vermaden

Another ${RANDOM} sysadmin sharing his experiences of work at IT industry.

Sensible Firefox Setup

I really wanted to do that **Firefox** guide earlier but always other things came up as usual. But that also has some upsides.

Yes – I used the **Firefox** logo from 2009 (some reported it is from 2013) as I believe it looks a lot better then the current one ... below You can check the **Firefox** logo declining progress.

2004   2009   2013   2017   2019

Fortunately progress of the **Firefox** browser seems to be directed in a good direction.

Below You will find *Table of Contents* for this article.

Magic of the Past

I struggled a lot … to find new home after **Opera 12.x** was killed in 2013. Its **Presto** engine was fast and standards (ACID3) compliant. **Opera 12.x** had official **FreeBSD** support (and was in the Ports). It had builtin **Opera Mail** client – imagine having **Thunderbird** integrated into **Firefox** … It has **Torrent** client integrated – image having **Transmission** integrated into **Firefox** as well. It had extensions support. It supported really intelligent **Mouse Gestures** – like it already new where the Next in Thread on the **Mailing Lists** link is … **Opera** provided at that time synchronization with **Opera Mini** on the phone (and other **Opera** instances as well) … and while having all that it was ultra fast and low on resources. Kinda like a dream. Total opposite of today's **Slack** client taking 2 GB RAM …

So much potential lost … and while having all these features it had very little market share … this reminds me of a quote by *Waldemar Łysiak* from its *Statek* (1994) book.

> *"If majority is always right – let's eat shit… millions of flies can't be wrong."*

Even in 2007 the **Opera** allowed some crazy browsing modes … and these were not the times of FullHD or higher resolutions. When You had 1280×1024 back then on a huge CTR screen it felt like king.

Dead. Killed. Abandoned.

After a lot of time I finally settled on **Firefox** – and while it will never be the same – this is the closest I was able to get.

Today I will try to share the sensible **Firefox** setup – to focus on the web and not on the browser.

Clean Start

Lets start with a clean start (and a backup if You already use **Firefox**). Copy your config on a side and remove everything.

```
% mv ~/.mozilla ~/.mozilla.BACKUP
% rm -rf ~/.cache/mozilla/firefox
```

This is how the clean **Firefox** 123.0 more or less should look like.
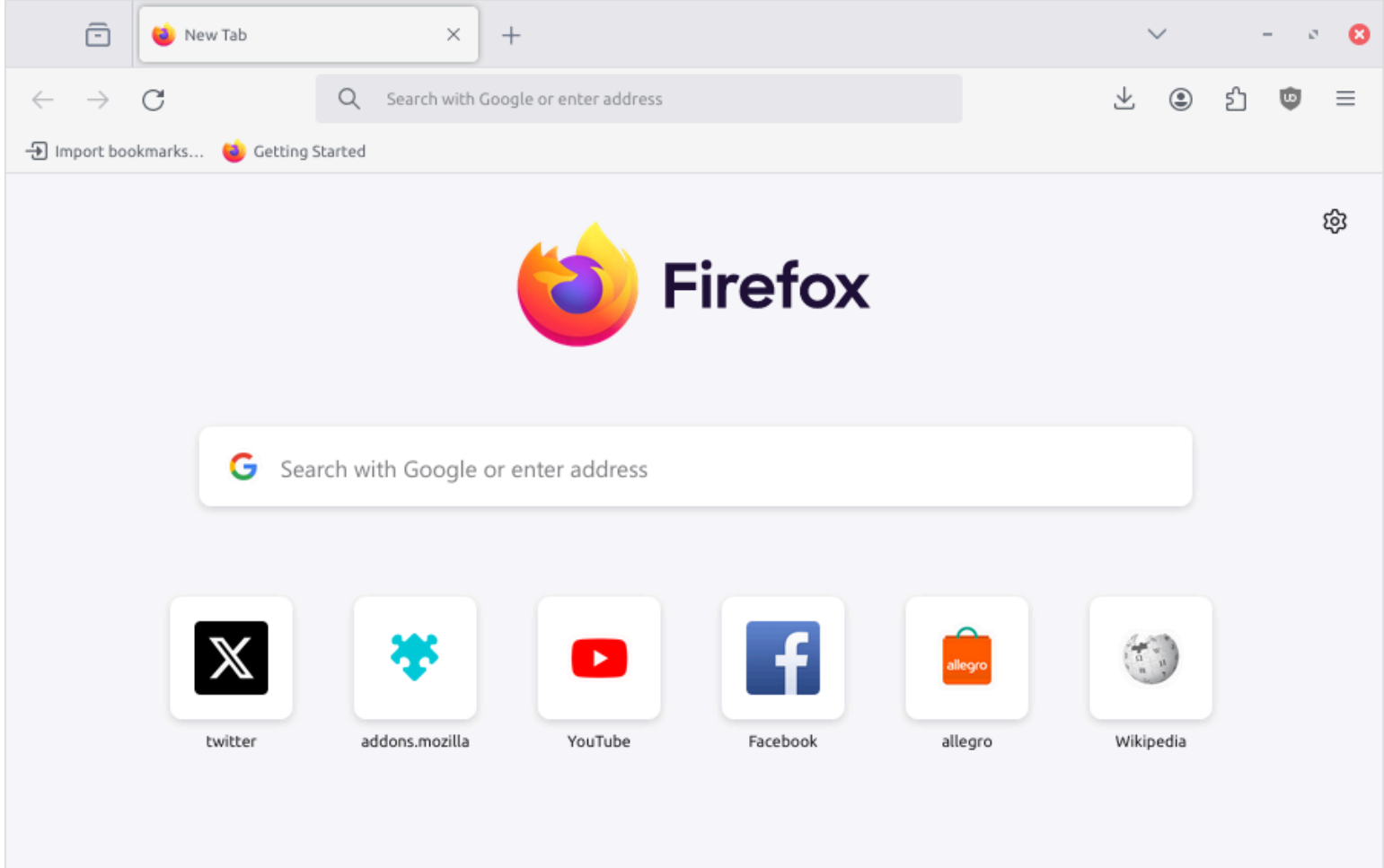
Complete list of what is stored where – https://support.mozilla.org/en-US/kb/profiles-where-firefox-stores-user-data – is available here.

Logins and Passwords

If you already used **Firefox** – or want to know how to backup your **Logins** and **Passwords** – do these.

My old Firefox profile was **ah3fnzb3.default-release** and the new name was generated as **o3pdrjav.default-release** as shown below.

We will be copying/protecting the **key3.db**/**key3.db** and **logins.json** files.

```
% cd ~/.mozilla.BACKUP.BROKEN/firefox/ah3fnzb3.default-release

% cp key*.db logins.json ~/.mozilla/firefox/o3pdrjav.default-release/
```

You may want to also copy **handlers.json** for download actions and **persdict.dat** for personal dictionary.

Complete information of what is stored where is available – https://support.mozilla.org/en-US/kb/profiles-where-firefox-stores-user-data – here.

Extensions

We will now focus Firefox Extensions. Today (at least for me) its impossible to just browse the Internet w/o at least **uBlock Origin** and **Still Don't Care About Cookies** plugins ... but there are more of them useful.

Currently I use below ones as a minimum and sometimes experiment with other ones.

- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/ublock-origin/**
- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/istilldontcareaboutcookies/**
- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/save-tabs-to-text/**
- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/select-link-text/**
- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/expire-history-by-days/**
- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/disable-autoplay/**
- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/clearurls/**
- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/absolute-enable-right-click/**
- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-us/firefox/addon/tineye-reverse-image-search/**
- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/open-multiple-urls/**
- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/minimaltwitter/**

Note about the additional preferences for some of the plugins.

The is a genius page of additional content for **uBlock Origin** – https://majkiit.github.io/polish-ads-filter/en/ – available here.

Subscribe to as many lists as You want – all supported and working in **uBlock Origin** tool.

For the **Expire History by Days** I would suggest picking some limit – I use **33** days.

Some notable mentions of other extensions that You may find useful.

- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/multi-account-containers/**
- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/gesturefy/**
- **https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/privacy-badger17/**

Feel free to share You favorite extensions in the comments.

Preferences

Now ... the preferences for Firefox I have chosen are displayed below ... but its not all of course – there would be additional **about:config** section.

Sorry that they took that much place ... initially I wanted to write everything down as text summary – but then You would have to find that in the **Preferences** page and ... it would took even more time.

The **General** tab.

The **Home** tab.

The **Search** tab.

... and last but not least – the **Privacy and Security** tab.

about:config

As PITA as it is – there are also many of these ... this time summarized in a text fashion below.

The list is below.

ABOUT:CONFIG	VALUE	COMMENT
browser.cache.memory.enable	false	-
browser.compactmode.show	true	(compact layout)
browser.display.show_image_placeholders	false	-
browser.download.alwaysOpenPanel	false	(do not show downloads box
browser.download.autohideButton	false	-
browser.download.improvements_to_download_panel	false	(normal download behavior)
browser.download.saveLinkAsFilenameTimeout	0	(faster)
browser.link.open_newwindow.restriction	0	(open windows as tabs)
browser.link.open_newwindow	1	(ignore open link in new ta
browser.search.openintab	true	(search bar will open new t
browser.search.suggest.enabled	false	-
browser.sessionhistory.max_entries	5	50
browser.sessionstore.interval	85000	15000
browser.tabs.animate	false	-
browser.tabs.insertRelatedAfterCurrent	false	-
browser.tabs.tabMinWidth	10	76
browser.tabs.loadBookmarksInTabs	true	(open links in new tabs)

ABOUT:CONFIG	VALUE	COMMENT
dom.block_download_insecure	false	(normal download without ye
dom.event.contextmenu.enabled	false	(allow right click)
dom.media.autoplay-policy-detection.enabled	false	(autoplay)
dom.webnotifications.enabled	false	-
general.smoothScroll.lines	false	-
general.smoothScroll.mouseWheel	false	-
general.smoothScroll.other	false	-
general.smoothScroll.pages	false	-
general.smoothScroll.pixels	false	-
general.smoothScroll.scrollbars	false	-
geo.enabled	false	-
gfx.xrender.enabled	true	(works in Thunderbird too)
image.jxl.enabled	true	(JPEG XL)
loop.enabled	false	-
media.autoplay.allow-extension-background-pages	false	(autoplay)
media.autoplay.default	0	(autoplay)
media.autoplay.enabled	false	(autoplay)
media.block-autoplay-until-in-foreground	false	(autoplay)
media.peerconnection.enabled	false	-
media.webrtc.hw.h264.enabled	false	-
network.http.http3.enabled	false	-
network.negotiate-auth.allow-insecure-ntlm-v1	true	(sharepoint)
network.prefetch-next	false	-
network.trr.mode	5	(disable TRR DNS)
pdfjs.defaultZoomValue	page-fit	-
privacy.firstparty.isolate	true	-
privacy.firstparty.isolate.block_post_message	true	-
privacy.trackingprotection.enabled	true	-
security.dialog_enable_delay	0	-
security.notification_enable_delay	0	-
security.ssl3.rsa_fips_des_ede3_sha	false	-
security.tls.version.fallback-limit	0	-
security.tls.version.max	4	-
security.tls.version.min	0	(IBM/HMC)
security.tls.insecure_fallback_hosts	10.20.30.40	(IBM/HMC)
toolkit.scrollbox.smoothScroll	false	-
ABOUT:CONFIG	**VALUE**	**COMMENT**

… and some (optional for some) privacy related stuff.

ABOUT:CONFIG	VALUE	COMMENT
browser.safebrowsing.downloads.enabled	false	(privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.downloads.remote.url	127.0.0.1	(privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.downloads.remote.url	127.0.0.1	(privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.enabled	false	(privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.malware.enabled	false	(privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google.advisoryURL	127.0.0.1	(privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google.gethashURL	127.0.0.1	(privacy)

```
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google.gethashURL                127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google.reportMalwareMistakeURL   127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google.reportPhishMistakeURL     127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google.reportURL                 127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google.reportURL                 127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google.updateURL                 127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google.updateURL                 127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google4.advisoryURL              127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google4.dataSharingURL           127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google4.gethashURL               127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google4.gethashURL               127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google4.reportMalwareMistakeURL  127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google4.reportPhishMistakeURL    127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google4.reportURL                127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google4.reportURL                127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google4.updateURL                127.0.0.1   -(privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.google4.updateURL                127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.mozilla.gethashURL               127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.mozilla.gethashURL               127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.mozilla.updateURL                127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.provider.mozilla.updateURL                127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.reportMalwareMistakeURL                   127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.reportPhishMistakeURL                     127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.reportPhishURL                            127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.reportPhishURL                            127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.reportURL                                 127.0.0.1    (privacy)
browser.safebrowsing.updateURL                                 127.0.0.1    (privacy)
captivedetect.canonicalContent                                 127.0.0.1    (privacy)
captivedetect.canonicalURL                                     127.0.0.1    (privacy)
toolkit.telemetry.enabled                                      false        (privacy)
captivedetect.maxRetryCount                                    0            (privacy)
captivedetect.maxWaitingTime                                   0            (privacy)
captivedetect.pollingTime                                      0            (privacy)
datareporting.healthreport.about.reportUrl                     127.0.0.1    (privacy)
datareporting.healthreport.infoURL                             127.0.0.1    (privacy)
datareporting.healthreport.service.enabled                     false        (privacy)
datareporting.healthreport.uploadEnabled                       false        (privacy)
extensions.pocket.enabled                                      false        (privacy)
ABOUT:CONFIG                                                   VALUE        COMMENT
```

Looks for example like that.

One of the things I learned that is possible to 'glob' the **about:config** options. This way you can enter – for example the **bro*ses*deb** value and **Firefox** will filter possible options for You.

Interface

I am a fan of the *Compact* layout – it needs one more step (**browser.compactmode.show = true**) to be visible and was already done in the previous section.

The details are in one of the Mozilla – https://support.mozilla.org/en-US/kb/compact-mode-workaround-firefox – support pages.

To start click somewhere besides buttons and select **Customize Toolbar…** – like that.

On the lower side You will now find needed option as shown below.

Also feel free to setup your preferred buttons and search box if needed.

This is how mine config looks like after all these tasks.

Export/Import Bookmarks

You may want to also backup/restore your bookmarks … assuming you have any.

Summary

I wanted to focus only on config part and no the **Firefox** features – this maybe some time in the future 🙂

Regards,

EOF

This entry was posted in Uncategorized and tagged browser, desktop, firefox, freebsd, laptop, linux, opera, x11 on March 18, 2024 [https://vermaden.wordpress.com/2024/03/18/sensible-firefox-setup/] .

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6 thoughts on "Sensible Firefox Setup"

Pingback: Valuable News – 2024/03/18 | vermaden

Pingback: Sensible Firefox Setup - CodeGurus

tau
March 18, 2024 at 2:19 pm

> https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/select-link-text/

You can select link text in Firefox by holding down the ALT key, no extension required 😉

> https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/privacy-badger17/
> https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/clearurls/

Id reccomend replacing ClearURLs with the "Actually Legitimate URL Shortener Tool" filter list you can add to uBlock Origin, and replacing Privacy Badger with nothing, because its generally more of a hinderence to privacy then a help and uBlock will block 99% of what Privacy Badger was going to block anways.

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vermaden Post author
March 18, 2024 at 3:41 pm

Thank You – but as long as **Select Link Text** is available its more convenient to NOT have to press **[ALT]** each time. I got used to this (select link text) when I used **Opera** back in **12.x** times and I see absolutely no sane reason to force myself to press **[ALT]** when I do not have to 🙂

… and thank You also for the 'privacy' tips. I did not installed Privacy Badger in 'this refresh' Firefox instance 🙂

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cmdrlinux

March 18, 2024 at 11:22 pm

Some great tips here – I definitely picked up a couple things.

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vermaden Post author

March 18, 2024 at 11:33 pm

Thank You 🙂