

Want to impress your friends with Linux? Use 3D-Desktop! (Linux Reviews)

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# Want to impress your friends with Linux? Use 3D-Desktop!

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3D-Desktop is pager (desktop switcher) that gives you a very impressive 3D overview of all your desktops and also allows you to switch between your desktops in a very fancy 3D box type way.

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## 1. Installing 3D-Desktop

Binary Packages for [3D-Desktop](#) are not available for all distributions, but the source is. May the source be with you.

- Fedora Core users: [HOWTO: Building 3d-Desktop RPM package for Fedora Core](#)
- Gentoo users: `emerge 3ddesktop`

Verify that your X server is accelrated (with the command `glxinfo`) using proper 3D video drivers for your card. Nvidia owners can obtain drivers from [nvidia.com](#).

## 2. How 3D-Desktop allows you to impress people

3D-Desktop allows you to get an overview of all your desktops displayed in 3D.



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```
(3ddesk --view=carousel)
```

It also has a feature that allows you to go from one desktop to another and view the desktops move like the side of a cube.

*Thanks to Savred*

```
(3ddesk --gotoleft --nozoom)
```

## 3. Assign some keyboard shortcuts that make make 3D-Desktop switch from one desktop to another.

The standard keyboard shortcuts for this purpose today are:

- Tux/Windows-key + Left Arrow and Arrow Right
- Ctrl+Alt+ Left Arrow and Arrow Right

(Defaults in KDE 3.1 and Gnome).

### 3.1. How to use 3D-Desktop with your window manager

```
usage: 3ddesk [ OPTIONS ]
```

Activates the 3d Desktop. 3ddeskd daemon must be running.

Where OPTIONS are:

```
--view=xxx          Uses the options from the view in 3ddesktop.conf
--mode=xxx          Sets the arrangement mode
                    (one of carousel, cylinder, linear, viewmaster,
                    priceisright, flip, or random)
--acquire[=#]       Grab images for all the desktops by cycling thru
                    (sleep for x millisecs at each screen for refresh)
--acquirecurrent    Grab image for current desktop
--nozoom            Disable the zoom out
--gotoright         Goto the desktop to the right
--gotoleft          Goto the desktop to the left
--gotoup            Goto the desktop to the up
--gotodown          Goto the desktop to the down
--goto=#            Goto specified column (deprecated)
--gotocolumn=#      Goto specified column
--gotorow=#         Goto specified row
--dontexit          Don't exit after a goto
--stop              Stop 3ddesktop (kill 3ddeskd daemon)
--reload            Force a reload of 3ddesktop.conf
--noautofun         Don't Automatically turn on Fun Mode
--revmousewheel     Reverse the mousewheel
--swapmousebuttons Swap the mousebuttons
--altmousebuttons  Use alternate mousebuttons scheme
```

You will want to assign the arrow keys to run `3ddesk --view=goright` and `3ddesk --view=goleft`. It may be preferable to use `--nozoom` because the zooming part simply takes to long. Using the window managers own method of switching between desktops will always be much more efficient. `3ddesk` will make you less productive, but it will, as said, allow you to impress heavily.

The `--mode=` option allows you to impress in different ways: `carousel`, `cylinder`, `linear`, `viewmaster`, `priceisright`, `flip`, or `random`.

```
3ddesk --mode=viewmaster
```

## 3.2. Using 3D-Desktop with Fluxbox

Fluxbox users can add this to `~/.fluxbox/keys` and get the really cool `go-<direction>` desktop switching using 3D-Desktop. This just scrolls like you are viewing a cube from one desktop to another.

```
# Use 3ddesk to change desktop
Mod4 KP_6 :ExecCommand 3ddesk --gotoright --nozoom
Mod4 Right :ExecCommand 3ddesk --gotoright --nozoom
Mod4 KP_4 :ExecCommand 3ddesk --gotoleft --nozoom
Mod4 Left :ExecCommand 3ddesk --gotoleft --nozoom
Mod4 Down :ExecCommand 3ddesk --view=carousel
```

- Mod4 is the Tux/Windows key on the left side of modern keyboards.
  - ◆ Mod4 Left :ExecCommand...

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- You can use `Mod1+Ctrl` (`Mod1` is `Alt`, so `Alt+Ctrl`) instead of `Mod4` if you are using a very old keyboard:
  - ◆ `Mod1 Ctrl Left :ExecCommand...`

This also allows you to get an overview of your desktops with `Alt + Arrow Down`:

```
3ddesk --mode=carousel
```

## 4. Configuration

You can configure the default behavior for 3D-Desktop system-wide in the file `/etc/3ddesktop.conf`.

```
view          default    ## this is the default if no --view specified
zoom          on
show_digit    on
digit_size    100
digit_color   green
use_breathing false
```

You can configure how big the numbers showing the desktop should be, and other eye-candy related things.

The most interesting use for this file is to create custom views:

```
view          goright
zoom          off
mode          cylinder
gotoright     on

view          goleft
zoom          off
mode          cylinder
gotoleft      on
```

This will enable you to start 3D-Desktop with `--view=goleft` and `--view=goright` using those preferences.

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```
3ddesk --mode=linear
```

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