

# Why do you use FreeBSD?



In June 2020, the FreeBSD Core Team surveyed the FreeBSD community. Of the many questions asked, one that is of interest to the folks just learning about FreeBSD or new to the community is “Why do you use FreeBSD?” Below you’ll find just a small sample of the responses, directly from the users themselves. If you’ve ever wondered why someone might choose FreeBSD, take a look. We think you’ll like what you see. **Anne Dickison**

*“FreeBSD allowed me to learn skills that have remained valid over a decade. Being able to use muscle memory for basics let me compound my understanding of the system and confidence in knowing and trusting the substrate on which my applications stand.”*

**“I use FreeBSD because it provides me with a fast, secure, and fully customizable server platform to handle whatever I throw at it.”**

*“[[I]]t’s the Swiss army knife of OSes. If you’ve got a problem that needs to be solved in a hurry, you can almost always count on being able to roll out a FreeBSD-based solution in time.”*

**“The system, the documentation, the community and the high level of dedication within is 100% in alignment with my way of working and communicating. It is just an amazing “friendship” that has lasted for more than 20 years.”**

*“I came because of systemd and stayed because of the awesome community; when I started a company FreeBSD was the only operating system I could use for my application.”*

**“I use FreeBSD because of the consistent user/administrator experience and the well-reasoned technical decisions of the Project.”**

“I use FreeBSD for being a system that I can trust to run for a long time. Upgrading releases is a forethought for the Project and not an afterthought. So when 13.0 comes out, I know I can cleanly upgrade to it, and I have tools that let me roll back if something doesn't go right. And while running that version of FreeBSD, I can trust that it will continue to run reliably.”

**“I use FreeBSD because it's stable, easy to manage, and consistent!”**

“Because it's of great quality. Because it works “out-of-the-box” if you have studied it for the first time. Because it provides all I need to do my daily job at home—browsing the Internet, listening to the music, watching movies or YouTube, coding, serving as a NAS appliance, gaming either natively or using Linux games, even gaming in wine if needed. Because FreeBSD doesn't change core internals like Linux distros do with their systemd or pulseaudio. Because everything in the base system just works and does it repeatedly and without strange problems like with mentioned pulseaudio. Because community is helpful and knowledgeable. Because FreeBSD opened a world of Unix for me back in 2006. Thank you, guys.”

**“FreeBSD offers a unique combination of a rock-solid open-source operating system with high standards for security and performance that integrates lightweight virtualization (jails) as well as the most advanced storage subsystem (ZFS).”**

“It “just works.” I can use it to do what I want—WRT network management, online activities, monitoring, media handling and development. There are no limits—if something's not there, it can be created... there are no secrets!”

**“FreeBSD is elegant, robust, and efficient. The configuration files are concise and well placed, and the filesystem and security options are compelling. FreeBSD is a pleasure to work with and use.”**

*“I like FreeBSD because it is an OS, not a distribution. There is a strong vision attached to it.”*

**“It is single entity controlled distribution, well documented and with a rich set of available end-user software installable from centralized repository. It is fast and reliable.”**

*“FreeBSD is the most-well-thought-out and easiest-to-learn operating system I have ever used. ZFS is a first class citizen, and I can install a system on top of it with no additional effort. The pkg command is a shining example of user friendliness. Having a base system separate from my installed packages keeps things sane and organized. I love it.”*

**“FreeBSD is the most dependable, consistent, available, and cost-effective computing environment, period.”**

*“I switched from Linux to FreeBSD for most applications because Linux feels like it is constantly chasing the “next shiny thing” and has forgotten most of its UNIX heritage. With FreeBSD, system administration is fun again, my files are safe, and my heart is at ease.”*

**“I like the spirit of the community, the knowledgeable people, the good documentation—and that it just isn’t Linux. I wouldn’t want it any other way.”**

*“I have been using FreeBSD from the very beginnings, and in all those years, FreeBSD has never let me down.”*

**“FreeBSD philosophy with clean and simple, rolling release, stable, open and free. I like BSD\* and open source.”**

*“I use FreeBSD because of its stability, great documentation, and security. FreeBSD is used as a key part of my workflow for storage (FreeNAS), networking (both pfSense and iocage+ipfw), and my Nextcloud deployments.”*

“Stability and security. It is far more stable than Linux systems I have run over the same period.”

**“Development not conducted by corporations, I like the democratic way you do things; the performance is also really good. The zfs support, pf as firewall and jails. I love jails.”**

“As an operating system, it provides a sane and stable experience. Changes are only made when something is broken or it makes a measurable improvement in the experience.”

**“FreeBSD is the best OS experience I ever had. I love the system architecture. FreeBSD mailing list and forums is the best place to get answers, and to learn anything about FreeBSD. Thank you so much.”**

“Control, simplicity, and documentation. FreeBSD allows me to actually control how my systems work, all the way down to the OS. On an old laptop with an ACPI table that didn’t advertise the BST properly, it was extremely simple to patch the driver and acpitools to account for the missing DWORDs; and it was easy BECAUSE of the simplicity and documentation.”

**“It’s a great and rock-stable OS, well designed with a great documentation.”**

“I use FreeBSD because it’s BSD-derived OS that’s easy to configure, uses a sane init system, and has native ZFS support. Jails and bhyve are great, too.”

**“Performance. Last week, a prototype of our next-generation CDN server delivered 374Gb/s of real customer traffic over hundreds of thousands of TLS-encrypted sessions from a single machine.”**

“I can build the OS I want and need.”

**“A real free basically UNIX operating system with power, performance, and security that just gets the job done.”**

“FreeBSD lets us implement research prototypes and share them with anyone with any (or no) restrictions.”

**“Freedom. Simplicity. Reliability. Good documentation. Because it inspires confidence.”**

“I believe FreeBSD has very smart design and it must be used for complicated solutions that require full control over system resources.”

**“In one word: consistency. Rather than having to learn a new system with each major release, FreeBSD allows me to focus on maintaining the system and doing other things more important.”**

“FreeBSD allows me to see the direct connection between source code and final product. This is what open source is all about.”

**“FreeBSD is a versatile and proven tool that never presents an insurmountable problem, or a baffling mystery.”**

“I’m able to spend less time doing sysadmin work and more time focusing on the applications that I get paid to deliver. Configuration via simple text files, a well-designed and strictly applied file hierarchy, and easy-to-understand scripts to control services (no giant blob of dubious quality code like systemd) all make my life easier.”

**“FreeBSD is better organized and it’s easy to use. It has clean structure. Jail support allows us to replace Citrix XEN in many cases. Its license is very liberal.”**

“FreeBSD support is a competitive advantage; FreeBSD keeps us honest when it comes to portability; and FreeBSD has always been a helpful and engaging community. I appreciate the level of professionalism with which FreeBSD conducts itself.”