# Pro Ubuntu Server Administration

## **Andy Hudson** steps boldly into server land with only a book to help him....

**A**press seems to be on a mission to encompass the Ubuntu book arena; the company has had a lot of success with its *Beginning Ubuntu* series of books, so it was only logical that they started to think about the far end of the experience spectrum and begin to cater for those users who are a little more advanced than most.



› A useful resource for Ubuntu fans – just don't read it at bedtime.

*Pro Ubuntu Server Administration* is relatively slender at 381 pages, and is packed with a number of useful chapters on a range of subjects. There's the requisite installation chapter geared towards the server release of Ubuntu, which also talks about setting up a RAID array, which is immediately followed with a chapter on using *Clonezilla* to build a remote deployment server. From there, you get an insight into performance monitoring and optimisation, with a sprinkling of tips that should be useful to the majority of system administrators.

Further chapters include a look at LDAP, *Samba*, creating a VPN server as well as a fascinating chapter on building a SAN. No book about server administration would be complete without at least one chapter on email, and this book doesn't disappoint, by focusing on *Postfix*. Rounding out the book is an interesting chapter on Kerberos, with a good explanation of how to configure it correctly under

Ubuntu. More importantly, it links the importance of good timekeeping via NTP to the usage of Kerberos – there's no point trying to use a time- and token-based authentication system if all your systems have different time settings!

The book makes a good effort to keep things interesting, although we'd argue that LDAP is unlikely to be interesting at the best of times! **LXF**

**LINUX** FORMAT **Verdict**

### Pro Ubuntu Server Administration

**Author:** Sander van Vugt
**Publisher:** Apress
**ISBN:** 978-1-4302-1622-3
**Price:** £24.99
**Pages:** 381

» *Useful with some good material that should be helpful for anyone working in an Ubuntu server environment.*

## Rating 8/10

---

# Beginning the Linux Command Line

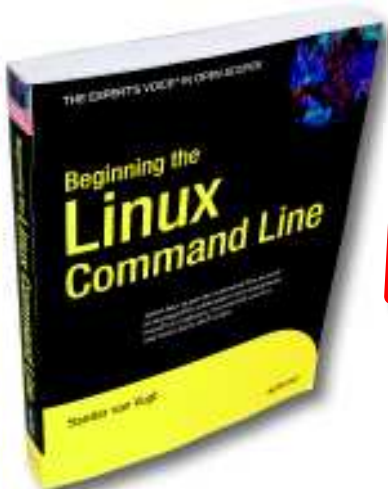## Forget the Indonesian hobbits – **Andrew Gregory** has found the missing link.

**W**e get a steady trickle of letters from readers who want to use the knowledge they've learned about configuring Linux through their distro's graphical tools and take the next step up to becoming a 'proper' Linux user – a command-line Linuxer. If that sounds like you, you'll



**LINUX** FORMAT **TOP STUFF**

› Linux elitists, burn this book on sight – it will let newbies into your closed magic circle!

know that there often doesn't seem to be any connection between achieving something in, for example, the Gnome control panel, and editing the corresponding config file. This can make the learning curve feel steeper than Mont Ventoux.

Which is precisely why we were so pleased when *Beginning the Linux Command Line* arrived at LXF Towers. It's written by Sander van Vught (who you may recognise from such titles as *Pro Ubuntu Server Administration*, reviewed above), and promises to be a "clear, distribution-agnostic book that starts right at the beginning and leads you through all aspects of command line administration". Even with the occasional inclusion of the odd bit of Euro-English, that's exactly what it is. The book starts you off with the *ls* command and how to get help from man pages, moves onwards and upwards through mounting devices, using *Vi* to edit config files, and managing groups and ownership

permissions. The final two chapters give you an introduction to kernel modules and shell scripting, and when you get to the end you'll look back in wonder at just how leet you've become in a shade over 370 pages.

The book is packed with theory, so it's not for casual readers, but if you've been using Linux for a year or so and want to improve, this is for you. **LXF**

**LINUX** FORMAT **Verdict**

### Beginning the Linux Command Line

**Author:** Sander van Vught
**Publisher:** Apress
**ISBN:** 978-1-4302-1889-0
**Price:** £27.49
**Pages:** 373

» *Absolute beginners will get nothing from this, but if you're already a Linux user and want to learn, buy this book.*

## Rating 9/10

# Beginning Portable Shell Scripting

**Andy Hudson** likes to travel light. Nothing more than a memory key for him!

Running a Linux distro gives you an insight into a much larger world of computing; some of the skills that you'll learn on your favourite distro will serve you well on other Unix-like platforms. However, you'll no doubt find that some things don't work in quite the same way that you'd expect them to, and so this book will come in handy to guide you through an appreciation of those subtle nuances between Unix variants.

The title of *Beginning Portable Shell Scripting* is rigorously adhered to throughout the text – the author goes to great lengths to maximise the portability of the code you produce.

A helpful guide to regular expressions can be found in Chapter 2, with a brief overview of shell scripting fundamentals in the following chapter. Chapter 7 in particular stands out as a good section; you get a good overview of some of the more popular shells, and any unique features or quirks that they have. Further on in the book you get a helping hand in constructing good scripts, and the importance of having a clear objective in mind before you even put fingers to keyboard.

In essence, this is a book for people who routinely manage multi-vendor Unix environments; if you stick to one or two distros, you're not going to get your money's worth from the book. Perhaps the best part of this book is Appendix A, which gives you a good run through of the vanilla shell language, although the author does try to explain where certain things hinder portability. You'll definitely learn a thing or two by reading this effort, although we wouldn't recommend it if you're just starting out with shell scripting. **LXF**
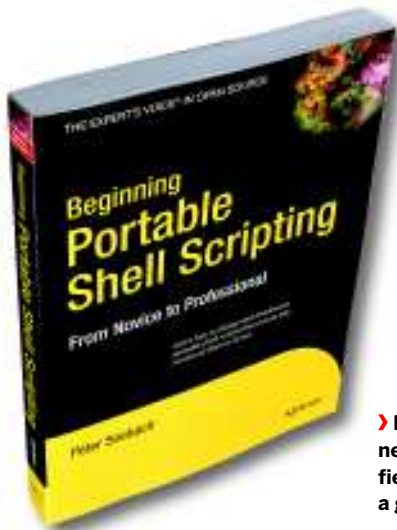
❯ Not a book for newcomers to the field, but handy for a general guide.

## LINUX FORMAT Verdict

**Beginning Portable Shell Scripting**

**Author:** Peter Seebach
**Publisher:** Apress
**ISBN:** 978-1-4302-1043-6
**Price:** £27.49
**Pages:** 337

❯ *If you're working in a multi-vendor Unix environment, this book will definitely come in handy.*

## Rating 7/10

# Freedom Fry



Mr. Stephen Fry introduces you to free software, and reminds you of a very special birthday.

# www.gnu.org/fry

## FREE SOFTWARE FOUNDATION