

Creating a bootable USB for testing Linux Mint

The information in this section will help you:


- Understand the basics of disk images
- Download an ISO image file for Linux Mint
- Create a bootable USB drive for testing the operating system

What is a disk or ISO image?

Generally, an ISO image (or disk image) is a copy of a CD or DVD contained in a single file. They can be created for application or operating system installation media, which can be burned to optical media or flashed to a USB drive. For example, you can download an ISO image for the Windows operating system from Microsoft's website.

In the case of Linux Mint, the disk image you will download is the equivalent of a fully installed operating system on a hard drive. When it is flashed to a USB drive, the drive itself will be recognized as a bootable device, sometimes referred to as a Live USB.

Before installing Linux Mint on your PC, it is good practice to test it by booting from a Live USB to ensure your PC is compatible with the operating system. After confirming your hardware is compatible, you can install Linux Mint by clicking on an icon on the desktop.

 **Trivia:** While “ISO” will appear as the file extension for a disk image, no part of the acronym stands for “image” or “optical.” ISO stands for the “International Organization for Standardization,” one of the international organizations that established the disk image standard.

Download the image file

A disk image can be downloaded from the Linux Mint official site.

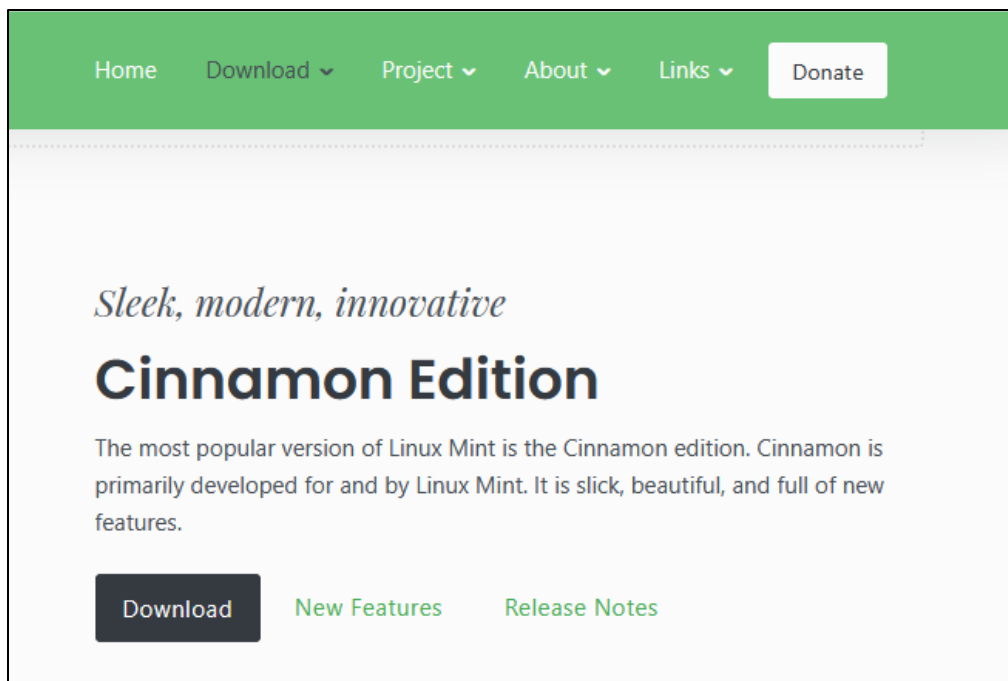
1. Go to the Linux Mint website.

Link: <https://www.linuxmint.com/>

2. Click the **Download** button under “Linux Mint 22.2.”

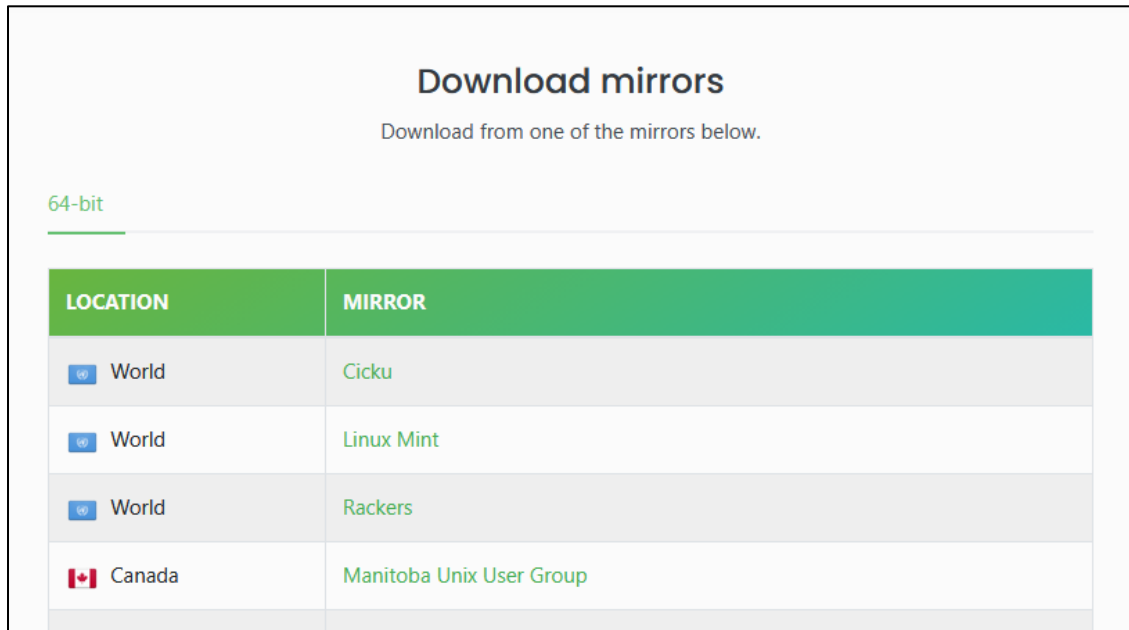


3. Click **Download** under the Cinnamon Edition section.







4. Scroll down to the **Download mirrors** section.

The **Location** column shows the country where the mirror site is located, and the **Mirror** column provides the link for downloading the ISO.




The screenshot shows a web page titled "Download mirrors" with the instruction "Download from one of the mirrors below." Below this is a section for "64-bit" with a table of mirror sites. The table has two columns: "LOCATION" and "MIRROR".

LOCATION	MIRROR
 World	Cicku
 World	Linux Mint
 World	Rackers
 Canada	Manitoba Unix User Group

5. Locate the mirror sites for your country and choose one for the download.

Quick tips for selecting a mirror site:

- University mirror sites are generally fast and reliable.
- Kernel.org (in the US) is also a good option (it's also the official site for the Linux kernel source code).

 **FYI:** On the download page, you will see a brief section for downloading a **sha256sum** file. This is used for verifying that the image file is valid and has not been tampered with. While this step isn't necessary for this section, steps for verifying the ISO file on Windows can be found in Appendix C.

6. Click the link in the **Mirror** column to download the ISO file, then go to the next section.

Download balenaEtcher

balenaEtcher is a free and open-source application for creating USB bootable media. After downloading the Linux Mint disk image, download and install balenaEtcher.

1. Go to the balenaEtcher page.

Link: <https://etcher.balena.io>

2. Click the **Download Etcher** button.



The page will scroll down to the “Download Etcher” section, which has installation files for Windows, MacOS, and Linux.

3. Click **Download** next to the Windows option.

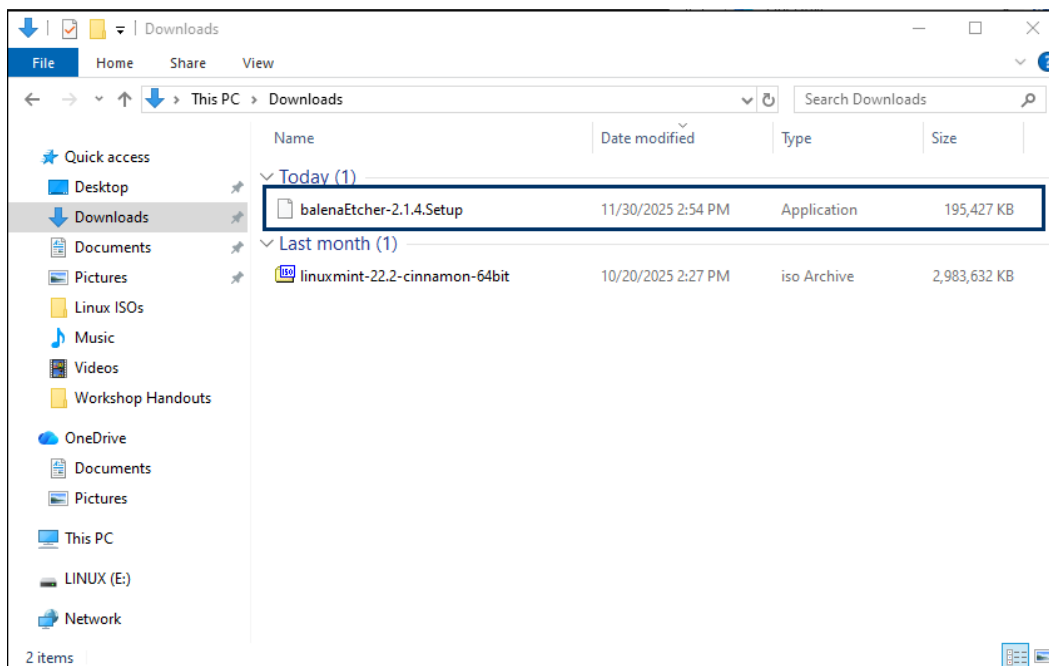
DOWNLOAD

Download Etcher

ASSET	OS	ARCH	
ETCHER FOR WINDOWS (X86 X64) (INSTALLER)	WINDOWS	X86 X64	Download
ETCHER FOR MACOS	MACOS	X64	Download
ETCHER FOR MACOS (ARM64)	MACOS	ARM64	Download
ETCHER FOR LINUX X64 (64-BIT) (ZIP)	LINUX	X64	Download
ETCHER FOR LINUX (LEGACY 32 BIT) (APPIMAGE)	LINUX	X86	Download

Looking for [Debian \(.deb\) packages](#) or [Red Hat \(.rpm\) packages](#)?

4. Locate the setup file in the **Downloads** folder.

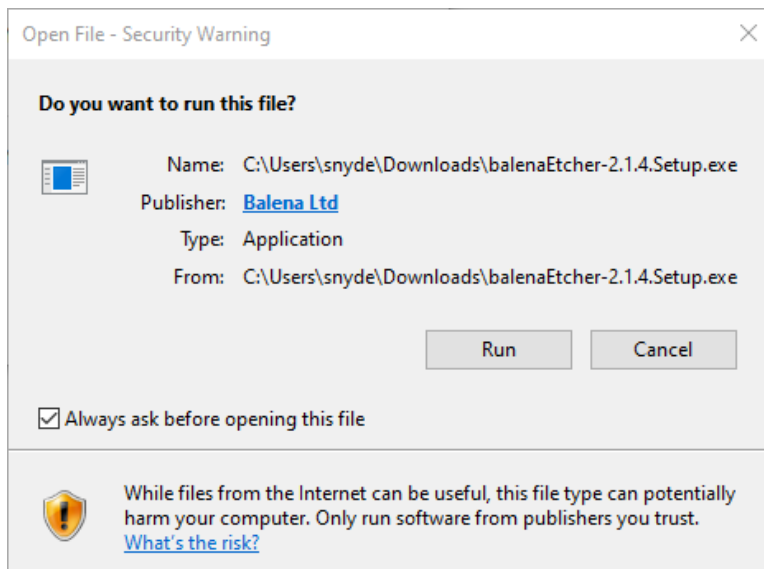


5. Double-click the setup file.

A dialog box asking “Do you want to run this file?” will appear.

6. Click **Run** on the dialog box to start the installation.

After the installation is complete, a desktop icon will be added to the desktop.



7. Double-click the **balenaEtcher** icon on the desktop to open the application.



Create a Live USB with balenaEtcher

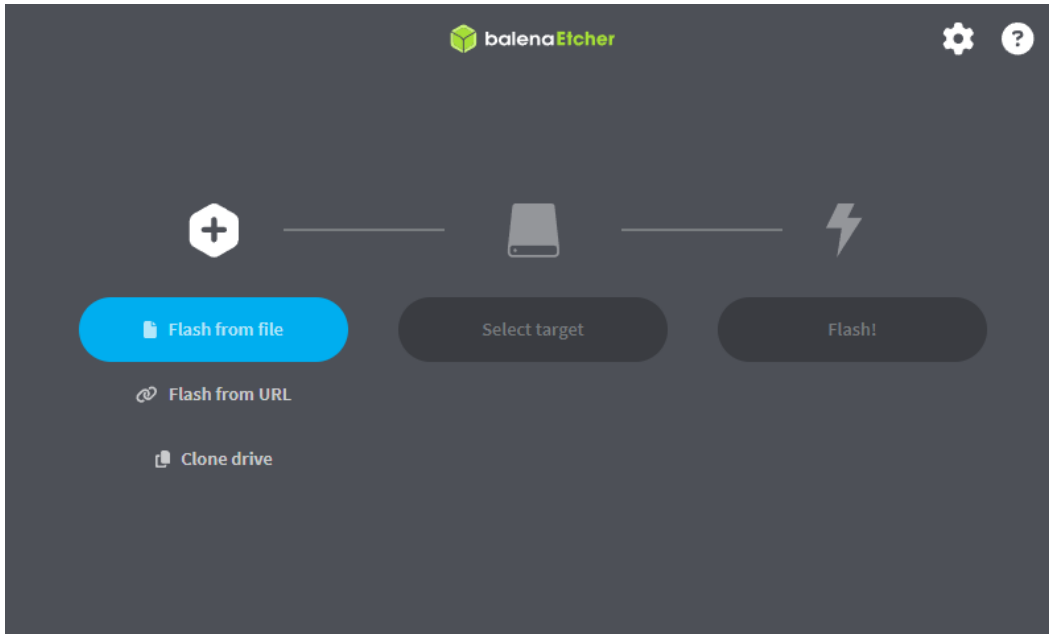
The interface provides a simple process for imaging the USB drive.

1. Plug the USB drive you wish to use for the Live USB into your PC.

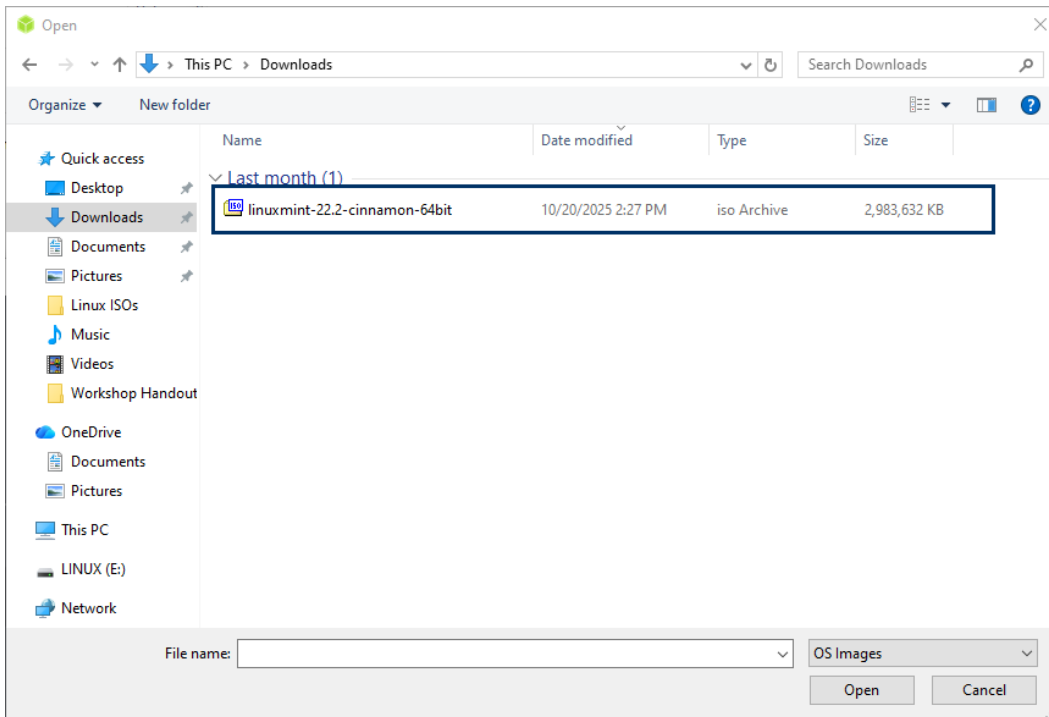
Note: The drive should have at least 4-5 GB of storage.

Caution: Make sure you don't have anything important saved on the USB drive. The flashing process will overwrite any existing data.

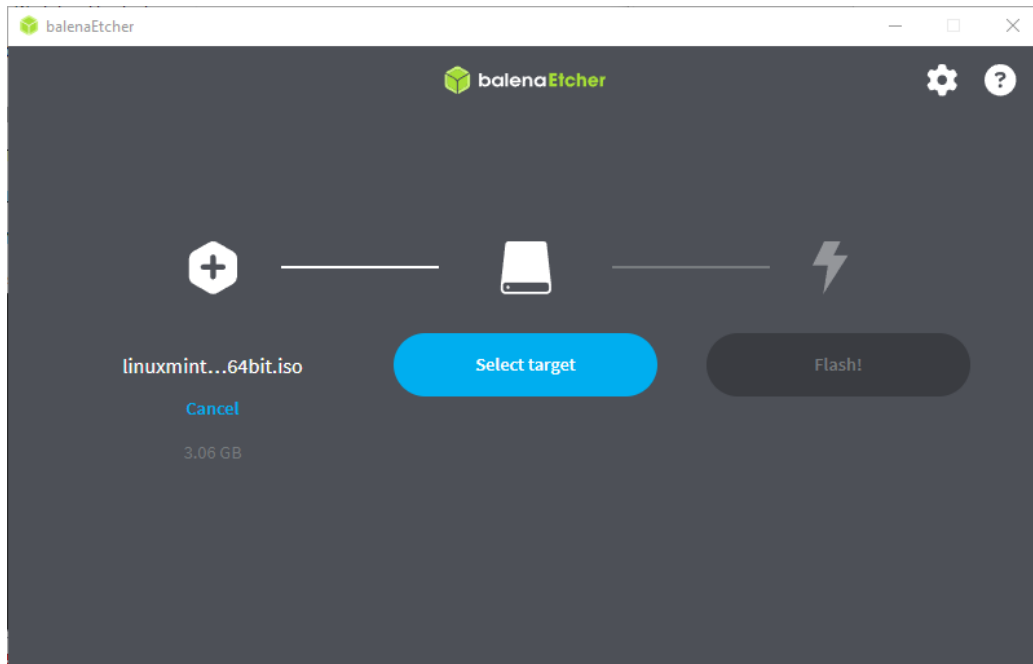
2. Click **Flash from file** and navigate to your Downloads folder.



3. Select the ISO file you downloaded from the Linux Mint website.

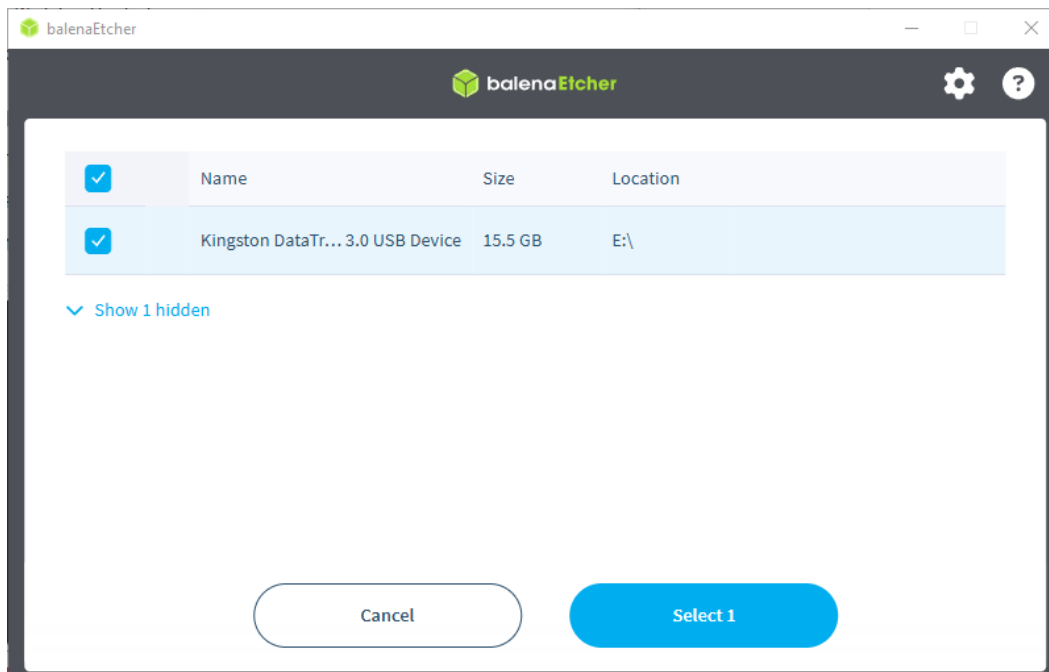


- Click **Select target** to select the USB drive to convert into a Linux Mint Live USB.

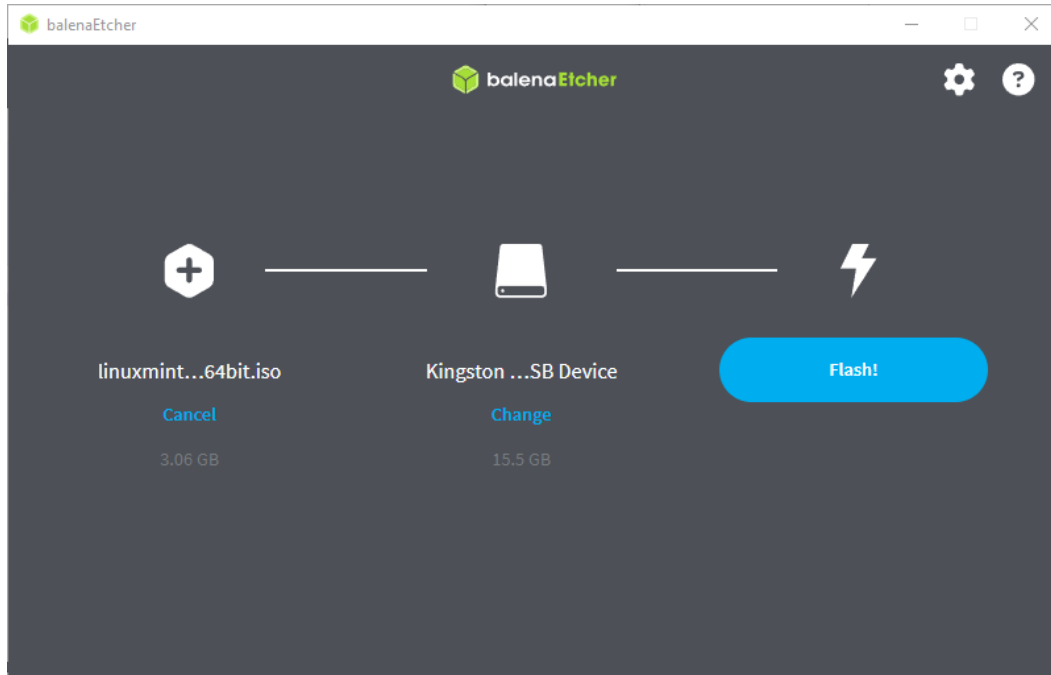


- Select the USB drive from the menu and click **Select 1**.

Note: The number next to **Select** shows how many USB drives are selected to be imaged. The dropdown under the list will reveal additional USB drives that are available.



6. Click **Flash!** to create the Live USB drive.



Etcher will take a few moments to flash the USB drive with the ISO file. After the process ends, you will have a Live USB for Linux Mint. See your PC's user manual for instructions for accessing the boot menu to select the Live USB to run Linux Mint.

