

# Drag's Guide to Debian variations

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This intended to help people choose 'what Debian is right for them' and provide for some sort of introduction. I don't represent Debian, I am not a lawyer, or anything like that. It's just a friendly fyi.

## The Multiple Branches.

Debian has several branches. The main ones are called Unstable, Testing, Stable.

Packages are built in various Experimental branches. Once those packages are in a usable state and don't break things unnecessarily they are accepted into Unstable. Unstable is like the 'cvs' branch of Debian linux and is where most of the work is done by developers and majority bugs are shaken out.

After packages are tested by adventurous end users and developers in real-life usage in Unstable they eventually, after a set time, are added to Testing if they are found to be relatively bug free.

Testing is the next 'Stable' release to be set out by Debian. After it is complete and has all the packages it will eventually need it is made into the next Stable barring any release bugs.

The Stable release is the only officially supported Debian version. It's designed to be stable in not only a bug-free fashion, but also a unchanging fashion. It has priority with security issues and the only updates are the ones necessary for bug fixes. It's designed to be a 'set and forget' style operating system where you don't have to worry about periodic updates breaking software or otherwise introducing incompatibilities.

The current Debian release is Debian 3.1r1 and is called 'Sarge'. The current testing is called 'Etch' and is due out sometime next year, supposedly.

In case your wondering where Debian got 'Sarge' and 'Etch' from these are the names of a couple characters from the movie 'Toy Story'. Debian Unstable is named 'Sid' and it will never be an officially supported distribution of Debian. (Sid is the boy next door that breaks toys and puts them back together in odd ways)

## Repositories, Mirrors, and Archives.

[Full Article](#) [2].

[Linux](#)

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**Links:**

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

[2] [http://aplawrence.com/Linux/debian\\_variations.html](http://aplawrence.com/Linux/debian_variations.html)