

## 5 ways to 'revive' old laptops

There are many ways you can use your old laptop, give it a new life, and rescue it from the scrap heap.

Reusing an old laptop not only reduces e-waste, it opens up a world of practical applications. Better yet, there are plenty of ways you can use your old laptop, give it a new life, and save it from the scrap heap.

### 5. Dedicated Linux PC



When an old laptop becomes too slow to run Windows, switch to Linux to give it a new lease of life. Even on a 10-year-old machine, Ubuntu still runs well. Linux distributions often have nice, user-friendly interfaces. Linux drivers work most of the time, and you don't have to use the terminal if you don't want to.

After installing Linux, you will see an immediate increase in performance. Your newly refurbished machine can now serve as a secondary computer for tasks such as coding, web browsing, and online learning. In addition to the usual things you do with a PC, a Linux machine can also become an effective learning tool to learn terminal operations, file management systems, permissions, and general system administration by using the device almost every day.

### 4. Build network-connected storage



Repurposing an unused laptop into a personal NAS (network-attached storage) is both a fun and practical way to repurpose an old device. The great thing about a laptop NAS is that you already have most of the necessary components: a powerful processor, onboard memory, and networking capabilities. Plus, using a laptop also gives you a built-in battery backup and a compact design, perfect for tight spaces or power outages.

With a temporary NAS, you can now skip the Google One storage subscription and go with a personal cloud. It saves money and gives you more control over your personal privacy and security, since everything is stored locally and encrypted.

### 3. Host Plex server

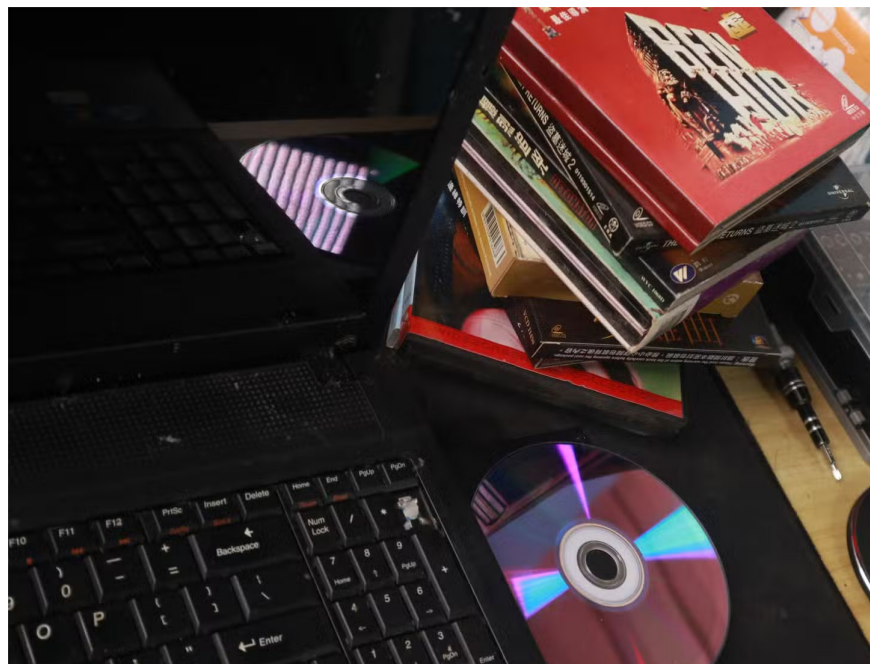


If you've already configured your old laptop as a NAS, you can install Plex Media Server on the same operating system! This allows you to load a collection of movies, TV shows, and music into a streamlined, customizable library that looks and feels just like Netflix . So not only do you have free personal cloud storage, but you can

also host your own movie streaming platform to share with your entire family and friends.

There are a few ways you can install Plex on an old laptop, such as installing it on Windows or Linux. There are also alternative self-hosted streaming platforms if you don't like Plex. One notable option is Jellyfin. Like Plex, Jellyfin lets you host your own movie streaming space. While it's not as convenient or attractive as Plex, it's not as restrictive. Plus, Jellyfin is open source, so people will always find a way to fork it, ensuring that it stays free.

## 2. Extract media from CD



Once you've hosted your own Plex server, you'll need to add movies and other media to it to enjoy using the platform. A popular way to source content for Plex is to rip CDs and DVDs using an inexpensive CD ripping tool.

In addition to old laptops, the contents of our CDs and DVDs also deserve a second chance. After all, these media contents are one of the few things we actually own in today's subscription-based economy. So preserve your music, movies, and shows by digitizing them whenever possible. And if you've also turned one of your old laptops into a NAS, you can store them there!

## 1. Home Assistant Server



Turning an old laptop into a smart home server creates a hub for managing smart devices, giving you unlimited access to your IoT setup without paying for a premium subscription. By hosting your own IoT server, you can control and automate routines on smart lights, power outlets, digital clocks, speakers, and more. You can even integrate external services like weather APIs and calendar events, allowing for more dynamic automation, ensuring your home adapts in real time to changing conditions.

A popular open source solution for smart home servers is Home Assistant. The platform can be hosted in a variety of ways – by installing it as an app on Windows, using the standalone Home Assistant OS, or running it through TrueNAS Scale. The latter is easy to set up and offers flexible options for installing a variety of other applications.

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