Slackware Experience

Personal notes on using Slackware. Some old notes have been archived.

Do note that Slackware also has a great documentation site.

Getting Slackware

The official way to do this is, of course, to get it from slackware.com.

Personally, I have getslack, a bash script based on (more accurately, a trimmed-down version of) the excellent (he termed it *infamous*) mirror-slackware-current.sh by Alien Bob. When going down this path, the next step would be to prepare the installation media.

Slackware Installer ISO Image

I no longer need an ISO image (refer to USB installer below). But, I have my slack2iso script (also based on Alien Bob's script) that can help in creating one using the tree downloaded by `getslack`.

Slackware USB Installer

Alien Bob has provided a script to make/setup/configure a USB-based Slackware installation media. I wanted to do something simpler using the existing files in the Slackware tree that I mirrored using `getslack` (mentioned above). So, here is how I got that working.

1. Create a FAT32 partition
   - use `fdisk` and make sure it is bootable (bootable flag enabled)
   - use `mkdosfs` (e.g. `mkdosfs -F 32 /dev/sdb1`)
2. Use syslinux to provide bootloader
   - create a `/linux/boot/syslinux` folder on the USB
   - type

     ```
     syslinux -d /linux/boot/syslinux /dev/sdb1
     ```

     Note: On newer syslinux, use `-i` to indicate new installation

   - a file `ldlinux.sys` should appear in `/linux/boot/syslinux`
3. Copy boot facilities from Slackware tree to the media
   - copy a kernel from slackware tree to `/linux/boot` (I used `huge.s`)
   - copy `initrd.img` and `message.txt` to `/linux/boot`
   - copy `isolinux.cfg` to `/linux/boot/syslinux` as `syslinux.cfg`
   - edit `syslinux.cfg` accordingly (initrd, kernel params, etc.)
4. Copy slackware<64> in the Slackware tree (I used a shorter folder name like slack on the USB)

And... we're done! Now we have a simple Slackware USB Installer and install it on every computer we can get our hands on! 😎

Note: GPT Disks and EFI

Things moving to (U)EFI and GPT... slowly leaving legacy BIOS and MBR.

Instead of MBR, we use GPT partitioning scheme:

- supports bigger disk
- supports EFI booting (easier to maintain actually :p)

Partition codes are 2-bytes instead (only 1-byte on MBR's partition table). Among the common ones:

- EF00 (EFI System Partition): this is what EFI boot look for
  - format FAT32

```
mkdosfs -F 32 -n MY1EFI /dev/sdxx
```

- 0700 (MS Basic Data): Windows Partition
  - format NTFS

```
mkntfs -f -L MY1WIN /dev/sdxx
```

- 8300 (Linux filesystem): Linux Partition
  - format EXT4

```
mkfs.ext4 -L MY1LIN /dev/sdxx
```

Once boot using EFI, `efibootmgr` tool can be used (available on Slackware 14.2)

- to create an entry labelled `Slackware` with loader file named `\efi\slackware\elilo.efi` located on first partition of first disk (`/dev/sda1`)

```
efibootmgr -c -d /dev/sda -p 1 -L "Slackware" -l
"\efi\slackware\elilo.efi"
```

- to delete an entry xxxx (bootnum)

```
efibootmgr -b xxxx -B
```

- to re-order boot sequence

```
efibootmgr -o xxxx,yyyy,zzzz
```

2025/01/01 15:54 · azman

Installing Slackware

Installation notes (i.e. packages, configs).

LastUpdated20250112

Basic Install

Using Slackware installer.

- official packages (`getslack`)
  - checkout my `getslack` config file
  - without kde (AND xfce if going DE-less)
  - `removepkg gnuchess xaos xsnow`
  - `removepkg joe nano vim-gvim slackpkg`
- setup/config
  - sample elilo.conf

    elilo.conf

```
prompt
#chooser=simple
timeout=50
default=Slack
image=vmlinuz-huge
        label=SlackHuge
        read-only
        append="root=/dev/sda2 resume=/dev/sda4 vga=normal"
image=vmlinuz
        label=Slack
        initrd=initrd.gz
        read-only
        append="root=/dev/sda2 resume=/dev/sda4 vga=normal"
```

  - make sure vim does not create backups (edit `/usr/share/vim/vimrc`)
    - or, run `vimstart` (from my1shell repo)
  - dmesg no longer allowed for user
    - append `rc.local` ← `echo 0 > /proc/sys/kernel/dmesg_restrict`
    - or, run `setup_slack` (from my1shell repo)
- additional packages (`getslackpack`)
  - checkout my `getslackpack` config file and repository list
  - (alien) openjdk libreoffice libreoffice-dict-en“
- additional packages (`getslackbuild`)
  - `slackware-xdm-theme`
  - `geany unrar`
  - `nss-mdns avahi libdaemon`

    - actually, scripts from slackbuilds.org (commonly used)

DE-less config

This is what I do for a `lean` (not necessarily minimal, but trimmed to my liking) installation.

- setup acpi from my personal script
- additional packages (`getslackbuild`)
    - `dmenu slock st wmname`
    - `rox-filer pmount`
- custom dwm build
    - using my own build script (which has personalized patches)

Updating

To maintain:

- run slack-update
    - this actually runs 3 scripts (`getslack`,`getslackpack`,`getslackbuild`)
- run slackpatch (if required)
- run getslackbuild build -x -i (if required)

Sample configuration files for the above scripts are here.

2025/01/12 07:57 · azman

Using Slackware-current

This is actually NOT recommended for beginners. But, sometimes, the need to use the latest software is unavoidable and this COULD be a solution. Plus, this will add a LOT of COOL-points 😎😎 😎

Note: *I have removed a section on DE-less installation since my current Slackware installations ARE, in fact, DE-less.*

Note: *I have also removed a section on hijacking other Linux system - this, here, turned out to be VERY similar to what needed to be done.*

Installing

[LastUpdated20210620]

I need to use GTK3 version that is newer that the one on 14.2, so I tried the development version

(**slackware64-current**). I have done the same once (pre-11), so I am aware that there can be some issues when doing this. I am happy to say that I AM writing this on a slackware64-current (15.0 beta?) installation on my laptop.

So, this is a little note to my future self (or anybody that may be find this useful ***DISCLAIMER: Use this at your own risk!***). I am doing this while still using Devuan and I want to keep that for backup, in case things go wrong. (On a side note, the reason I use Devuan was because of the GTK3 version.) So, I have an extra partition that I have reformatted and prepared to download the stuffs I need.

- download official packages (`getslack`)
  - create download path: `<mount-path>/home/share/slackware`
  - create custom getslack config `.getslack`
  - set `VERS=current`
  - exclude kde & xfce
- setup EFI boot
  - `bzImage` in kernels/huge.s (rename to `vmlinuz`)
  - `initrd.img` in isolinux/ (this has the slackware setup)
- boot and run installation as usual
  - DO NOT format partition (packages are there!)
  - pick packages from mounted path
  - manually set kernel to boot (i use huge - generic needs initramfs)
- boot newly installed slackware
  - remove `gnuchess` and `xaos` packages
  - make sure vim does not create backups (edit `usr/share/vim/vimrc`)
  - allow `dmesg` for user
    - append `etc/rc.d/rc.local` ← `echo 0 > /proc/sys/kernel/dmesg_restrict`
  - just for personal reference, some useful info on using nmcli

```
nmcli r[adio] wifi
nmcli r[adio] wifi on

nmcli d[evice] wifi list
nmcli d[evice] wifi connect <ssid> password <pass> ifname <wlan0>

nmcli c[onnection] show
nmcli c[onnection] down <ssid>
nmcli c[onnection] up <ssid>
```

  - customize `etc/xdg/user-dirs.defaults` (standard default paths)
  - create user
- get additional packages (`getslackpack`)
  - luckily, alienBob's repo 'supports' current
  - create custom getslackpack config `.getslackpack`
  - (alien) openjdk libreoffice libreoffice-dict-en“
- get additional packages (`getslackbuild`)
  - run as `VERS=14.2 getslackbuild fetch <pkg>`
  - pkgs: `dmenu geany rox-filer slackware-xdm-theme`
  - pkgs: `slock st wmname pmount unrar`
  - pkgs: `nss-mdns avahi libdaemon`
  - *note: rox-filer cannot be compiled, needed patching (this)*
  - i have gathered all the scripts from slackbuilds.org that i use and keep them here

- i want to use dwm
  - using my own custom build script (which has personalized patches)
  - my dwm xinitrc will run loginctl hibernate when battery<30% (→ what i need on my current laptop)

Updating

To maintain:

note: *my `libmy1slack` library will detect current when `etc/slackware-version` has '+' suffix. this sign will disappear when -current is near to a stable release.*

- run slack-update as usual
  - when `-current` going stable, use SLACKVERS=`current slack-update`
- run slack-current instead of `slackpatch`
  - when `-current` going stable, use `-f` switch
  - to see removed packages, use slackview (i.e. SLACKVERS=`current slackview find –alien`)
- update those installed using getslackbuild if needed

2025/01/01 16:06 · azman