

HowTo:

Install and DualBoot into Microsoft Windows 7 and Linux Ubuntu

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Backing Up

Before you do anything, backup <http://simms-teach.com/resources.php> all your files into an external storage device. I recommend using a USB external HDD (Hard Drive). Make sure not to backup any of your files onto the HDDs that you are using for this installation process since this may cause you to lose your data.

Installation Priority

When setting up dual boot, you want to make sure to install Windows first. This is because Windows' boot loader tends to be particularly picky (overwriting anything else on the Master Boot Record).

Step 1: Installing Windows

Using a Single HDD

Boot from the Windows Installation Disk. Go to the Advanced menu and select the HDD (Hard Disk Drive) that you using. Click on the advanced options and select Create New (in order to create a new partition). Windows will then prompt you to select a specified amount of HDD space to partition*. Leave a portion of the HDD non-partitioned, on which you will later install Linux. Continue on and finish the installation process. You have now installed Windows

*Note: When deciding how much space to leave non-partitioned, keep in mind that though Windows can't recognise Linux file systems, Linux does recognize Windows file systems, so if you want to access music, pictures, or any other files in Linux you can access those files on your Windows partition through Linux. I recommend leaving about 25% of the HDD free for Linux.

If you already have Windows installed and you do not wish to go through the installation process you can use partitioning software (e.g. Partition Magic, EASEUS Partition Masters, etc) to repartition a portion of your HDD for Linux.

Using Multiple HDD

If using two or more HDD to install windows and Linux you will not need to leave a portion of your first HDD unpartitioned. Just have windows partition the first HDD and leave the second HDD unpartitioned for Linux.

Step 2) Installing Linux

First download and burn a copy of Ubuntu (via a disc image, better known as an ISO file) onto a Disk or Flash Drive. You can download the software free from <http://www.ubuntu.com>. Make sure to download the "Live Installation" version of Ubuntu, to give you the opportunity of trying out the OS prior to installing anything. Boot from the installation disk, and select "Try Ubuntu". Once you have played around, double click the "Install Ubuntu" desktop icon, and proceed through the process to the advanced menu and select your second HDD to partition.

When partitioning make sure to leave small portion of your HDD non-partitioned for swap. I recommend about leaving twice the amount of RAM you have non-partitioned, or as much as 4GB. You will then select a file system for your Linux partition, either ext3 or ext4 (your choice, read about the trade-offs). Next, simply follow the rest of the installation process. You have now installed Linux.

Step 3) Default Boot Setting

With Windows 7 and Ubuntu onto your computer, the dual boot loader is already set up. When booting up your PC, a prompt will pop up asking you whether you want to boot into Linux or Windows. After 30 seconds or so, the PC will automatically boot into Linux (or whichever is set to be default).

Step 4) Changing Boot Default Settings

Boot into Linux and you have two options. There are instructions on how to edit the grub menu manually, but with modern Linux distributions you can make it easier on yourself and download a graphical interface to the grub start up. These often promise various configurations to the boot loader, but the most useful is the simple change of which option you would like to have selected as default. By default it's set to the latest Linux kernel, but if you'd prefer to boot into Windows automatically you can set grub to do so using such a utility.