

# ? Frequently Asked Questions — Darby Linux

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## General

### Q: Will this erase macOS from my Mac?

A: Only if you choose to during the Linux installation. You can dual-boot Linux alongside macOS if you prefer. See the [User Guide](#) (USER\_GUIDE.md#dual-booting-with-macos) for dual-boot instructions.

### Q: Can I go back to macOS after installing Linux?

A: Yes. You can always reinstall macOS using Internet Recovery (hold `Cmd+Option+R` at startup). Your Mac's firmware supports this regardless of what's installed on the disk.

### Q: Which Linux distribution should I use as the base?

A: We recommend **Ubuntu 22.04 LTS** or **Linux Mint 21** for the best compatibility. Debian 11/12 also works well. Choose the **minimal installation** option for the lightest starting point.

### Q: Is this a custom Linux distro?

A: No. This is a **configuration kit** that runs on top of a standard Ubuntu/Debian installation. It installs and configures software to work optimally on Mac hardware.

### Q: Do I need to be technical to use this?

A: Basic comfort with the command line is helpful, but the installer is designed to be straightforward. Follow the [User Guide](#) (USER\_GUIDE.md) step by step.

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## Hardware

### Q: Does my Mac model work?

A: Check the [Supported Models](#) (SUPPORTED\_MODELS.md) list. Generally, all **Intel Macs from 2008 to 2019** are supported. Apple Silicon (M1/M2/M3) Macs are **not supported** — they use a different architecture.

### Q: Why doesn't WiFi work during the Linux installation?

A: Most Macs use Broadcom WiFi chips that require proprietary firmware not included in the default Linux installer. Connect via Ethernet during installation, then run our kit to install WiFi drivers.

### Q: Will the Touch Bar work on my MacBook Pro?

A: Basic Touch Bar support (function keys) is available on Linux via community drivers. The full Touch Bar experience (dynamic controls) is limited. MacBook Pro 2016–2019 models with Touch Bar will get basic F-key functionality.

### Q: Can I use my Apple peripherals (Magic Mouse, Magic Keyboard, AirPods)?

A: Yes, via Bluetooth. The kit installs and configures Bluetooth support. AirPods work for audio but may not support all features (e.g., automatic ear detection).

### Q: Will the FaceTime camera work?

A: On most Macs, yes. The kit attempts to install the community `facetimehd` driver. Some newer models may have limited support.

**Q: Is the Thunderbolt port supported?**

A: Basic Thunderbolt functionality (data, displays) works on most Intel Macs. Hot-plugging may be limited on some models.

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## Performance

**Q: How much faster will my Mac be with this setup?**

A: Most users report significantly faster performance, especially on Macs with HDDs. XFCE uses far less RAM than macOS (typically 300–500 MB idle vs 2–4 GB for macOS), and our storage optimisations improve I/O performance.

**Q: How much RAM does this use?**

A: The XFCE desktop idles at approximately **300–500 MB** of RAM. A Mac with 4 GB of RAM will run comfortably; 2 GB is usable but tight.

**Q: How much disk space does this need?**

A: The base Ubuntu minimal install uses about 5 GB. The kit adds roughly 2–3 GB of additional packages. We recommend at least **20 GB** of total disk space for comfortable daily use.

**Q: Will this make my Mac's battery last longer?**

A: Typically yes for light usage, thanks to TLP power management and performance tuning. However, Linux battery life on Macs can vary; some models may see shorter battery life than macOS due to driver differences.

**Q: Should I replace my HDD with an SSD?**

A: If your Mac has an HDD and you can upgrade, absolutely. An SSD is the single biggest performance upgrade you can make. The kit will auto-detect the new SSD and apply appropriate optimisations.

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## Software

**Q: Why Chrome and not Firefox?**

A: Chrome is set as the default because it's widely used and provides a consistent experience. Firefox is available in the default Ubuntu repositories if you prefer it: `sudo apt install firefox`.

**Q: Can I install other software?**

A: Absolutely. You have a full Linux system. Use `apt` to install packages, Snap, Flatpak, or download applications directly. Popular options:

- LibreOffice: `sudo apt install libreoffice`
- VLC: `sudo apt install vlc`
- GIMP: `sudo apt install gimp`
- VS Code: Download from [code.visualstudio.com](https://code.visualstudio.com/) (<https://code.visualstudio.com/>)

**Q: Can I use a different desktop environment instead of XFCE?**

A: The kit is designed for XFCE, but you can install others. For older Macs, we recommend sticking with XFCE or LXDE/LXQt for the best performance. GNOME and KDE are heavier.

**Q: Does Netflix / Spotify / YouTube work?**

A: Yes. Chrome includes the Widevine DRM module, so Netflix, Disney+, Spotify, and other streaming services work out of the box.

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## Updates & Maintenance

### Q: How do I update the system?

A: Two types of updates:

1. **System packages:** `sudo apt update && sudo apt upgrade`
2. **Kit updates:** `sudo /opt/lightweight-linux-mac/scripts/ota/update_manager.sh install`

### Q: Can I roll back an update?

A: Yes. Kit updates can be rolled back with:

```
sudo /opt/lightweight-linux-mac/scripts/ota/update_manager.sh rollback
```

System package updates require more manual intervention (or use Timeshift for snapshots).

### Q: How do I change the update settings?

A: Edit `/etc/lightweight-linux-mac/update.conf`. You can change the check interval, auto-install behaviour, and update channel.

## T2 Chip Support

### Q: Does my Mac have a T2 chip?

A: T2 chips are found in Macs from late 2017 to 2020. Check with:

```
sudo ./scripts/hardware/t2_support.sh --check
```

### Q: Will the Touch Bar work?

A: Basic Touch Bar support (function keys F1-F12) works after installing T2 support. Dynamic app-specific controls are not fully supported on Linux. You can change the Touch Bar mode with

```
sudo touchbar-mode {0|1|2|3}.
```

### Q: My T2 Mac's internal SSD isn't accessible from Linux. What do I do?

A: T2 Macs encrypt the internal SSD via the T2 chip. You may need to boot from an external SSD or install the [t2linux](https://wiki.t2linux.org/) patched kernel which includes SSD support. See [t2linux.org](https://wiki.t2linux.org/) (<https://wiki.t2linux.org/>) for details.

## Security

### Q: What security measures does Darby Linux apply by default?

A: The installer applies: UFW firewall (deny incoming, allow outgoing), AppArmor enforcement, automatic security updates, Fail2ban (SSH brute-force protection), SSH hardening, and kernel security parameters (ASLR, ptrace restriction, symlink protection).

### Q: How do I check my security status?

A:

```
sudo ./scripts/security/harden.sh --status
sudo ./scripts/security/harden.sh --audit
```

**Q: Can I disable the firewall temporarily?**

A: Yes: `sudo ufw disable` . Re-enable with `sudo ufw enable` .

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## Gaming

**Q: Can I play games on my old Mac with Darby Linux?**

A: Yes! Install the gaming stack with `sudo ./install.sh --enable-gaming` or `sudo ./scripts/gaming/setup_gaming.sh --all` . This installs Steam, Proton (for Windows games), Wine, Lutris, and GPU-specific optimisations. Performance depends on your Mac's GPU and specs.

**Q: How do I get the best gaming performance?**

A: Use the gaming-mode Steam launcher: `steam-gaming` . This automatically switches to the performance CPU governor and enables GameMode. For FPS overlay, launch games with `mangohud %command%` in Steam launch options.

**Q: Does Proton work on Mac hardware?**

A: Yes. Proton (Steam Play) works well on Intel/AMD GPUs found in Macs. NVIDIA GPUs using nouveau have limited performance; consider proprietary drivers for NVIDIA. Check compatibility at [ProtonDB](https://www.protondb.com/) (<https://www.protondb.com/>).

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## Wallpaper

**Q: How do I change the wallpaper?**

A:

```
./scripts/ui/wallpaper_manager.sh --set /path/to/image.png
```

**Q: The default wallpaper doesn't match my screen resolution.**

A: Regenerate it:

```
sudo ./scripts/ui/wallpaper_manager.sh --generate
```

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## Troubleshooting

**Q: Something broke. How do I get help?**

A: See the [Troubleshooting Guide](#) (TROUBLESHOOTING.md) for common issues. If your problem isn't listed, open a GitHub issue with your Mac model, kernel version, and error logs.

**Q: How do I check which Mac model Linux detected?**

A:

```
cat /etc/lightweight-linux-mac/hardware.conf
```

**Q: How do I check what storage optimisations were applied?**

A:

```
cat /etc/lightweight-linux-mac/storage.conf  
cat /sys/block/sda/queue/scheduler    # Current I/O scheduler
```

**Q: The installer failed midway. Can I re-run it?**

A: Yes. The installer is designed to be idempotent — it's safe to run multiple times. Already-installed packages will be skipped.