

Can You Run It On Linux? 10 Vital Apps You'll Want When You Switch

By Danny Stieben

Read the original article here: <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/can-run-linux-10-vital-apps-youll-want-switch/>

Now has never been a better time to switch to Linux, but you may still be hesitant about it because you're not sure whether your favorite applications from Windows will work on it. To help answer your questions, we'll take a look at 10 popular Windows applications and whether you have options for them in Linux or online.

With this list, you should have more confidence when trying to make the switch.

Chrome



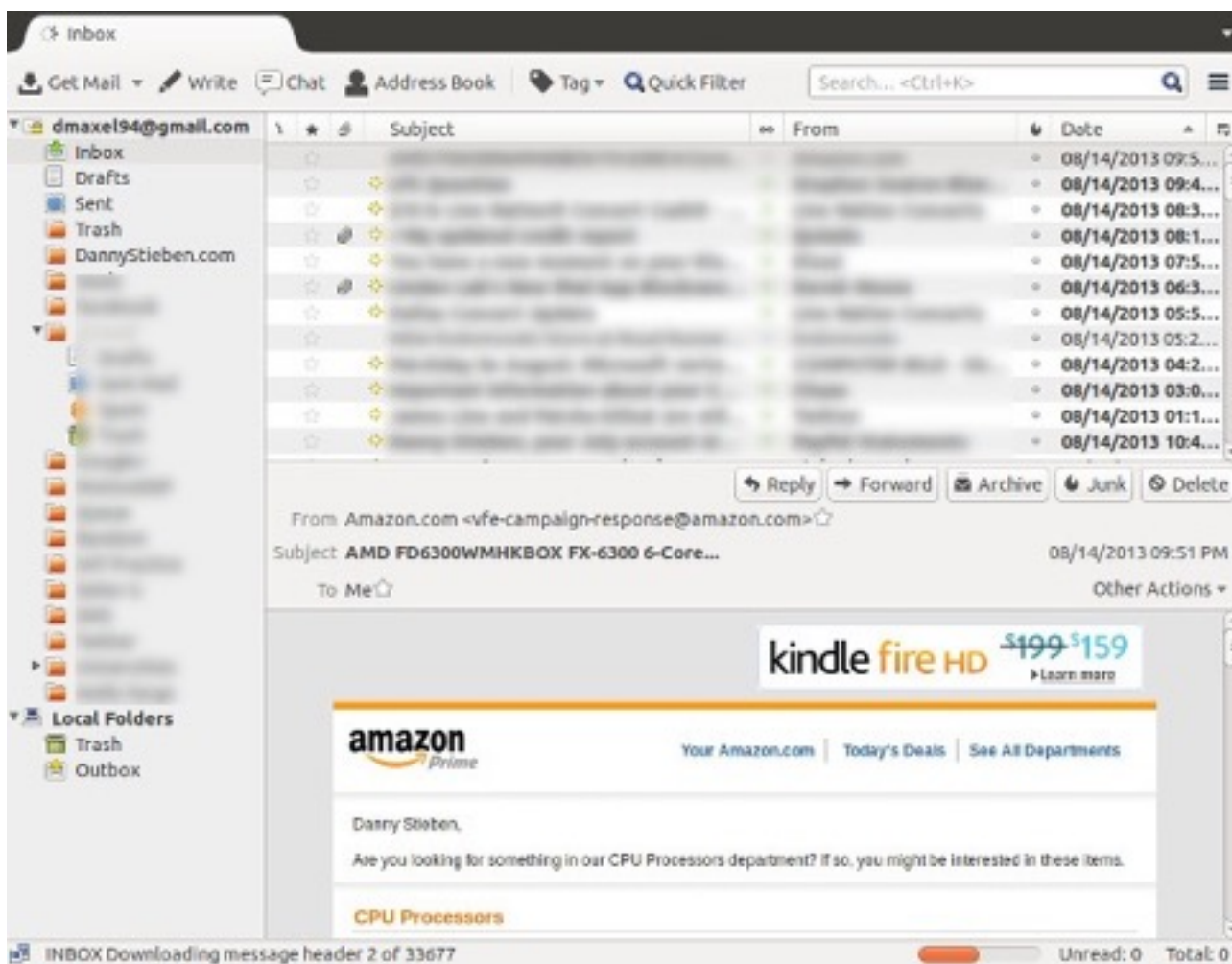
Except for Internet Explorer, all of the major browsers (Firefox, Chrome, and Opera) are all available on Linux. There are even several lesser-known browsers that are available on Linux such as Midori. These browsers give you plenty of choice and loads of features, so you should be able to access any content that you wish with no problems whatsoever.

Native Official App: Yes

Best Linux Alternative App: Chrome or Firefox

Best Online Alternative App: N/A

Outlook



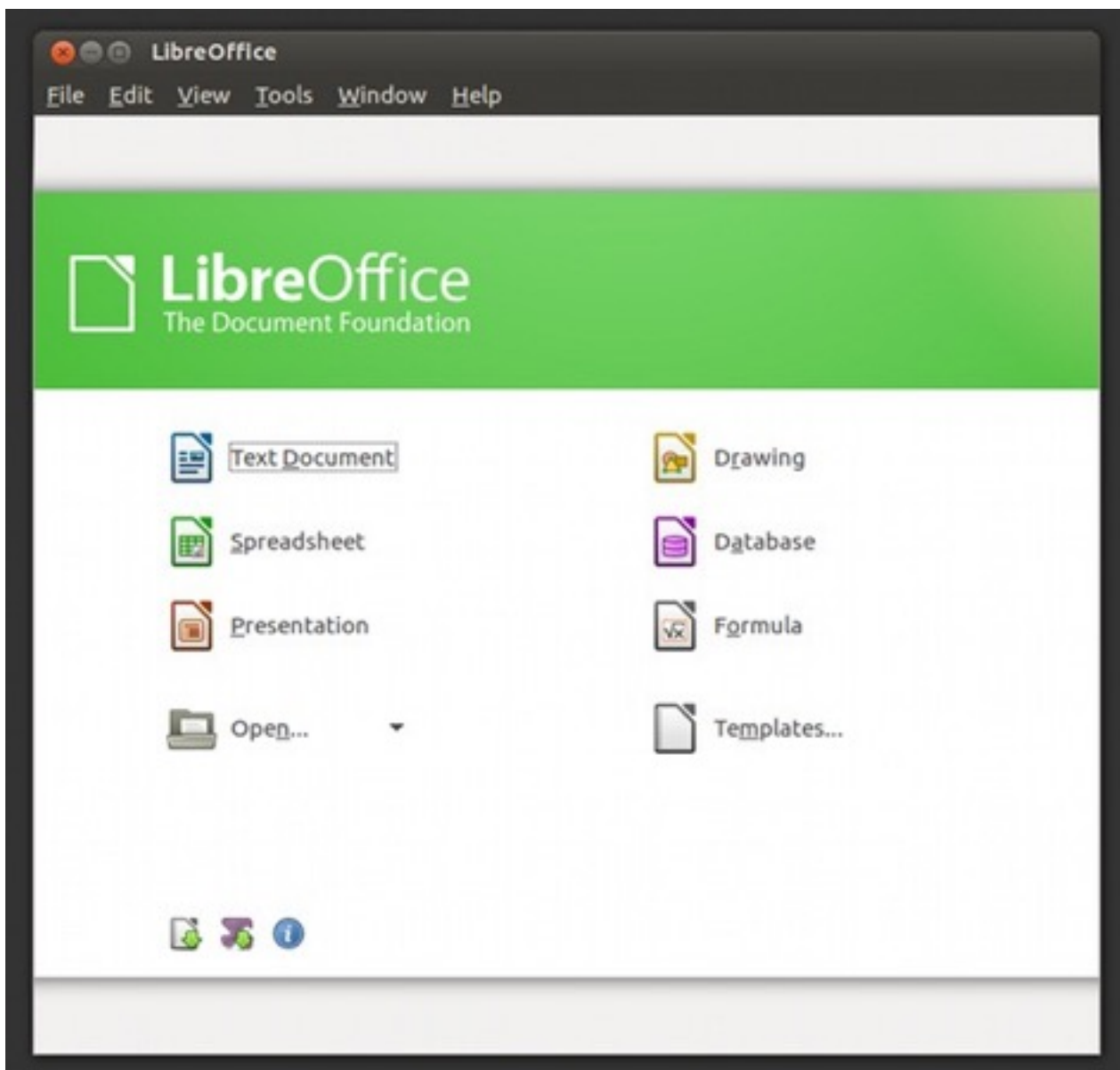
To take care of your email needs, you have plenty of options on Linux as well — although Outlook isn't one of them. Thunderbird, one of the most popular email clients, is also available there. If you need an email client that has great support for Microsoft Exchange accounts like Outlook has, then Evolution may be better for you. Otherwise, you can also easily use any web-based email interface with your preferred browser, including Gmail and much more.

Native Official App: No

Best Linux Alternative App: Thunderbird or Evolution

Best Online Alternative App: Gmail

Microsoft Office



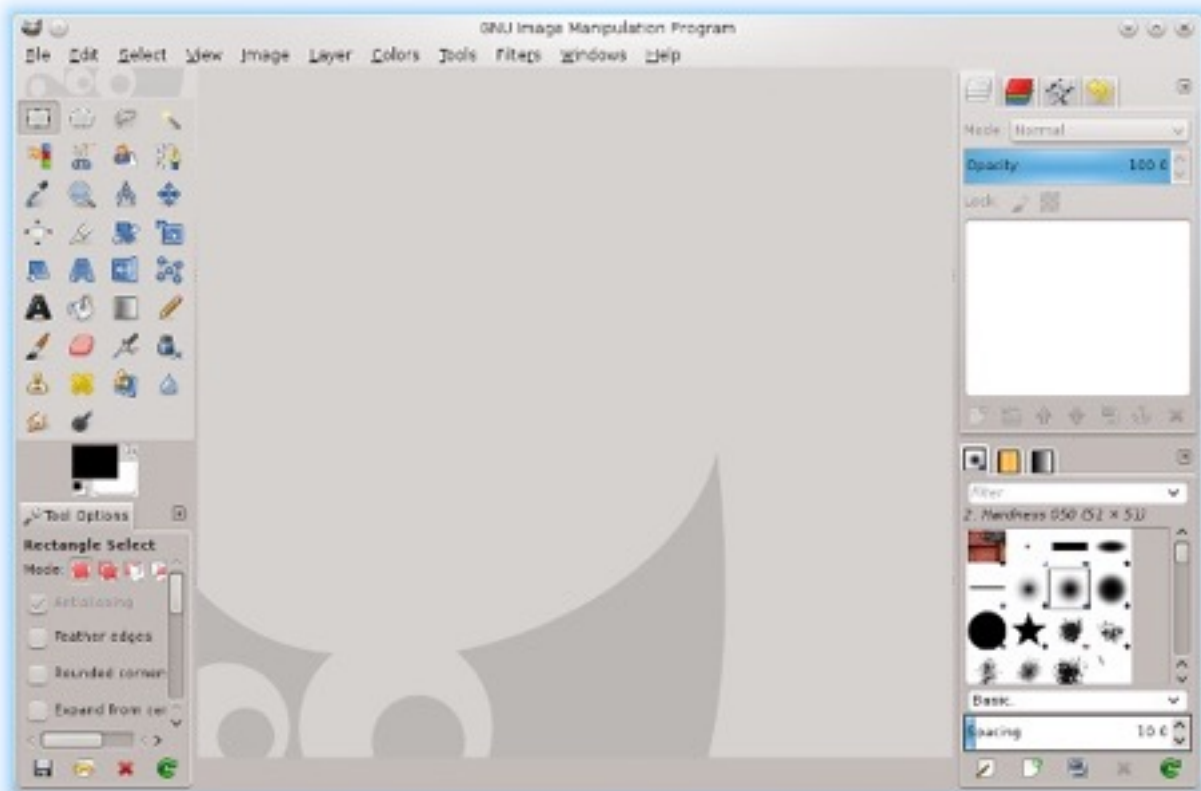
The world's most popular office suite doesn't have an offering on Linux, and people who try installing it with the Wine compatibility layer for Windows software tend to have mixed results at best. Instead, the best alternative for the Linux desktop is LibreOffice, which is still full of features and offers surprisingly good compatibility with Microsoft Office formats. In fact, you'll only really come across issues if you tend to use very high-level Office features such as Macros; LibreOffice has macros as well, but they aren't compatible with Office's macros.

Native Official App: No

Best Linux Alternative App: LibreOffice

Best Online Alternative App: Google Drive

Photoshop



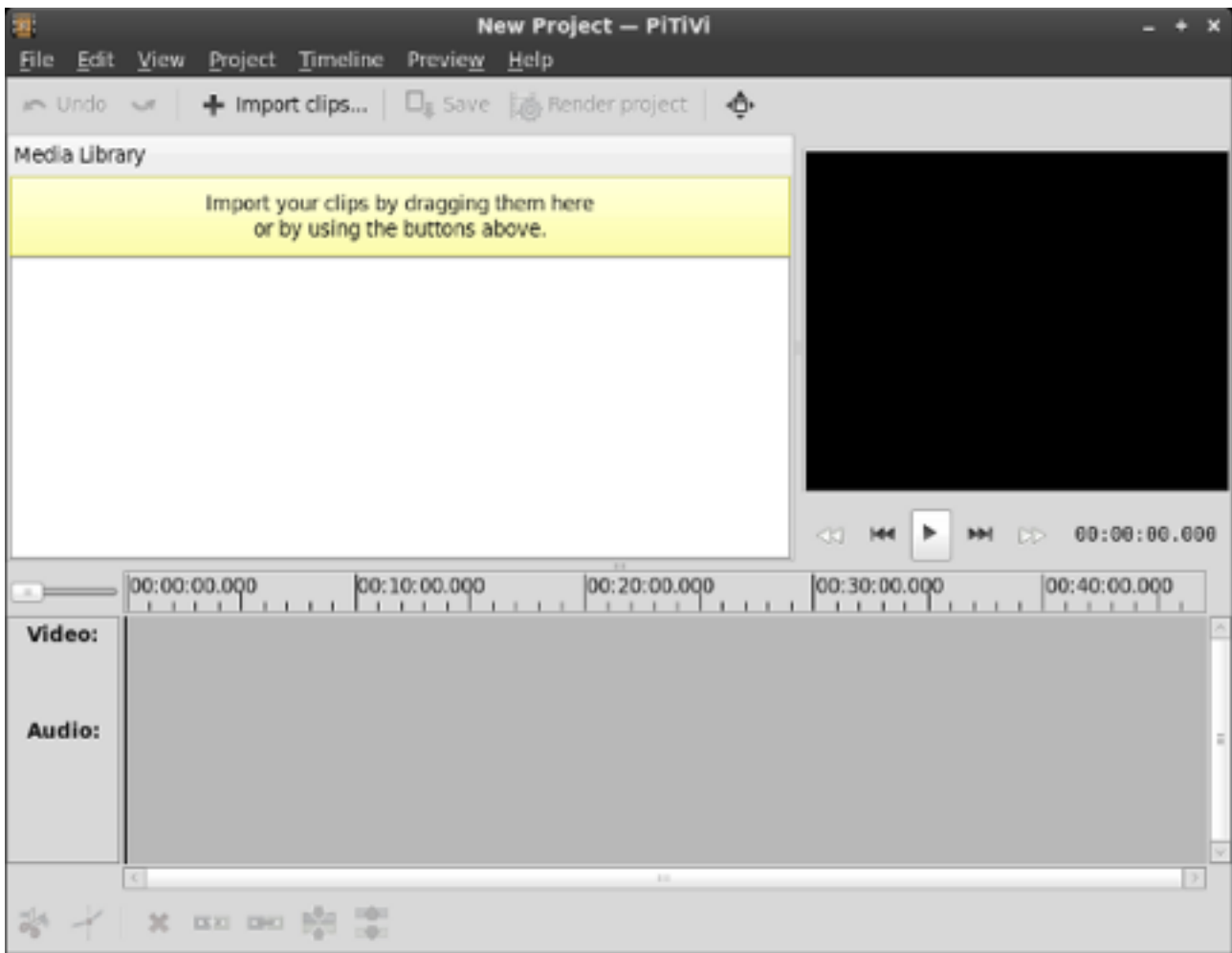
Photoshop also isn't natively available on Linux, and although people seem to have relatively decent success at installing it via Wine, and that process usually involves installing an older version. If you want up-to-date versions of Photoshop, you're out of luck. However, you can easily install GIMP, which is an extremely capable image manipulation tool. Although some of the workflows may be different (and sometimes longer) than in Photoshop, you can achieve virtually the same tasks. And if GIMP doesn't provide a feature you're looking for by default, there's a good chance that there's a plugin to help you out.

Native Official App: No

Best Linux Alternative App: GIMP

Best Online Alternative App: Pixlr

Windows Movie Maker



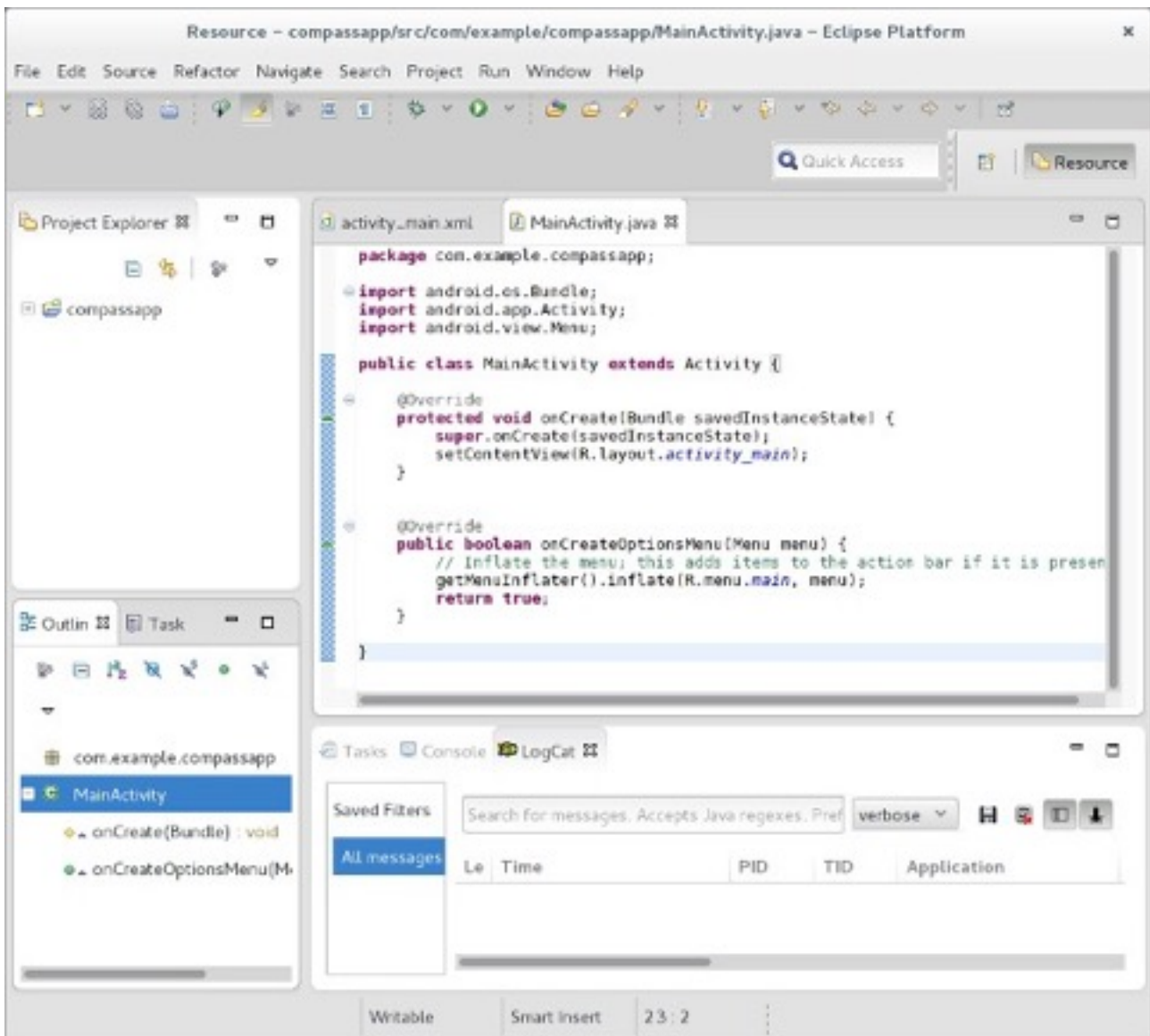
As you might expect, Windows Movie Maker and iMovie are both meant only for their respective platforms and therefore not available on Linux. However, there are a couple of Linux alternatives that you can choose from. If you're looking to create very simple home videos, then look no further than PiTiVi. There's also OpenShot and Kdenlive for slightly more advanced projects, but they haven't been in active development for a while. Finally, as a professional-grade video editor there's Lightworks, but it also asks for a professional-grade price.

Native Official App: No

Best Linux Alternative App: PiTiVi

Best Online Alternative App: WeVideo

Eclipse



Developers need to have a trusty IDE (Interactive Development Environment) by their side to help with all of their programming projects. Eclipse is a popular one for a lot of developers, especially those building Android apps. Thankfully, it is also available on Linux and easily installable. If you use a different IDE such as Visual Studio, which isn't available on Linux, then you may need to switch to Eclipse. Additionally, if you're looking for a lightweight IDE/code editor, then I'd suggest Geany. If I'm working on simpler projects (such as for school assignments), then I prefer to use Geany as it doesn't have excessive functions that I don't need.

Native Official App: Yes

Best Linux Alternative App: Geany

Best Online Alternative App: N/A

Minecraft



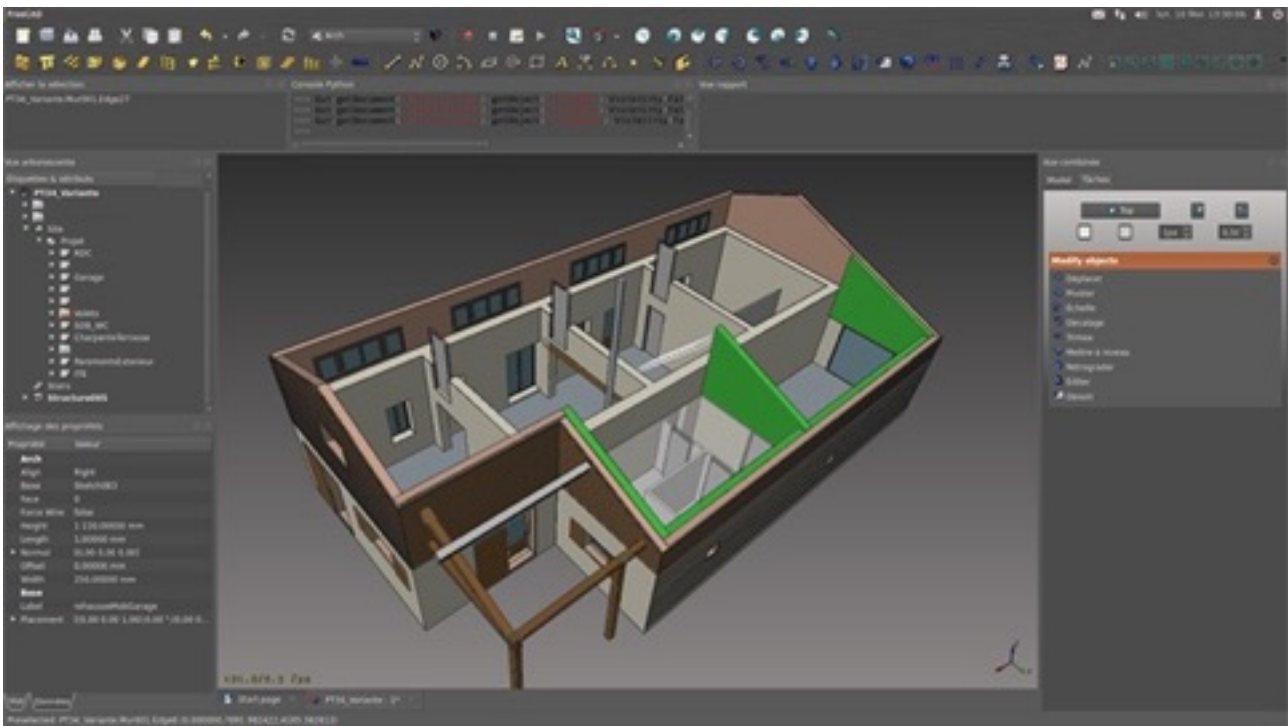
Arguably the most popular indie game available, Minecraft, is a must for a lot of people, and thanks to its Java roots, it can run on Linux as well. In fact, there's pretty much no difference between the Windows and Linux versions whatsoever. The only difference would be that some add-ons or mods come packaged in .exe installers that won't work on Linux, but they also tend to provide the files in a .zip file, so you shouldn't have to miss out on anything.

Native Official App: Yes

Best Linux Alternative App: Minetest

Best Online Alternative App: N/A

AutoCAD



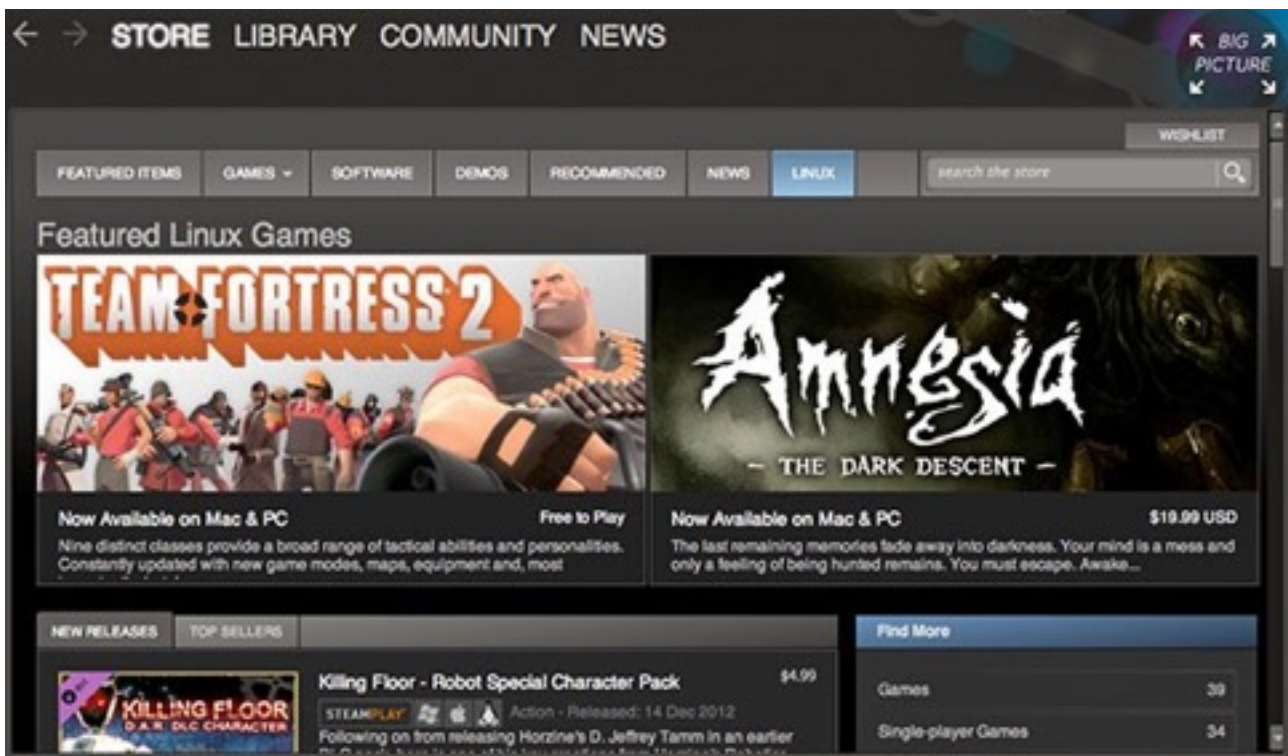
A common complaint about Linux is that there isn't good software for some more specific tasks, including CAD software. While you can't get AutoCAD onto your Linux system, there's a great free alternative called FreeCAD which can take care of your CAD needs. It's also made to be modular, so you can add in extra functionality if you need it. If need be, you can also try out FreeCAD on Windows or Mac OS X before you make the switch to Linux so you'll already feel comfortable with it.

Native Official App: No

Best Linux Alternative App: FreeCAD

Best Online Alternative App: Tinkercad

Steam



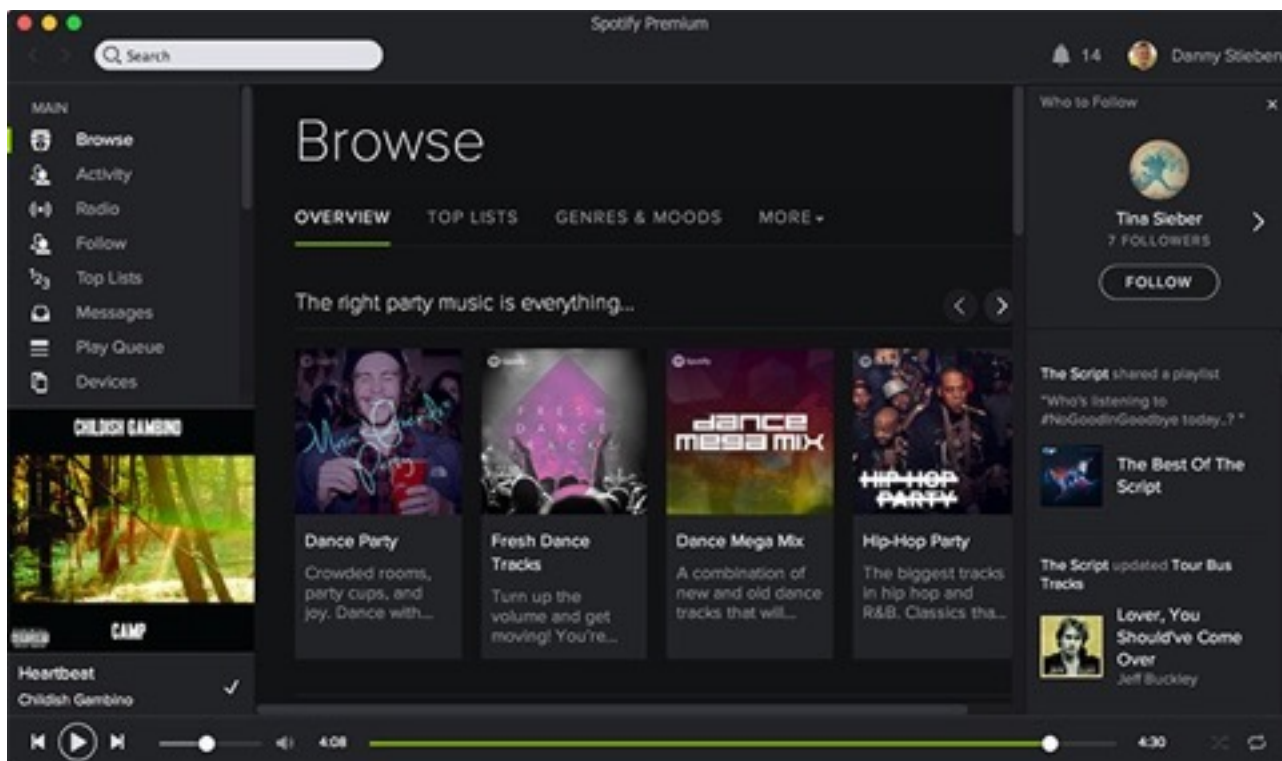
Steam is a popular platform for finding, getting, and managing/updating games. Since early 2013, Valve has been pushing to turn Linux into a viable gaming operating system, and after approximately two years you'll find quite a few games on Steam that work on Linux as well. You'll still have to skip out on huge titles like Battlefield and Call of Duty (although Battlefield expressed interest in Linux), but there are other AAA titles already available on Linux such as Civilization V. The list of Linux-compatible games is only going to grow, so you should check out Steam's listing of games and see which ones you want run on Linux. Alternatively, you can always try to get a game by itself (not via Steam) and use Wine to get it to run. Your success will vary widely from game to game.

Native Official App: Yes

Best Linux Alternative App: Wine

Best Online Alternative App: N/A

Spotify



The most popular music streaming service has spread itself rapidly with easy access on mobile devices and desktops via a web player and a desktop client. If you run a Linux distribution which uses .deb packages (such as Debian, Ubuntu, or derivatives of either), then you can install the beta Spotify client for Linux. Alternatively, you can also just access Spotify from their web player via your browser.

Native Official App: Yes

Best Linux Alternative App: [Atraci](#)

Best Online Alternative App: Spotify Web Player, Google Play Music

Time to Switch!

With these 10 vital apps, you should be ready to tackle Linux without breaking a sweat. With all of the benefits that an open source operating system provides, and knowing that you have apps available to get work done, there's no excuse for you to not try it out.

Don't forget to also check out our [Best Linux Software list](#) for other great Linux apps to try out!

Read more stories like this at MakeUseOf.com
