

Clone root partition

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Hi,

I'm trying to compile a comprehensive document on cloning root partitions. My immediate goal is to clone my current working Linux to external USB HD, so that I can use it wherever I go.

By comprehensive I mean it should not be as simple minded as

```
dd if=/dev/hda2 of=/dev/sda2
```

or

```
cp -a / /mnt/point
```

or

```
tar -p -m cf - / | (cd /mnt/point; tar xf -)
```

I know they work, but there are so many things have been left out. By comprehensive, I mean I want to know all relevant things that need to be considered.

For example for dd, let alone its rigid limitation, if you use it, at least the 'conv=sync,noerror bs=4k' options should be used: sync,noerror just means continue and zero fill any error blocks, bs=4k just writes 4k at a time which will speed things up a lot. For cp, at least 'cp -ax' should be used.

But there are still much more to it.

First, directories that don't need to copy over, like /tmp, /proc. With modern Linux that uses udev, the /dev and /sys don't need to be copied either. Anything else (besides distro specifics like /var/cache/apt/archives)?

2nd, the clone partition should be made bootable, by grub or lilo.

Anything else? Like the concerns of /etc/fstab...

Last, with all the above concerns, how to achieve them with various tools?

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Keywords: tar rsync find cpio dd

thanks

PS. If you come across this message late, be it a week or even a month late, please do comment, I hope this thread can be a one stop place for people looking for concerns over cloning root partitions.

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Tong (remove underscore(s) to reply)

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