

Everything you need to know about using Nala on Ubuntu

Nala is an open source, Python-based front-end replacement for APT. It performs various functions: Parallel download, package update and upgrade, history fetch, autofetch mirror repository and restore installation.

Advanced Package Tool (APT) is everyone's favorite package management tool when working on Debian-based distributions. However, despite the rich feature set, this is not a convenient way to manage packages for beginners.

One major drawback of APT is that it makes the content on your terminal screen look cluttered and there should be similarity in the text on your Linux terminal.

This is where Nala, with its streamlined containers and multicolored boundaries to make your terminal output look cleaner and better structured, comes into play. Here's what you should know about Nala.

What's special about Nala?

The question is, what is Nala and is it worthy of replacing APT? Nala is an open source, Python-based front-end replacement for APT. It performs various functions: Parallel download, package update and upgrade, history fetch, autofetch mirror repository and restore installation.

Without going into the benefits at this stage, explore Nala's settings, followed by the features and changes it brings in your terminal window.

Install Nala on Ubuntu

There are several ways to install Nala on Ubuntu/Debian:

1. Install from official repositories
2. Add Custom Repository
3. Install the Nala DEB . package

On Ubuntu 22.04 and later, you can install Nala using any of the above methods. However, you need to work with Nala's custom repositories for older versions.

1. Install Nala from the official Ubuntu repositories

First, you have to update the package list on Ubuntu using apt update command as follows:

```
sudo apt update
```

There is a difference between the apt update and upgrade commands, so it's best to use the update command in the first place.

Next, install Nala by running:

```
sudo apt install nala
```

2. Add Nala Repository on Old Ubuntu Versions

If you are using an older version of Ubuntu, you can still successfully install and use Nala by installing via a third-party repository. First step, go to and add the Volian Scar repository to install Nala on Ubuntu:

```
echo "deb [arch=amd64,arm64,armhf] http://deb.volian.org/volian/ scar main" | sudo
```

You can get the GPG verification key with the wget command:

```
wget -qO - https://deb.volian.org/volian/scar.key | sudo tee /etc/apt/trusted.gpg
```

If you are using this step to install Nala on Ubuntu 22.04 or later, execute the command below to install Nala:

```
sudo apt update && sudo apt install nala -y
```

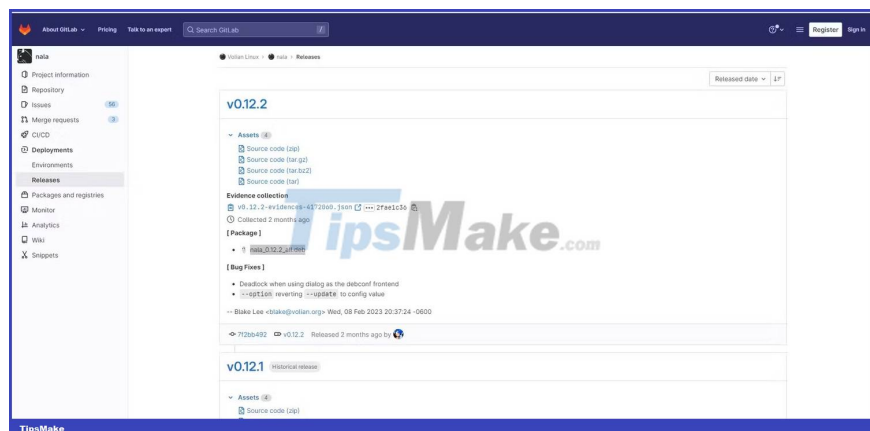
On older versions, to install a legacy version of Nala, execute the following command:

```
sudo apt update && sudo apt install nala-legacy -y
```

3. Install via DEB . package

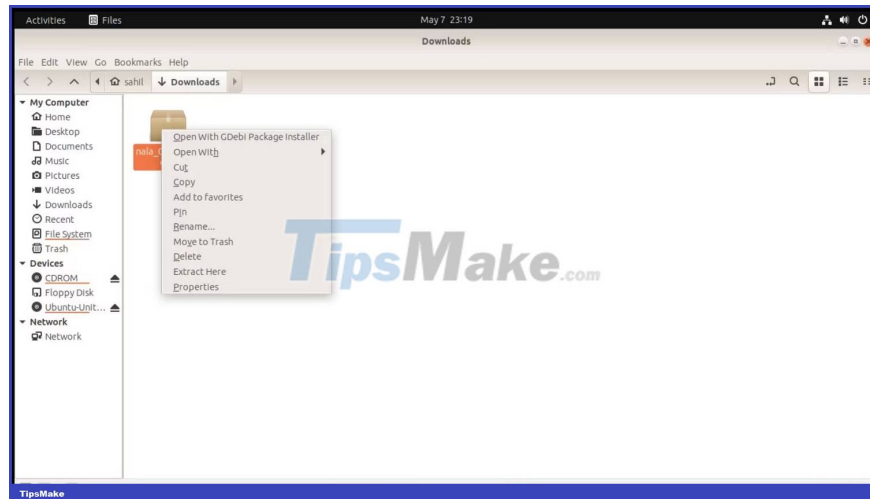
The last way is to install Nala through its DEB package. Here's how to download and install the package on your system:

1. Go to the download page and download the latest DEB package available.

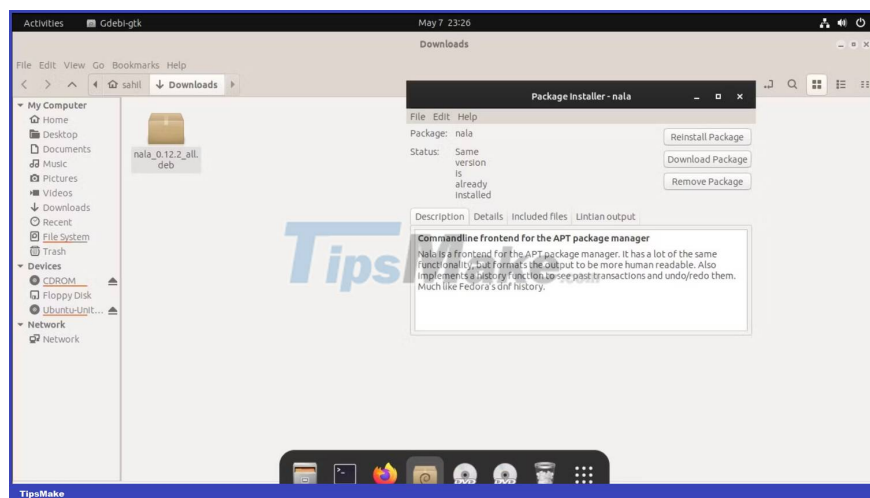


2, After downloading the package, open the **Downloads** folder on the machine. Locate the DEB package and right click on it.

3. Click **Open With GDebi Package Installer**



4. In the following dialog box, select the **Install Package** option . Enter the root password in the prompt and let the installation complete.



Alternatively, you can install the DEB package using dpkg as follows:

```
sudo dpkg -i packagename
```

To verify the installation, update and upgrade the system's packages with the nala command:

```
sudo nala update && sudo nala upgrade -y
```

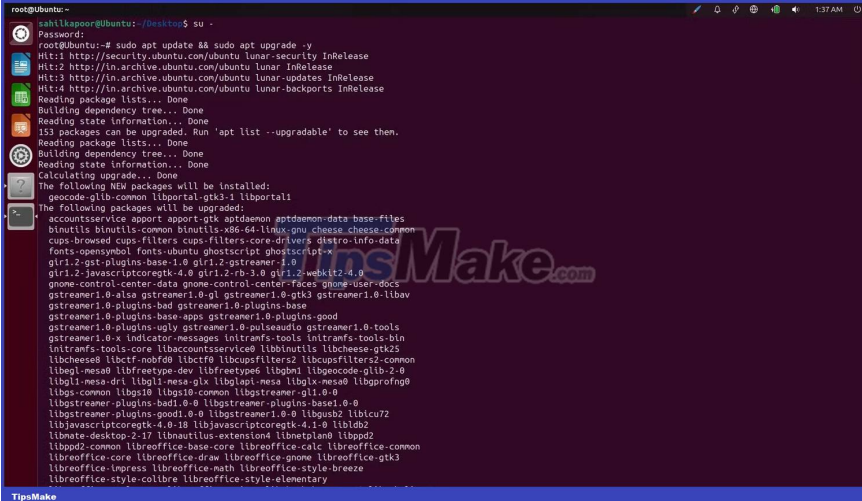
If the command executes successfully, you can be sure that Nala is ready to use on your machine.

Compare 2 package managers APT and Nala

Since Nala is up and running, compare the output of APT with the output of this Python-based package manager.

Update and upgrade existing packages using APT:

```
sudo apt update && sudo apt upgrade -y
```



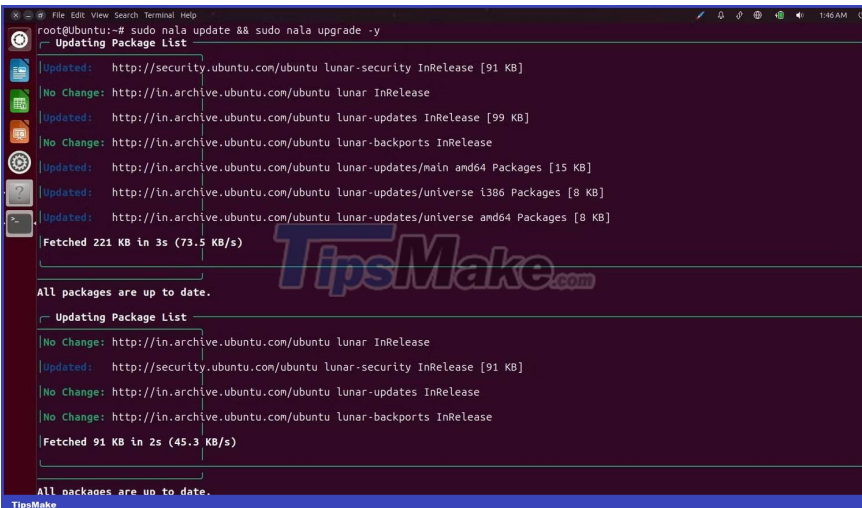
```
root@ubuntu:~# sudo apt update && sudo apt upgrade -y
Hit:1 http://security.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar-security InRelease
Hit:2 http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar InRelease
Hit:3 http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar-updates InRelease
Hit:4 http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar-backports InRelease
Reading package lists... Done
Building dependency tree... Done
Reading state information... Done
153 packages can be upgraded. Run 'apt list --upgradable' to see them.
Reading package lists... Done
Building dependency tree... Done
Reading state information... Done
Calculating upgrade... Done
The following NEW packages will be installed:
  gpecode-glib-common libportal-gtk3-1 libportal1
The following packages will be upgraded:
  accountsservice apport apport-gtk aptdaemon aptdaemon-data base-files
  binutils binutils-common binutils-x86_64-linux-gnu cheese cheese-common
  cups-browsed cups-filters cups-filters-core-drivers distro-info-data
  fonts-opensymbol fonts-ubuntu ghostscript ghostscript-x
  gir1.2-gst-plugins-base-1.0 gir1.2-gstreamer-1.0
  gir1.2-javascriptcoregtk-4.0 gir1.2-rb-3.0 gir1.2-webkit2-4.0
  gnome-control-center-data gnome-control-center-faces gnome-user-docs
  gstreamer1.0-also gstreamer1.0-gi gstreamer1.0-gtk3 gstreamer1.0-libav
  gstreamer1.0-plugins-bad gstreamer1.0-plugins-base
  gstreamer1.0-plugins-base-apps gstreamer1.0-plugins-good
  gstreamer1.0-plugins-ugly gstreamer1.0-pulseaudio gstreamer1.0-tools
  gstreamer1.0-x indicator-messages iniframfs-tools iniframfs-tools-bin
  iniframfs-tools-core libaccountsservice0 libbinutils libcheese-gtk25
  libcheese0 libctf-nobfd0 libctf libcupsfilters2 libcupsfilters2-common
  libegl-mesa0 libfreetype-dev libfreetype6 libgbm1 libgcode-glib-2.0
  libgl1-mesa-dri libgl1-mesa-glx libglapi-mesa libglx-mesa0 libgprofng0
  libgs-common libgs9 libgs9-common libgstreamer-glib-1.0-0
  libgstreamer-plugins-bad1.0-0 libgstreamer-plugins-base1.0-0
  libgstreamer-plugins-good1.0-0 libgstreamer1.0-0 libgusb2 libicu72
  libjavascriptcoregtk-4.0-10 libjavascriptcoregtk-4.1-0 libldb2
  libmate-desktop-2.17 libnautilus-extension4 libnetplan0 libppd2
  libppd2-common libreoffice-base-core libreoffice-calc libreoffice-common
  libreoffice-core libreoffice-draw libreoffice-gnome libreoffice-gtk3
  libreoffice-impress libreoffice-math libreoffice-style-breeze
  libreoffice-style-colibre libreoffice-style-elementary
```

If you look at the output after executing the apt command, you will notice a lot of text on your screen, some of which may not even make sense to you.

Also, there are lots of updates, package names, pending and completed installations, along with other details.

Then this time run update/upgrade commands with Nala, like below:

```
sudo nala update && sudo nala upgrade -y
```



```
root@ubuntu:~# sudo nala update && sudo nala upgrade -y
Updating Package List
Updated: http://security.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar-security InRelease [91 KB]
No Change: http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar InRelease
Updated: http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar-updates InRelease [99 KB]
No Change: http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar-backports InRelease
Updated: http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar-updates/main amd64 Packages [15 KB]
Updated: http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar-updates/universe i386 Packages [8 KB]
Updated: http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar-updates/universe amd64 Packages [8 KB]
Fetched 221 KB in 3s (73.5 KB/s)

All packages are up to date.
Updating Package List
No Change: http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar InRelease
Updated: http://security.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar-security InRelease [91 KB]
No Change: http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar-updates InRelease
No Change: http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu lunar-backports InRelease
Fetched 91 KB in 2s (45.3 KB/s)

All packages are up to date.
```

If you look at the text on your screen after executing the command, you'll notice how structured everything looks. Nala creates well-structured containers for each updated component and provides a status bar that shows how much time is left to install.

deb-get is another third-party package manager for Debian users, which you can use in place of dpkg for best results.

How to use Nala on Ubuntu/Debian

Using Nala on Ubuntu/Debian or their related Linux distributions is easy. You can use this UI package manager to update, upgrade and even install software.

Here's how you can use Nala in your usual activities:

1. Update/upgrade package

Like APT, you can use Nala to update and upgrade your system packages. Use the following commands to do so:

```
sudo nala update sudo nala upgrade
```

To perform both tasks together, use the && operator:

```
sudo nala update && sudo nala upgrade
```

2. List available packages

If you use **dpkg --list** or **apt list** to list the packages available on your Ubuntu/Debian distribution, you can replace the command with Nala:

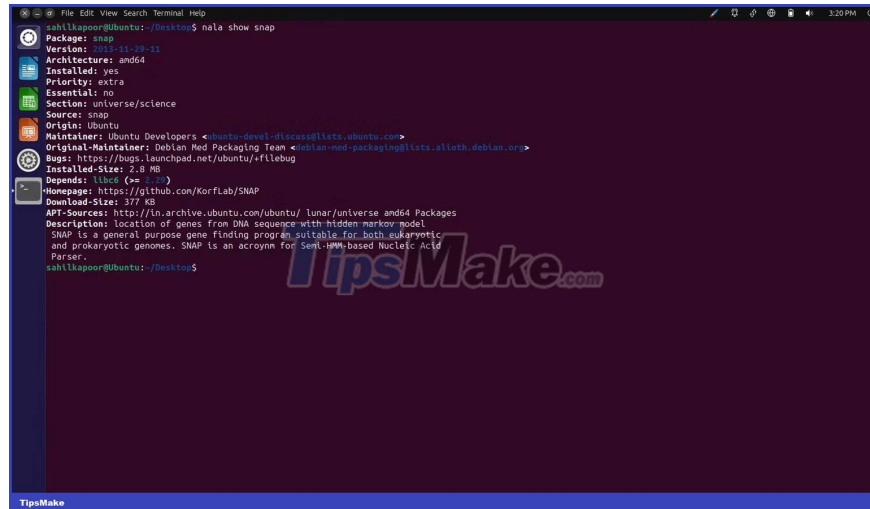
```
nala list
```

Once done, you'll see a well-structured list of all the apps available for download. However, this command takes up a lot of screen space, making it difficult to scroll around.

In such a case, you can combine the list command with the less command as follows:

```
nala list | less
```


nala show snap



```
sahll Kapoor@Ubuntu:~/Desktop$ nala show snap
Package: snap
Version: 2019-11-29-11
Architecture: amd64
Installed: yes
Essential: no
Section: universe/science
Source: snap
Origin: Ubuntu
Maintainers: Ubuntu Developers <ubuntu-devel-discuss@lists.ubuntu.com>
Original-Maintainer: Debian Med Packaging Team <debian-med-packaging@lists.alioth.debian.org>
Bugs: https://bugs.launchpad.net/ubuntu/+fllebug
Installed-Size: 2.18 MB
Depends: libc6 (>= 2.27)
Homepage: https://github.com/KorfLab/SNAP
Download-Size: 377 KB
APT-Sources: http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ lunar/universe amd64 Packages
Description: location of genes from DNA sequence with hidden markov model
SNAP is a general purpose gene finding program suitable for both eukaryotic
and prokaryotic genomes. SNAP is an acronym for Sequence-based Nucleic Acid
Parser.
sahll Kapoor@Ubuntu:~/Desktop$
```

There are several other benefits to using Nala that you can discover by checking out Nala's manual page.

You finished reading the article "**Everything you need to know about using Nala on Ubuntu**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.