



Mike Basinger is a long-time contributor to Ubuntu Linux. He formerly served on the Ubuntu Community and Forum Councils and currently works at the University of Utah Marriott Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, as an IT manager. If you have any Ubuntu problems you would like answered, send your questions to: [mike.basinger@ubuntu.com](mailto:mike.basinger@ubuntu.com).

Q&A with Ubuntu Forums admin Mike Basinger

# ANSWERBUNTU

droid smartphone, Samsung Galaxy Nexus. I do not want to use a cloud application but via a USB cable or Bluetooth.

At the moment, I use Outlook to sync with my smart phone. Can you give me any useful advice?

Theo Rowaan



This can be done with a program called SyncEvolution.

SyncEvolution is not installed in the default Ubuntu installation and must be installed via the Ubuntu Software Center or the command line. To install via the Software Center, type *software* in the Unity Dash or click Software Center icon. Once opened, type *syncevolution* in the Software Center search box at the top right corner. Install the SyncEvolution package by clicking on the *Install* button (Figure 1).

Via the command-line, type the following in a terminal window.

```
sudo apt-get install syncevolution
```

Configuring SyncEvolution is not hard, but it is a subject that could be an article of its own and more than I can fit in this column. I suggest going to the SyncEvolution website [2] or the man page for the program and reading how to detect

your phone and set up a sync configuration for it.

## Un-Unity-fying Amazon



I just installed Ubuntu 12.10, and I love the newest version of Unity; it is very slick and fast.

The one thing I really dislike about it is the new feature of Amazon search results showing up in the Unity Dash. Why do Dash searches now bring up results from Amazon, and is it possible to turn that off?

Thanks,  
Jeff B., Seattle, WA



The Amazon shopping lens in Unity has been a topic of much discussion in the latest Ubuntu

release cycle. People have voiced concern about their search requests in Unity being sent to Amazon. The truth is that your search query is not going directly to Amazon: Servers at Canonical receive your query and re-send it to Amazon, providing a blind between your computer and Amazon. The reason this feature has landed in Ubuntu 12.10 is to generate revenue for future Ubuntu development. Although Ubuntu is free as in beer in its cost to you, it is not free to produce, and Canonical is looking for

## Resetting Unity



I have been playing with settings in Unity and have made things a real mess. Is there a quick way to get back to default?

Steve, West Yellowstone



In Ubuntu 12.04, you can easily do this from a terminal window. (Remember that you can open a terminal by hitting Ctrl + Alt + T in Unity.) Enter:

```
unity --reset
```

and to reset icons, use:

```
unity --reset-icons
```

This will not work in Ubuntu 12.10, and AskUbuntu [1] currently has a bounty open for a solution.

## Syncing Evolution



Dear Mike,  
I need an application that will sync my agenda, contacts, and things to do in Evolution with my An-

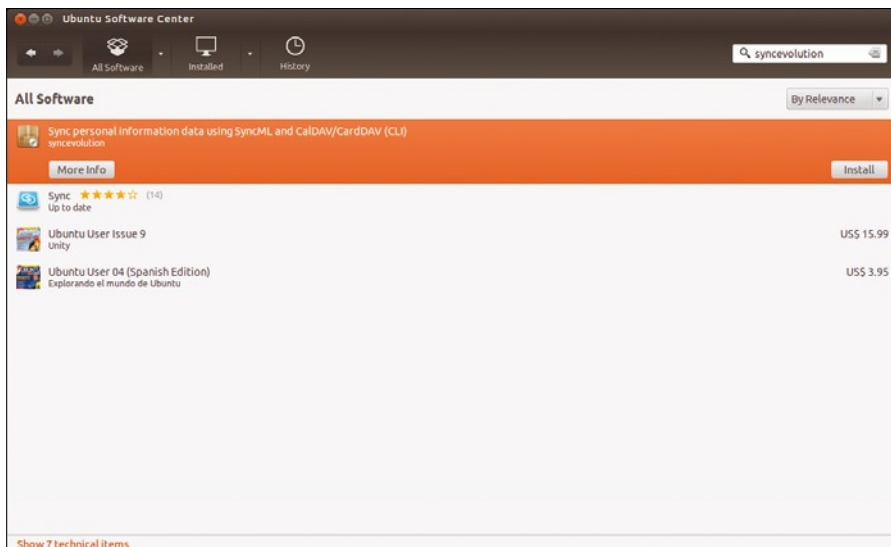


Figure 1: Installing SyncEvolution via the Software Center.

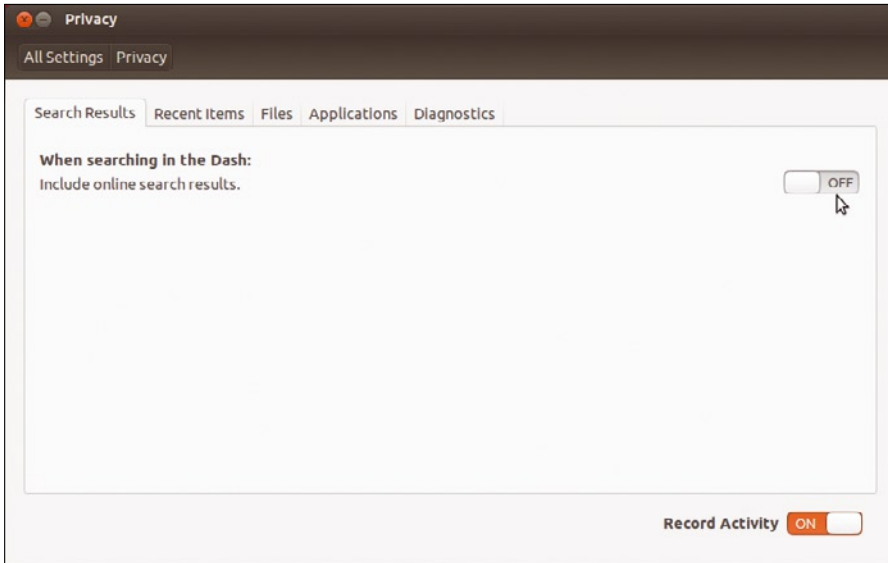


Figure 2: You can disable Amazon search results via “System Settings.”

ways to generate money that would be a benefit for the Ubuntu user.

If you are worried about privacy concerns or just don't want Amazon results showing up in Unity, you can easily disable the Amazon lens.

To disable the Amazon search, click on the gear icon in the upper right-hand corner of your screen. Select *System Settings* from the pull-down menu and choose *Privacy*. Set *Include online search results* to off (Figure 2).

You can also completely uninstall the Amazon shopping lens from the command line with:


```
sudo apt-get remove \
unity-lens-shopping
```

Then, do:


```
unity --replace
```

Make sure to log out and back on or restart Unity to enable the lens removal.

### Just the Boot Facts

 I prefer to see the regular text output of the Ubuntu boot up instead of the purple splash screen with indicator dots. I know you can hit the Esc key during the splash screen, but is it possible to make text the default?

Kevin, Denver, CO

 Make sure you don't have plymouth-theme-ubuntu-text package installed, and then edit `/etc/default/grub` and remove the “quiet

splash” from the Linux command line (Figure 3):


```
gksu gedit /etc/default/grub
```


After this, you will need to update the GRUB files:

```
sudo update-grub2
```

The next time you boot up, you should get the text output from the Ubuntu boot sequence.

### Running as Root

 There is this command-line program (CLI) that I must always run as sudo and enter my password. What I was wanting to know is if it's possible to give my user root privileges to just that one program so I don't have to type in my password each time? Thanks in advance for the help!

 By editing the sudoer file, you can set a

program to run as root and not ask for a password. The best way to edit the sudoer

file is with the command-line program visudo run as root:

```
sudo visudo
```

This will open a command-line text editor, nano by default, with the sudoer file in a temporary buffer. Add the following entry at the end of the file:

```
%admin ALL=NOPASSWD: /path/to/program
```

Then, change the program path to match the program you want to run with sudo rights and no password. Note that you can get the full path of any Linux/UNIX program with the *which* command. For example, *which firefox* will show the path of `/usr/bin/firefox`.

Be careful doing this: Ubuntu and Debian developers usually have good reasons why certain programs need a root/sudo password to run. By changing this, you are putting your system in danger. ■

**INFO**

- [1] AskUbuntu – Resetting Unity: <http://askubuntu.com/questions/17610/how-do-i-reset-my-unity-configuration>
- [2] SyncEvolution: <https://syncevolution.org/documentation/getting-started>

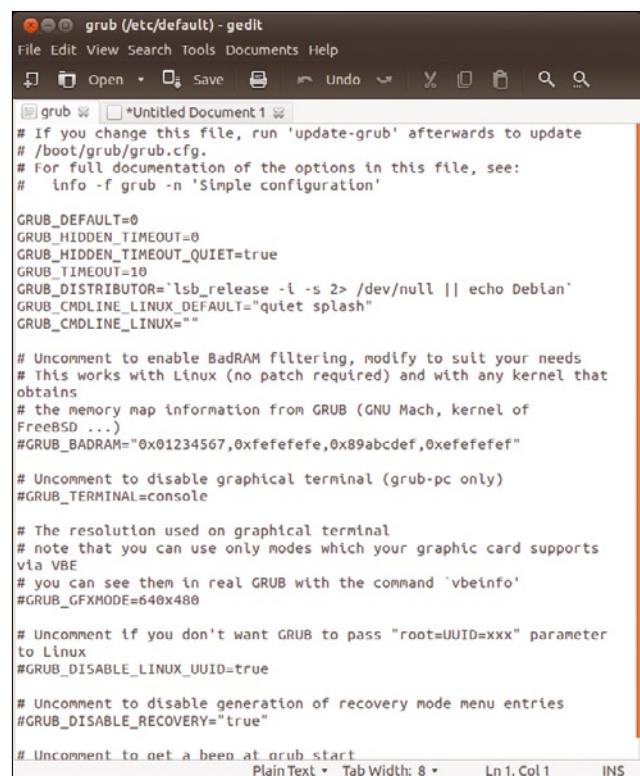


Figure 3: Edit `/etc/default/grub` to remove the purple splash screen.