# How to run an Ubuntu Desktop virtual machine using VirtualBox 7

## 1. Overview

In this tutorial, we'll walk you through one of the easiest ways to try out Ubuntu Desktop on a virtual machine. **VirtualBox <https://www.virtualbox.org/>** is a general purpose virtualiser that is available across Linux, Mac OS and Windows. It's a great way to experience Ubuntu regardless of your current operating system.

VirtualBox 7 and above includes a new feature called **Unattended Guest OS Install <https://blogs.oracle.com/virtualization/post/guide-for-virtualbox-vm-unattended-installation>** which significantly streamlines the setup experience for common operating systems like Ubuntu, making it easier than ever to get started.

**Note:** This tutorial will also work for other distributions, so try it out with some of the Ubuntu **flavours <https://ubuntu.com/download/flavours>** as well!

### What you'll learn

- How to install and configure VirtualBox
- How to import an Ubuntu image
- How to run a virtual instance of Ubuntu Desktop

- Further configuration options

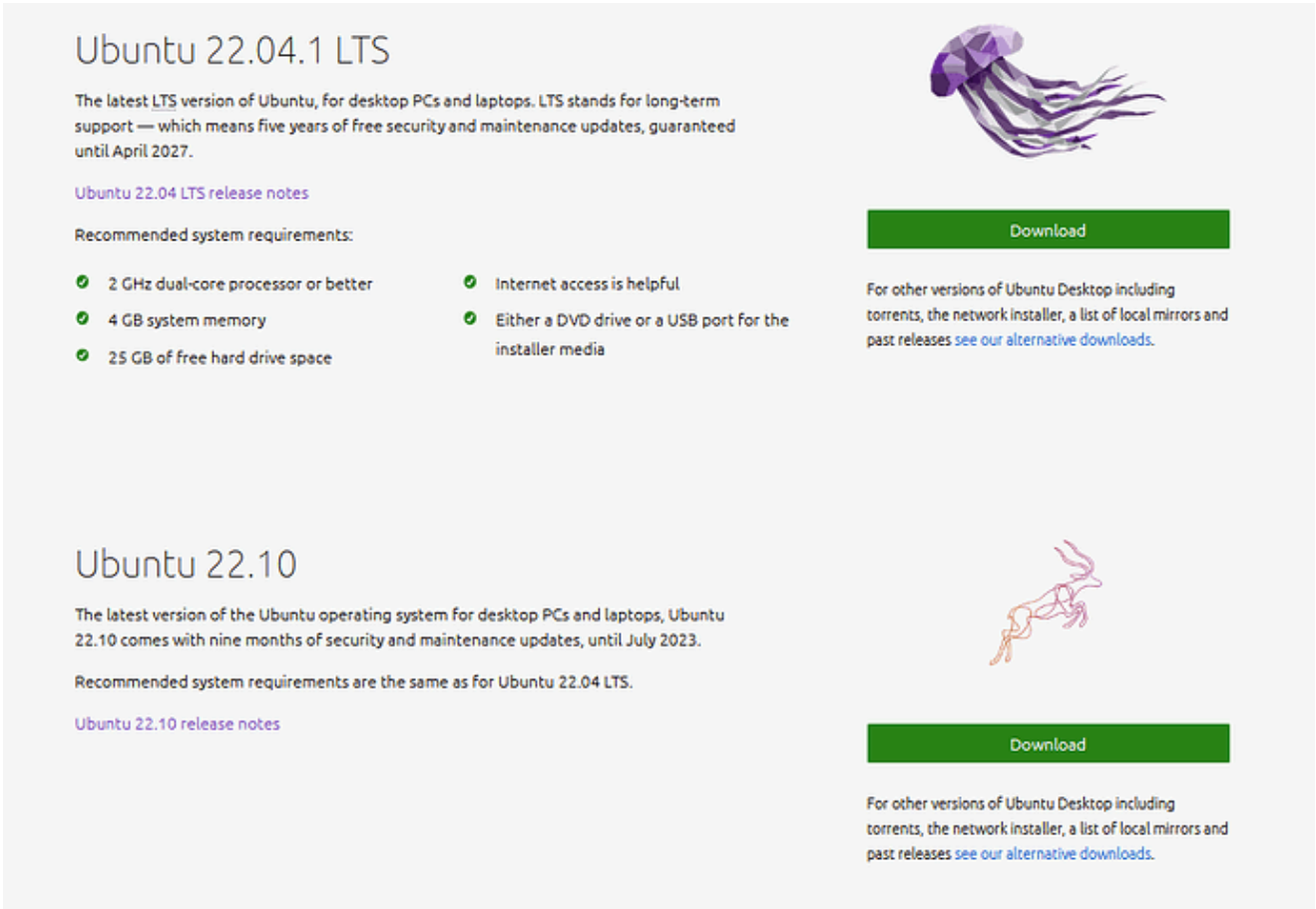
## What you'll need

- A PC with internet access!

# Download an Ubuntu Image

Duration: 3:00

You can download an Ubuntu image **here <https://ubuntu.com/download/desktop>** . Make sure to save it to a memorable location on your PC! For this tutorial, we will use the latest Ubuntu 22.10 release.

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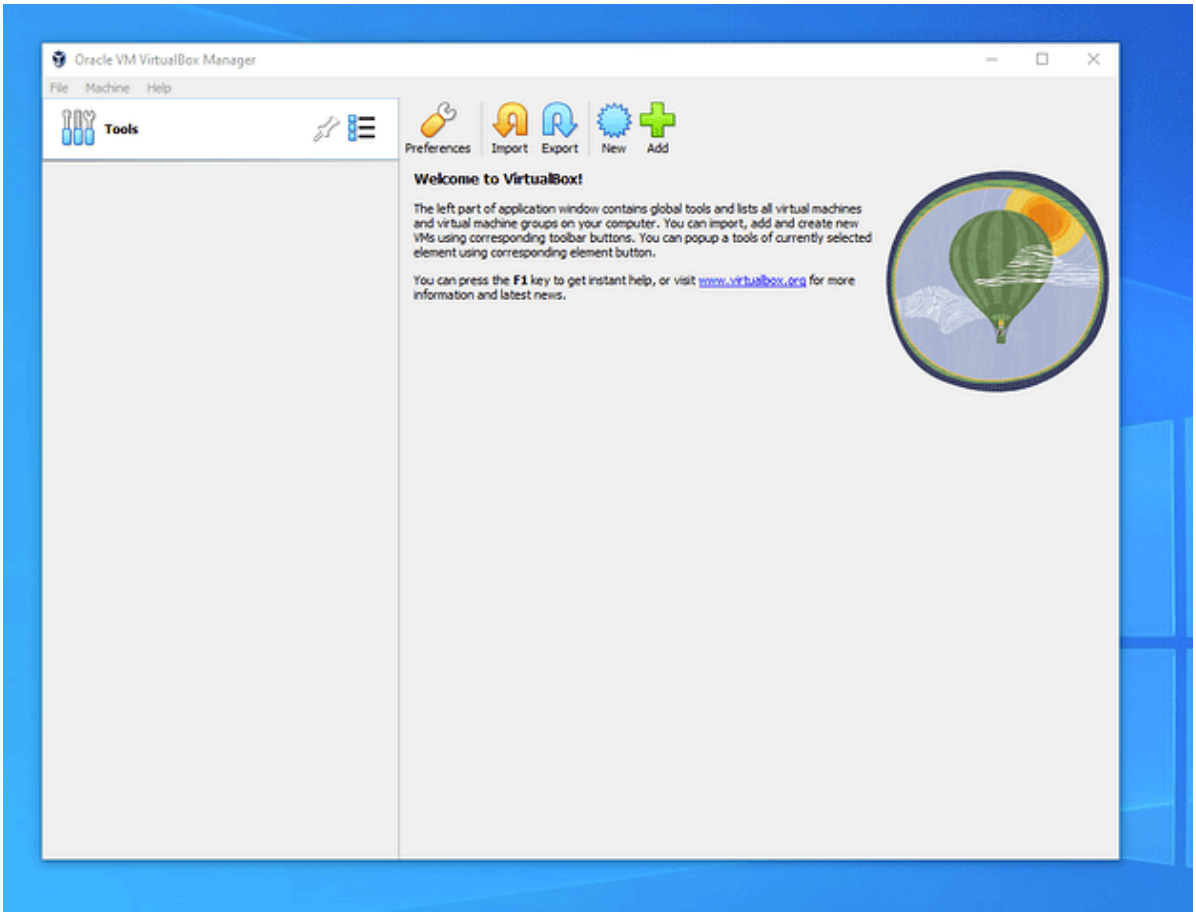
# Download and install VirtualBox

Duration: 5:00

You can download VirtualBox from the downloads page **here <https://www.virtualbox.org/wiki/Downloads>** . This page includes instructions on how to install VirtualBox for your specific OS so we won't repeat those here.

Once you have completed the installation, go ahead and run VirtualBox.

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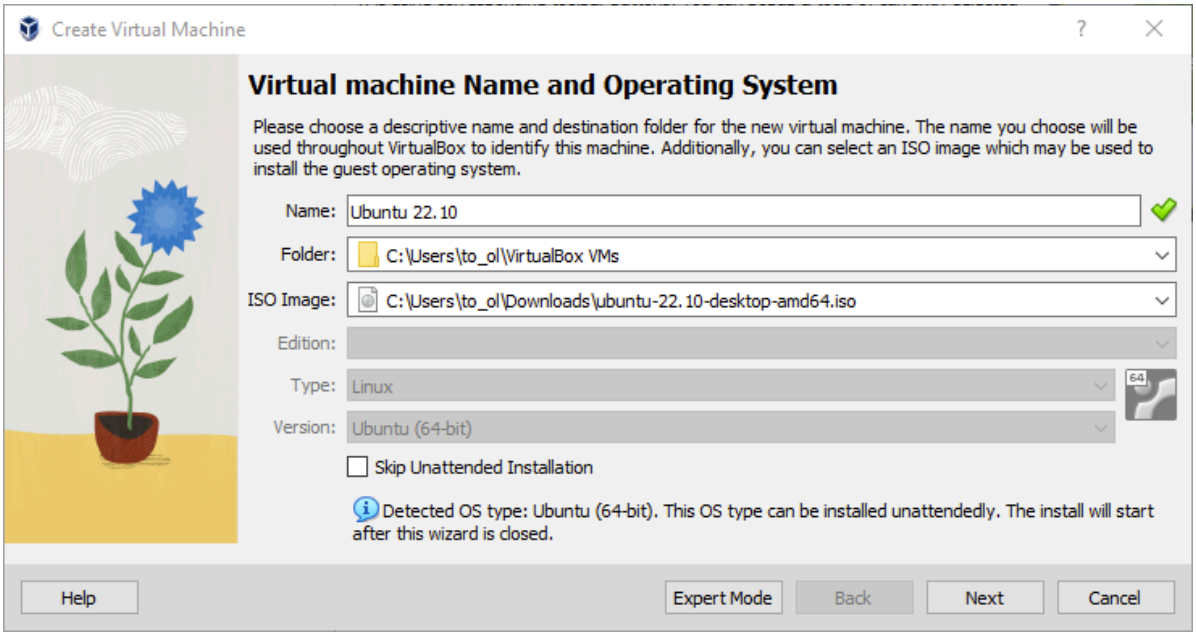
## 2. Create a new virtual machine

Click **New** to create a new virtual machine. Fill in the appropriate details:

- Name: If you include the word Ubuntu in your name the Type and Version will auto-update.

- Machine Folder: This is where your virtual machines will be stored so you can resume working on them whenever you like.
- ISO Image: Here you need to add a link to the ISO you downloaded from the Ubuntu website.

We want to install Ubuntu unattendedly so we can leave the checkbox to skip unchecked.




## Create a user profile

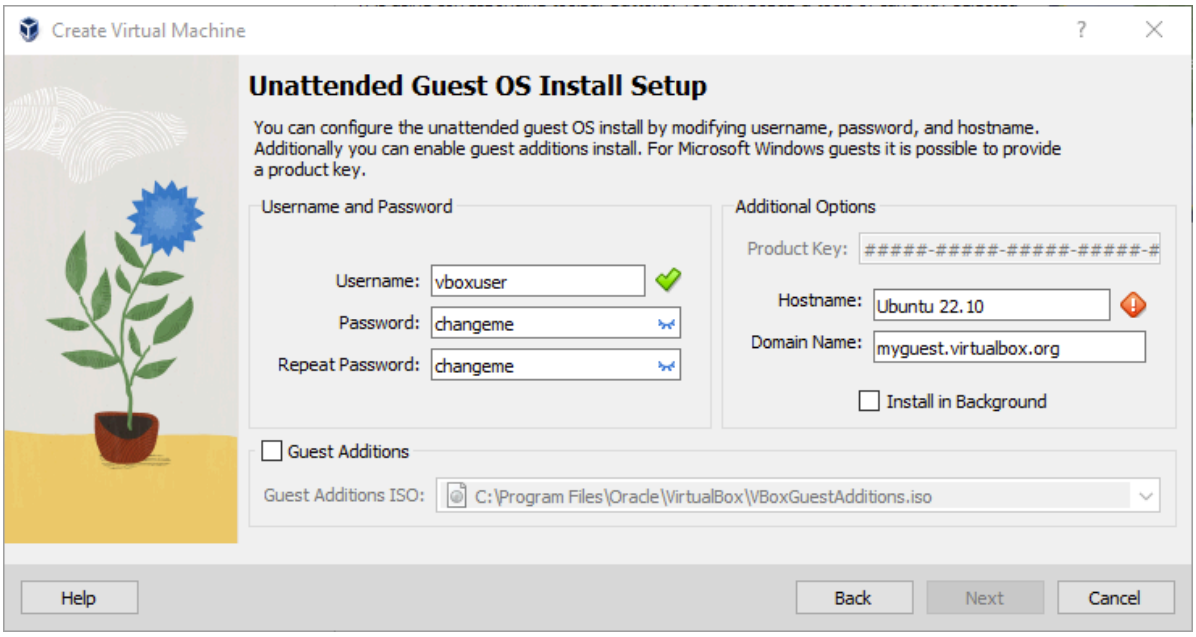
To enable the automatic install we need to prepopulate our username and password here in addition to our machine name so that it can be configured automatically during first boot.

The default credentials are:

- Username: vboxuser
- Password: changeme

It is important to **change these values** since the defaults will create a user without sudo access.

Ensure your Hostname has no spaces to proceed!

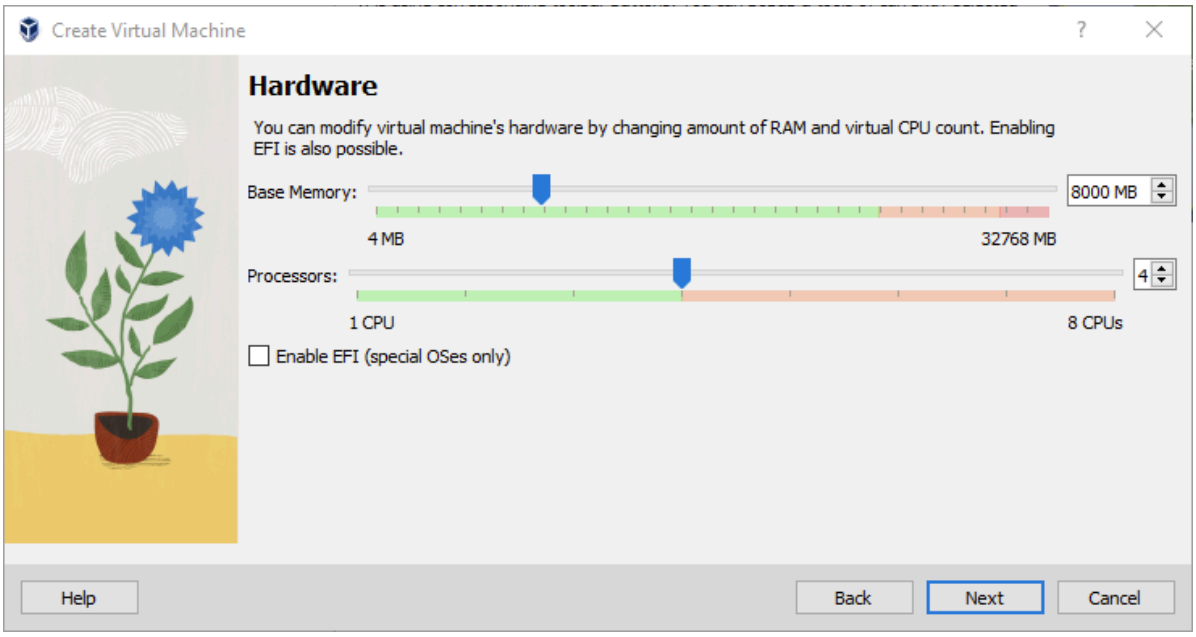



It is also recommended to check the **Guest Additions** box to install the default Guest Additions ISO that is downloaded as part of VirtualBox. Guest additions enables a number of quality of life features such as changing resolution and dynamic screen resizing so it is highly recommended!

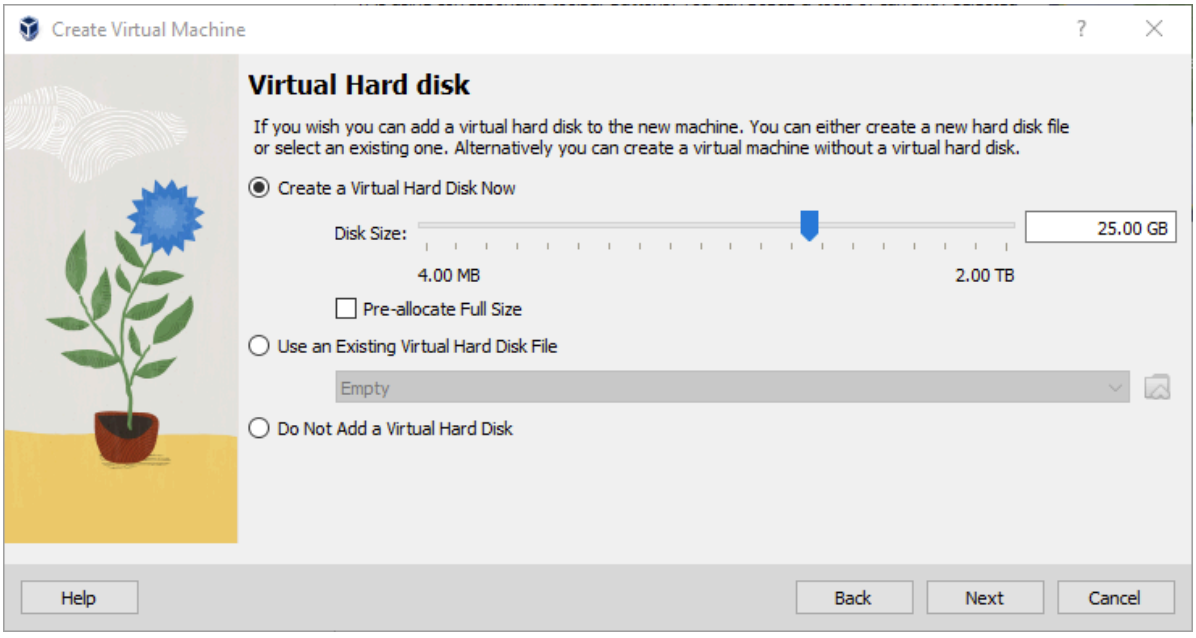
**Note:** If you choose not to use unattended install then this step will be skipped and you will go straight to the following screen. Once your machine has been created you will be able to create a username and password by proceeding through the standard **Ubuntu Desktop installation flow <https://ubuntu.com/tutorials/install-ubuntu-desktop#4-boot-from-usb-flash-drive>** on first boot.

## Define the Virtual Machine's resources

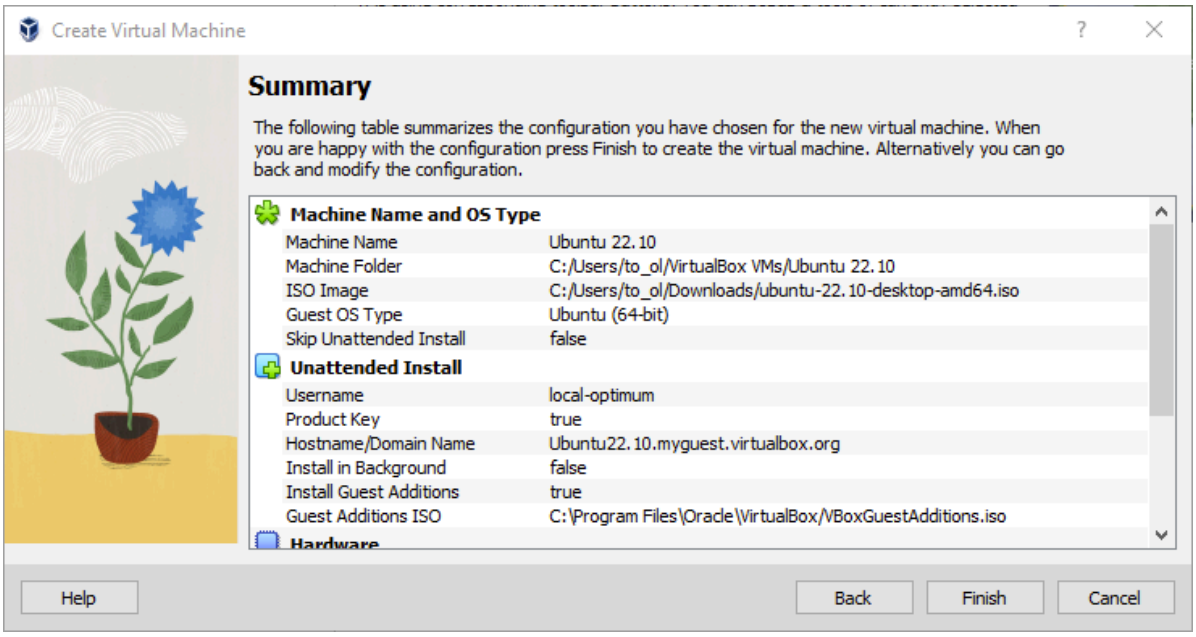
In the next section we can specifiy how much of our host machine's memory and processors the virtual machine can use. For good performance it's recommended to provide your VM with around 8GB of RAM (althought 4GB will still be usable) and 4 CPUs. Try to remain in the green areas of each slider to prevent issues with your machine running both the VM and the host OS.




Then we need to specify the size of the hard disc for the virtual machine. For Ubuntu we recommend around 25 GB as a minimum. By default the hard disk will scale dynamically as more memory is required up to the defined limit. If you want to pre-allocate the full amount, check the 'Pre-allocate Full Size' check box. This will improve performance but may take up unnecessary space.




Click **Next** to continue and view a summary of your machine setting.




After this click **Finish** to initialize the machine!

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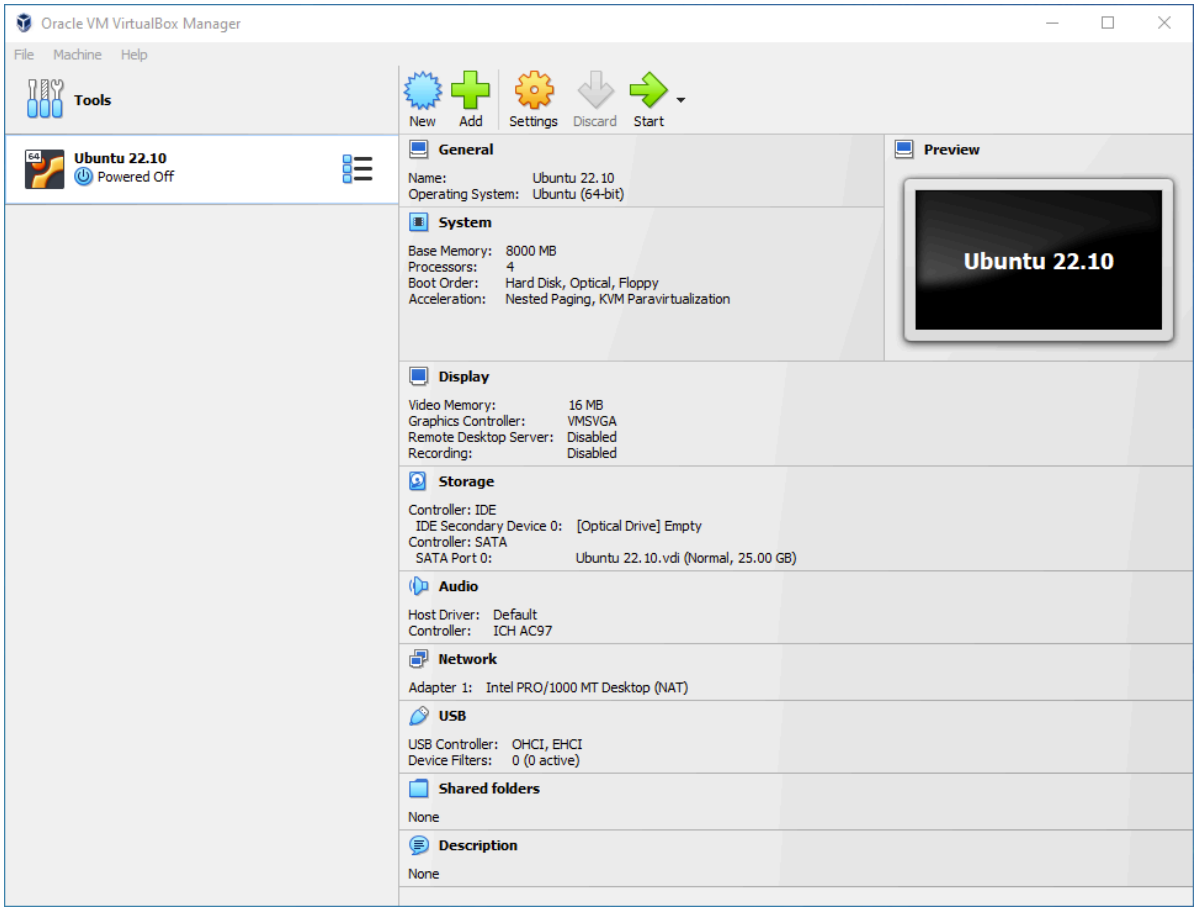
# 3. Install your image

Click **Start** to launch the virtual machine.

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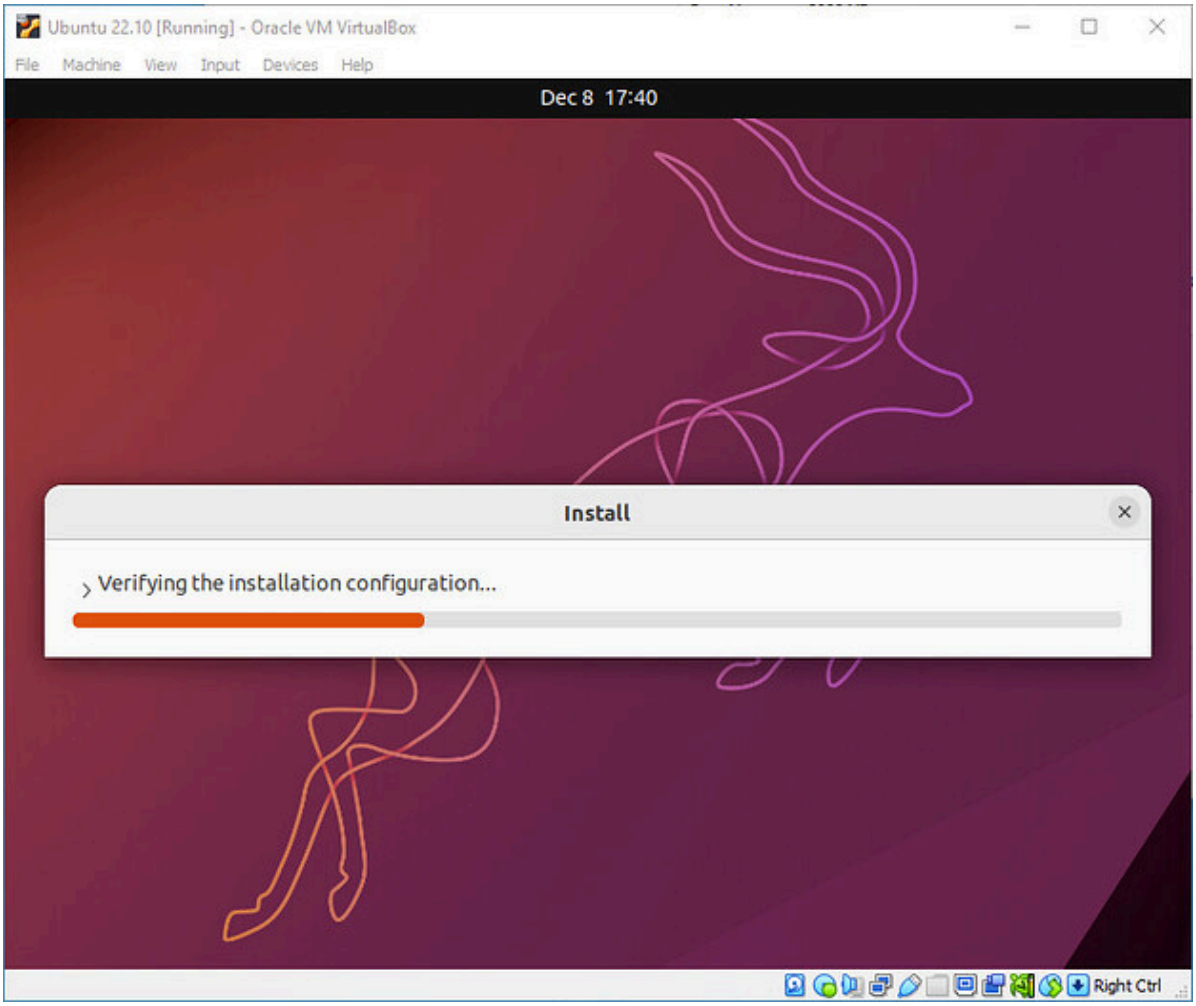
You will see a message saying 'Powering VM up ...' and your desktop window will appear.

On first boot the unattended installation will kick in so do not interact with the prompt to 'Try and Install Ubuntu' and let it progress automatically to the splash screen and into the installer.

**Note:** If you chose not to use unattended install then you will need to progress through the Ubuntu install manually. Check out our **Ubuntu Desktop installation tutorial** <https://ubuntu.com/tutorials/install-ubuntu-desktop#4-boot-from-usb-flash-drive> for more details.

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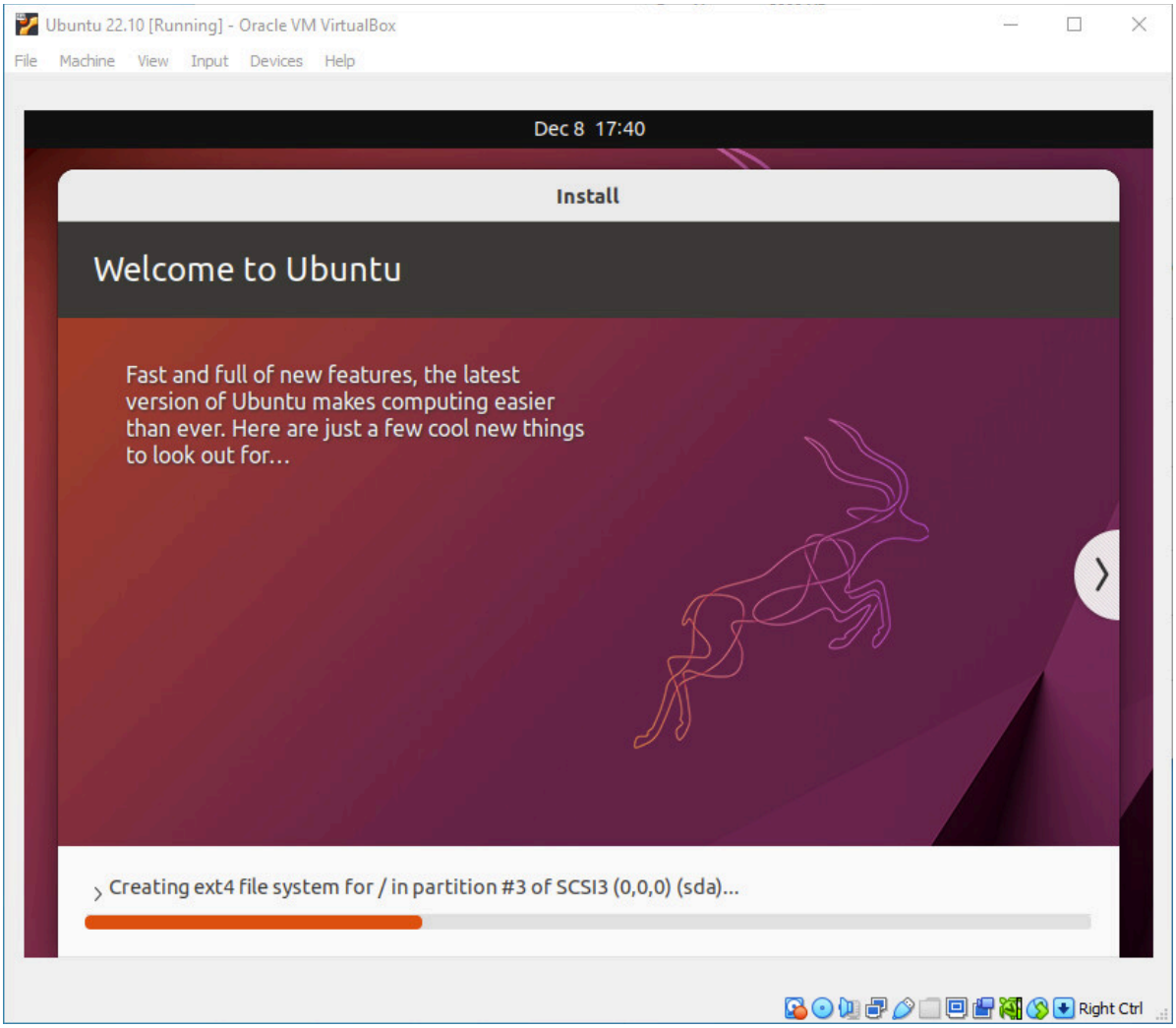
You will notice at this stage that the resolution of the window is fixed at 800x600. This is because the Guest Additions features are not installed until after the Ubuntu installation has completed.

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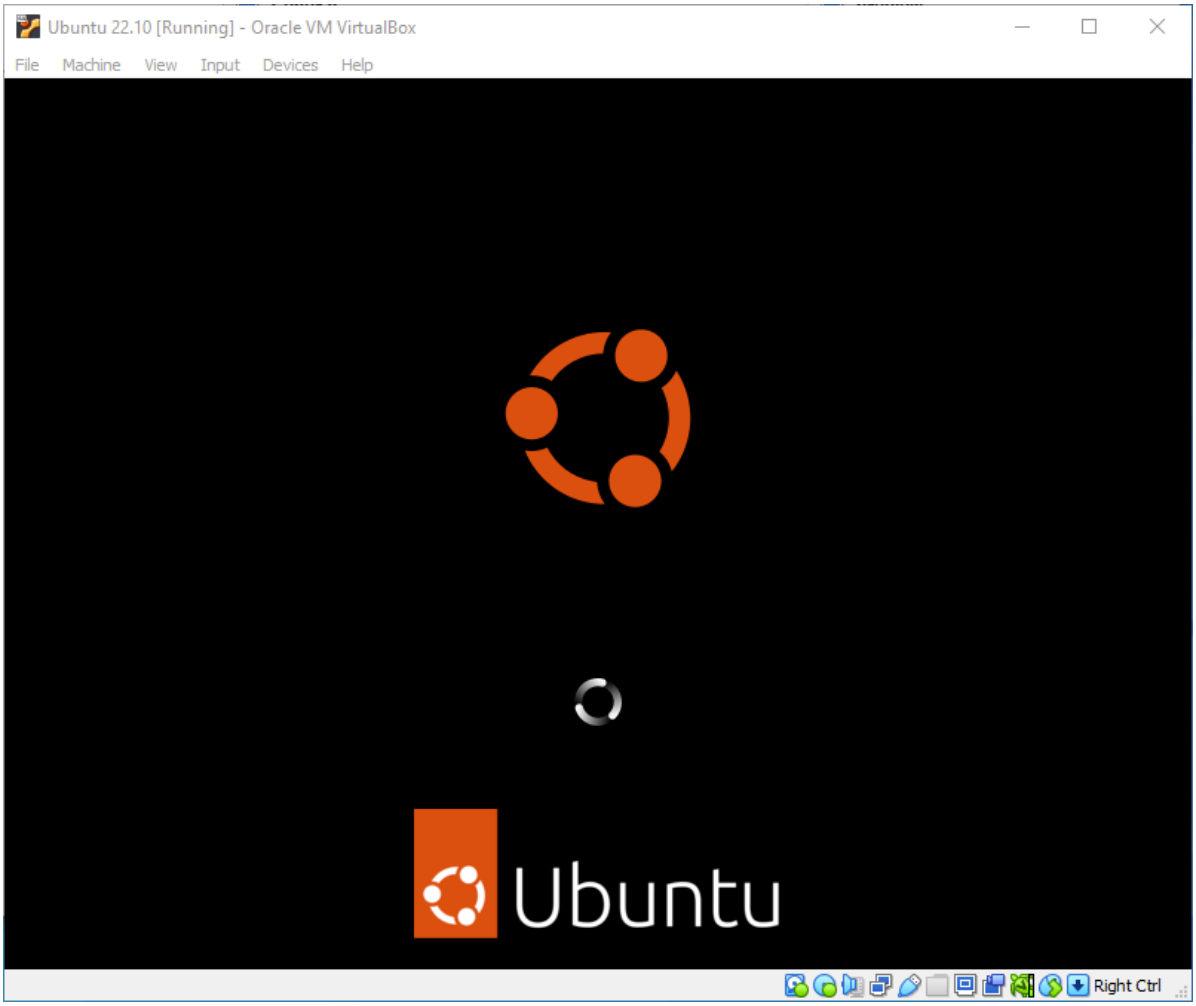
Once the installation completes, the machine will automatically reboot to complete the installation.

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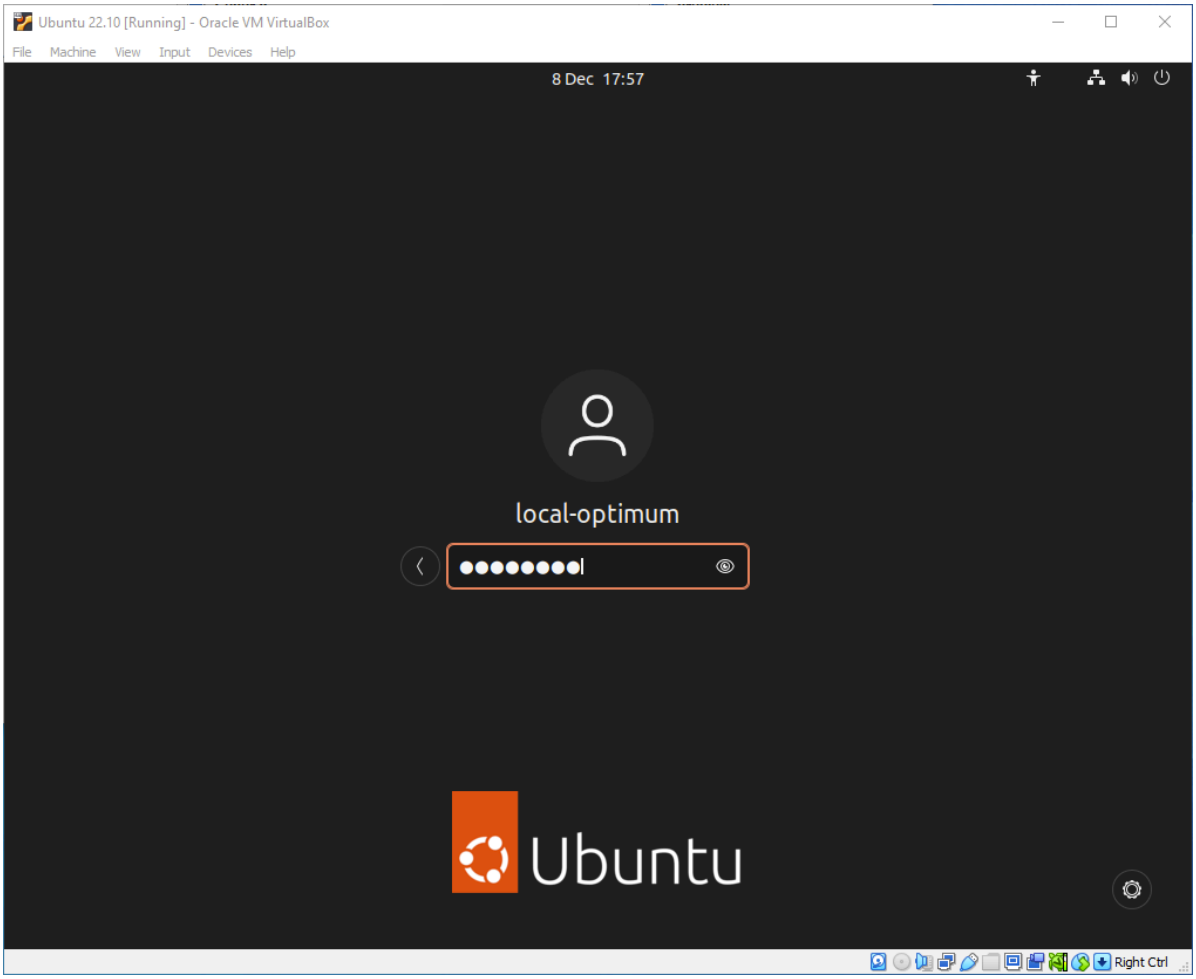
Finally you will be greeted with the Ubuntu log-in screen where you can enter your username and password defined during the initial setup (don't forget that the default password is 'changeme' if you left everything as the default).

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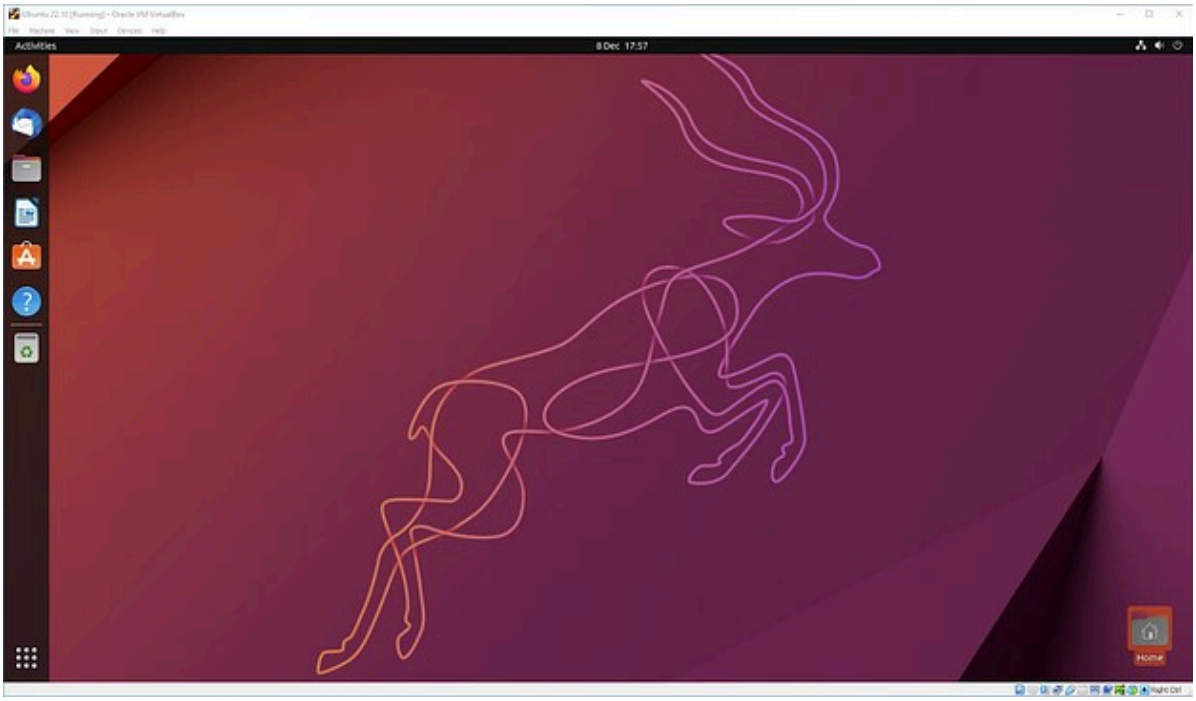
## 4. Explore Virtual Box

Enjoy your shiny new Ubuntu Desktop!

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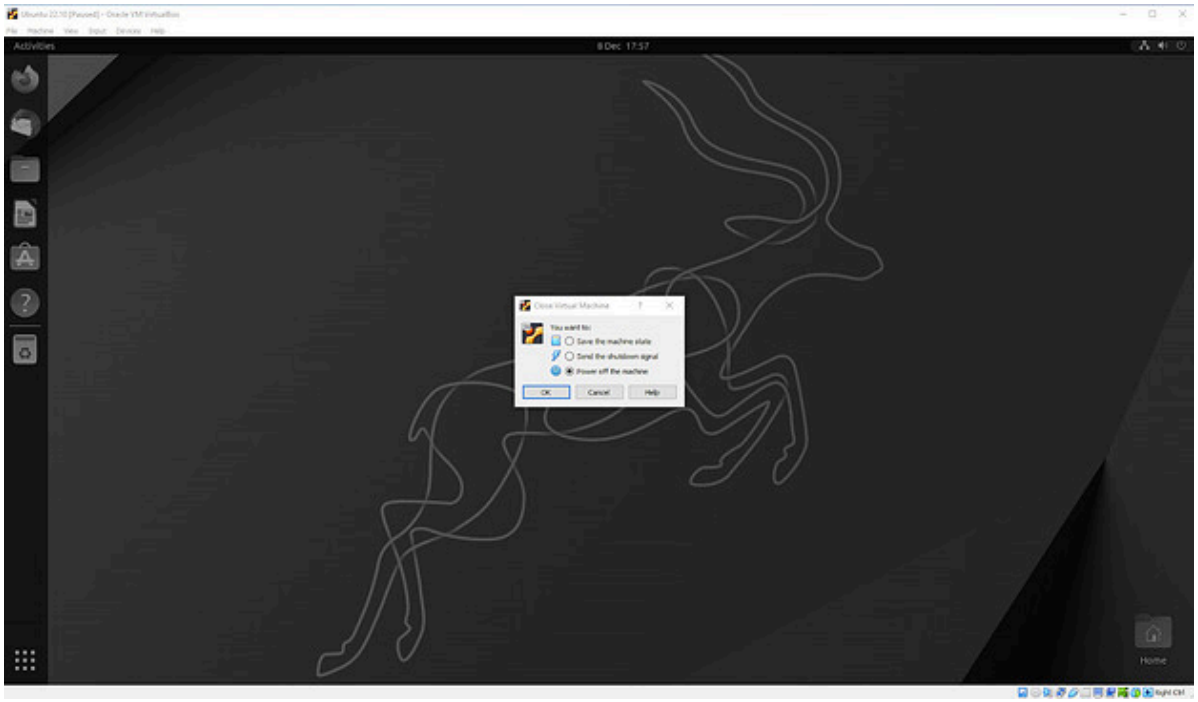
As always we recommend opening a terminal and running `sudo apt update && sudo apt upgrade -y` and then `sudo snap refresh` to get everything updated to the latest versions.

Once you've finished your session you can close your machine by clicking the **X** in the top right of the window and choosing whether to keep your machine frozen in its current state or shut it down completely.



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As you can probably tell, there are tonnes of further configuration options available in VirtualBox and we've only scratched the surface.

VirtualBox allows you to create and configure multiple virtual machines, so don't be afraid to create new instances of Ubuntu to try out different system and storage configurations to fine tune your performance.

Why not try following the tutorial above with one of the **Ubuntu flavours** <https://ubuntu.com/desktop/flavours> !


<https://ubuntucommunity.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/original/3X/1/6/164d32c05935382bf167615a445aa1a74785ee5c.png>

# 5. Tell us your thoughts!

Thank you for following this tutorial, we'd love to hear how you got on.

Give us feedback in the **Ubuntu Discourse** if you have any issues.

To help us improve our tutorials, we'd love to hear more about you:

**How will you use this tutorial?**

○ Only read through it ○ Complete the exercise

**What is your current level of experience?**

○ Novice ○ Intermediate ○ Proficient

**What operating system are you following this tutorial on?**

○ Ubuntu ○ Other Linux OS ○ Windows ○ Mac OS

Was this tutorial useful?

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