

RE: Making a Debian Bootable USB Pen Drive

Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/Debian/2006-10/msg00352.html>

- *From:* Grok Mogger <linuximp@xxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Tue, 3 Oct 2006 16:35:47 -0400
-

Nuno:

"Don't! Nothing should be installed on a flash drive. A traditional install was meant for hard drives, not flash drives. Browser cache, /tmp, syslog and so on will damage the device."

Andrew:

" I assume you are trying to avoid the damage caused by longterm heavy writing which "wears out" flash memory, right? "

Me:

Is the heavy writing that Andrew mentioned the only thing that would ruin it, or are there other concerns?

And also, has anyone ever had a usb flash drive actually wear out? I'm somewhat skeptical that having your OS entirely on a flash-drive would really ruin it. Of course, I've never tried it. But I don't think I've ever heard anyone mention that their flash drive died on them.

Thanks,
- GM

-----Original Message-----

From: Andrew Sackville-West [<mailto:andrew@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>]

Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2006 1:35 PM

To: debian-user@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Subject: Re: Making a Debian Bootable USB Pen Drive

On Tue, Oct 03, 2006 at 07:33:23AM -0700, Ottavio Caruso wrote:

Nuno Miguel dos Santos Baeta wrote:

Hi!

I want to install Debian in a USB pen drive.

RE: Making a Debian Bootable USB Pen Drive

Don't! Nothing should be installed on a flash drive. A traditional install was meant for hard drives, not flash drives. Browser cache, /tmp, syslog and so on will damage the device.

I have only loosely been following this thread, but am curious about this sort of thing in general. so what if you mount /tmp on tmpfs (thus putting it in memory or swap depending on memory loads) and I wonder, can you change where syslog puts its logs (like into tmp) and then build some script to save it off when you shutdown? I assume you are trying to avoid the damage caused by longterm heavy writing which "wears out" flash memory, right? Likewise, what about putting together a file on whatever harddrive exists (a la knoppix and dsl use of a swapfile) as a place to mount /var and /tmp while running the system and again, copy it off to the usb drive during shutdown so that the info is archived, but the writes to flash are minimized.

If you want to run a distro from a usb device, like I do, use a so called 'frugall install': partition your drive in two (you can use loop files if you prefer), put a live iso in the first partition and save you data onto the second partition when you are done. Knoppix, live.debian.net or damn Small Linux will do the job.

I agree that this is a much better solution.

just my .02

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