Using Ubuntu
A Simple Guide
Version 3 Unity (for Ubuntu 11.04)

Getting Started

Starting Ubuntu is simple. Just turn your computer on as normal and you will briefly see the Ubuntu logo while Ubuntu starts.

If you have a password or multiple users, you will be presented with the login screen. Choose your user from the list and enter your password.

Your desktop loads as soon as you are logged in. You can begin using Ubuntu immediately; there is no waiting for things to load in the background.

This guide comes in two versions. If your desktop looks like the screenshot below, this is the one for you. PCs with older graphics cards will default to the 'classic' desktop. You will need to look at the 'classic' version of this guide.
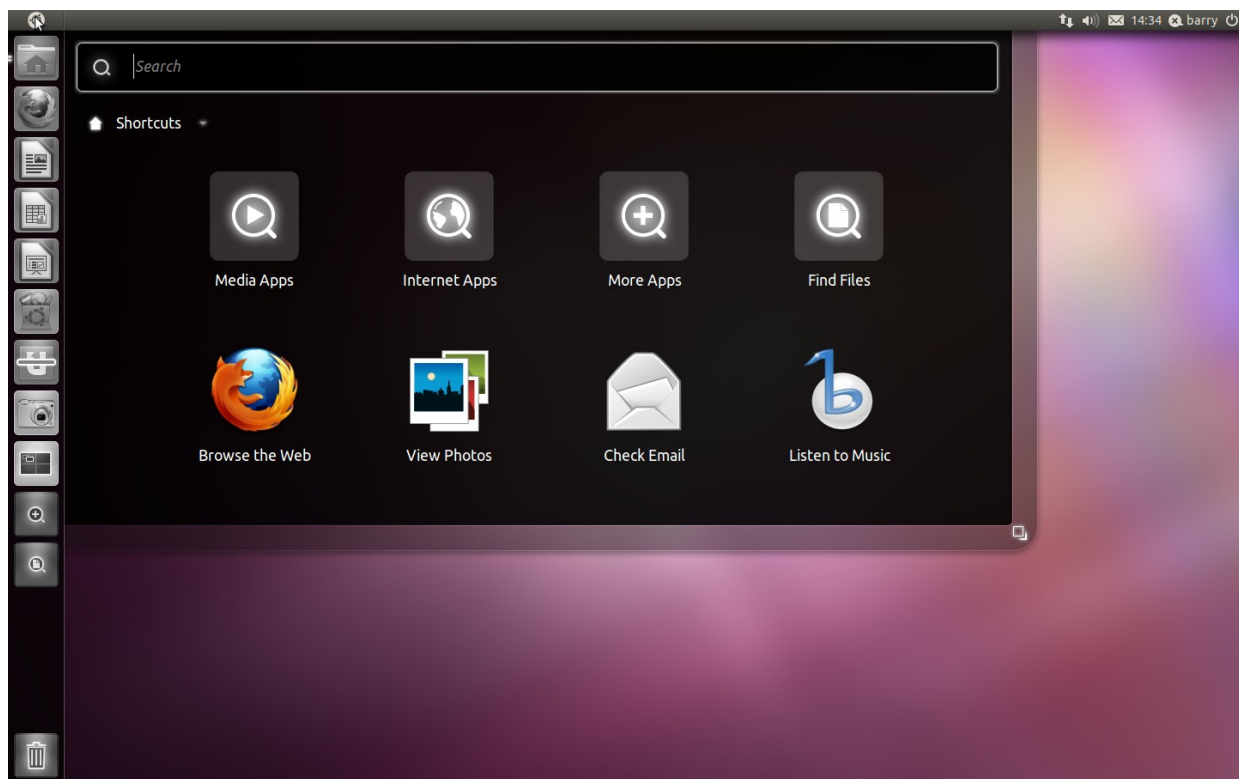
The Panels

Ubuntu has a bar, or **panel** that sits at the top of your screen. This panel is always present, is not overlapped by open windows, and provides easy access to almost everything in Ubuntu.

There is a sidebar at the left of the screen with a set of frequently used shortcuts to your applications. These can be added to, or removed to suit your uses. The icon at the bottom of this sidebar is the 'trash' bin.
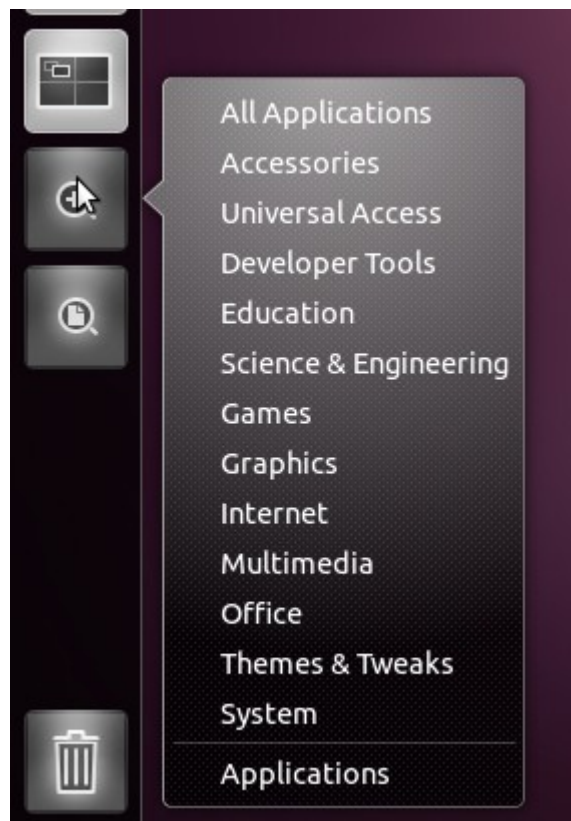
The Ubuntu symbol that appears in the top panel to the far left can be clicked at any time to open shortcuts to all installed applications.

A simpler way to open an application is to right click on the applications icon in the sidebar – see below.

The Applications, Places, and System Menus

To open an application, you can single-click on an icon in the sidebar, or if the application you require is not shown there, you can click on the Ubuntu icon in the top panel and open the application launcher. Note that four favourite applications appear on the launcher as well as shortcuts to launcher windows for different categories of application.
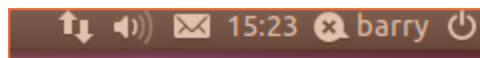
Alternatively, you can use the application icon on the sidebar as seen above. This allows selection of the type of application you are looking for.

To access your documents and files, use the **Find Files** icon at the right of the launcher window, or the one on the sidebar. Your **Home Folder** is listed along with bookmarked folders including **Documents**, **Music**, and more.

To change your system preferences or settings, use the **System settings** menu which will display when you click the 'on/off' icon to the right of the top panel system indicators (screenshot below). Your user preferences can be changed without a password. Administration settings, however, require an administrator password.
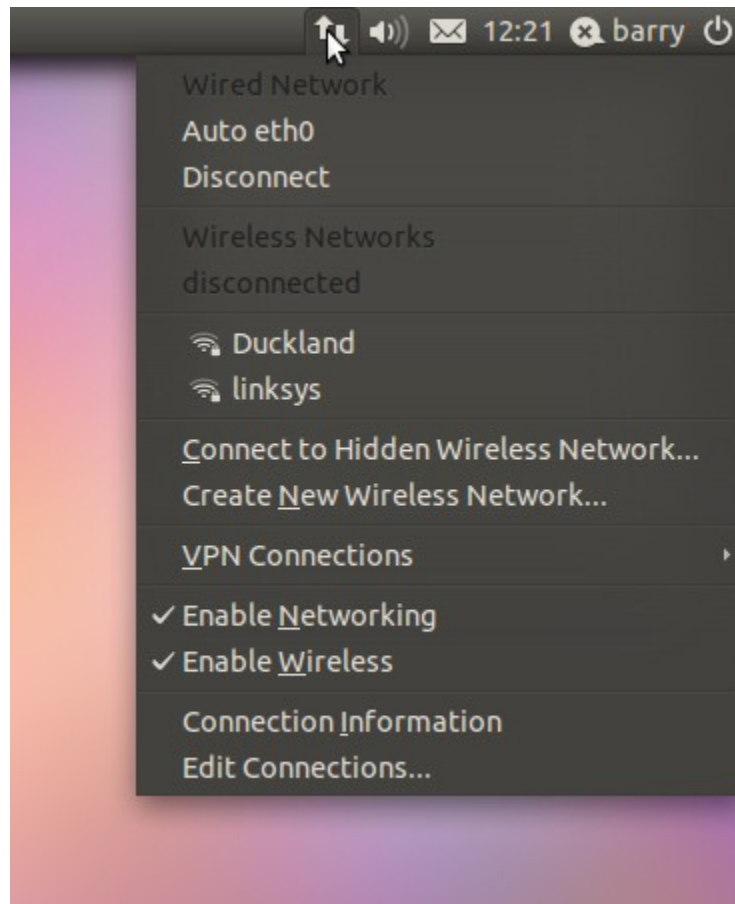
Indicators

The right side of the top panel holds the system **indicators**, including the network, sound, messaging, clock, user, and session indicators.

To change networks settings, click on the **network indicator**, which looks like a wireless signal strength or two networked computers

(depending on your hardware configuration). If your computer supports WiFi, wireless networks that are in range will be listed when you click on the indicator. Connect to your network by clicking on its name.

To

manage your system's sound, click on the **sound indicator**, which looks like a speaker. You can adjust your system volume by using the slider, or click **Sound Preferences** for more options.

To set up and access messaging services such as chat, email, or broadcast (microblog and social network) accounts, click on the **messaging menu**, which looks like an envelope. If you have a new chat, email, or broadcast message, the messaging indicator's icon will turn green. Click it to view the new message.
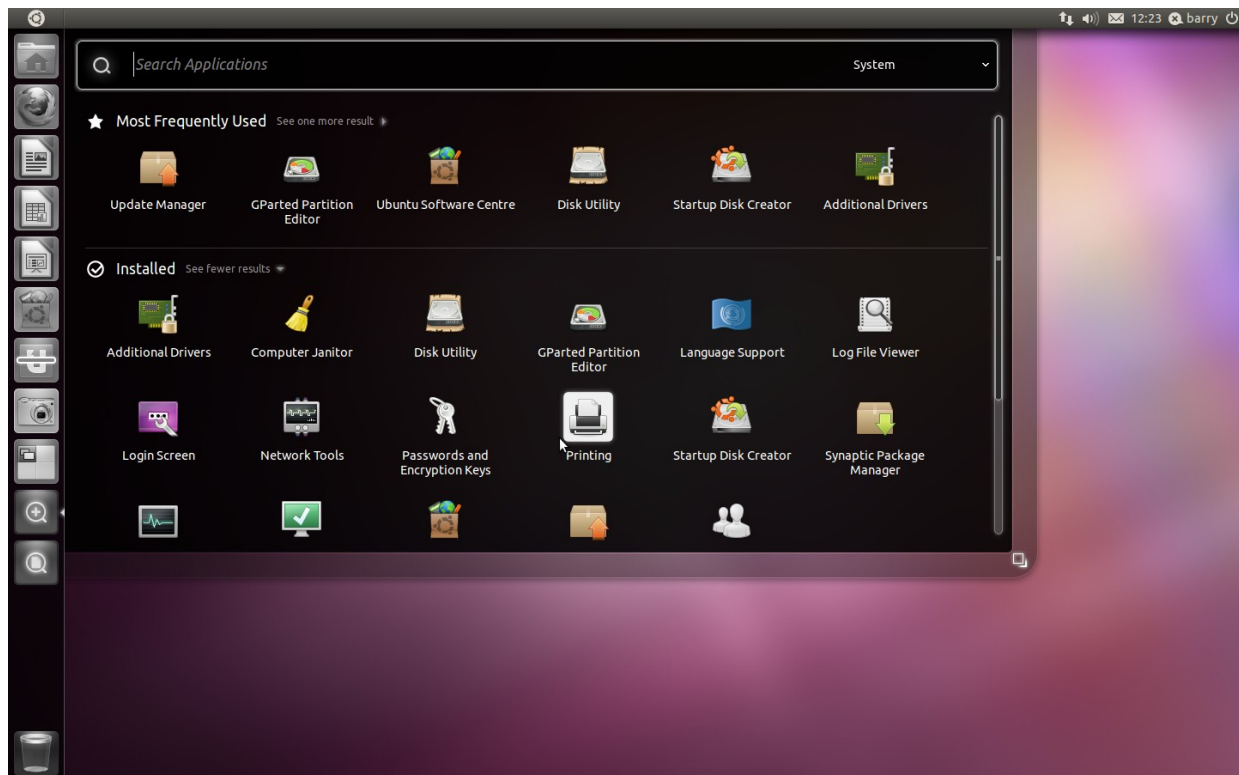
Printers

Setting up your printer is usually very easy. In many cases, as soon as you switch your printer on, Ubuntu will find the correct driver (you need to have an internet connection) and automatically install your printer.
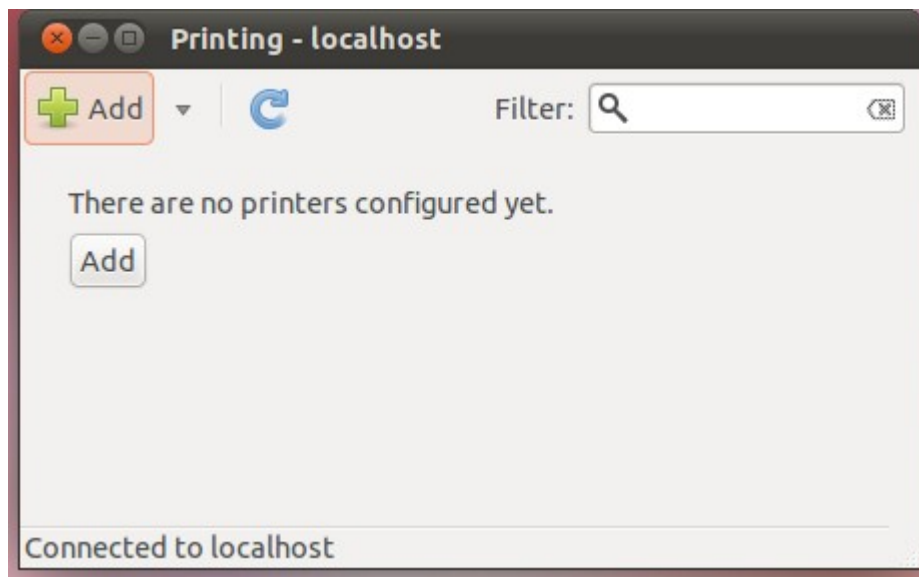
In the rare cases that a driver is not available, you will often find that the

printer manufacturer provides a driver for download from their web-site. If that is the case, carefully follow their full instructions for installation. If you have problems, you will almost always find the solution on one of the Ubuntu help forums, or by sending an e-mail to your local Ubuntu mailing list. You will be able to do this by following links from the www.ubuntu.com site.

If your printer does not load automatically, then click the application system icon:
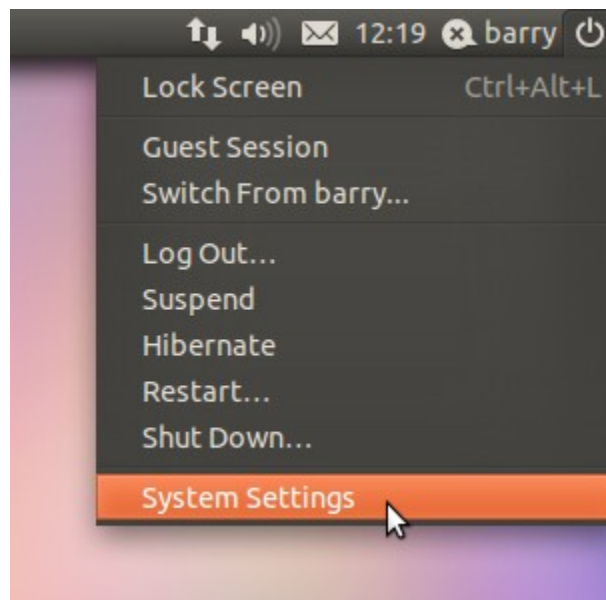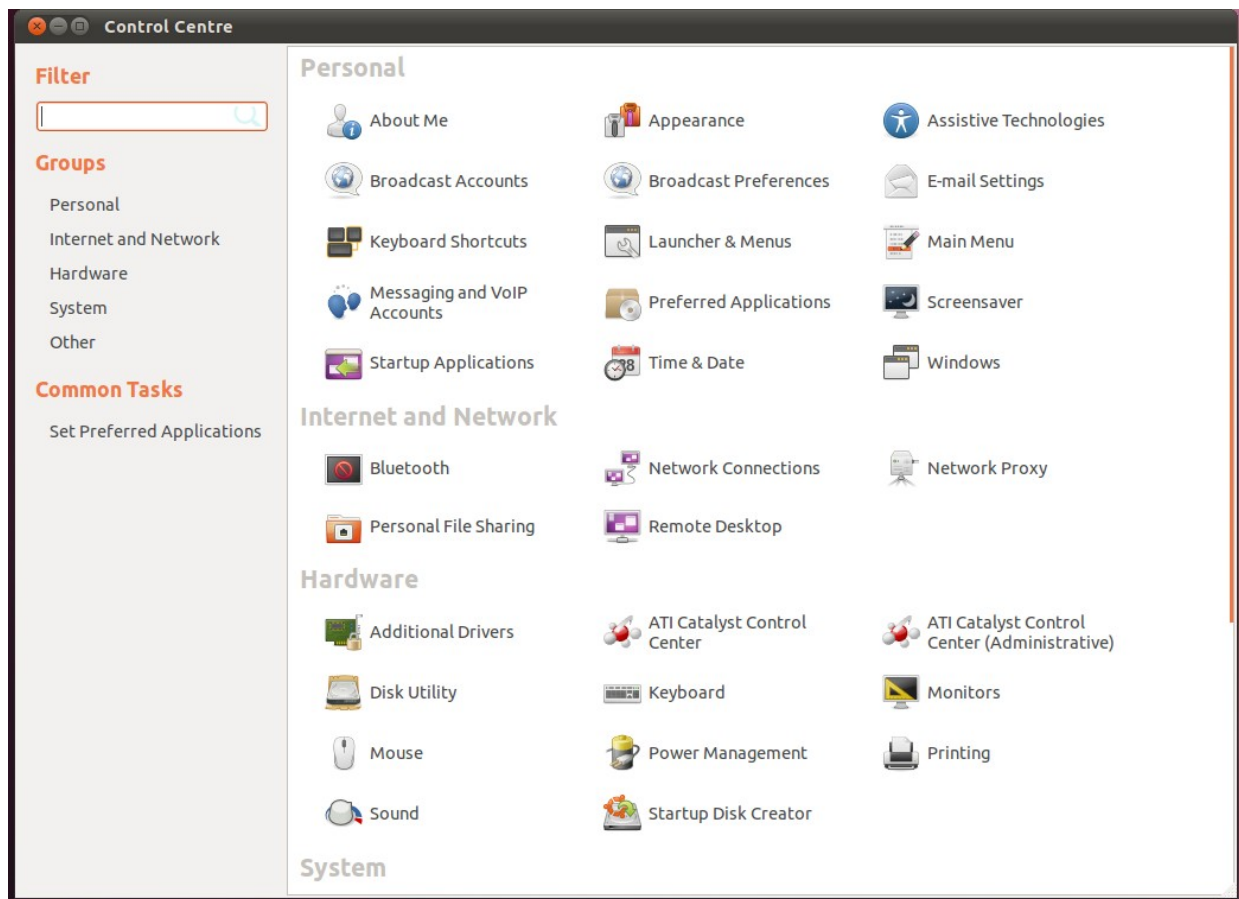

then click on the 'Printing' icon.

Clicking on the 'Add' button will enable Ubuntu to find your printer if is is turned on and guide you through installation.
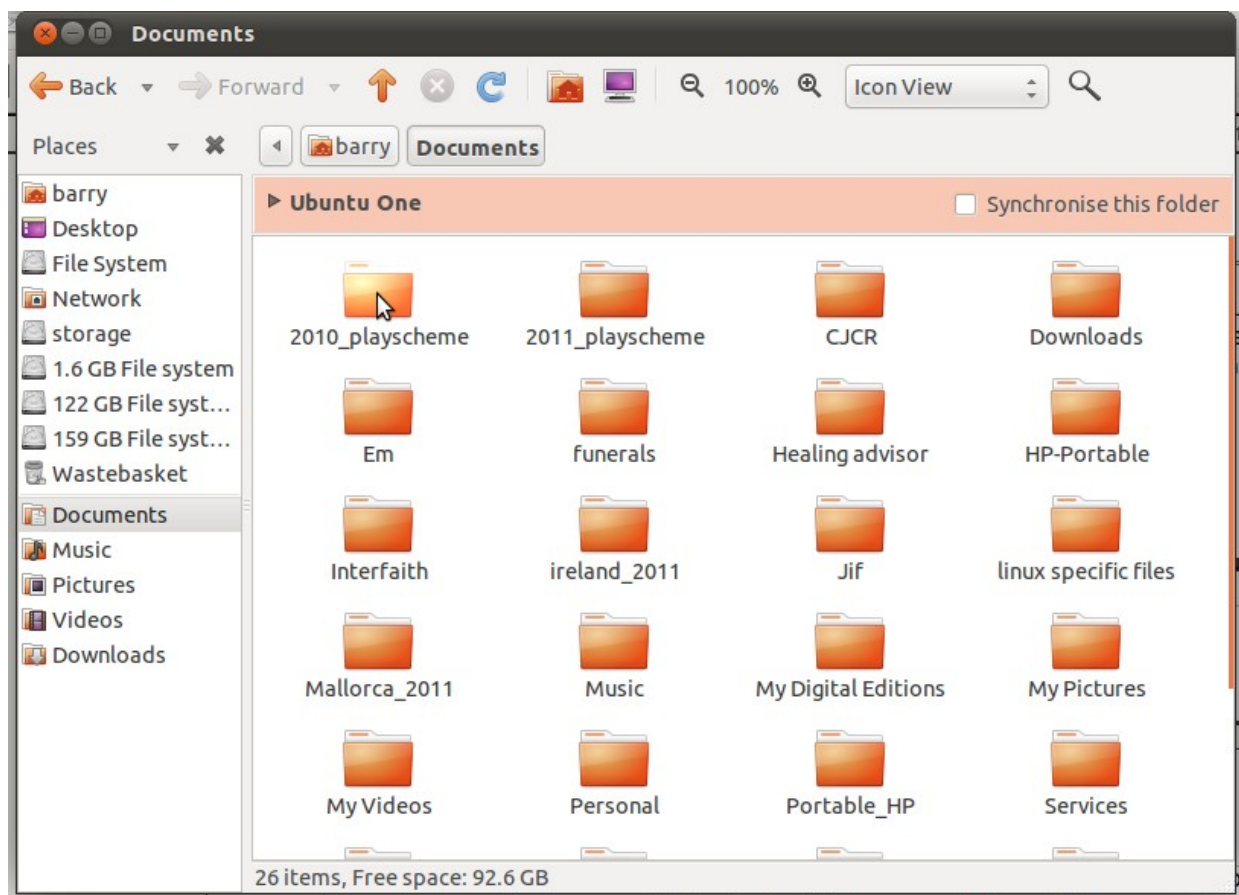
Customising Ubuntu

To make alterations to the appearance and many other aspects of Ubuntu, you can use the Ubuntu control panel. To access this, you simply click the on/off button at the far right of the top panel.

Files

All the files on your computer and on devices attached your computer can be found in the **file browser**, (called Nautilus). The easiest way to get to the file browser is to click on the Files and Folders icon on the sidebar, or by using the **Find Files** icon after clicking the Ubuntu icon (top left).

Folders can be **bookmarked** in Ubuntu. Bookmarked folders show up in the **Places** menu as well as in the sidebar of the file browser. To add a bookmark, drag any folder in the file browser to the sidebar.
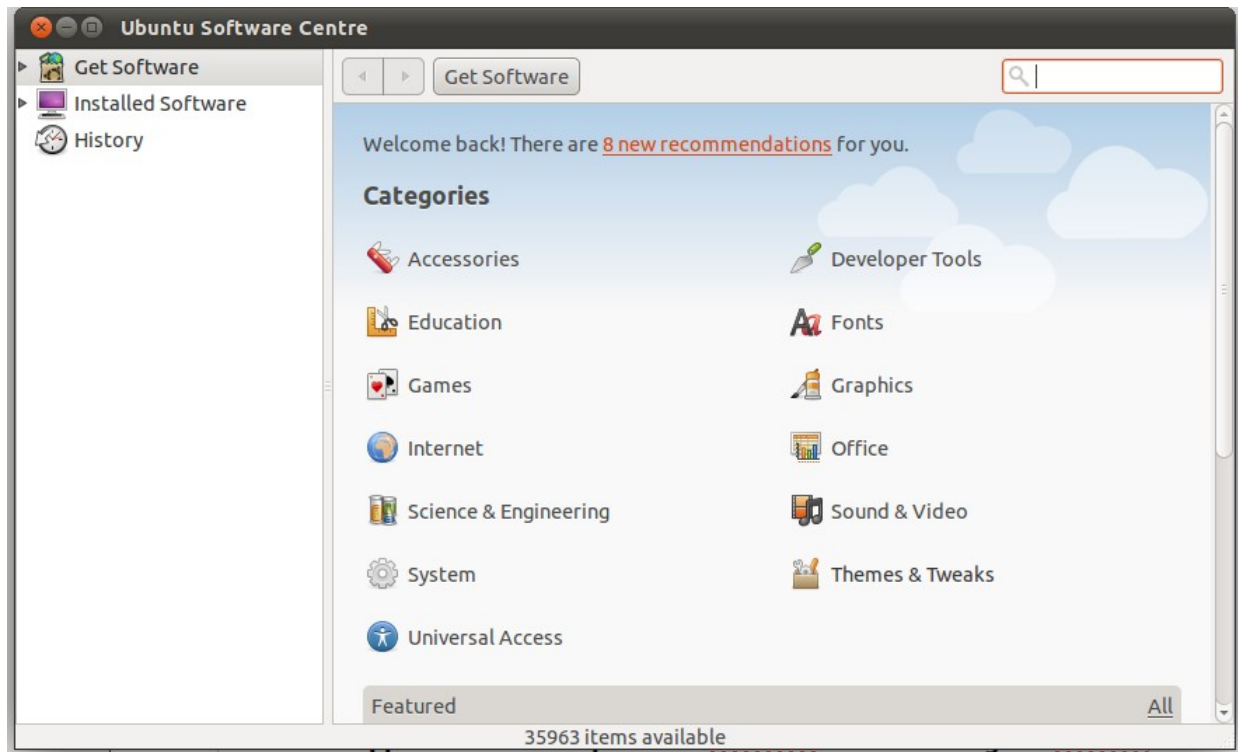
The files and folders on your computer are stored in what is called the **root directory**, denoted by a slash, "**/**". All other files are found in subdirectories of the root directory. For example, your **home folder** (where **Documents**, **Music**, and your other files are stored) is in the directory **/home/yourusername** where "yourusername" is your Ubuntu username.

Common Tasks

Ubuntu comes loaded with all kinds of great applications for common tasks. Right out of the box you can use Ubuntu to take notes, manage your photos, browse the web, check your email, connect to social networks, create documents, listen to music, watch movies, and more. If you want to install an application that is not loaded on Ubuntu from the start, you can search for, download, and install it all within the **Ubuntu Software Center**.

Whenever an application window is on your screen, you will see the name of that application on the top panel. Hovering over that name will bring up the
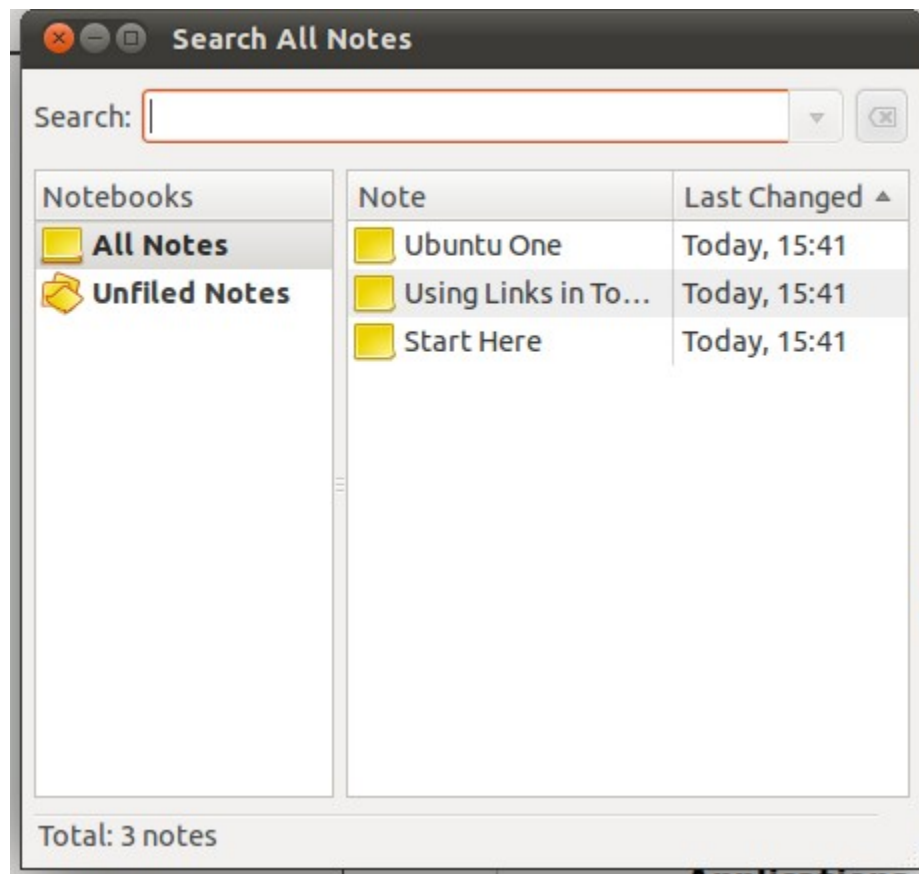
menus for that application. Not all applications have that feature – Firefox is one that does. Some applications present the menus on the top bar of the window in which they run. The screenshot below is the Ubuntu software centre.
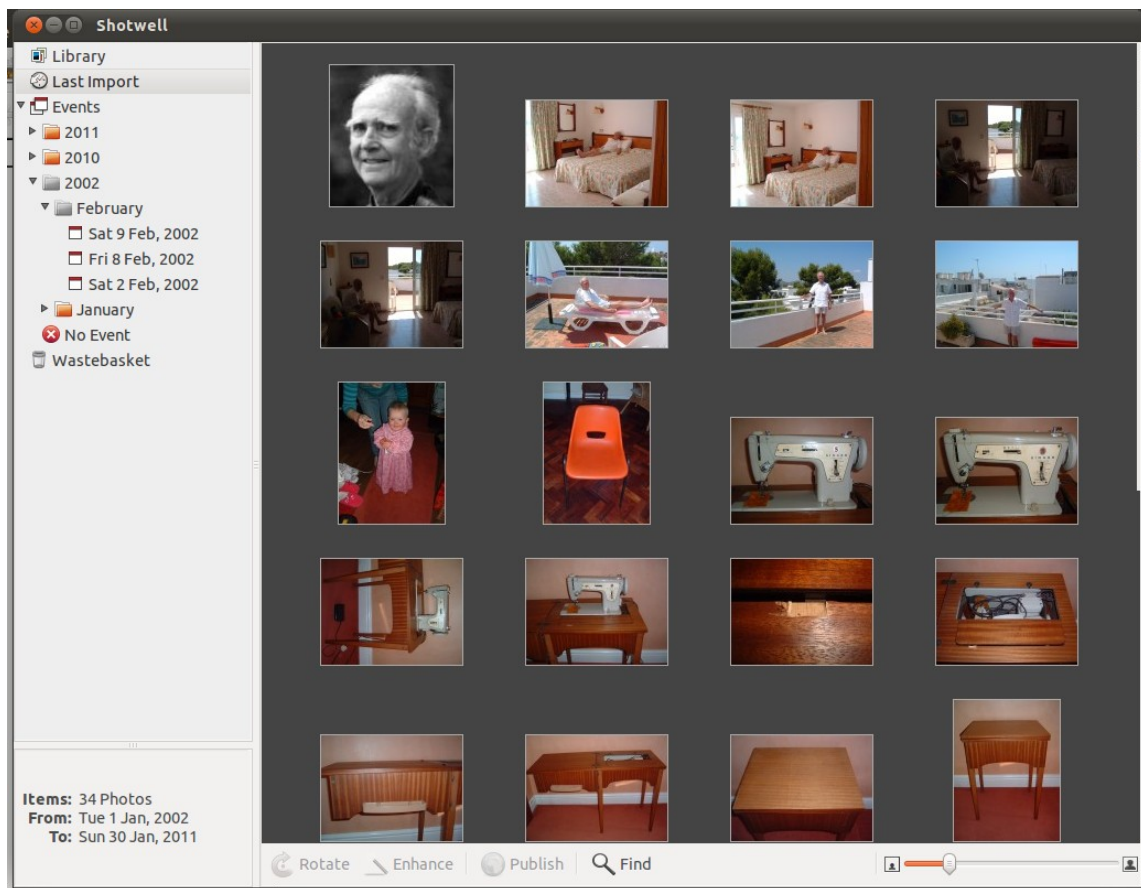

Taking Notes

To take notes, open **Tomboy Notes** by clicking the Applications icon on the sidebar and opening **Tomboy Notes**. Tomboy adds an icon to the sidebar. This happens when you open any application. If you want to retain the icon on the sidebar, simply right-click the icon and click the 'keep in launcher' item.

When **Tomboy** opens, the main window shows you all of your **Notes** and collections of notes, called **Notebooks**. To start a new note, click **File → New** in the top panel – this will appear when your pointer hovers over the 'Tomboy Notes' caption, or **Create New Note** from the icon in the panel.

Managing Photos

To manage your photos, open **Shotwell Photo Manager** by going to the applications icon on the sidebar and right clicking. Use the **Graphics** item, and open **Shotwell Photo Manager**. Shotwell will show you your existing photos, or to add new photos, **File → Import From Folder**. Navigate to your photos in the file browser, then click **OK**. You can make small adjustments to a photo by double-clicking it within Shotwell. The photo will be displayed larger with different adjustments available at the bottom of the Shotwell window.
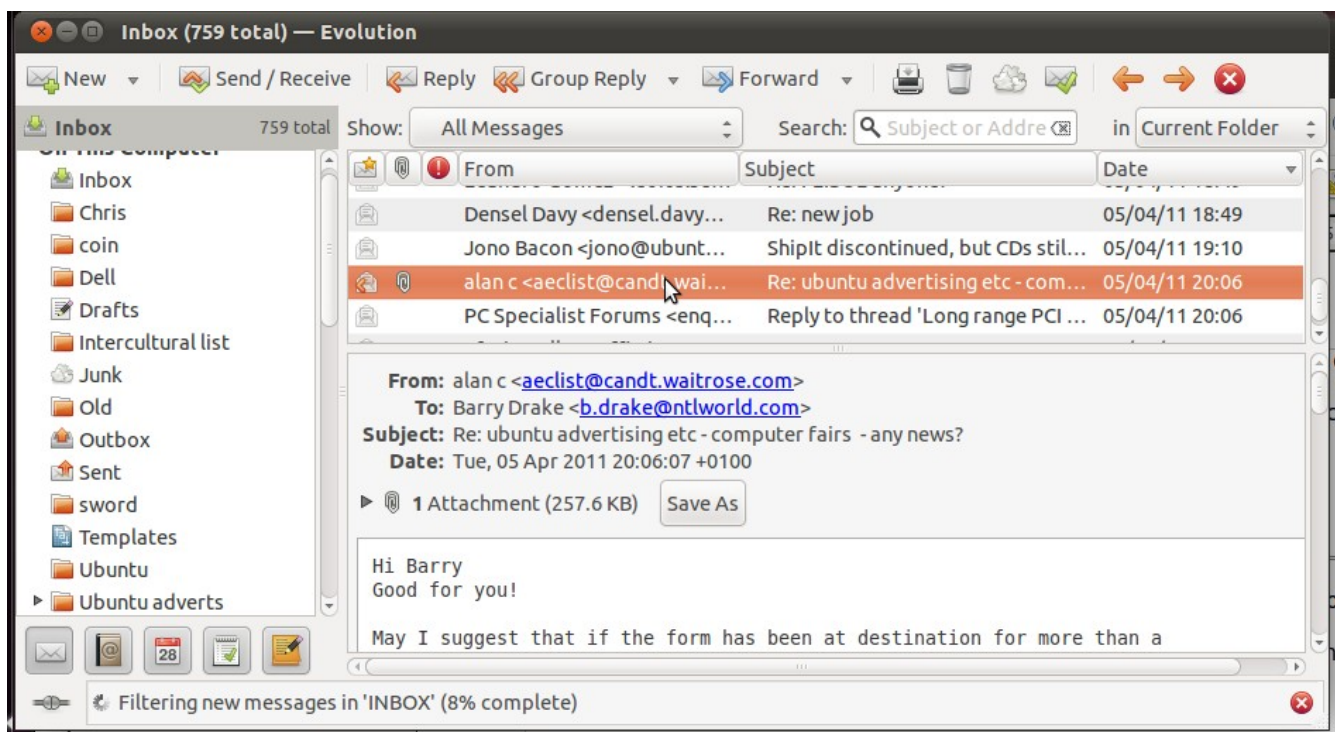
Browsing the Web

To browse the web, open **Firefox Web Browser** by right clicking the **Firefox** icon.

You can perform a search right from the home page, or type an Internet address into the location bar at the top of the window. To open a new tab, click the "**+**" button on the tab bar. To close a tab, click the "**x**" button on the right side of the tab.
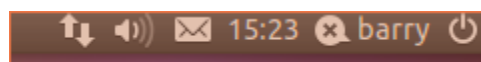
Checking Email

To open your email, open **Evolution Mail** by going to the **Ubuntu** icon on the top panel and clicking **Check email** on the launcher window. If it is your first time opening Evolution, it will prompt you to create a new identity with your email settings.

Connecting to Social Networks

To connect to social networks such as Twitter or Facebook, open the **Gwibber Social Client** by going to the **Messaging Indicator** (the envelope icon) then clicking **Broadcast**.

If it is your first time opening Gwibber, it will prompt you to enter your account settings.
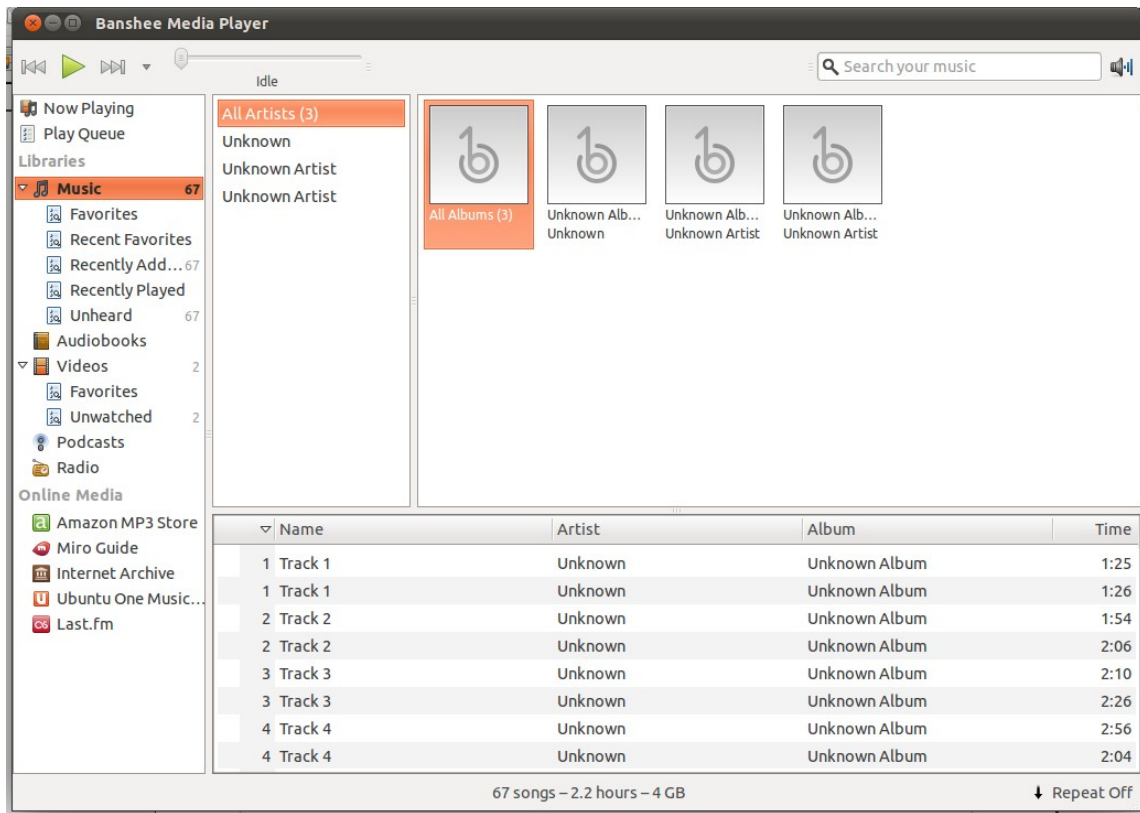
Creating Documents

To create a document, open an LibreOffice application from the sidebar **LibreOffice** icons.

For slideshow-style presentations, open Impress by choosing **LibreOffice impress**. For spreadsheets, open Calc by choosing **LibreOffice Calc**. For a word-processed document, open Writer by choosing **LibreOffice writer**. You can also double-click any document you have in the file browser and it will open in the corresponding LibreOffice application.

Listening to Music

To listen to music, click the Ubuntu icon and click 'Listen to music'. This will open the **Banshee music player**. Browse your library by choosing **Music** from the Banshee sidebar, or purchase new music by choosing **Ubuntu One Music Store** from the sidebar. To add music you already own, right-click **Music → Import File** or **Music → Import Folder**.

Watching Movies

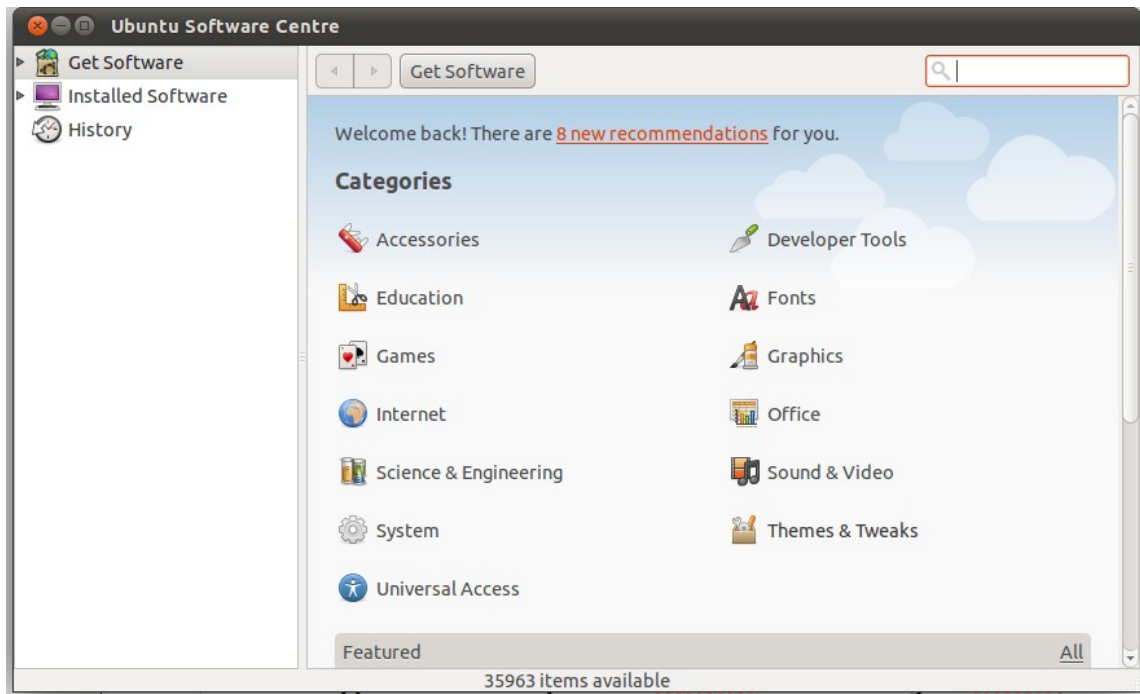To watch movies, open **Movie Player** by righ-clicking the **Applications icon,** and going to **Multimedia → Movie Player**. Open a movie by going to **Open → Movie** from the Movie Player window. You can view YouTube or BBC videos right in Movie Player by choosing **YouTube** or **BBC** from the drop-down menu in the sidebar. You can also double-click any movie you have in the file browser and it will open in Movie Player.

Installing New Applications

If you want to install a new application, you can search for, download, and install it by going to the sidebar and clicking the **Ubuntu Software Center** icon.

Search from the bar at the top, or browse by clicking on one of the categories. Once you find what you would like to install, click the **Install** button next to the application name. Ubuntu will download and install the application, putting it in its corresponding category in the **Applications** menu. While an application is being installed, you can keep browsing or even close the Ubuntu Software Center and the process will continue in the background.

Keyboard shortcuts

Ubuntu has a large number of keyboard shortcuts, and most of the installed applications include their own shortcuts. Commonly used examples are ctrl+c for copy and ctrl+v for paste. A full list is available at: https://help.ubuntu.com/community/KeyboardShortcuts

In addition, you may add your own using the 'system settings' menu described above, and clicking the 'keyboard shortcuts' icon.

Further Information

Stay Up to Date

Ubuntu will automatically check for updates periodically. Installing updates is important because it can add new features, fix bugs, and make Ubuntu even more secure. To check for and install updates manually, right click the Applications icon on the sidebar, and go to **System → Update Manager**. Click the **Check** button to check for new updates, then click the **Install Updates** button to install the new updates. Since you are performing an administrative task, you may be prompted for your password.

Get Support

Ubuntu is maintained by a large community and sponsored by **Canonical Ltd.** Official, paid support can be purchased directly from Canonical, or free support can be obtained, provided largely by the Ubuntu community. Learn more at http://www.ubuntu.com/support.

The Ubuntu Manual

This guide is meant to be short and simple to get you started with Ubuntu. For a slightly more in-depth guide about using Ubuntu that covers nearly every task in greater detail, check out the **Ubuntu Manual Project**. The manual can be purchased in print or downloaded for free at http://ubuntu-manual.org/.

About this Guide