

Re: Free space on a Unix based OS

Source: <http://unix.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/comp.unix.misc/2006-05/msg00009.html>

- *From:* DMFH <dmfh@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Fri, 19 May 2006 03:26:52 -0400
-

On 2006-04-27, Bible John <johnw_94020@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

I am running Mac OSX Tiger. I am told that Unix oses need at least 2 GB's of free space in order to run properly. Is this true and if so why? Howcome with non Unix oses I can have less free space available and they still work properly?

Please don't take my comments as disparaging, I'm trying to offer a viewpoint as well as some input to the question above at the same time! :)

That a UNIX "type" OS needs a certain amount of disk space to run correctly really doesn't include a lot of factors about how much disk space is needed. If you were to break up the usage of the OS into two categories, user-used and system-used, like a desktop or a system that runs a software firewall, the user-used machine is going to need more disk space since there's likely a need for more application software, etc.

Most distributions of commercial or free UNIX have notes about how much space is required for a basic install or install with more options. BSD's are particularly good with this. I have a firewall that runs on a 200MB (yes, megabytes) IDE drive and stores logs on a 340MB IDE drive that never goes down except for the occasional power loss.

What I've noticed over the years is a lot of bloat in both M\$ and some Linux distributions as the desire to include everything / anything possible needed by a user in the installation. Some expert installation processes allow you to pick what's installed, but that can get complex as you don't know what software is required by what other software, etc.

Having extra software on-board from a disk performance perspective really doesn't slow anything down. In UNIX OS's, having sufficient swap space (the disk space used as memory when the system wants to manage idle processes or real memory runs out) is important - I use

Re: Free space on a Unix based OS

the rule of thumb of swap space being 2x the size of main system memory, or at least the same as system memory. Other OS's have other rules of thumb.

A good practice I found helpful is to follow the old way of breaking up the root (/), usr (/usr) and other paths in UNIX that are common like /var and /tmp into separate disk partitions and allocating a little extra for the root partition so you can install software or packages with the system in a simple state – this doesn't apply really to OSX.

To get back to your question with OSX – space is used as temporary space to create archives, press CD's, etc. Low disk space can give you issues there as you may not have enough space to create a compressed file, etc.

Hope this helps a bit.

/dmfh

```
-----  
_ | | _ / _ | | _ _ _ _  
dmfh @ / _ ` | ' \ | _ ' \ _ / _ \ \ /  
 \ , _ | | | | | | | | | | ( ) \ _ / _ \ \  
-----  
.
```