?This question is polite, contains information to help people troubleshoot the problem and shows your helpers what avenues you have already tried. Not only does this make their job easier, but saves you the frustration of being told to try all the possible solutions you've already gone through.Don't assume automatically that the problem is the fault of KDE. Proceed as though this is your error, otherwise you will quickly annoy people if it does indeed turn out to be your problem and not KDE.Use clear language with correct spelling. Watch out for any ambiguities and make sure you think about what you say before you write it. If you are asked for clarification, give it as best you can. KDE is a project where many of the users and developers are not native english speakers and if you don't use correct english, misunderstandings may ensue. Use the language appropriate to the channel or mailing list you are in — if you don't, people who might have been able to help you may ignore your message because it is not in a language they understand.Include all information that could be relevant, even if you're not sure. Have you upgraded other software or hardware on your system, particularly system libraries or a new kernel? These things could affect how KDE performs. Even if you cannot see a link, someone else might.Don't paraphrase error messages. Paste in the exact error, and if it's more than a line or two don't paste them directly into an IRC channel. Use a paste service like <http://www.rafb.net/paste>. If you must type them in by hand, be sure you are 100% accurate. When you provide incorrect information, your helpers cannot help you as easily. Follow up on your solution! Tell us if it worked, or if you have solved it yourself in the meantime. This helps us know for sure if our solution worked, and helps other users who may be searching mailing list archives for a solution to the problem themselves.

4. *What do I do when told to look elsewhere?*

When you're told 'google knows' or 'google is your friend' then chances are, you have not followed the above advice. You've not done your research, and the solution is probably one the helper knows very well to be easy to find. When you're linked to a FAQ or a usermanual please don't ever say, 'No, I don't want to have to read this I want you to just tell me'. This is very bad manners. If you cannot put in the effort to read the document, what is the incentive for your helper to put in the time and effort to help you? If you're told to go use google, take it graciously and do so.

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Above all, use common courtesy. KDE users and developers are usually volunteering their time out of an already very busy schedule, and like to know that you are appreciating that they are helping you for free. Be polite, say please and thank you and try to be pleasant and friendly.

Does this seem like a lot of trouble to ask a question? If you want to be able to feel that people owe you an answer or support, then you're quite welcome to pay for commercial support from companies that support KDE on UNIX® platforms. If you don't want to pay money, then pay the people who do this for free with your politeness and appreciation :)

If you think the answer to your question should be included in the KDE FAQ please feel free to submit any patches or suggestions to the KDE FAQ Maintainer, at faq@kde.org

Chapter 19

Contributing

1. *How can I contribute to KDE?*

KDE is a free software project that lives from voluntary contributions. Everybody is encouraged to contribute to KDE. Not only programmers are welcome. There are many ways in which you can help to improve KDE:

- Test the software.
- Send in bug reports. For more information on this, see [How do I submit a bug report?](#).
- Write documentation or help files. You can get some information by visiting the [KDE Editorial Team Home Page](#).
- Translate programs, documentation, and help files. For more information on this, you should visit [The KDE Translators' and Documenters' Web Site](#).
- Draw nice icons or compose sound effects. You can visit the [KDE artists page](#) to find out more.
- Write articles and books about KDE. If you want to help spread the word about KDE, simply send an email to kde-promo@kde.org. This will get you in touch with the KDE public relations volunteers.
- Program new KDE applications. Please refer to Q: ?? for more information.
- Of course, sponsors are also welcome. :-)

There are several places to look for more information if you want to get involved in the development. The first step is to subscribe to some of the [mailing lists](#). You will soon see something that can be improved or added.

2. *How do I submit a bug report?*

There is a bug tracking system available at <http://bugs.kde.org>. The system features a wizard to submit new bug reports and a list of all known

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bugs. The easiest way to submit a bug is to select Help → Report Bug... from the menu bar of the application with the bug. This will open a small dialog box with a link to the bug tracking system. Please make sure to follow the instructions of the bug reporting wizard.

3. *I want to program for KDE. What should I do first?*

Everybody is encouraged to develop software for KDE. What you should do first depends strongly on your experience, e.g. whether you have already learned C++ or have experience with the Qt™ toolkit and so on. To get into KDE programming, you will need some basic tools: cmake, and gcc. You should look to <http://techbase.kde.org/> for more tips. Another excellent resource for learning KDE programming is the Qt™ online tutorials. These are installed along with Qt™. To view them, open `$(QTDIR)/doc/html/index.html` in Konqueror and bookmark it. The tutorials can be found under "Using Qt". The source code for each lesson can be found in the `$(QTDIR)/tutorial` directory. There is, however, one thing that everybody interested in programming for KDE should do: *subscribe to the developers mailing list*. To subscribe, you have to send an email to kde-devel-request@kde.org with the subject `subscribe your_email_address`.

IMPORTANT

Please read [How to subscribe/unsubscribe to these lists](#) carefully. Everything said there applies to the development list as well.

4. *How do I get access to KDE SVN?*

The KDE project uses SVN to develop the core parts of the software. Usually, when you have changed one of the parts (e.g. fixed a bug), and you want to commit this change, the best way is to create a patch against a current snapshot and send this patch to the developer/maintainer of the respective program. If you are doing this more or less regularly, there are instructions here on how to get write access to the SVN repository: http://techbase.kde.org/Contribute/Get_a_SVN_Account. But be aware that more users will slow down SVN access for all developers, so we want to keep the number of people with direct SVN access reasonably small. But feel free to ask!

5. *Can I have read-only access to the SVN repository?*

Yes. Instructions on how to get anonymous, read-only SVN access are here: http://techbase.kde.org/Getting_Started/Sources/Anonymous_SVN

6. *Are there any SVN mirror sites for KDE?*

No, there are currently no anonymous SVN mirror sites for KDE. If you're interested in setting one up, please contact sysadmin@kde.org

7. *How do I go about translating KDE programs into my native language?*

Look at the [The KDE Translators' and Documenters' Web Site](#) to see whether your program is already translated (most are). Otherwise you will find information there on how to do it yourself.

Chapter 20

Credits and License

The current FAQ maintainers are:

- J Hall jhall@kde.org

Many of the answers in this FAQ are taken from the various KDE mailing lists and newsgroups. Here is a *big* thank you to all of you who have contributed answers that eventually appear in this FAQ.

Special thanks go to the former FAQ maintainers, Rainer Endres and Mr. Lee Wee Tiong

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