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How to Install Linux in Windows With a VMware Virtual Machine

Do you want to install Linux, but can't leave Windows? Try a virtual machine to run your favorite version of Linux inside Windows. We show you how to set up VMware Workstation Player.

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Fancy trying Linux but don't want to install it on your PC? If you've heard bad things about dual booting, the answer could be to use a virtual machine.

Installing Linux on Windows in a virtual machine is straightforward. Here's how to install Linux on VMware Workstation, step by step.

Use a PC That Supports Virtualization

You've tried Linux from a live CD. Now you want to install it, but you're unsure about dual booting. The sensible option is to install your chosen Linux operating system in a **virtual machine** (VM).

A virtual machine is a software environment that replicates the conditions of a hardware environment: a personal computer. The environment is based on the hardware of your physical PC and limited only by the components within. For instance, you couldn't have a virtual four core CPU on a processor with two cores.

However, while virtualization can be achieved on many systems, the results will be far superior on **computers equipped with a CPU that supports it**.

Several VM tools make it easy to install Linux operating systems (OS). **VMware** produces the most accomplished virtual machine applications. Let's find out how to install Linux in Windows with VMware Workstation Player.

Install VMware Workstation Player

To start, head to the **VMware website** and download the latest version of their Workstation Player tool. We're using VMware Workstation 15 Player, which is around 150MB to download.

Download: VMware Workstation 15 Player (Free)

VMware Workstation Player is free and available for non-commercial, personal, and home use. Students and non-profit organizations can also benefit from the free version. In terms of functionality, VMware Workstation Player includes everything you could need for the standard virtual machine tasks.

However, VMware offers a wide selection of virtualization solutions aimed at businesses of all levels. You can find out more about their solutions on the **website's product page**.

Once VMware Workstation Player has downloaded, launch the installer and follow the installation wizard. You'll see the option to install an Enhanced Keyboard Driver---while you won't need this initially, it's worth having.

Proceed through the installation wizard, and restart Windows when prompted.

Choose Your Preferred Linux OS

You probably know which Linux OS you want to try. Some Linux distros are particularly **suited to running in a VM**, but others are not. All 32-bit and 64-bit distros work in a virtual machine. However, you cannot run Linux distros for ARM architecture (such as the Raspberry Pi) in VMware.

Should you want to emulate an ARM environment in Windows, try QEMU.

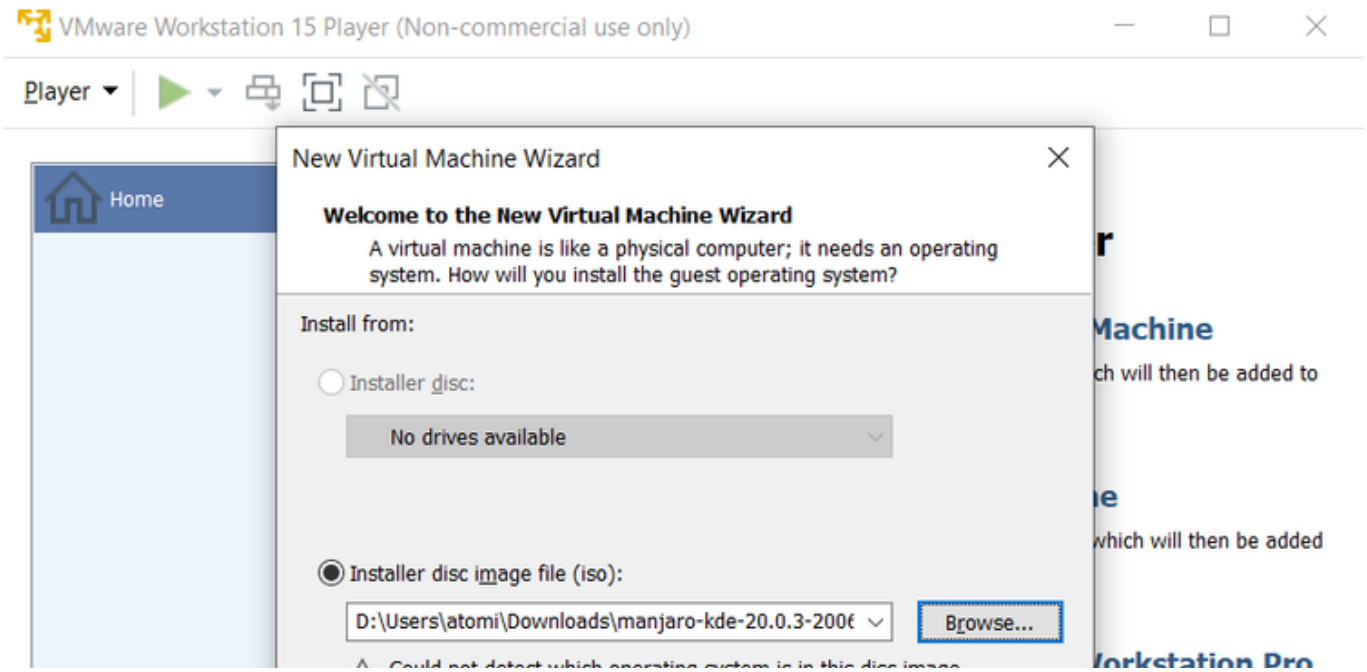
> **RELATED:**
>
> **Emulate The Raspberry Pi OS Raspbian In QEMU**

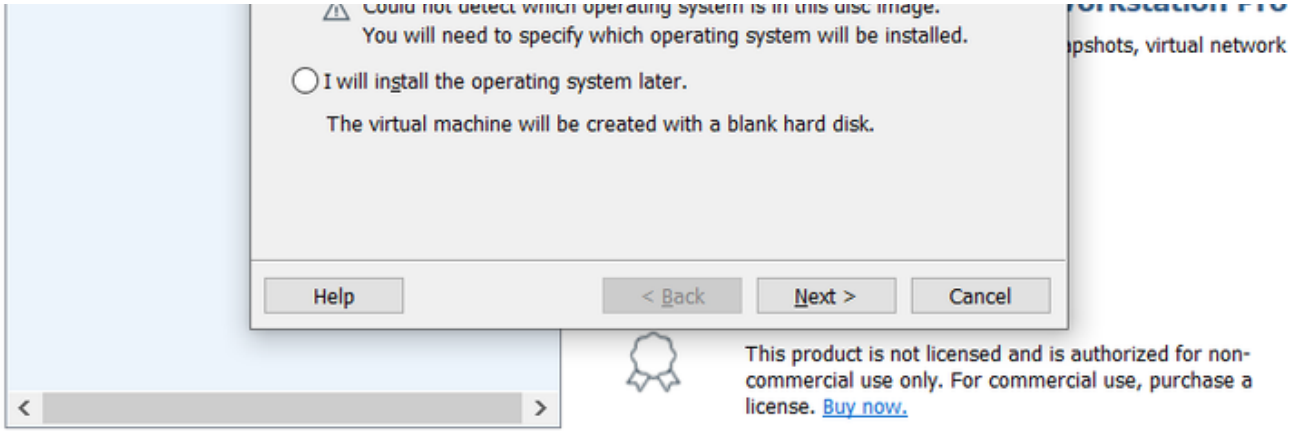
If you don't know which OS to choose, however, you'll find our regularly-updated list of the **best Linux distributions here**.

Create Your Linux Virtual Machine

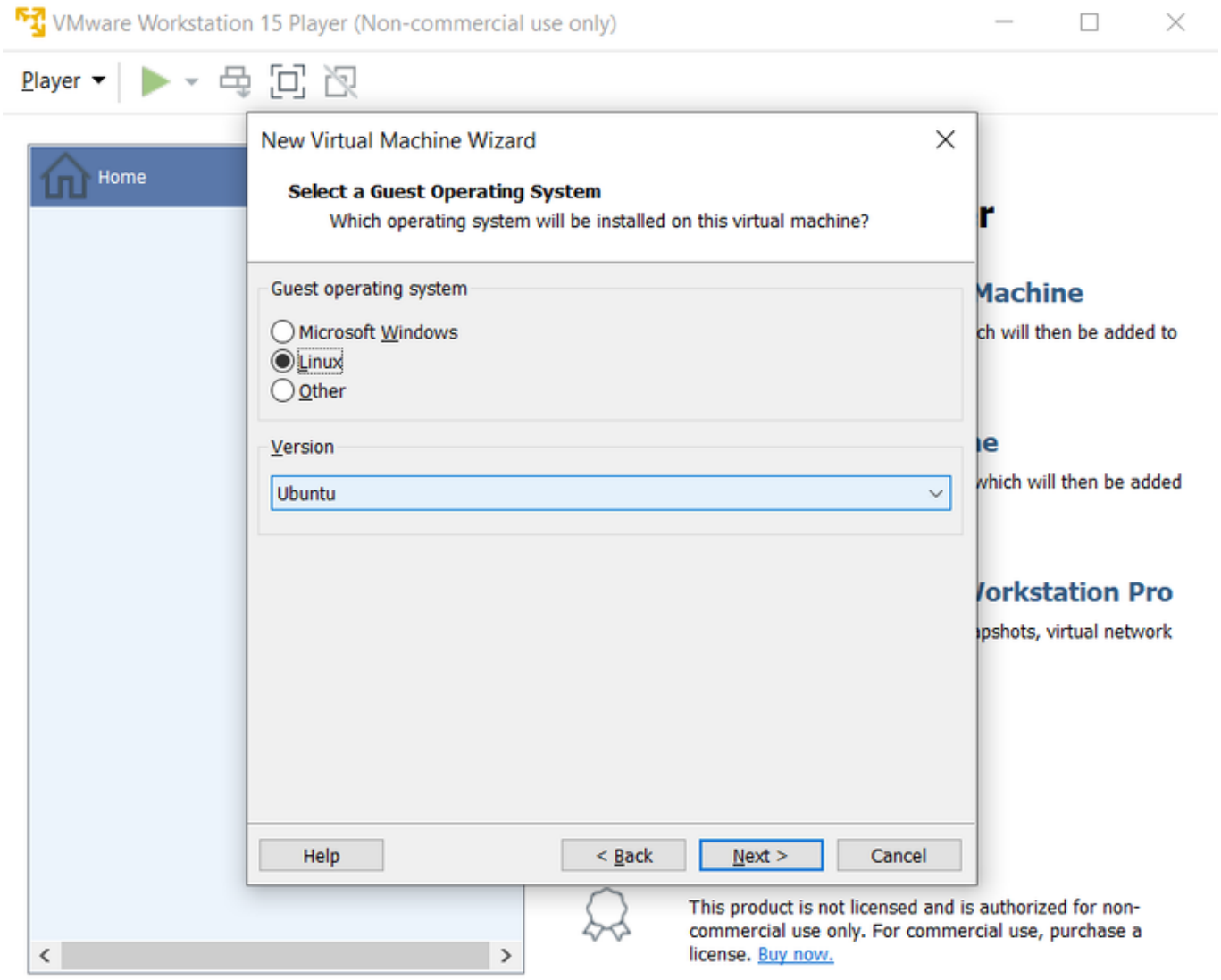
While your Linux ISO downloads, it's a good time to start configuring your VM. Start by launching VMware Workstation Player. When you're ready to create a VM:

1. Click **Create a New Virtual Machine**
2. Select the default option, **Installer disc image file (iso)**
3. Click **Browse** to find the ISO file





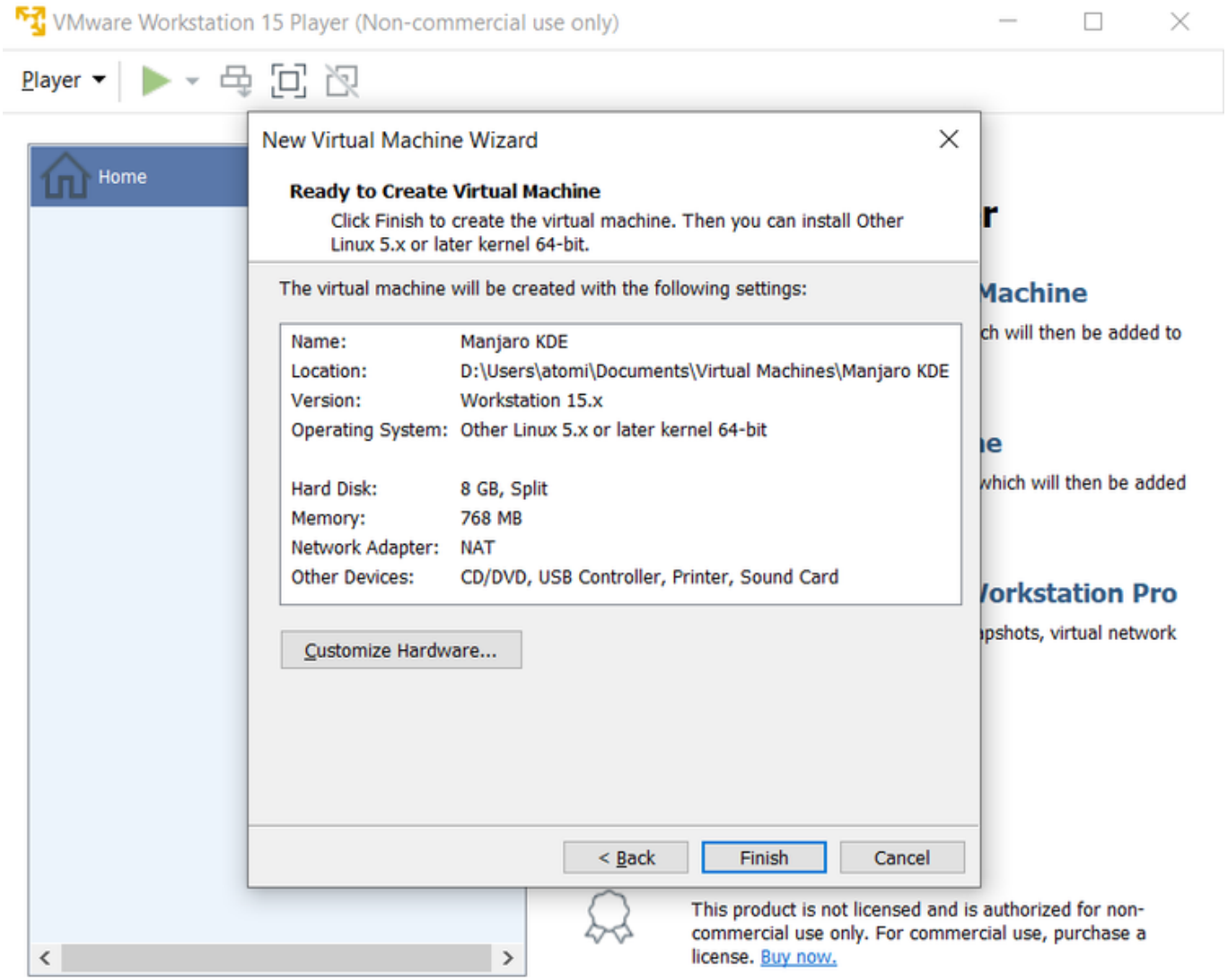
4. With "guest" OS selected, click **Next**
5. Select **Linux** as the Guest operating system type



6. Under **Version**, scroll through the list and select the OS
7. Click **Next** to proceed and if necessary, input a **Virtual machine name**
8. Confirm the storage **Location** and change if needed

With the operating system selected and configured, it's time to build the virtual machine.

1. Under **Specify Disk Capacity** adjust **Maximum disk size** if required (the default should be enough)
2. Select **Split virtual disk into multiple files** as this makes moving the VM to a new PC easy
3. Click **Next** then confirm the details on the next screen
4. If anything seems wrong click **Back**, otherwise click **Finish**



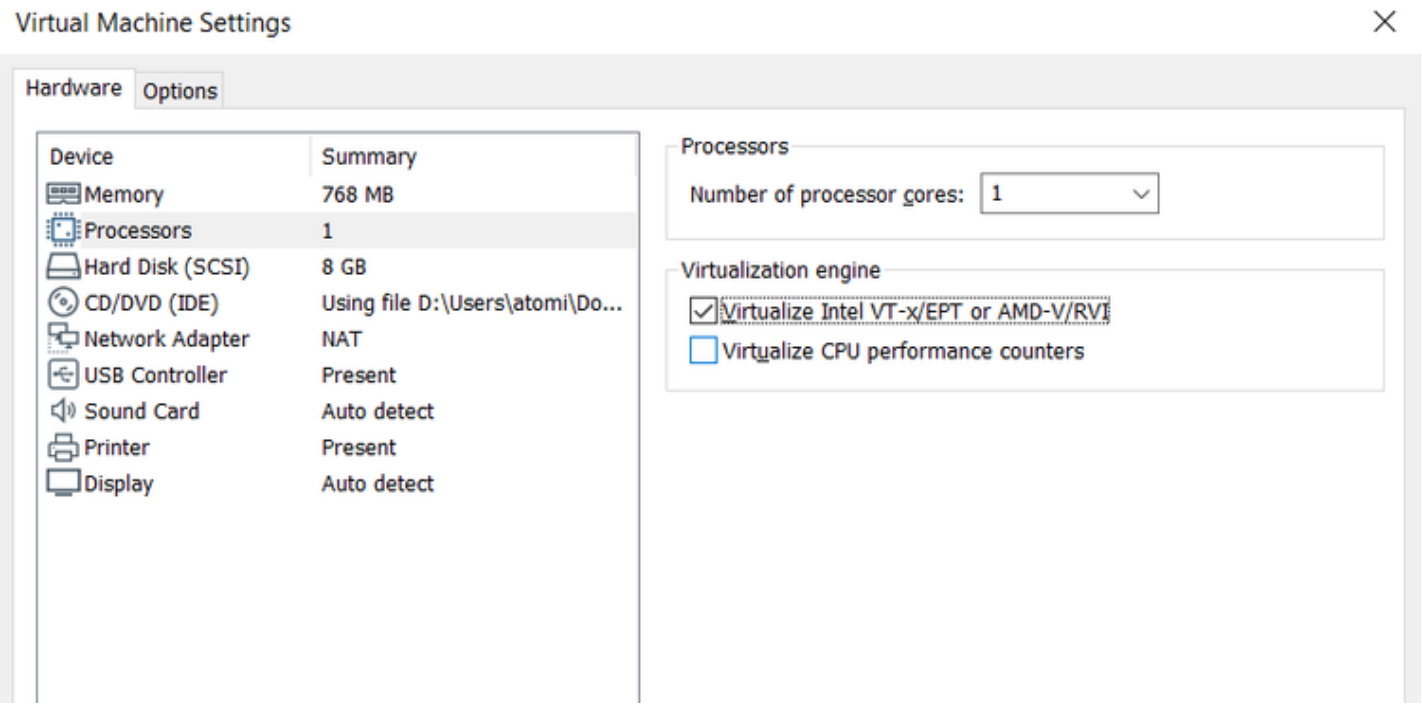
Your Linux virtual machine will be added to VMware Workstation Player.

Customize Your Virtual Hardware

In some cases, you might need to customize the virtual machine before installing Linux. Alternatively, you might install the OS and find there is something missing

Alternatively, you might install the OS and find there is something missing.

To fix this, right-click your virtual machine in VMware Workstation Player and select **Settings**.



Here, you can tweak the virtual machine's hardware in other ways beyond the HDD. You have options for the **Memory**, **Processors**, **Network Adaptor** configuration, and much more.

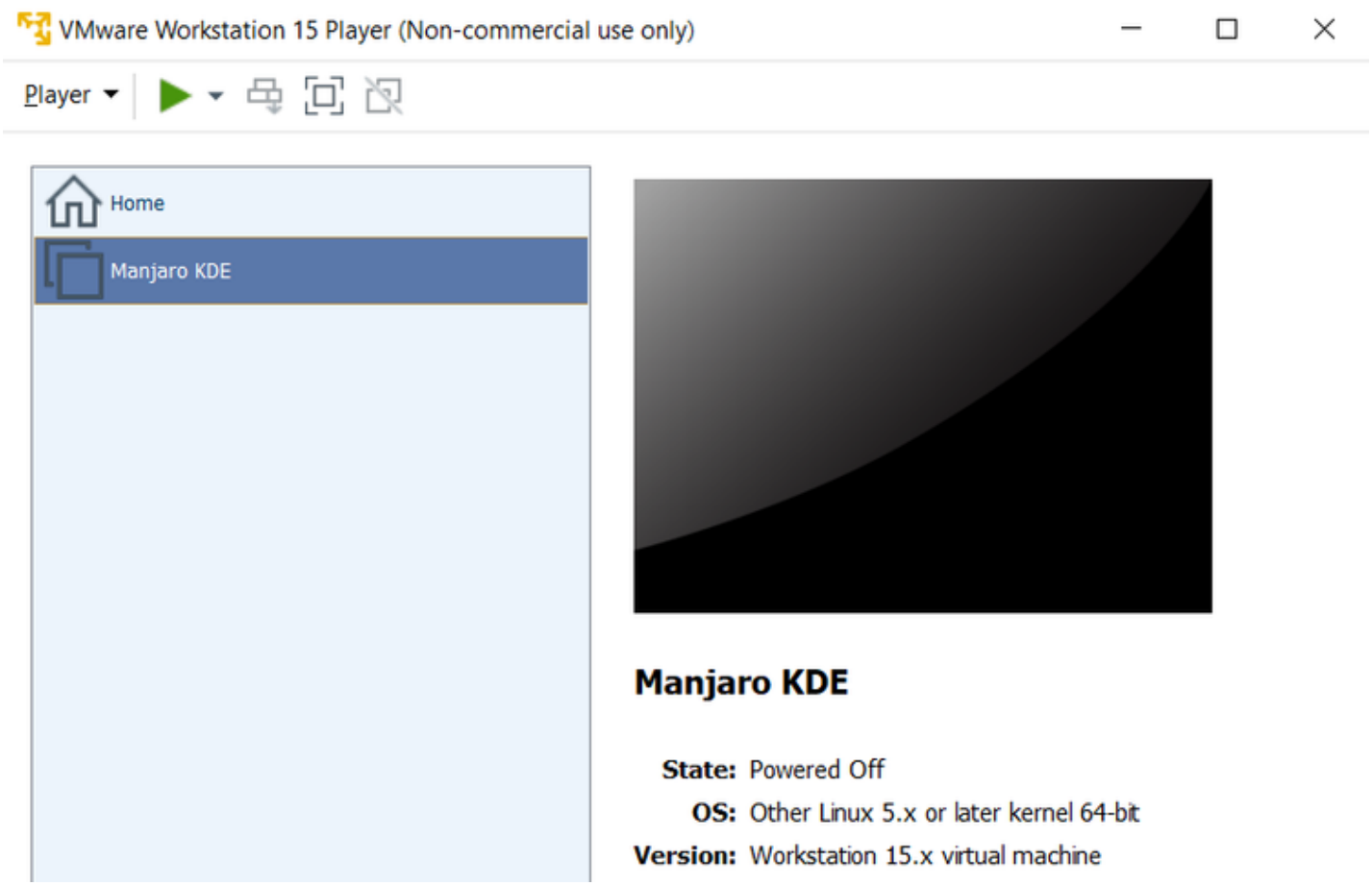
It's worth taking a look at the **Processors** screen. In the right-hand pane, you'll spot a reference to a **Virtualization engine**. By default, this works automatically, but for troubleshooting set Intel VT-x or AMD-V, depending on your CPU.

You can address performance issues in the **Memory** screen. Here you'll spot an illustration of the suggested RAM size, as well as recommended options for your virtual machine. It's a good idea to stick to these recommendations. Going too small will prove a problem, while setting the RAM too high will impact on your PC's performance, slowing everything from standard system tasks to running the VM software!

Finally, spare a moment to check the **Display** settings. Default settings should be fine but if there is an issue with the display you can toggle 3D acceleration. Multiple monitors can be used and custom resolution set, but note that some modes will clash with some desktops.

Click **OK** to confirm changes, then select the virtual machine and click the **Play** button to

begin.



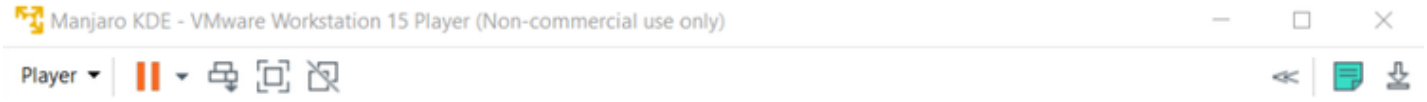
Download and Install VMware Tools

On the first boot of your virtual machine, you'll be prompted to **Download and Install** VMware Tools for Linux. Agree to this, then wait as it is downloaded.

VMware Tools will enhance the performance of the virtual machine while enabling shared folders between host and guest machines.

How to Install Linux in VMware

When the ISO boots in the virtual machine, it will boot into the live environment. This is a temporary Linux that exists only on the boot media and in the system memory. To ensure the environment persists, use the **Install** option on the desktop.



From this point, the installation will continue as if you're installing an OS on a physical machine. Progress through the installation wizard, creating a user account and setting other options when prompted.

Once the installation is complete, you'll be able to log into the Linux virtual machine and start using the guest OS. It's that simple!

How to Run Linux in a Virtual Machine

Now you can launch the Linux virtual machine at any time using the **Play** button in VMware Workstation Player.

Looking for some software to install?

Often, Linux ships with a number of preinstalled applications but if you want something else, check the **best Linux apps**.

By the way, if you just want to get into the Linux terminal, things are far simpler than installing VMware. Check out **how to access the bash shell on Windows**.

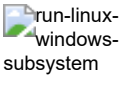
Install Any Linux Distro in a Virtual Machine on Windows!

If you want easy access to Linux, the best option is to install it in a virtual machine in Windows. VMware Workstation Player provides the best tools for doing just that.

Installing Linux in VMware is simple. Let's run through the steps again:

1. Download the free VMware Workstation Player
2. Install, and restart Windows
3. Create and configure your virtual machine
4. Install Linux in the virtual machine
5. Restart the virtual machine and use Linux

It really is that simple. You don't even have to limit your choice to one OS. Choose from hundreds (if not thousands) of Linux distros, which you can install in a VMware-based virtual machine.



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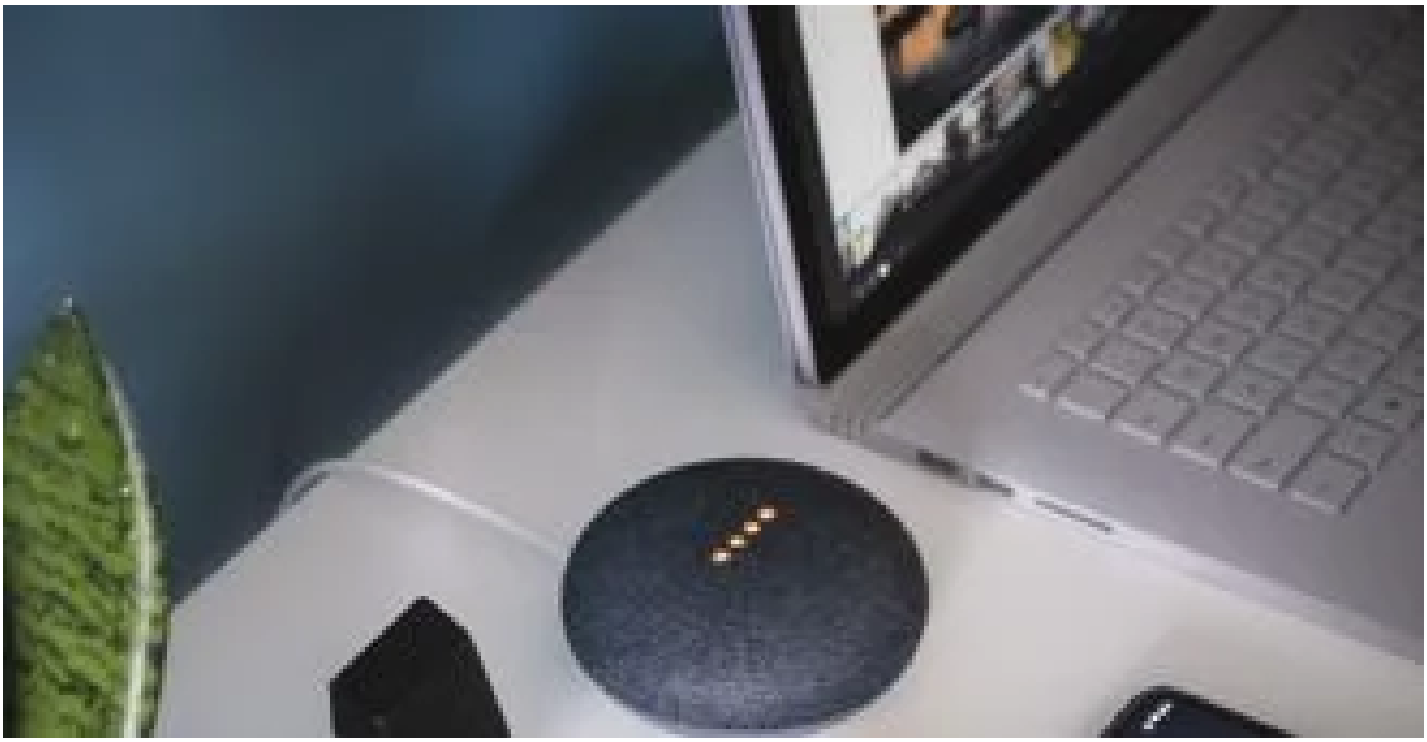

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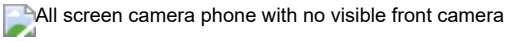

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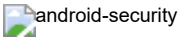

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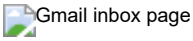

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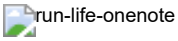

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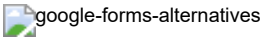
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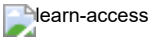
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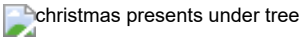
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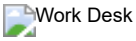
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