

Installing Red Hat 9 Linux to Dual Boot with Windows XP

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I. Preface

This document will attempt to explain how to setup Linux in Dual Boot configuration with Windows XP. It is assumed that the reader has knowledge of basic computer operations including burning ISO images. You will also need high speed internet access to download a copy of Red Hat 9 and you must have a licensed full copy of Windows XP. As far as hardware requirements go a 10 gig HD will work albeit a very tight fit. If possible use at least a 40 gig drive. It's possible to use a processor as low as a 200MHZ but it will be very slow, aim for at least a 500MHZ PII. WinXP needs at least 128MB of ram Linux could do with less but 128 is a good minimum. If possible go for 512MB. You can run WI-FI cards but I wouldn't recommend that to a beginner. It would be best to use an older Kingston 10/100 card, which can be found online for about \$5.

II. Acquiring the Red Hat 9 Distribution

You will need to download the ISO images if you don't have them already. You can find the 3 disc set at <http://webfire-data.net/linux/redhat9/>. Burn the ISO images and you will be ready to go.

III. Install Windows XP

The only thing that will be different from a normal XP installation is that you will delete all the partitions, and create a new partition using half of the drive space. It doesn't have to be exactly half, its up to you but just make sure you have at least 5 gigs for XP and 5 gigs for Linux. After you create the partition

don't do anything with the extra space (don't create another partition). Then setup WinXP on the new partition you created. Everything else would be the same as a normal windows install.

IV. Install Red Hat Linux 9

Now start the Red Hat installation. When you get to the partitioning part do not choose to use automatic partitioning. Choose manual partition with Disk Druid. You will be able to identify the XP installation by the NTFS filesystem designation. All you need to do is choose create new partition. With Linux you can have just one partition but its standard to create several, one for / (2 gigs), /home (this will hold your personal files 1-2 gigs), /var (log files go here 800MB will be ok), and /usr (programs go here 3 gigs would be good). Also you will need to create a partition called swap (use double the amount of RAM in your machine) its function is similar to the Virtual Memory in Windows. You don't need to know what those designations mean right now, just that you need to create them.

After that's completed the next big step is to configure the bootloader. You'll know your there when it starts to ask about "Lilo". You probably won't need to configure anything here but just make sure there are 2 boot OS's specified. Also make sure to choose text login, don't choose graphical login. There's plenty of other configuration after that but those are the most important parts that relate to dual booting.

V. Completion

Now when your computer restarts you should receive a prompt that will allow you to choose between OS's. Go through a complete boot process for both to make sure they work after that your finished. Keep in mind the command to reboot linux is "shutdown -r now". You'll might need to change to the /usr/sbin directory before you can run that command (cd /usr/sbin).