

ubuntu[®]



Simplify your Life:

Fully Updated for 12.04 LTS

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Welcome to Unity

Ubuntu announces the latest version of Unity – version 5.10.0. Whether you are a new user or an old pro, this guide is designed to help you understand what this latest version of Unity is all about.

Ubuntu releases upgrades about every 6 months; however, Unity version updates might be released at different times throughout this 6 month cycle. Even though users might not notice the variations between the different Unity versions, there are often big changes that take place under the hood.

This guide is meant for Unity version 5.10.0, which is the version that shipped with Ubuntu 12.04 LTS (Long Term Support). If you are using a different version of Ubuntu, or if you have installed newer Unity releases separately, then your Unity version might also be different.

It is recommended that you check what version of Unity you are running (P.5), that way you will know whether this guide is right for you.

Why choose Unity?

Unity 5.10.0 is the newly improved desktop interface that comes with Ubuntu 12.04 LTS. This fresh version of Unity offers users all the great things from the previous version, and now includes many new features. As always, Unity provides an easy to customize desktop for the ultimate personal experience with optimal performance, blistering-fast speed, and unparalleled functionality.

Since its inception by Mark Shuttleworth (founder of Ubuntu), thousands of people collectively contribute to the Unity development project – an ongoing open source project. The open source license associated with the software permits anyone to get under the hood of Unity to customize the look and feel of it, to modify it, or to use it in ways that were not necessarily envisioned by the original authors.

This modern miracle of minds melding in unison brings about the most functional design for an aesthetically pleasing and innovative desktop interface. In the Ubuntu community, people work together to share ideas, implement changes, and expand their knowledge.

Unity offers thousands of free software applications to download and is compatible with your existing PC files, printers, cameras, and MP3 players; and best of all, there are no viruses!

Checking your Version of Unity

Checking your Unity version is fast and easy. The following four step guide will assist you. If you are not running version 5.10.0, use the **Update Manager** to install the latest updates.

1.) Click the **Dash home button**.

NOTE: The Dash home button is the first button in the Launcher.

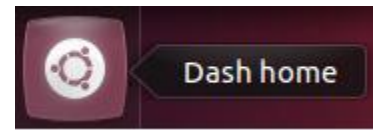


Figure 1: Dash home button

2.) In the **Global Search Bar**, type "Terminal".

3.) When the Terminal application appears, single click it to launch it.

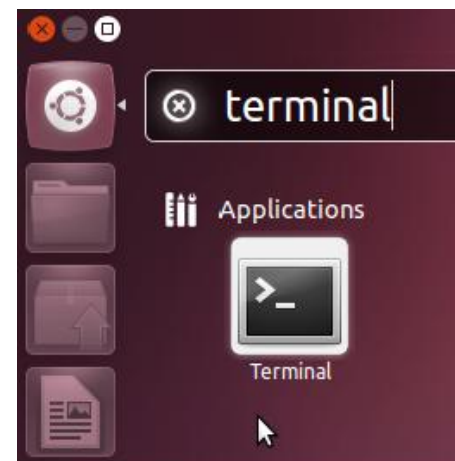


Figure 2: Terminal Search

4.) Type the following, then press enter:

```
unity --version
```

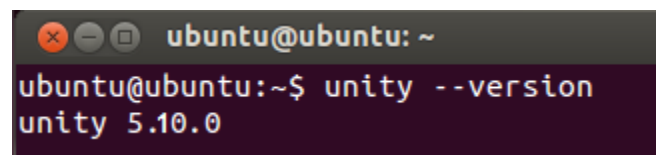


Figure 3: Unity Version Check

Ubuntu Local Community

Ubuntu users and developers meet up in local communities all over the world. These local communities (called LoCos) provide a way for Ubuntu users to connect with each other for invaluable free support and technical exchange.

Ubuntu users in Vancouver, Canada, share an exceptionally vibrant, in-face community. For those fortunate enough to reside near Vancouver, contact your Ubuntu Local Community at <http://meetup.com/ubuntuvancouver>.

Join Ubuntu meet-ups to learn all the tips and tricks in person.

International LoCos

Not in Vancouver? Please check out <http://loco.ubuntu.com/> for your nearest Local Community group.

Unity Quick Start

This next section explains some basic features of Unity. You will learn where to locate:

- Launcher
- Dash
- Music/ Pictures/ Videos
- Email & Web Browsing

Launcher

In Figure 4, we see the Unity desktop and the Launcher. The Launcher, which is located on the left-hand side of the screen, allows users to manage and run applications.

Applications load with a single click. Once selected, the icon flashes while it loads. A small arrow - indicator tab - just left of any icon shows you which applications are currently running on your computer (See Figure 5).

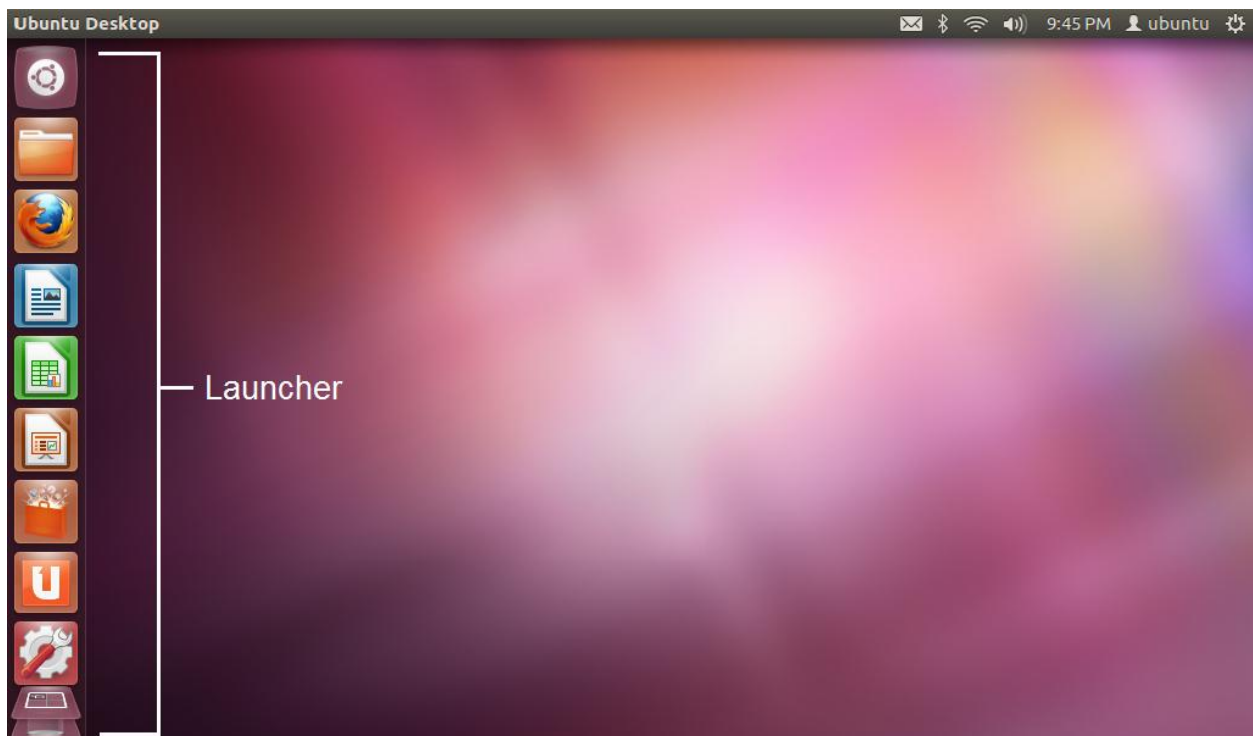


Figure 4: Unity Desktop – Launcher

The Dash

The Dash is a search tool, which enables users to access files and applications on their computer and internet such as installed applications, recent files, bookmarks, music, videos, etc. To access the Dash, click the Dash home button – the first icon in the Launcher (see Figure 5).

Using the Dash is one way to access your music, picture, and video files.



Figure 5: Dash home button with Inset Image of Dash Home

Music/ Pictures/ Videos

The Home Folder is where you can access all your documents, music, pictures, and videos (see Figure 6).

With a single click, you can access each folder in the menu. From there, you can upload, view, and manage all of your documents, music, pictures, and videos.

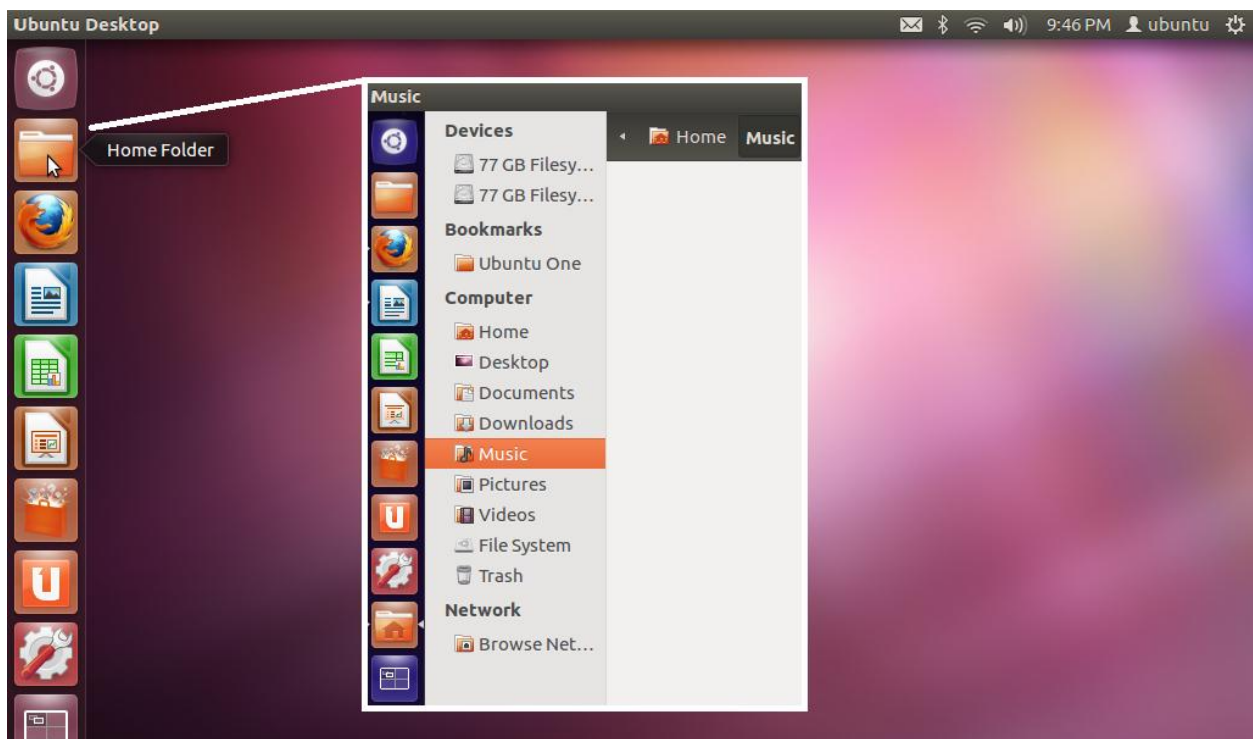


Figure 6: Unity Desktop with Inset Image of Home Folder

Web Browser & Email

The third icon from the top is the Firefox Web browser (see Figure 7). Click this icon to access the internet and email (such as gmail, hotmail, yahoo, etc).

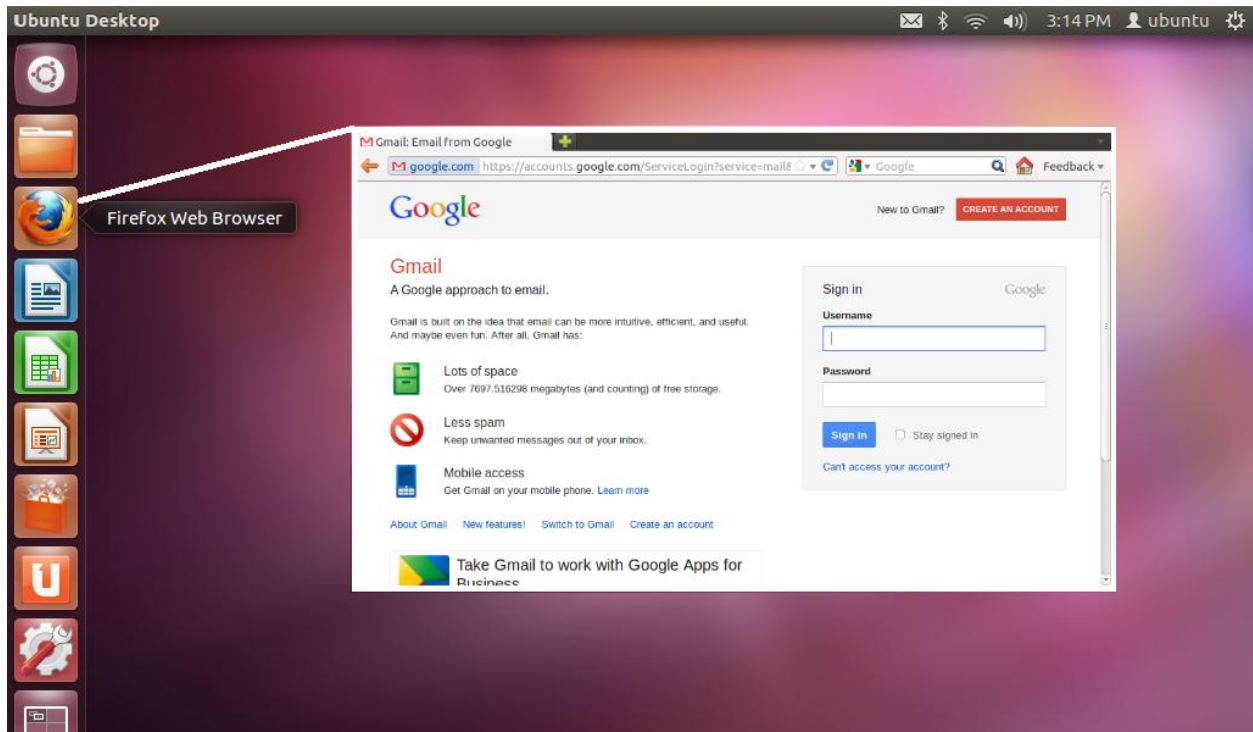


Figure 7: Unity Desktop - Web Browser

A More In-depth View

This next section will provide a more in-depth view of some basic functionality of Unity. In it, we will discuss:

- The Launcher
- The Notification Bar
- The Dash
- Lens and Scope
- Music/ Pictures/ Video Editing
- Ubuntu Software Centre
- LibreOffice 3
- System Updates
- Ubuntu One Cloud Storage
- Heads Up Display, or HUD

The Launcher

As discussed in the Unity Quick Start section, the Launcher allows you to manage and run applications from your desktop.

Also in that section, we looked at the first three icons in the Launcher (i.e. Dash home button, Home Folder, and Firefox Web Browser). This section will provide a brief description of the remaining icons in the Launcher and discuss some basic functionality of the Launcher.



Figure 8: Launcher with Labels

Launcher Applications



LibreOffice Writer allows you to create and edit text and graphics in letters, reports, documents, and web pages.



LibreOffice Calc allows you to perform calculations, analyze information, and manage lists in spreadsheets.



LibreOffice Impress allows you to create and edit slides for presentations, slideshows, and web pages.



Ubuntu Software Centre allows you to download from thousands of applications available on Ubuntu.



Ubuntu One allows you to store, sync, and share information in a cloud server.



System Settings allows you to access Personal settings, Hardware, and System. To customize your settings see the companion guide entitled “Ubuntu 12.04 LTS – Achieve Personal Unity – Customization Guide”.



Workspace Switcher allows you to organize and increase the usable size of your desktop by having multiple workspaces.



Trash allows you to discard files or programs. It will retain them until you want to permanently delete them (i.e. empty the trash).

Managing the Launcher

The following section will discuss how to manage some basic functions of the Launcher.

To Close a Running Application:

- 1.) Right-click on the icon.
- 2.) Select “quit”.



Figure 9: Closing a Running App

To Rearrange an Icon:

- 1.) Click and hold the icon.
- 2.) Drag it anywhere in the Launcher.
- 3.) Release.



Figure 10: Rearranging an Icon

To Unlock an Icon:

- 1.) Right-click on the icon.
- 2.) Select “unlock from Launcher”.



Figure 11: Unlocking an Icon

To Add an Icon:

- 1.) Find the application you wish to add by searching through the Dash.
- 2.) Drag and drop the icon into the Launcher.

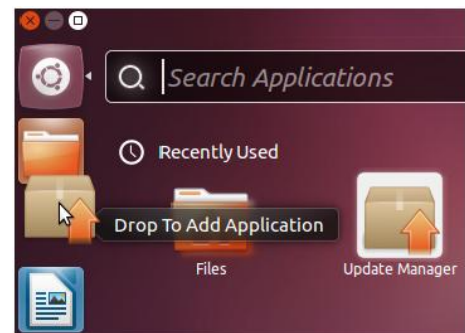


Figure 12: Adding an Icon

The Notification Bar

The notification bar is located in the upper-right corner of the desktop. It provides users with a quick and easy way to manage and run applications from their desktop.

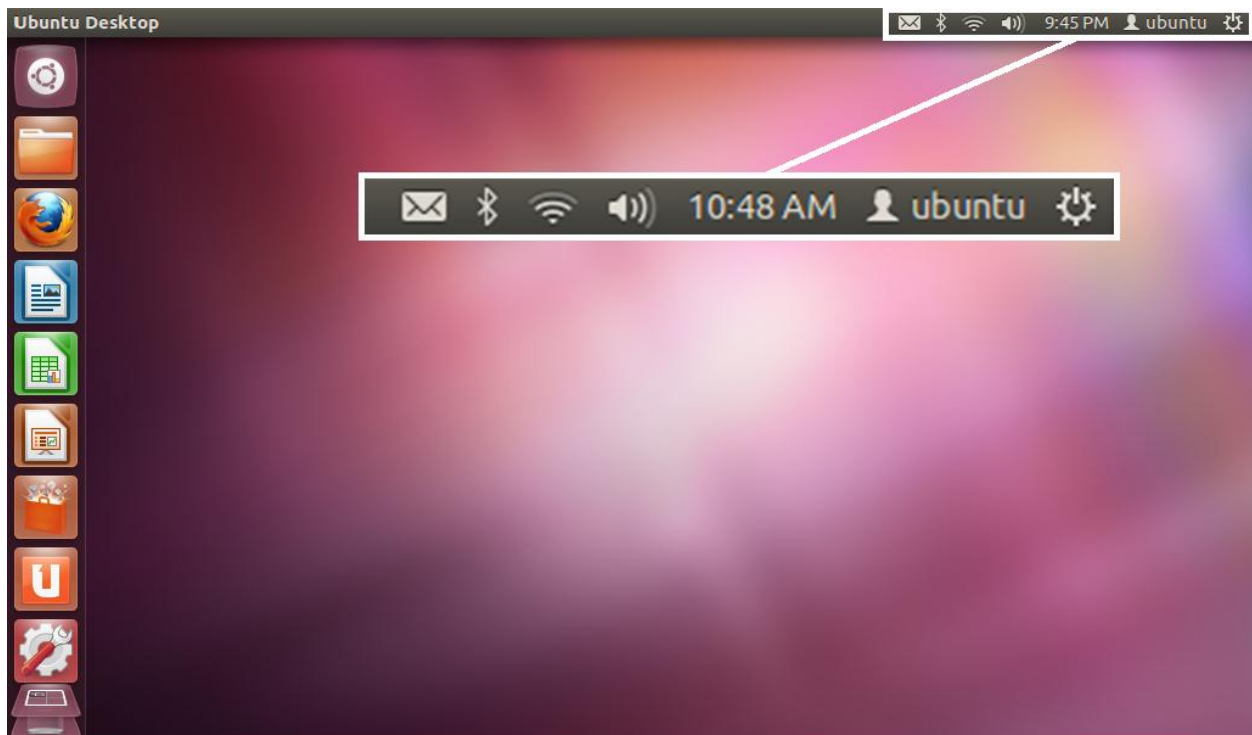


Figure 13: Notification Bar

The Notification Bar Icons

The Messaging Indicator.

The messaging indicator allows you to access any of your **chat accounts** (e.g. MSN, Yahoo!, google, etc.), your **broadcast accounts** (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, Linkedin, etc.), **Thunderbird** (i.e. local mail client), and **Ubuntu One** (i.e. cloud service).

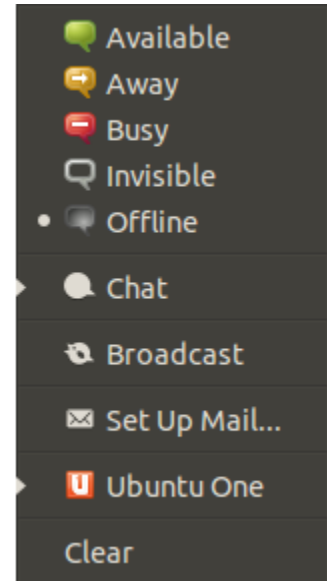


Figure 14: The Messaging Indicator

The Bluetooth Indicator

The Bluetooth indicator is where you can: enable **Bluetooth**, **Send Files to Device**, and manage **Bluetooth Settings**.

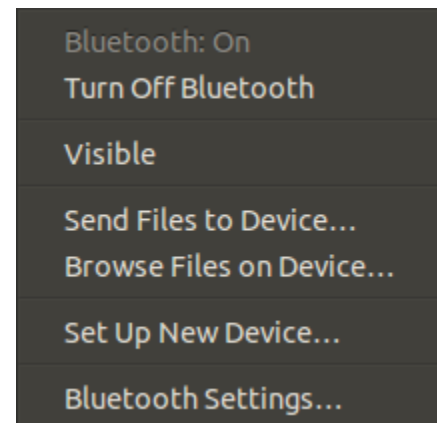


Figure 15: The Bluetooth Indicator

The Wireless Network Indicator

The wireless network indicator allows you to **connect to different wireless networks, create a new wireless network, and access connection information.**

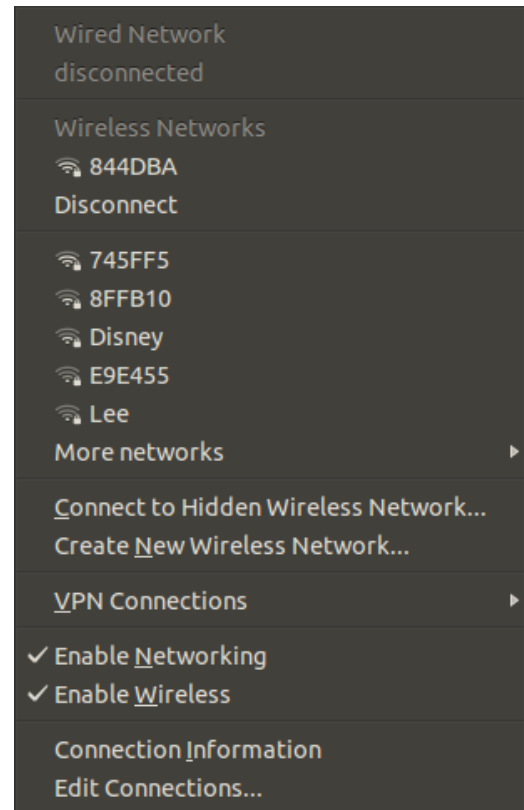


Figure 16: The Wireless Network

The Sound Indicator

The sound indicator allows you to **adjust the sound level, sound settings, and access Rhythmbox.**

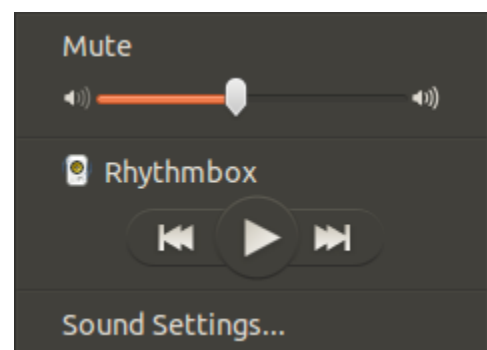


Figure 17: The Sound Indicator

10:48 AM The Time Indicator

The time indicator allows you to **change the time and date, view a calendar, and manage time and date settings.**

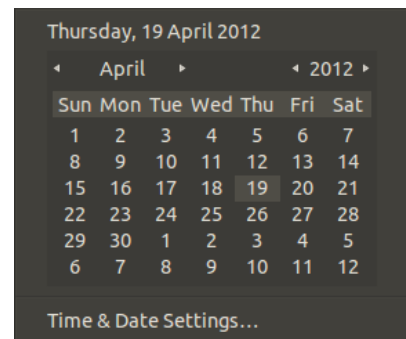


Figure 18: The Time Indicator

ubuntu The Me Menu

The me menu allows you to **switch user accounts, and manage user accounts.**

NOTE: The Guest account is strictly for temporary guest use only. Any work done in that account will not be saved.

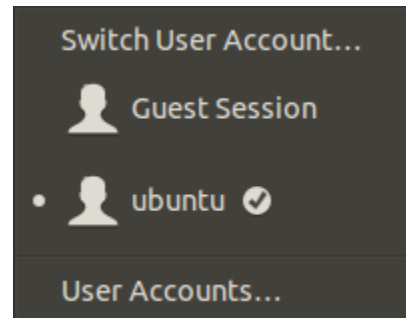


Figure 19: The Me Menu

⚙️ The Session Indicator

The session indicator allows you to manage **system settings, log out, and shut down.**

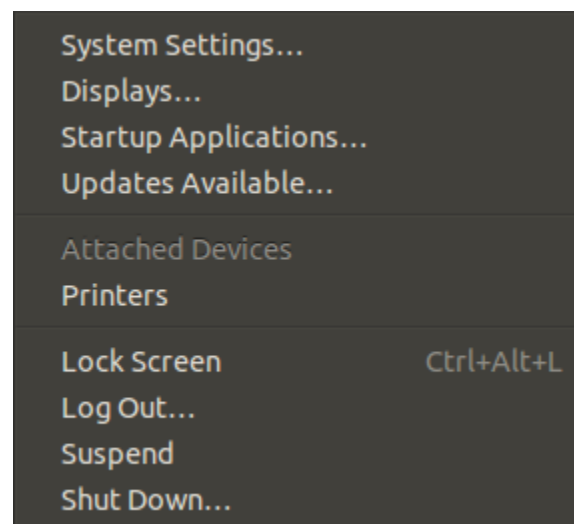


Figure 20: The Session Indicator

The Dash

The Dash is a search tool, which enables you to access files and applications on your computer and the internet.

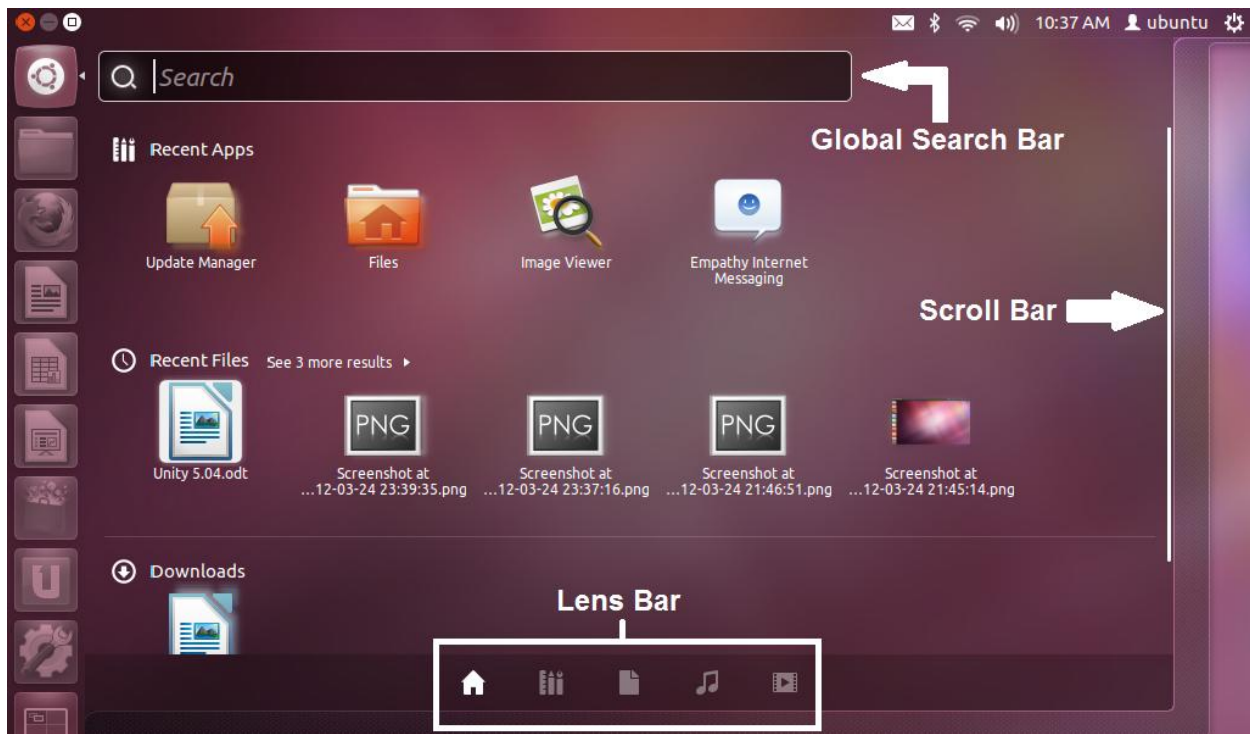


Figure 21: The Home Lens Tools

Global Search Bar

The global search bar is located at the top of the Dash screen (see Figure 21). This is where you can type the name of the application or file you are looking for. As you type, the Dash will anticipate what you are searching for and present you with the most relevant results (see Figure 22). Your search term can be altered either by pressing backspace to delete letter by letter, or by using the 'x' button (located at the beginning of the global search bar) to delete the entire field (see Figure 22).

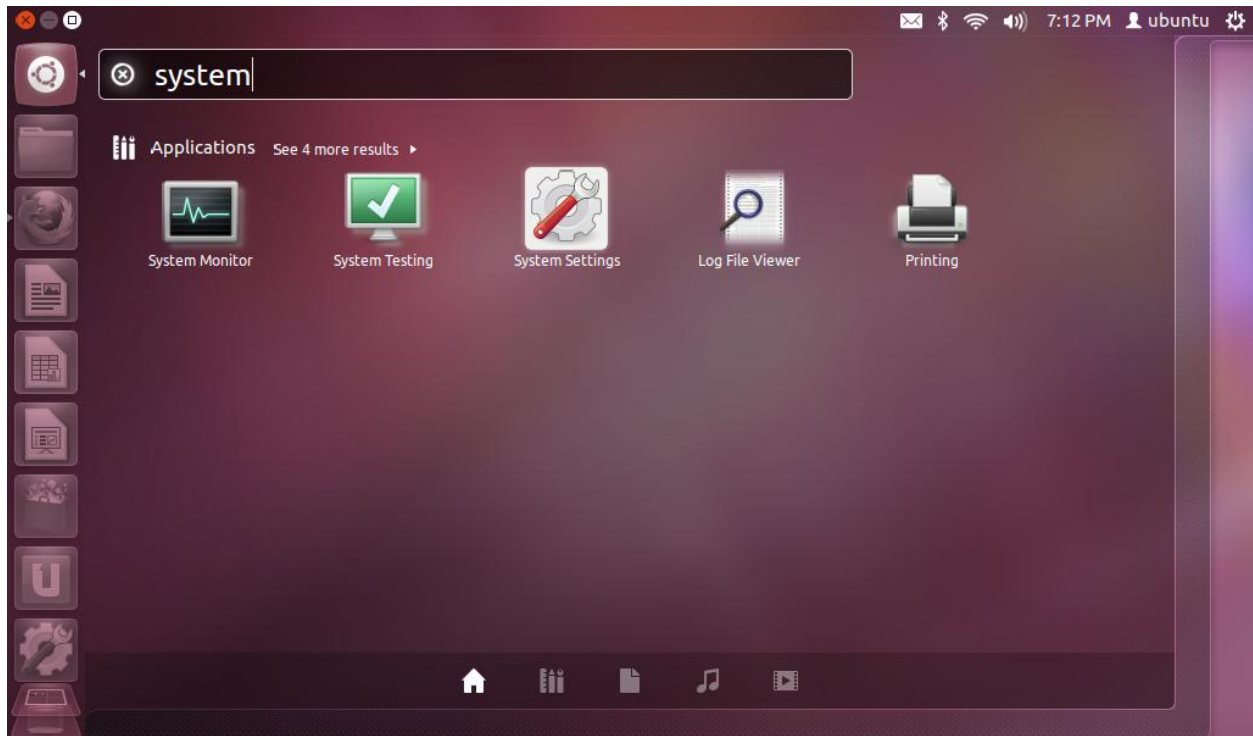


Figure 22: The Global Search Bar

Scroll Bar

The scroll bar is located on the right of the Dash screen. This tool allows you to move the screen up and down (see Figure 21).

The Lens Bar

The lens bar is located on the bottom of the Dash screen providing you with five lenses (see Figure 21).

Lenses and Scopes

The following section is intended to be an introduction to the Lenses and Scopes feature in Unity. More information can be found on **Make it Yours. Ubuntu 12.04 LTS Lens and Scopes**.

What is a Lens?

A lens allows you to search your computer and internet for just about anything. It provides you with organized, integrated, and easily-readable results.

The following five lenses are preloaded in the lens bar:

- Home
- Applications
- Files & Folders
- Music Collection
- Videos

TIP: Another convenient way to access the Lenses is from the Launcher – simply right-click the Dash home button to enable a quick-access menu.

What is a Scope?

A scope (or Filter Results) allows you to narrow your search parameters within each lens (except for the Home screen). For example, you could use your Video lens to search for videos in general, but you could use your scope to narrow your search to videos on specific websites, such as Youtube or Vimeo.

The Home Lens

The Home Lens is for basic searches of your entire computer or internet.

As the names indicate, the partitions offer you files and applications that you have recently used, or recently downloaded.

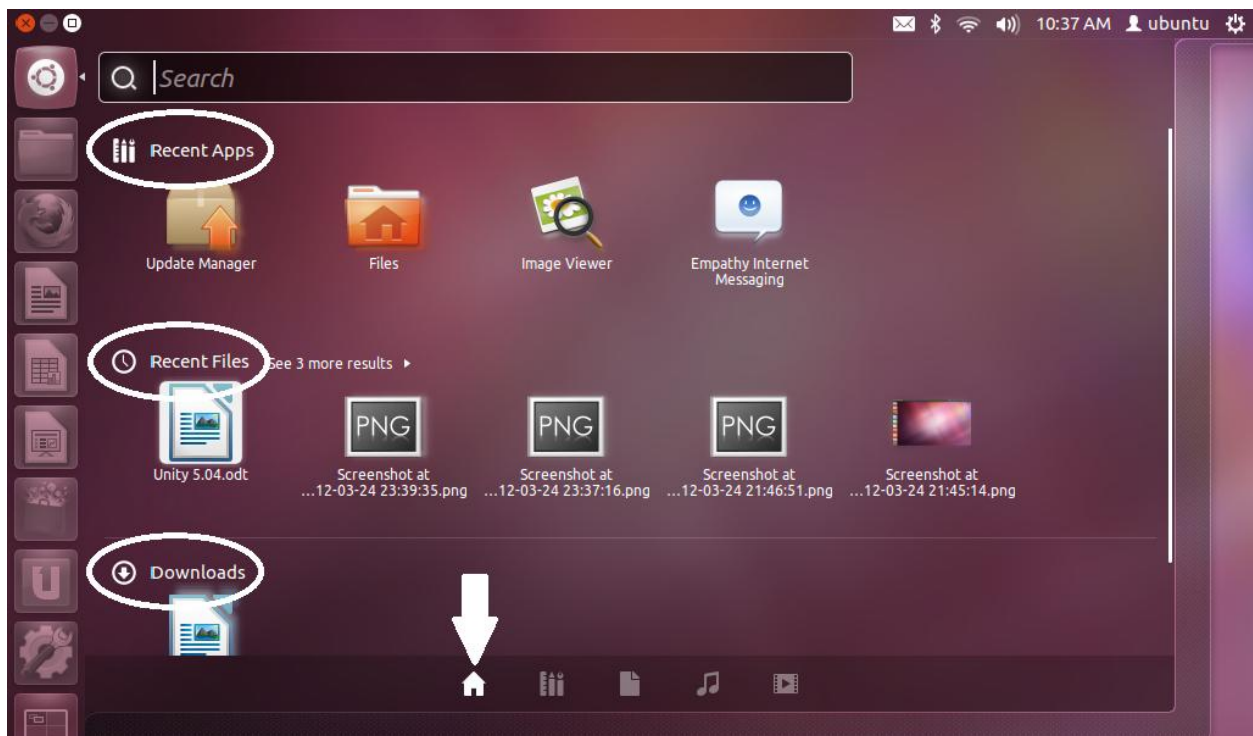


Figure 23: The Home Lens

NOTE: There is no scope for the Home Lens.

The Applications Lens and Scope

The Applications Lens is where you can search for applications on your computer. The advantage of searching within the Applications Lens is that it has a scope. The scope, or Filter results tab, is a dropdown menu that is located on the upper-right corner of the screen, which enables you to customize your search. With each selection, a different set of search results are automatically populated. You may select or deselect as many items in the list as you want.



Figure 24: Applications Lens and Scope

NOTE: If an app you are searching for doesn't appear in your dash search, it's because it's not installed on your computer.

TIP: To learn about downloading free software, see the section on Ubuntu Software Centre (P.31).

The Files & Folders Lens and Scope

The Files & Folders lens allows you to search your computer for files and folders. Similarly with the Applications Lens, the Files & Folders Lens is scope enabled. Simply click on the Filter results tab located in the upper-right corner of the screen to select such search options as: last modified, type, and size (see Figure 24).

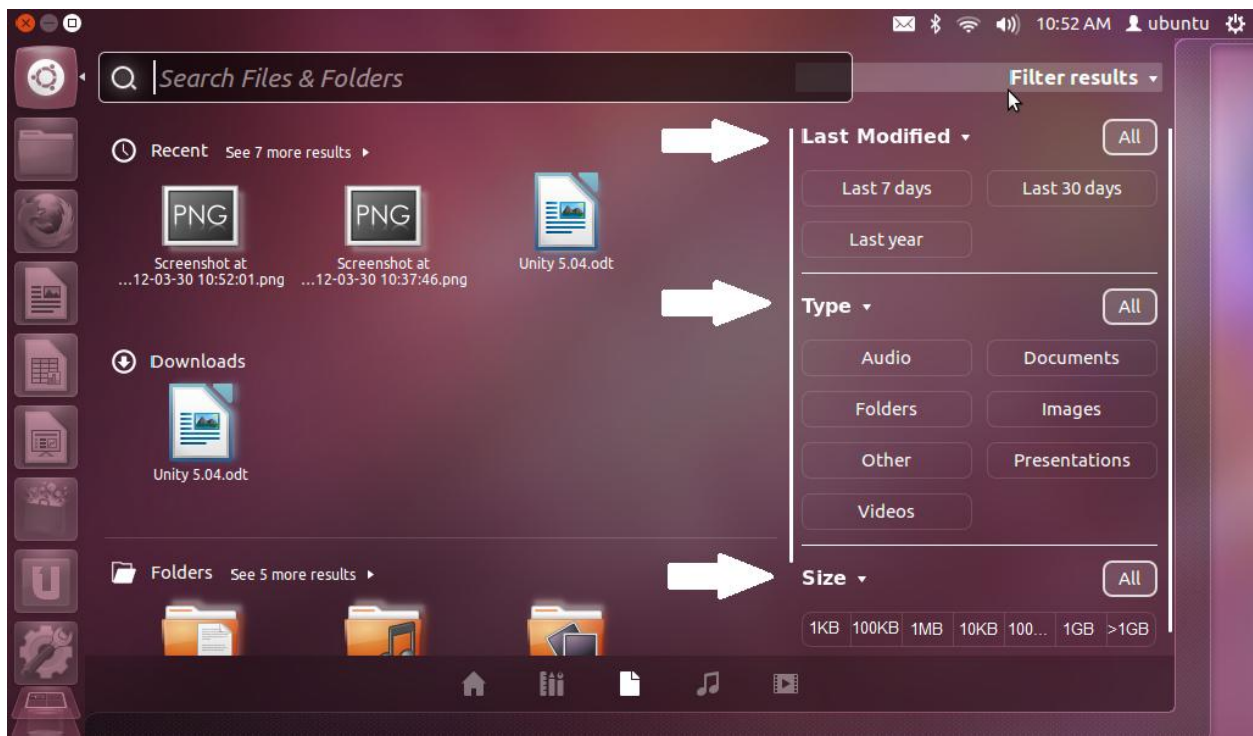


Figure 25: Files & Folders Lens and Scope

The Music Collection Lens and Scope

The Music Collection lens and scope allows you to search your music files on your computer and the internet. With the Music Collection scope, you can narrow your search by decade, genre, and sources. Simply click on the Filter results tab located in the upper-right corner of the screen to modify your search.

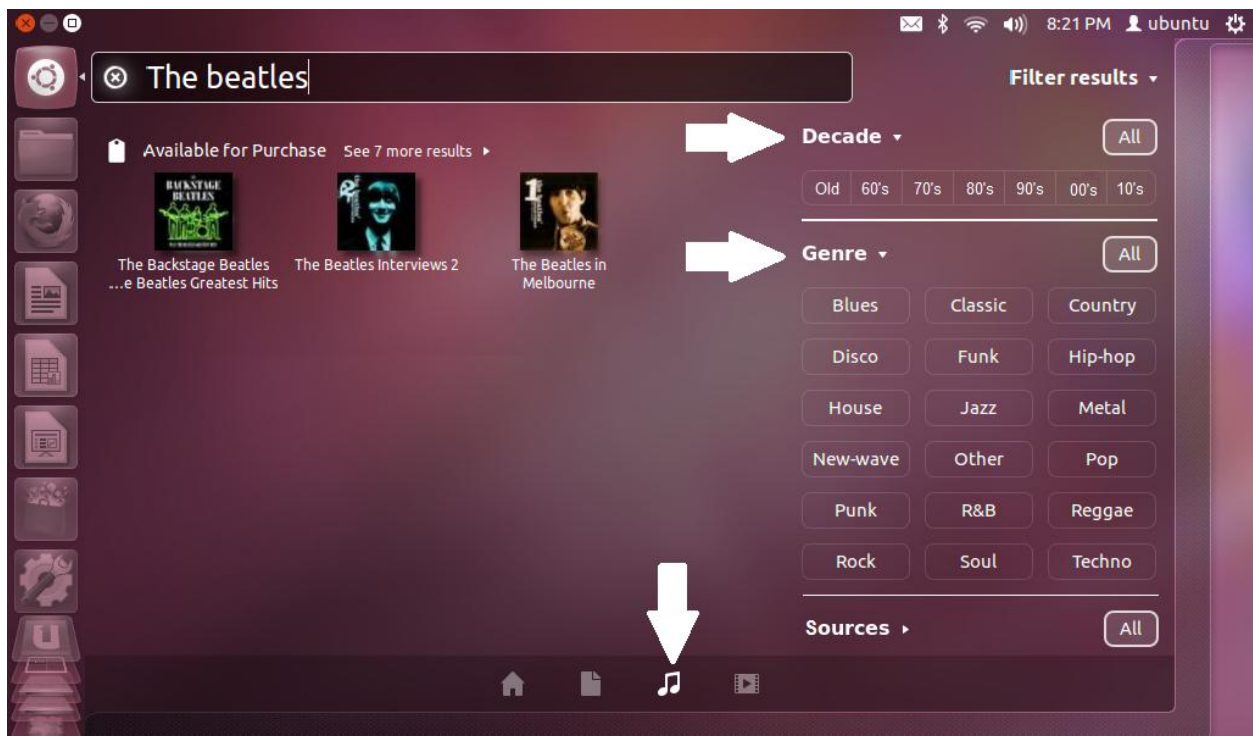


Figure 26: Music Collection Lens and Scope

Videos Lens and Scope

The Videos lens and scope allows you to search for videos on your computer and the internet. With the Videos scope, you can narrow your search by different video sources, such as your My Videos folder, or online videos, such as YouTube, TED Talks, or Vimeo. Simply click on the Filter results tab located in the upper-right corner of the screen to modify your search.

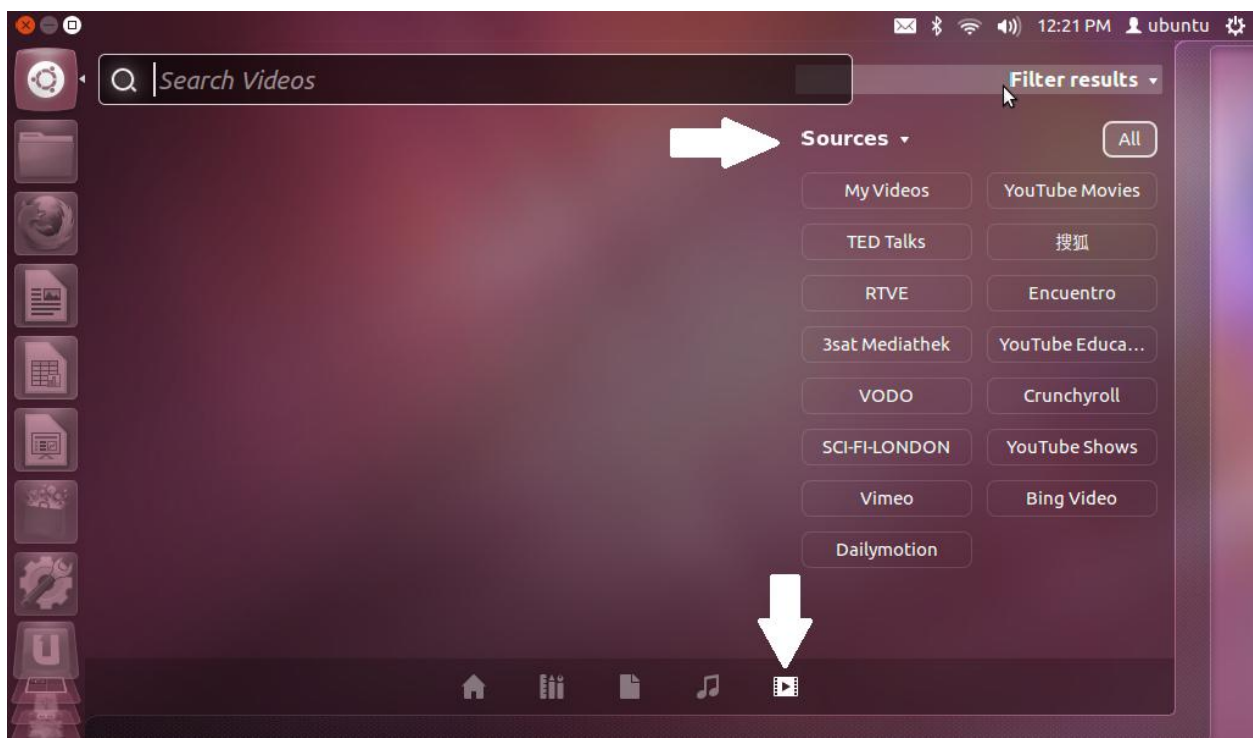


Figure 27: Video and Lens Scope

Ubuntu Software Centre

The Ubuntu Software Centre allows you to download from thousands of applications available on Ubuntu, the majority of which are free.

Categories for applications range from games to professional software. In every category, the Ubuntu Software Centre presents you with the top rated downloads as well as the most recent (you may also search by name). Before downloading, you will be able to read product descriptions and reviews, view ratings, and see screenshots.



Figure 28: Ubuntu Software Centre

TIP: If you are switching to Ubuntu and want to find similar alternatives, view **Appendix A: Quick Switch Guide**.

In Figure 29, we see a screen shot of the Accessories category within the Ubuntu Software Centre. By default it has arranged the accessories by top rated. A different sorting arrangement can be selected from the drop down menu, which is located in the upper-right corner of the screen.

Click on any item in the list to display the “More info” and the “Install” button. Once an application is installed, it will show up in the “Installed” tab, which is located in the top of the screen (see Figure 29).

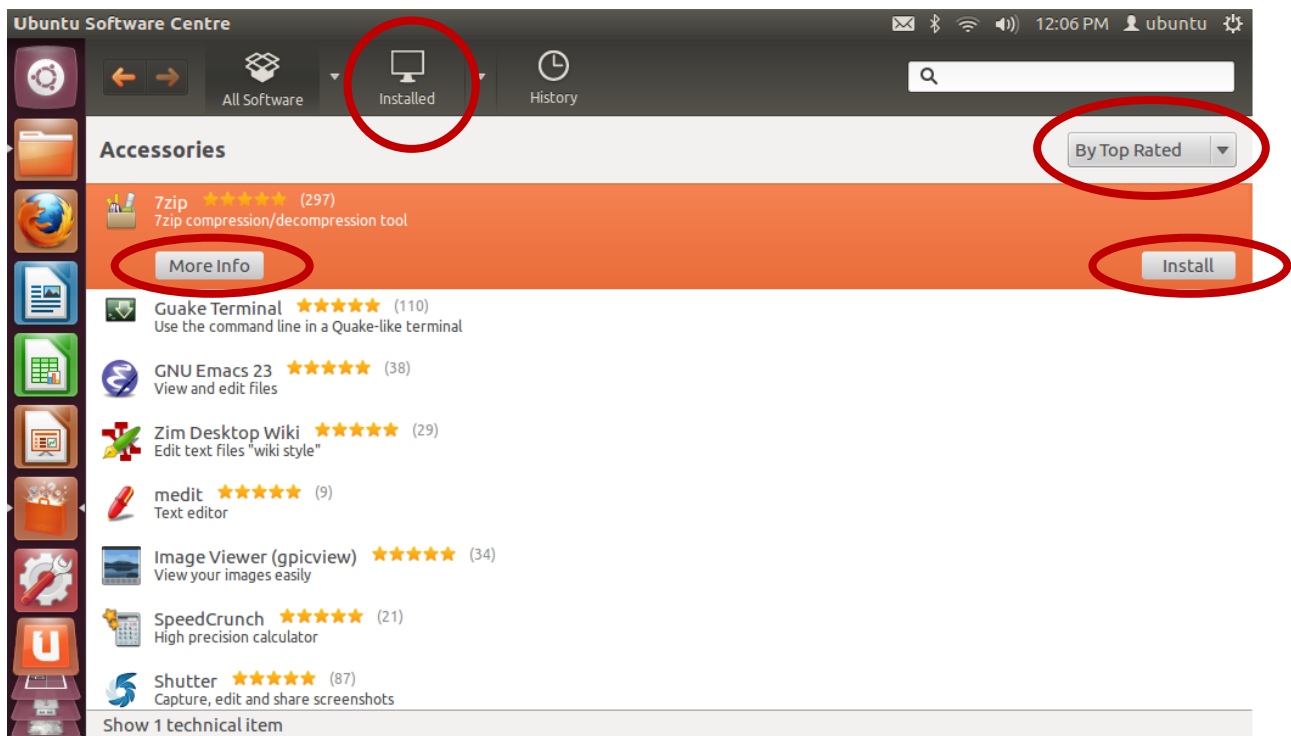


Figure 29: Accessories

TIP: For more comprehensive functionality of the Ubuntu Software Centre, please see the [Ubuntu Software Centre 11.10 – Apps for the Masses Guide](http://frenchfortunecookie.wordpress.com/chic-guides/).

<http://frenchfortunecookie.wordpress.com/chic-guides/>

Music/Picture/Video Editing

Managing and editing your media requires capable software. Fortunately, everything you need to create professional content is available for download in the Ubuntu Software Centre.

Music Editing

Editing music is made fun and easy with Audacity. Best of all, it is free in Ubuntu Software Centre.

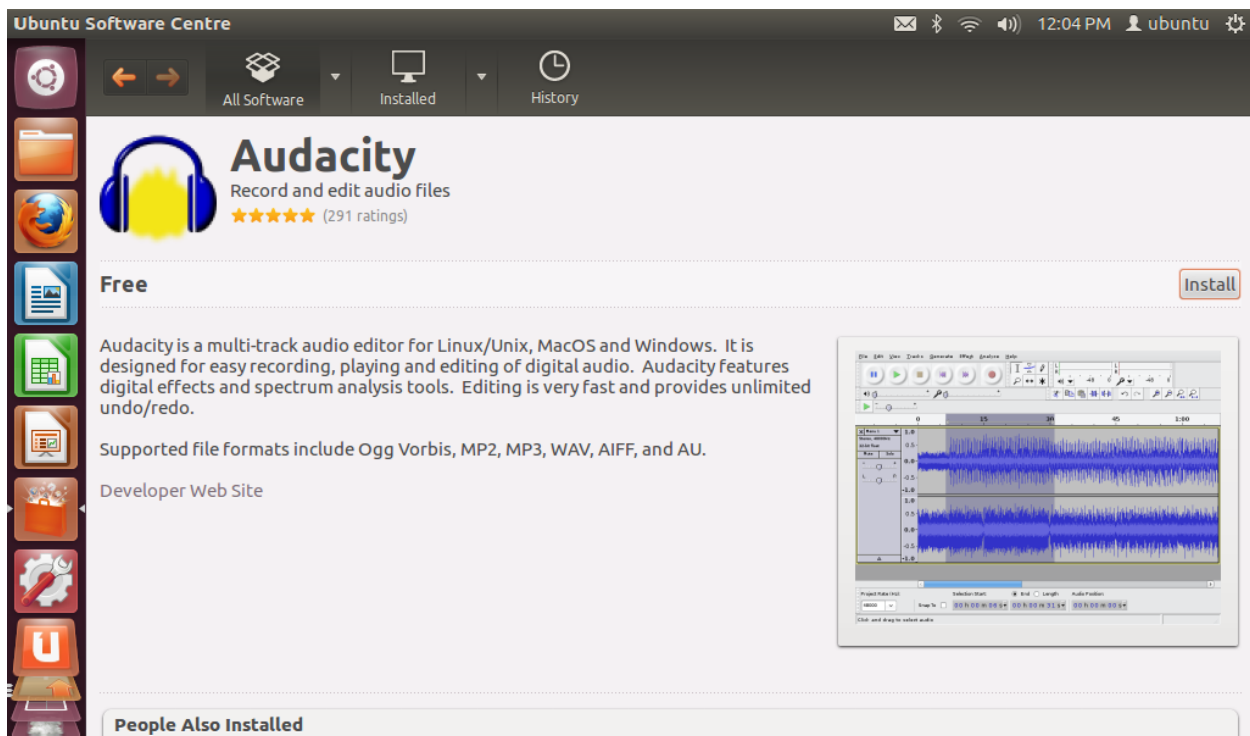


Figure 30: Audacity

Picture Editing

Try GIMP Image Editor for enhancing and retouching your photos. It comes equipped with a large collection of professional-level editing tools. It is available for free in Ubuntu Software Centre.



Figure 31: GIMP Image Editor

Video Editing

Pitivi Video Editor is one of the top rated video editors in the Ubuntu Software Centre. With Pitivi Video Editor, you can easily edit your audio and video projects. Best of all, it's free!

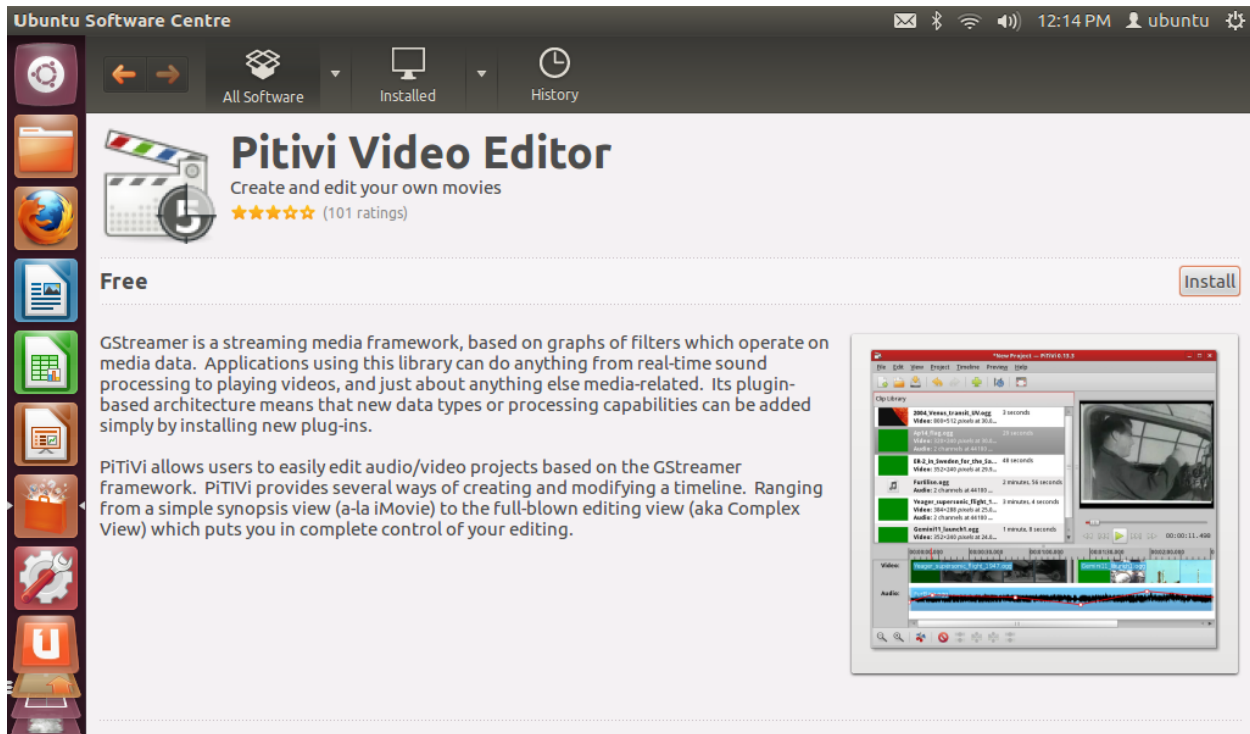


Figure 32: Pitivi Video Editor

LibreOffice 3

LibreOffice 3 is the latest version of a set of office suite software programs that come standard with Ubuntu. With these programs, you can create professional documents, spreadsheets, and presentations. The programs are easy to use, packed with the features you need, and it's completely free!

In this section, we will introduce you to the following three LibreOffice 3 programs:

- Writer
- Calc
- Impress

NOTE: All other LibreOffice 3 programs can be found in the Ubuntu Software Centre. Just type “Libre” in the search bar.



LibreOffice Writer

Writer is a complete word processor with all the features you need to create professional-looking documents. It is fully capable of opening and saving a wide variety of document types, including DOC, DOCX, and ODT.

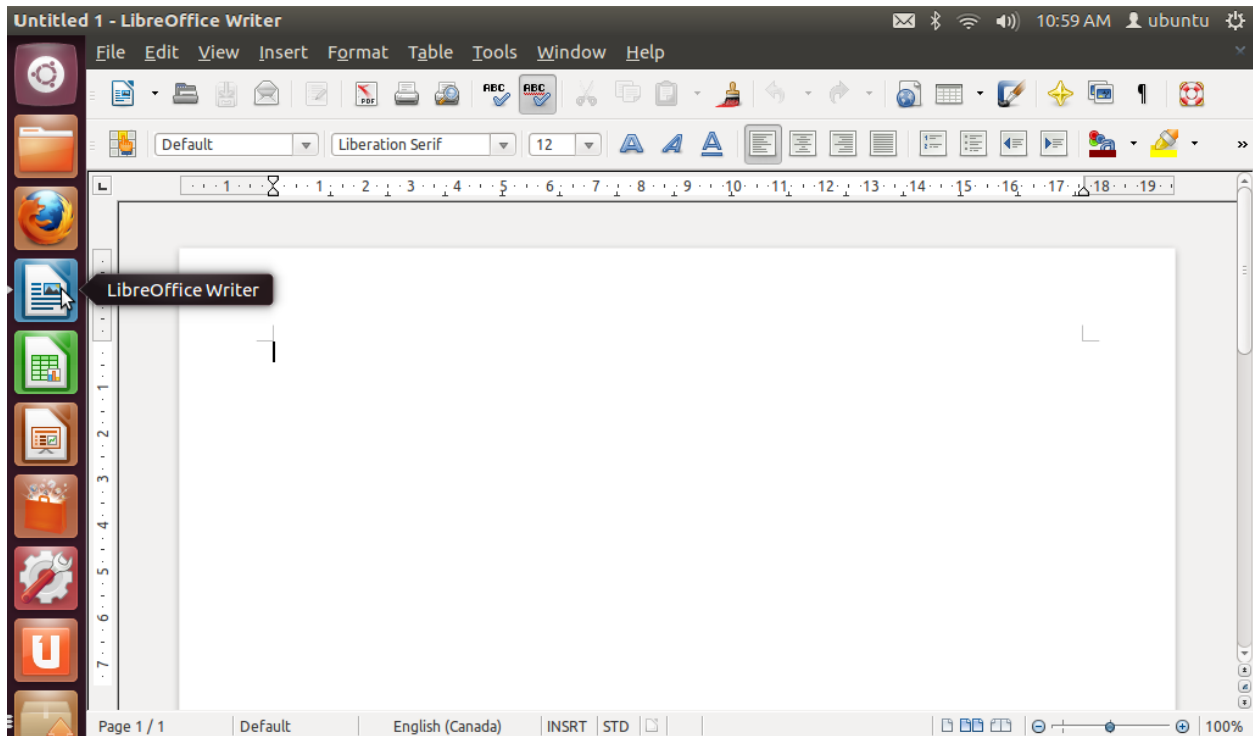


Figure 33: LibreOffice Writer

TIP: To guarantee that your documents can be opened by the widest range of products, save your documents in Open Document TEXT (ODT) format. ODT is an XML-based format, which means it can be accessed using any Open Document Text-compliant software.

LibreOffice Calc

Calc is a program that allows you to perform calculations, analyze information, and manage lists in professional-looking spreadsheets. It is fully capable of opening and saving a wide variety of document types.

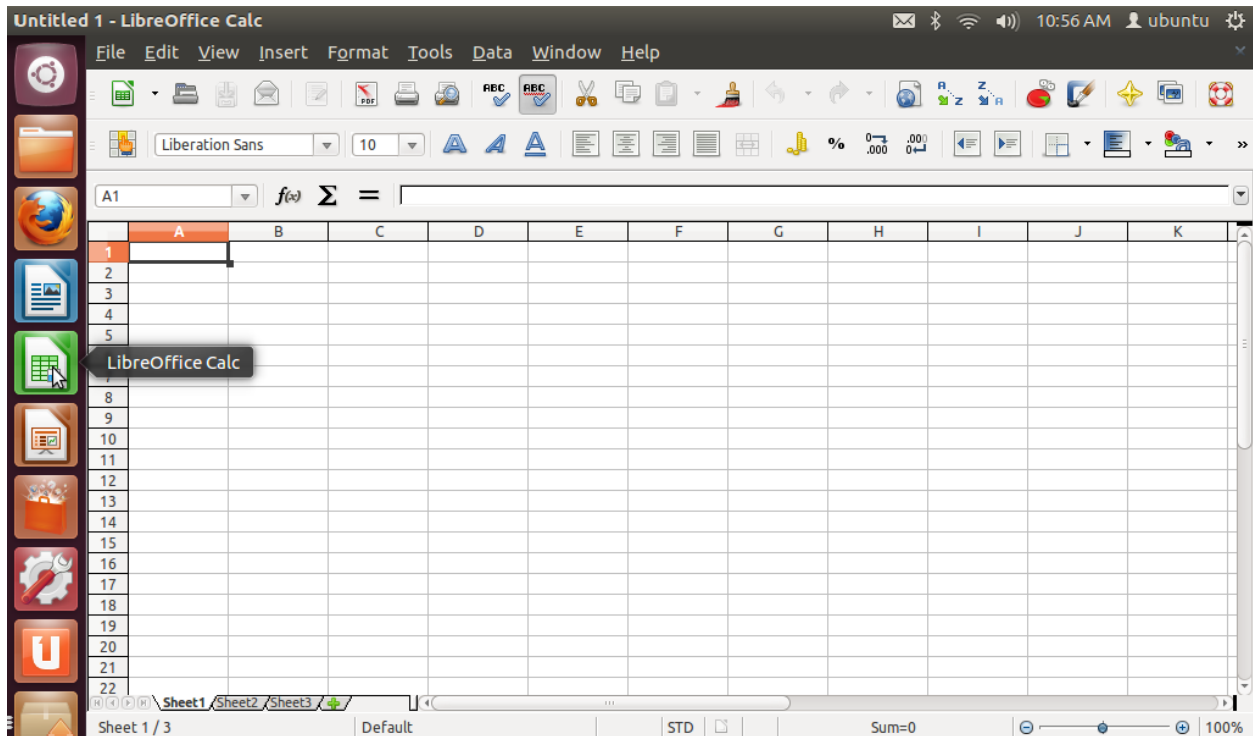


Figure 34: LibreOffice Calc

LibreOffice Impress

Impress is a program that allows you to create and edit professional-looking slides for presentations, slideshows, and web pages. It is fully capable of opening and saving a wide variety of document types.

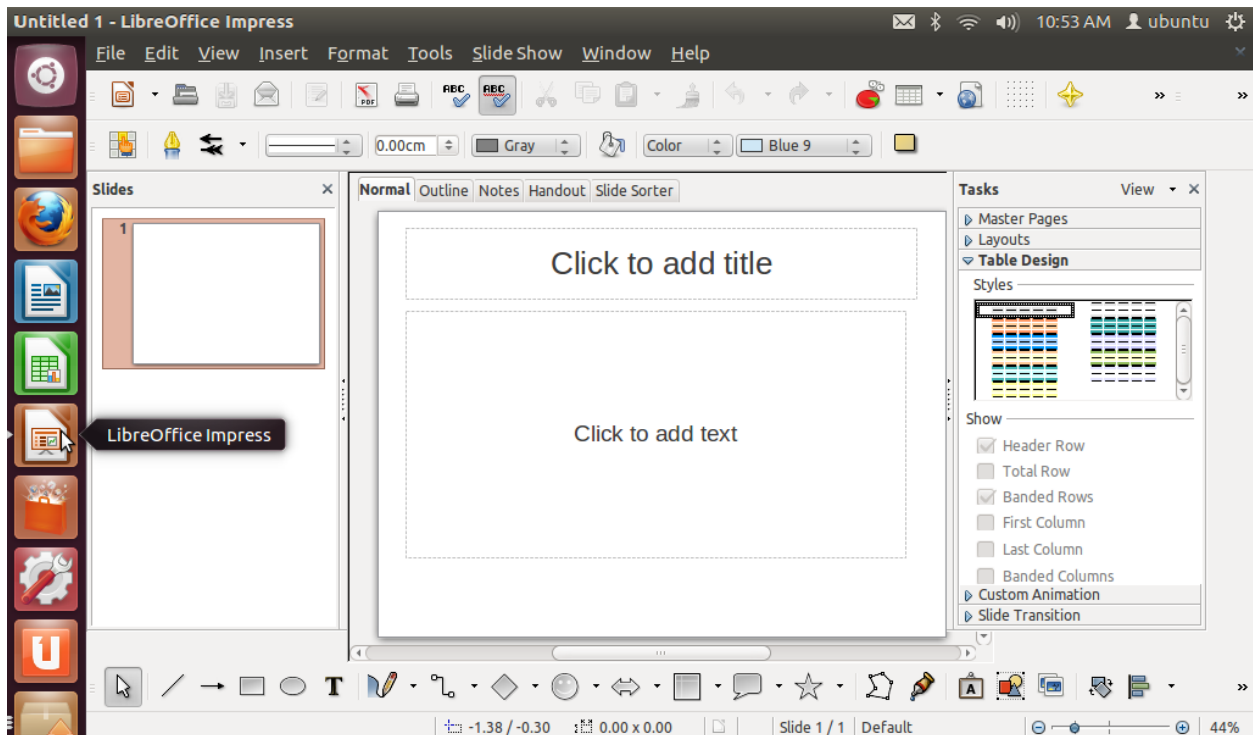


Figure 35: LibreOffice Impress

System Updates

To ensure that your system is operating at its optimum, it is necessary to continue to install system updates. As with any computer software, there will be bugs (i.e. compatibility or functionality issues). Fortunately, there are updates to fix many of these known issues.

To install the latest system updates, go to the Dash home button (first icon in the Launcher) and search for Update Manager (see Figure 36).

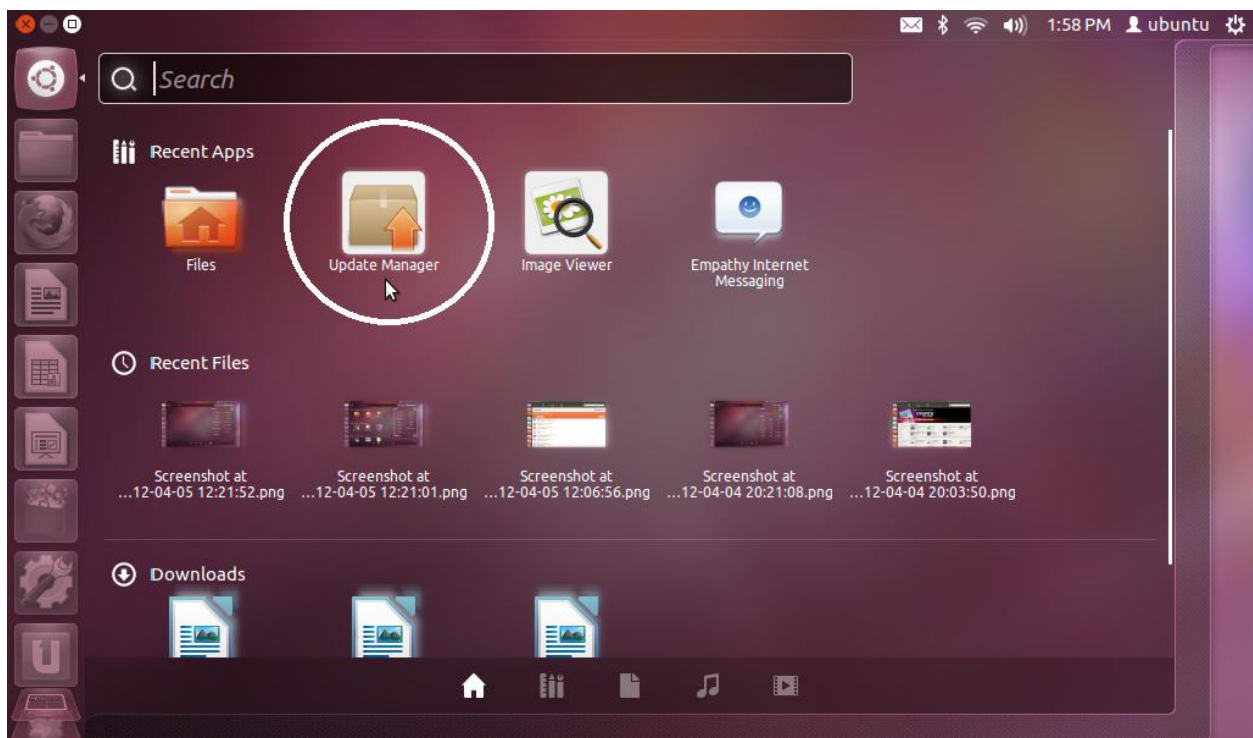


Figure 36: Update Manager

Once you have found the Update Manager application, single click the Update Manager icon and it will present you with all the updates available for your computer. On the bottom portion of the dialogue box, there will be a button labelled “Install Updates”. Simply select that button to proceed with the update installation (see Figure 37).

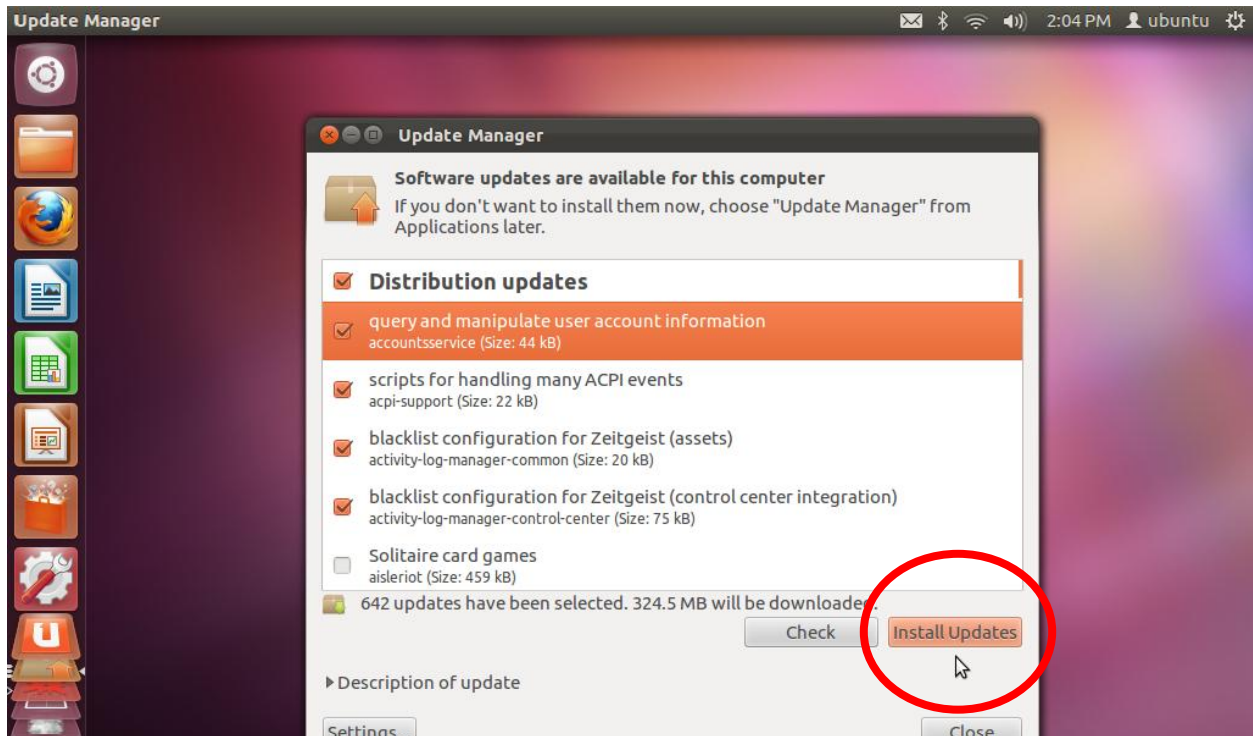


Figure 37: Update Manager Dialogue Box

NOTE: You will be prompted to enter your login password to install updates.

Ubuntu One Cloud Storage

Ubuntu One is a cloud storage service that allows you to store, sync, and share information in a cloud server. It offers you 5 Gigabytes (GB) of free storage and is compatible with the two most common proprietary¹ operating systems currently in the market. This is great because you can access your files, photos, and music, wherever you are.

Adding files is as easy as dragging and dropping files from any local file (docs, music, video, etc) into Ubuntu One.

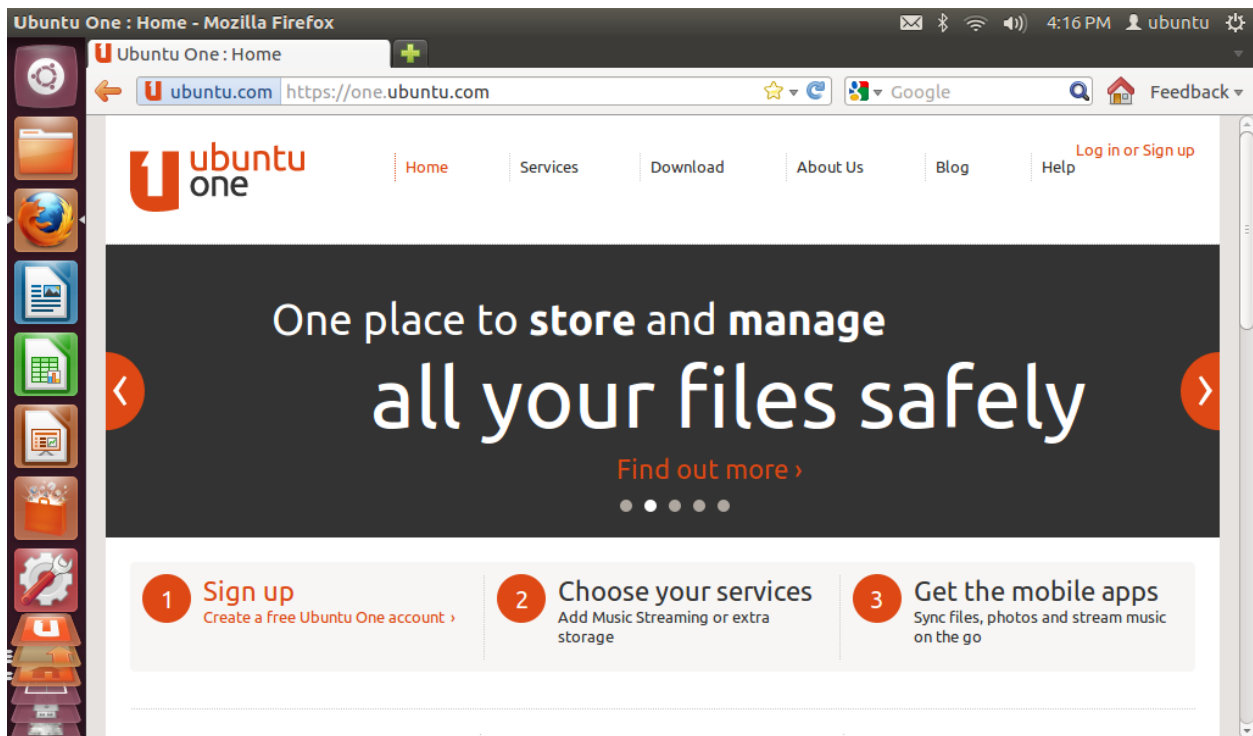


Figure 38: Ubuntu One

¹ Proprietary software means that the copyright holder (not the user) retains exclusive legal right to the software. As such, there are certain restrictions prohibiting the user from modifying or distributing the software.

There are a number of different ways to access your Ubuntu One service. To access it from your computer, click on the Ubuntu One icon in Launcher (see Figure 39). You can also access Ubuntu One through the Home Folder.

If you are away from your computer, you can also access it via the website one.ubuntu.com.

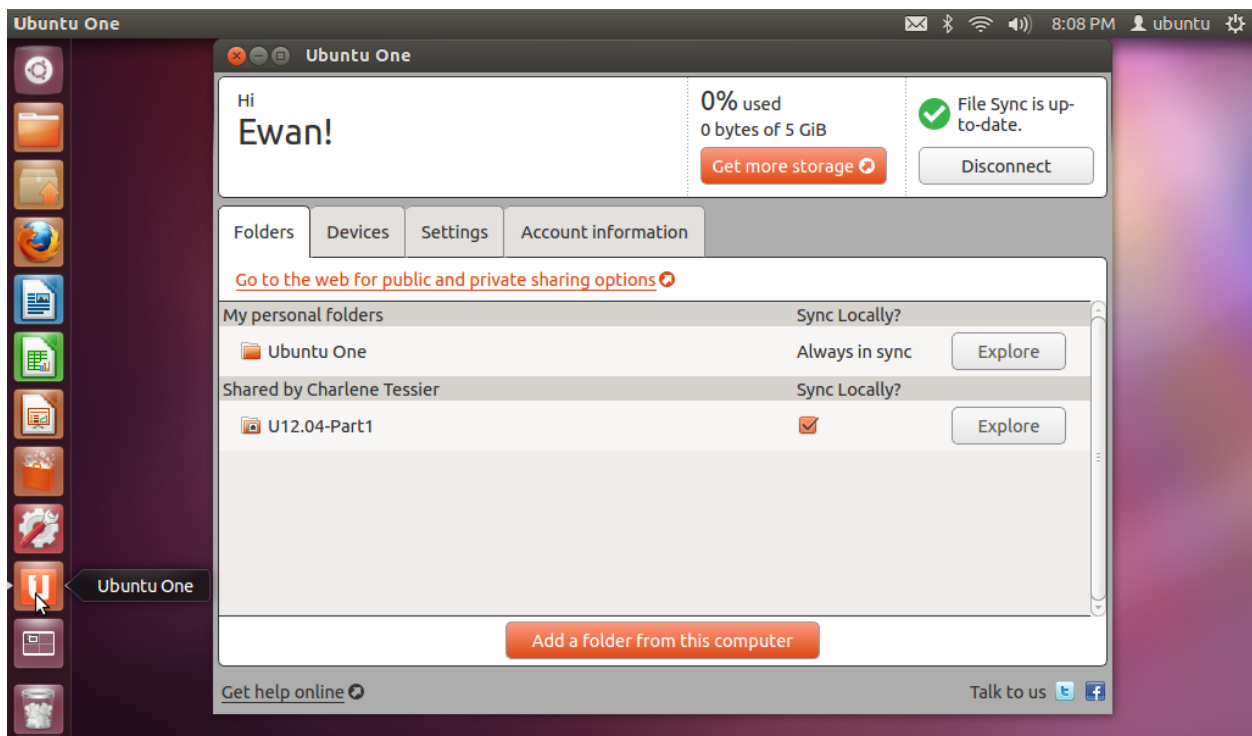


Figure 39: Ubuntu One from Launcher

Heads Up Display, or HUD

The Heads Up Display, or HUD, is an innovative search command tool that works across multiple applications. To access the HUD, simply press ALT. As you type into the HUD, the powerful search engine processes your request in real-time and produces the most relevant results. With every keystroke, your search becomes narrower as the HUD hones in on the task that you want.

Figure 40 demonstrates how easy it is to bookmark your favourite webpage.

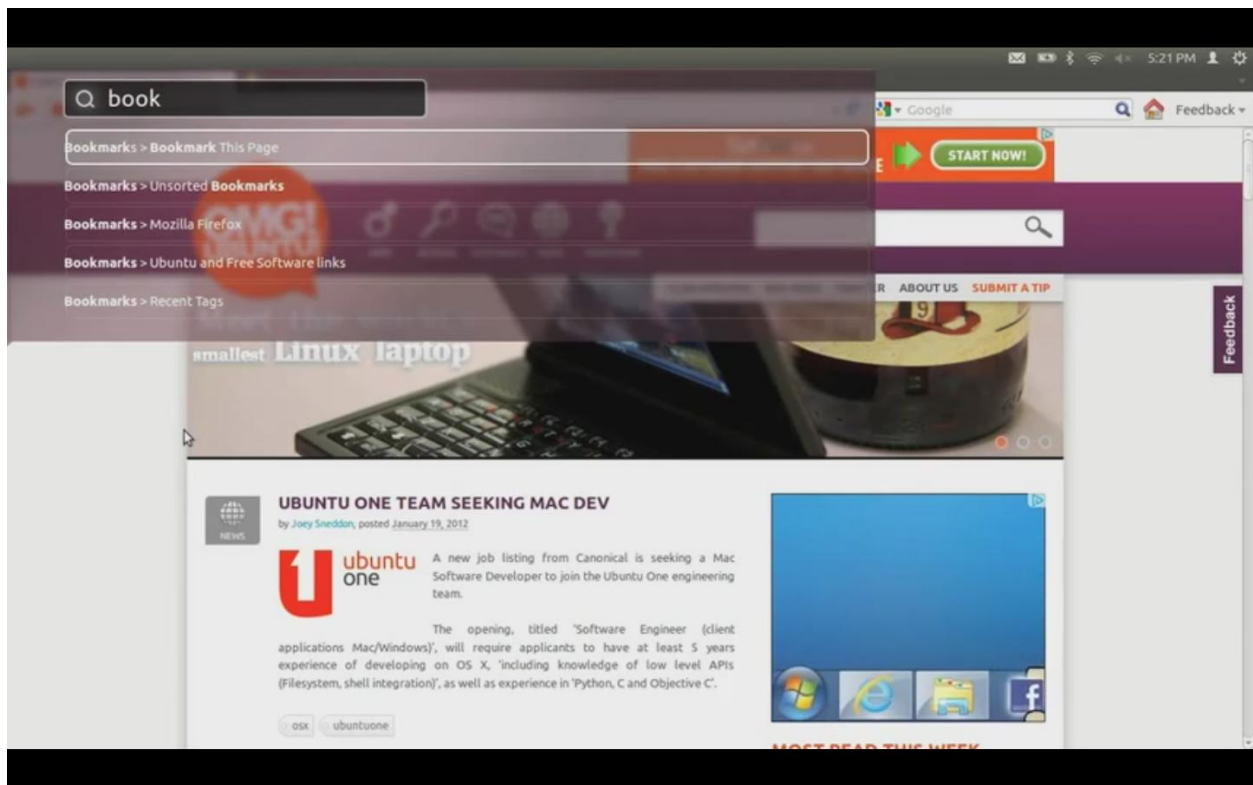


Figure 40: Heads Up Display (HUD)

NOTE: You cannot access the HUD from within the Dash.

Use the HUD with Inkscape Vector Graphic Editor to accelerate your productivity. Figure 41 demonstrates how easy it is to apply a glow effect to a vector object.

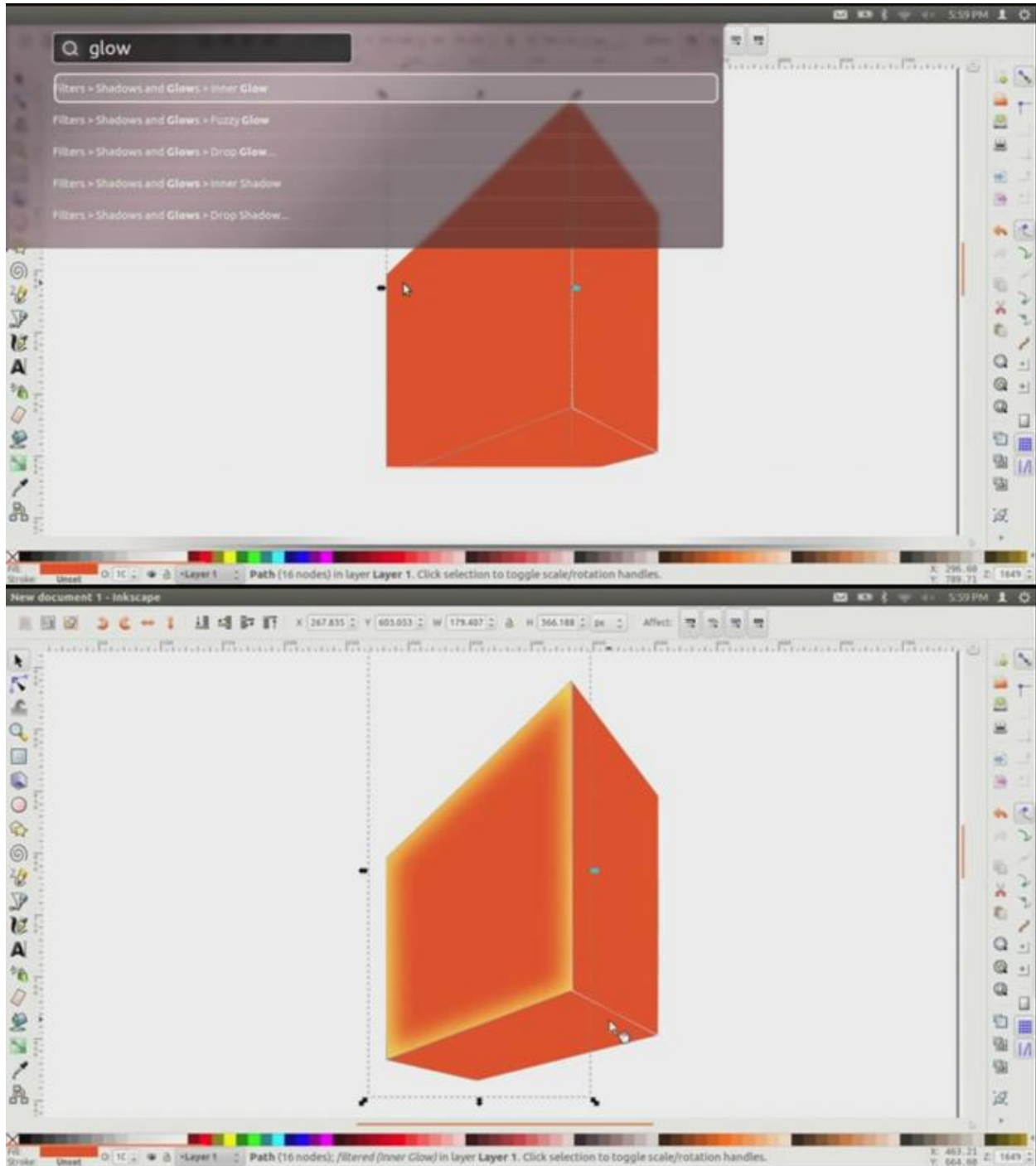


Figure 41: Using HUD with Inkscape Vector Graphics Editor

Whether you are web-browsing or illustrating, just begin typing what you want to do, and the smart index appears immediately responding to your intentions.

Along with the search results, the HUD also displays breadcrumbs (e.g. Filters > Shadows & Glow > Inner Glow) allowing you to understand where to locate the command manually. This serves as a fundamental difference with the traditional menu-style interface. With the HUD, there are no hotkeys to remember and no more clumsy navigation through vague and robust menus. Let the HUD's sophisticated index do all the work and watch your expertise grow.

Wrap-Up

This guide is intended to provide an overview of some basic functionality of Unity. For more advanced guides, please visit:

Ubuntu 12.04 LTS – Achieve Personal Unity – Customization Guide

Make it Yours. Ubuntu 12.04 LTS Lens and Scopes

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Appendix A: Quick Switch Guide

The following table will help you get started with some open-source software alternatives to the software you may be familiar with.

All Ubuntu software is available for free from the Ubuntu Software Centre. For even more alternatives, visit Ubuntuguide.org.

PROPRIETARY SOFTWARE	UBUNTU SOFTWARE
Adobe Acrobat	PDF Reader
Adobe After Effects	GIMP (Plugins)
Adobe Illustrator	Inkscape
Adobe Photoshop	GIMP
Bittorrent (& other p2p)	Transmission
CD Copy	Sound Juicer
iTunes	Banshee
MS Access	LibreOffice Base
MS Excel	LibreOffice Calc
MS Outlook	Evolution
MS Powerpoint	LibreOffice Impress
MS Project	Planner
MS Word	LibreOffice Writer
MSN Messenger	Empathy
Quicken & MS Money	KmyMoney
Windows Media Player	VLC

Table 1: Ubuntu Quick Switch Guide²

² Courtney Loo, "[Ubuntu Software Centre – Streamline Your Software Experience Ubuntu 11.04 Edition](#)" (Ubuntu Software Centre Documentation 1.00, September 2011), 24.