Fedora 27 announcement, news and known issues

Once a year, we upgrade all the desktop systems to the latest version of Fedora, our Linux desktop operating system.

General information

- Fedora 27 release notes
- Common Bugs and Known Issues

Local links:

- Linux desktop environments
- Fedora compatibility settings
- Fedora tips

New in F27, or in our Fedora setup:

- Gnome 3.26 (see below for details)
  - Various Gnome shell extensions that you can load for yourself from https://extensions.gnome.org/
- Cloud integration: you can link your Google Drive, OwnCloud/SurfDrive and some other cloud storage services the file manager (in addition to Dropbox, which has been there for a couple of years).
  Various online calendars can be integrated in the desktop calendar utility.
- Python is now available in version 2.7 and 3.6. If you had private packages or virtualenv installed for python 3.5, you may have to reinstall those for 3.6. Your python 2.7 packages should remain operational.
  - All python programs in the desktop and system utilities, are now using python 3.6. Command `python` will continue to invoke python2 so all your own scripts should not be affected. Command `python3` will now invoke version 3.6 in stead of 3.5, so some differences may be present.
  - When available, we have installed both the python 2.7 and the python 3.6 version of a package.

    - iPython has been upgraded to version 6.2.1 for python 3.6, and to version 5.5.0 for python 2.7
    - spyder needs to be run with fresh default preferences in order to work right
- Nvidia CUDA version 9.0, on systems that can make use of this.
- Wayland: the official Fedora release notes have a lot of information about Wayland, a replacement for the X11 graphics system. We don't use Wayland at this time, since it doesn't yet support many features that are needed in our type of work (remote graphics, various scientific programs, …). So you can ignore all that is written about Wayland in the documentation (which includes over half of the known bugs, issues and workarounds mentioned there).

Known issues in Fedora 27

- Gnome has become too demanding for our oldest computers. Gnome Classic usually works. Cinnamon suffers from the same problem, but is usually able to go into “fallback” mode when this situation occurs.
- VNC issues: Desktop environments that require hardware accelleration (3D desktop effects) are too heavy to be used inside a virtual desktop (VNC, X2GO). See VNC desktop issues for details and workarounds.
- TeX package `psfig`, which has been obsolete for a long time, has now almost completely stopped working. Converting documents to newer packages such as `graphics` or `graphicx` is recommended, and is usually easy.
- When selecting a desktop from the login screen, the GNOME desktop is listed multiple times. Choosing any one of them should work.
- ICAclient (Citrix receiver, in use to reach the university “self service” pages) is only available as browser plugin, no longer as stand-alone application.
- xmgrace is missing its fonts. please contact the helpdesk if you encounter this problem, a workaround is available but needs to be applied on a per-user basis
- spyder (integrated development environment for python) has some incompatible preferences. if you have used it in earlier fedora versions, you should probably get rid of the `.spyder2` and `.spyder3` directories in your home before starting the new version.

Some general observations and tips

- Gnome 3. Gnome 3 is a completely different desktop design, which makes the desktop look and behave a bit like a Tablet PC. Some people may like it, but if you don't, “Mate” is available as an alternative, to give you the experience of good old Gnome 2, or “Cinnamon”, for a more desktop-like version of the new Gnome, or try “Gnome Classic”.
  More on Gnome 3
- Gnome applications: in every new release, more Gnome applications are rewritten in the style of the Gnome 3 desktop. This means: a separate application menu, displayed Mac-style in the top bar on the Gnome desktop, or under the application icon in other desktops, the most important actions displayed as buttons, and everything else in a menu at the top right in the application window.
  See desktop applications for a table listing alternatives, in case you cannot get used to the new look.
- Cinnamon desktop tweaks: While Cinnamon is based on (and compatible with) Gnome 3, there are separate tools for its customization, eg, if you want to modify the programs that start in each session, use cinnamon-session-properties for that (also available from the settings

overview).
More on Cinnamon or see the list of available desktop applications

- Programs that start with each session: A lot of programs are started by default in each desktop session. many of them are unnecessary; some of them are annoying or can cause problems. users can disable everything they don't need.
More on session tweaking
- The command `pmount` can be used to mount removable media (cdrom,dvd,usb-disks) from the commandline. E.g.: `pmount /dev/cdrom` mounts the cd/dvd as /media/cdrom.
- Emacs. Stating with Emacs version 24, the program contains quite a number of changes. For the most part: it tries to work nicer with current desktop systems, since the way people expect an X application to behave, have changed a lot over the years. Best to enable the KDE or Gnome clipboard manager, and enjoy the new feature of emacs and of your desktop the way they were programmed to be.
But emacs being emacs, all of this behaviour can be configured and fine-tuned. Read the news, available from the help menu (C-h n).
If you realy, realy, realy want the old selection, cut and paste behaviour back, add this in your .emacs:

```
(setq select-active-regions nil)
(setq mouse-drag-copy-region t)
(setq x-select-enable-primary t)
(setq x-select-enable-clipboard nil)
(global-set-key [mouse-2] 'mouse-yank-at-click)
```

- Intel compilers: The Intel compilers (ifort,icc) are not enabled by default. The latest freely available version is 10.1, which can be loaded using `module load intel`. However, for most code, the GNU compilers are better than these slightly older Intel compiler versions. (if you read that the Intel compiler has speed benefits, this probably refers to the very expensive current version, which we cannot install on a system-wide basis, or you are reading an obsolete webpage; the GNU compilers have gained significant speed of the last couple of years).
If you really need the current Intel compilers, find funding, and be prepared to have a license locked to a single computer.