



REVIEWER'S GUIDE TO CROSSOVER



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INTRODUCTION

CrossOver is a Windows compatibility tool that allows Mac and Linux users to run their Windows software without a Windows OS license. CrossOver is based on an open-source technology called Wine, which is a re-developed Win32 API for Unix-based operating systems like Mac OS X and Linux. CrossOver competes directly with virtual machine emulation solutions like VMWare, Parallels, and VirtualBox. However, because of its different technical approach, CrossOver has some important differences in comparison with its competitors.

- Unlike virtual machine solutions, CrossOver requires no Windows OS license. This means lower cost for the end user, and fewer hassles.
- CrossOver runs directly on top of the native operating system (Mac OS or Linux), rather than in a separate virtual machine. This means faster launch times, and generally better performance, since the user is not having to pay a double RAM/CPU/Disk penalty for keeping two operating systems running simultaneously.
- Small system footprint. CrossOver takes only 80MB on the user's hard drive, as opposed to 20-40GB (or more) that are typically devoted to creating a decent-sized C: partition for virtual machine solutions. In terms of RAM, likewise, CrossOver consumes only 1-2MB of RAM over and above what the application is actually running. This stands in contrast to the 1-2GB of RAM that users typically devote to their virtual machine.
- CrossOver's executables and all the user's documents and files are utilized directly from Mac OS X or Linux. There's no C: partition or virtual disc image, so all the files are stored natively. Obviously, from an integration standpoint, this is superior to having one's work files stored in two separate file systems on the user's machine.
- Near-immunity from viruses and malware. Unlike users of VM solutions, who are exposed to Windows viruses because they're running a real copy of Windows, such malware doesn't run under Wine-based solutions like CrossOver (for technical reasons we're cheerful to elaborate on if you're really interested). This saves the user the expense and hassle of purchasing additional antivirus software.

The current major drawback to CrossOver is that CrossOver does not yet run all Windows software, and in some cases those applications which do run, run imperfectly. This is something we're very upfront about—we emphasize with all prospective customers that CrossOver still has some warts, and they should try before the buy. This is why we make our trial download as easily available as possible, and fully functional.



CrossOver Mac, version XI.

GETTING STARTED

Product installation is straight-forward.

If you're using a Mac, simply double-click on the .zip file in your Downloads folder. Once CrossOver has unpacked itself, it will ask you whether you want it to move itself to your Applications folder, which is the normal place applications live on your Mac. However, you can run it from any folder you desire. CrossOver will then install itself.

If you're using Linux, installation will vary according to the flavor of Linux you're using. In general, though, you want to run either the .deb or .rpm package, depending on your distro. This can be accomplished by double-clicking the .deb or .rpm. Your package manager will start. Enter your administrator password if prompted, and then choose install. Once installed, you'll find a new CrossOver menu entry in your Start menu.

For information on installing CrossOver, see

<http://www.codeweavers.com/support/wiki/linux/linuxtutorial/install>

You can also watch a video of a Mac install here:

<http://www.codeweavers.com/videos/InstallingFromAccount>

INSTALLING WINDOWS SOFTWARE

Once CrossOver is installed, the next thing you'll probably want to do is install some Windows software. To do this on Mac, run CrossOver, select the Configure menu, and click **Install Software**. On Linux, you'll find Install Software as a menu choice in the CrossOver menu. CrossOver's software installer will launch, at which point you'll be walked through the installation process.

Probably the most important part of CrossOver from an end-user standpoint is the installer. We've tried to make the Windows software installation process as seamless and painless as possible. We've also made strides in integrating the installer directly with our online compatibility database (c4.codeweavers.com), which captures information on thousands of Windows software titles, and how they run under CrossOver.

Installing a piece of software can be initiated launching CrossOver's installer, and selecting a Windows installation file that you want to run. Alternately, just putting a Windows-format installation CD into the CD drive will cause CrossOver to ask you whether you'd like CrossOver to install the software for you.

CROSSTIE

One of the coolest features CrossOver has is called CrossTie. CrossTie is basically a “recipe” that tells CrossOver how to install a particular Windows software title. Any application in our C4 database that has a CrossTie file written for it (and there are more than a thousand of these) can be installed by simply going to that application’s C4 page, and clicking on the green **Install via CrossTie** button. Doing so downloads the CrossTie recipe, and fires up CrossOver’s installer. All the user has to do is click **Install**, and CrossOver does the rest. CrossTie makes installing Windows software incredibly quick and easy. These same CrossTie files are also loaded into CrossOver’s “Install Software” list, and are used when CrossOver autodetects an inserted Windows CD.

We assume your preferred operating system is Mac OS, [click here](#) to switch to Linux.

- Download CrossOver Mac Trial Now**
Click the button above to download the CrossOver Mac trial version (fully functional for 14 days).
- Install Application Now**
CrossOver should launch and begin the installation when the above button is clicked. [Click here](#) to download the CrossTie file directly instead.
- Buy CrossOver Mac at 25% off Now**
Click the button above to Purchase CrossOver Mac (12 months support) for ~~\$59.95~~ \$44.96
Buy CrossOver Mac at 25% off Now
Click the button above to Purchase CrossOver Mac (6 months support) for ~~\$49.95~~ \$37.46

Note: The purchase buttons above will open the CodeWeavers store in a new tab. Close that tab after purchasing to return to this page.

CrossTie makes it quick and simple to install Windows software from our CodeWeavers Compatibility database.

For more on CrossTies, please see:

http://www.codeweavers.com/support/wiki/linux/linuxtutorial/use_tie

http://www.codeweavers.com/support/wiki/mac/mactutorial/use_tie

Or, to see a video of CrossTie in action, please see:

<http://www.codeweavers.com/videos/Outlook2007onCrossOverv10>

If a Windows software title doesn’t have a CrossTie file associated with it, have no fear. The normal installation process is straightforward as well. Basically, you only need to select a Windows installer file to use (either on your drive, or on a CD), then select the type of bottle you want to put it into. Then click the Install button.

Once the software is installed on your machine, CrossOver will create launcher icons for you. You can now launch the software like any other native application on your operating system. Note that if there are no Windows applications running, CrossOver just sits in the background on your dock, consuming no processor time. This keeps the overhead of the software very low. Once the Windows software is running, CrossOver stays out of sight—and that’s as it should be. CrossOver simply enables the Windows software to run as if it were native.

BOTTLE MANAGEMENT

You'll find another item of interest under CrossOver's Configure menu. The Manage Bottles functionality lets you manage the Windows software you have under CrossOver, and displays information regarding the bottles they are placed in. You can think of a bottle as a self-contained Windows environment. Bottles can come in several different flavors—Win98, Win2K, WinXP, etc. The bottle manager also allows you to create and destroy bottles as needed. Incidentally, all of the CrossOver files live in one location on your system drive.

In Mac OS, they will be located under `~/Library/Application Support/CrossOver`.

On Linux, they're located in `/home/.cxoffice`.

Each bottle has its own folder, and within each bottle, you'll find subfolders for Wine operating system, system32, the registry, and so on. CrossOver's bottle manager simply manipulates these folder structures and the files within them. Destroying a bottle removes the corresponding folders from your hard drive. From a system administration standpoint, this means that CrossOver is not scattering its system files hither and yon across your operating system—instead, the CrossOver installation is very atomic, lightweight, and portable. This also allows tasks like Time Machine to work properly. A complete installation of an application like Internet Explorer can comprise as little as 80MB under CrossOver.

SUMMING UP

CrossOver is a lightweight, high performance Windows compatibility product that competes squarely with VMWare and Parallels, but has some fundamental technical differences. It's not yet a silver bullet, but it's well worth trying for anyone that has a few Windows software titles that they'd like to run under Mac OS X or Linux. Not all applications work under CrossOver, but thousands do, and when they do, CrossOver offers a much more pleasing, integrated, and low-cost solution in comparison with virtual machine products.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Should you have any questions or concerns during your product evaluation, CodeWeavers is committed to providing you with first-rate technical support. Please feel free to contact our Marketing Department (marketing@codeweavers.com) or our Technical Support department (info@codeweavers.com) and you will receive prompt and courteous help with any issues you may have. Thank you again for your interest in CrossOver!