

# Elements of GNOME Desktop

The GNOME desktop has three distinct areas. They are:

1. The top menu panel (the gray bar at the top)
2. The desktop area (the workspace area in the center that fills most of the screen)
3. The window list panel (the gray bar at the bottom)

## 1. The top menu panel

This panel stretches across the top of the screen. The left side contains:

- i. The applications menu
- ii. The places menu
- iii. The system menu
- iv. Program icons for the default email program, web browser, and reminder notes.

The right side of the panel is home to:

- i. The notification area
- ii. a volume control
- iii. the user switch area
- iv. a clock and calendar

### i. The Applications menu

This menu contains a categorized list of installed applications, which are updated as necessary when software is installed or removed. When you click on **Applications** a drop-down list appears. The default list installed is:

- a. **Accessories**
- b. **Games**
- c. **Graphics**
- d. **Internet**
- e. **Office**
- f. **Programming**
- g. **Sound & Video**

## h. **System Tools**

### ii. **The Places menu**

This menu is divided into four subsections.

The first subsection allows quick access to commonly accessed folders, and makes it easy to

keep your file system organized. These links are:

- a. **Home Folder** where your personal files are kept by default.
- b. **Desktop**, a folder within your Home Folder where the files and folders that appear on your desktop are stored.
- c. **Documents**, a folder within your Home Folder intended as a place for you to store documents, such as those that you might have created with a word processor or spreadsheet program.
- d. **Music**, a folder within your Home Folder intended as a place for you to store music files.
- e. **Pictures**, a folder within your Home Folder intended as a place for you to store photographs and other pictures.
- f. **Videos**, a folder within your Home Folder intended as a place for you to store videos.
- g. **Download**, a folder within your Home Folder intended as a place for you to store miscellaneous files that you have downloaded from the Internet.

The second subsection allows quick access to:

- a. the **Computer** window, which allows you to browse the computer's files and all data storage attached to the computer.

The third section provides links to tools that help you browse and manage network locations.

- a. **Network** allows you to view the networks that your computer is attached to, and to access files and other resources available through those networks.
- b. **Connect to Server** allows you to create connections to public or local networks.

The fourth section helps you quickly access any file on the system.

- a. **Search for files** allows you to search for files stored on your computer.
- b. **Recent Documents** lists the documents and folders recently accessed.

### iii. **The System menu**

This menu is divided into three subsections.

The first provides access to configuration tools.

The **Preferences** menu contains tools that affect only your account, and only require normal user access.

These links include:

- a. **About Me** stores details about yourself that you can share with other people as an electronic business card.
- b. **Appearance** customizes the appearance of your desktop, including the background picture.
- c. **Assistive Technologies** lets you choose software to magnify portions of the screen or to read the contents of screens to you.
- d. **Authorizations** lets you selectively permit the software on your computer to carry out certain tasks automatically and without your intervention.
- e. **Bluetooth** configures Bluetooth devices to work with your computer
- f. **Default Printer** specifies the printer to use by default.
- g. **Desktop Effects** enables or disables special visual effects for the desktop.
- h. **Display** sets the resolution and other details of your display.
- i. **File Management** controls how files and folders are presented to you.
- j. **Input Method** allows you to choose methods to input languages whose writing systems do not use an alphabet, such as some Indic and East Asian languages.
- k. **Keyboard** specifies the type of keyboard that you use with this computer.
- l. **Keyboard Shortcuts** sets key combinations to perform certain tasks within certain programs, or within the desktop environment more generally.
- m. **Main Menu** lets you add, remove, or re-order the items on the **Applications** and **System** menus, or create new menus of your own.
- n. **Mouse** configures the buttons and other controls on your mouse.
- o. **Network Connections** displays your computer's network connections and allows you to configure them.
- p. **Network Proxy** allows you to specify a *proxy server* for your computer.
- q. **PalmOS Devices** links your computer to personal digital assistants (PDAs) that use the PalmOS

operating system.

- r. **Personal File Sharing** lets you share your documents and other files with other users of this computer or with users of other computers over a network.
- s. **Power Management** configures your computer to perform differently under different power settings.
- t. **Preferred Applications** lets you choose which applications you prefer to use for particular tasks.
- u. **Remote Desktop** permits you or other people to access your computer's desktop from a remote location over a network connection.
- v. **Screensaver** sets your screensaver.
- w. **Software Updates** specifies how you would like your computer to handle software updates when they become available.
- x. **Sound** lets you choose sounds to accompany actions or events on your computer.
- y. **Startup Applications** chooses applications to start automatically when you log in.
- z. **Windows** controls the appearance of the windows that applications appear in.

The **Administration** menu contains tools that affect the whole system and require root access. These tools prompt for the root password when launched.

- a. **Add/Remove Software** lets you change the software installed on the system.
- b. **Authentication** allows you to control how the system verifies users who attempt to log in.
- c. **Bootloader** lets you choose your default boot entry and the time the boot message is displayed.
- d. **Date and Time** permits the system date and time to be changed.
- e. **Firewall** link lets you setup and configure a firewall for your computer.
- f. **Language** allows you to change the default language.
- g. **Logical Volume Management** lets you configure the LVM in a graphical setting.
- h. **Network** permits configuration of your network connections and devices.
- i. **Network Device Control** lets you monitor and control your network devices.
- j. **Printing** allows you to configure your printers.
- k. **Root Password** lets you to change the root password for the system.
- l. **SELinux Management** allows you to change security settings that protect your computer.

- m. **Services** lets you decide which services will run when the system starts.
- n. **Software Sources** permits you to enable or disable software repositories.
- o. **Update System** looks for software updates at your selected software sources.
- p. **Users and Groups** allows you to add or remove users and groups.

The second section provides access to the help documentation, along with information about the Fedora project, the GNOME project and information about your computer and its operating system.

- a. **Help** is the guide for questions about GNOME.
- b. **About GNOME** tells you about GNOME and the people who made it.
- c. **About Fedora** is a guide containing documentation about the Fedora project.
- d. **About This Computer** provides basic information about your computer and links to the process and resource monitor.

The third section contains entries to

- a. **Lock Screen** starts the screen saver or blanks the screen. It will ask for your password to restore your session to the screen.
- b. **Log Out** of the current session.
- c. **Shut Down** gives you options to **Hibernate**, **Restart**, or **Shut Down** your computer.

#### iv. **Application launchers**

The series of icons next to the menus provide quick access to commonly used applications. These icons are called *launchers*.



The icon for **Mozilla Firefox**, a web browser.



The icon for **Evolution**, a mail client and personal information manager.



The icon for **Tomboy**, note-taking software.

To add more launchers to a panel, right-click on the panel and select **Add to Panel**. You can also add launchers that are in the **Applications** menu. Right click on the application you want to add and select **Add this launcher to panel**.

#### v. **The notification area**

The notification area displays icons that alert you to new events taking place on your computer. For example, your email program might display an icon here to indicate the arrival of new email, or your printer software might display an icon here to indicate that a document is now printing.

#### vi. **Volume control**

The volume control allows you to quickly change the overall volume of sound on your computer. Click the icon to show a slider, and then use the mouse to drag the slider to the desired volume. If you double-click the icon, a volume control window appears in which you can separately change the volume of different sound sources.

#### vii. **The user switch area**

If you click the current username located next to the clock, a list of available users appears. To switch to a different user account, select the username.

#### viii. **Clock and calendar**

To access the calendar, click the clock on the right hand side of the panel. When you double-click a date, the **Evolution** personal information manager opens.

## 2. **The desktop area**

The default desktop area, or *workspace*, contains three icons:

- i. The **Computer** icon. If you double-click this icon, a window appears that contains available storage devices on the computer. These are also listed in the **Places > Computer** menu.
- ii. The **Home** icon, which represents the location where all of the logged in user's files, such as music, movies, and documents, are stored by default. There is a different home directory for each user, and users cannot access each other's home directories by default.
- iii. The **Trash** icon. Normally, when you choose to delete a file, it is not permanently removed from your system. Instead, it is sent to the trash folder, which you can access from this icon. To

permanently remove a file from your system, you must *empty* the trash. To empty the trash, right-click the icon and select **Empty Trash**.

### 3. The window list panel

This panel has four components:

- i. The **Show Desktop** button, on the left side, is used to hide all open windows, and reveal the desktop area. This function is useful when the open applications obscure an important desktop file or icon. To restore the windows, click the **Show Desktop** button again and all windows return to their previous location.
- ii. Any open applications appear as button icons in the middle part of the window list panel. It shows all application windows in use on the desktop workspace, whether they are visible or hidden. A hidden window button appears with a white background. The currently selected application window button has a gray background, and is said to have *focus*. Usually, this is the application whose window is on top of all the others on the screen. To switch from one running application to another using the mouse, click on the desired application's button in the panel.
- iii. The *Workspace Switcher* is the group of squares situated on the far right. They allow you to move between *workspaces*. Workspaces have long been a feature of UNIX and Linux desktop environments. Each workspace provides a separate desktop where applications can be organized, and a corresponding window list panel. By default there are four workspaces available. To change this number, right-click on the workspace switcher and choose **preferences**.
- iv. The Trash icon on the right end of the window list panel works the same way as the Trash icon in the desktop area. If you delete a file, it is moved to this location. A right click on the Trash icon brings up the options to Open the folder, Empty Trash, Remove from Panel, and Lock to Panel.