

# Simplifying FreeBSD Installation

**Source:** <http://unix.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/FreeBSD/questions/2004-03/1108.html>

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To: freebsd-questions <[freebsd-questions@freebsd.org](mailto:freebsd-questions@freebsd.org)>

I have read a few posting regarding the FreeBSD installation procedure. I thought that I might as well weigh in with my own comments since I am fairly new to FreeBSD, although I have been using computers since 1984 (good old DOS).

- 1) The installation procedure is not as polished as say that of WinXP, but that is to be expected. It has been pointed out by others that while the routine does offer many useful configuration options, it fail to fully explain them to the user. The often-stated remark "Read the Directions" or words to that effect are not truly germane to this issue. The average user simply wants to plunk a disc into his computer and install an OS with minimum input.
- 2) While network support is robust, it is not easily configured within the OS. There are few if any "wizards" to guide the user. I have a simple home networking system. Three computers – 2 = WinXP & 1 = FreeBSD 5.2.1 – up and running. They are connected via a hub and then to a router connected to a cable modem. It is not the most modern setup I agree, but it is functional. Just to get FreeBSD to do a correct DHCP took a custom script for the dhclient.conf file that someone was kind enough to give me. Then getting the three computers to actually network together is another story. Say what you want about networking, but since MS is the most used OS available today, it would behoove FreeBSD to have in place a system to routinely network with MS and not have to install additional software and then be forced to reconfigure all of the computers to work with it. I can attest to the fact that most individuals do not have the time or inclination to go about that chore.
- 3) From what I have been able to deduce, the packages available from FreeBSD are not as current as the ports collection. Downloading something like Open Office or the complete KDE 3.2 suite and then installing it from ports is not something most users would envy. It is a time consuming and possible tedious venture. The packages should be kept as current as the ports.
- 4) The installation procedure should offer the user a method of starting KDE, Gnome or whatever automatically upon boot-up. Having to do

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it all manually, whether adding the commands to the proper files or simply using the command line is not good enough. The average user has little time or patience to read through the XFree86 literature in addition to the KDE or Gnome paraphernalia then go through the configuration process which requires him/her to know specific monitor, and video card settings, etc to get the system up and running. This does not even include the additional effort of getting a 'wheel mouse' or 'optical mouse' properly configured. As we are all too well aware of, such problems rarely occur in the Microsoft OS. In any case, at least the latest versions.

5) Most non-Microsoft operating systems are three to five years, if not more, behind in PNP technology. It is something that all non Microsoft OS vendors should place greater effort on improving.

6) Greater effort should be put into getting the operating systems more fully aware of various ACPI procedures used by various vendors. I have seen when FreeBSD fails to use ACPI on several models of Compaq computers even though MS has no such deficiency. The often-stated remark that MS is simply working around a bug in the code is a cop-out by the developers. If MS can work around a bug, so can other vendors.

7) The bottom line is that if FreeBSD or any other OS vendor wants to become truly mainline, they have to get their products to work on the same platform and perform as easily as Microsoft's operating system does. Once they have reached that plateau, they can then proceed to improving on their overall product features and usability.

Well that is enough of my ramblings. I just thought that I might add my 2 cents to the mix.

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