

Porteus Linux: A portable Linux with a difference

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I'm writing this in Porteus Linux v5.0rc1 for x86_64, a Live Linux distribution booted from a USB pendrive. It is fast, good-looking and has a good range of applications and utilities. I stumbled upon Porteus recently while looking for a compact Live Linux distribution to install on a couple of spare SD cards. It seemed ideal, as it is a portable distribution designed for USB pendrives and CDs, and optionally can be configured to be persistent between reboots and shutdowns. Porteus is based on Slackware, although I gather the developers might switch to Arch Linux at some undefined future date. Spins of Porteus with various Desktop Environments are available, and I settled on Xfce after trying a couple of the others.

Although my original objective was to install a portable Linux distribution on SD cards, I only managed to install Porteus on an SD card by using YUMI Multiboot USB Creator for Windows, which I run using WINE in Linux, rather than in Windows. The reason Porteus boots from an SD card when installed by YUMI is because YUMI installs its own boot manager on the SD card and chainloads the OS. Actually, if an SD card or USB pendrive has sufficient capacity, YUMI can install several OSs on a single SD card or single USB pendrive and you can choose on the YUMI bootloader menu which OS to boot.

Anyway, Porteus is interesting because, optionally, it can be configured quite easily to be persistent. I.e. if you want it to, Porteus can save new files, applications you install, browser bookmarks, edited configuration files and so on between reboots/shutdowns. However, I was unable to get persistence working with Porteus installed by YUMI on an SD card, but persistence works perfectly when I install Porteus on USB pendrives, which is the medium Porteus is really designed to be installed on.

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[2] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/63>

[3] <https://fitzcarraldoblog.wordpress.com/2019/11/22/porteus-linux-a-portable-linux-with-a-difference/>