

## Chapter 19

# K3b—Easy CD Burning Program

**W**e chose K3b as the CD and DVD burning program to include in the *SimplyMEPIS* CD and this book because it is one of the finest and most versatile programs of this type we have ever used, in any operating system. K3b handles music, video, and data equally well, and has no trouble burning the “ISO” (complete file system image) CDs needed to boot your computer directly from its CD drive. This is the program that was used to create the original master version of the *SimplyMEPIS* bootable CD and the video instruction DVD included with this book.

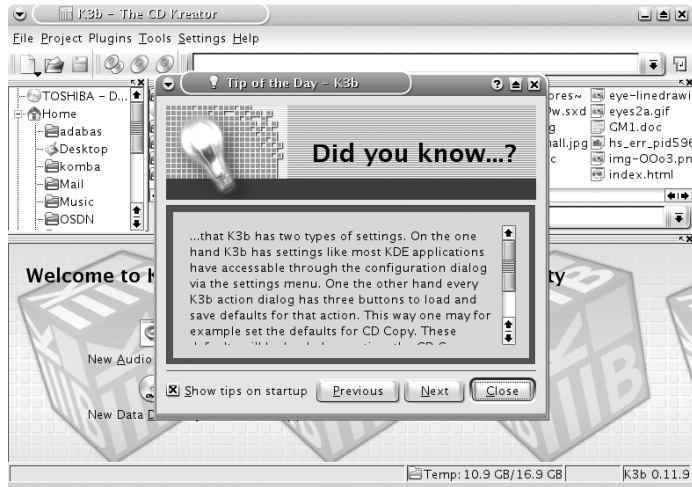
You can also use K3b to copy almost any kind of CD or DVD that doesn't have some sort of built-in copy protection, although you will want to make sure you don't make illegal copies of movies or songs that are protected by copyright laws where you live.

Remember, too, that if your drive won't burn DVDs, no software—not even K3b—can make it into a DVD-burner. Most RW (Read/Write) drives that can *read* DVDs can't *make* them, even if they do a fine job of writing CDs.

## Running K3b

So far we haven't encountered a CD or DVD drive that K3b failed to detect or that needed any setup action beyond clicking "Okay" on the defaults. When you start K3b for the first time it will detect your CD R/W (or DVD R/W) drive and that will be that. You will soon be taken to an opening screen that has a big "Tooltip" window splashed across it.

As with all other Linux programs, you can keep the "Tips" windows from showing up when you start the program by unchecking the "Show tips on startup" box. It's probably a good idea to let them come up at least the first few times you open the program—and to actually read them, because they contain useful information. Or you may want to click "Next" on the K3b tooltip window four or five times and read all the tips at one time, then shut them off for the future. (K3b is so easy to use that there aren't a lot of tips, so this might be best.)



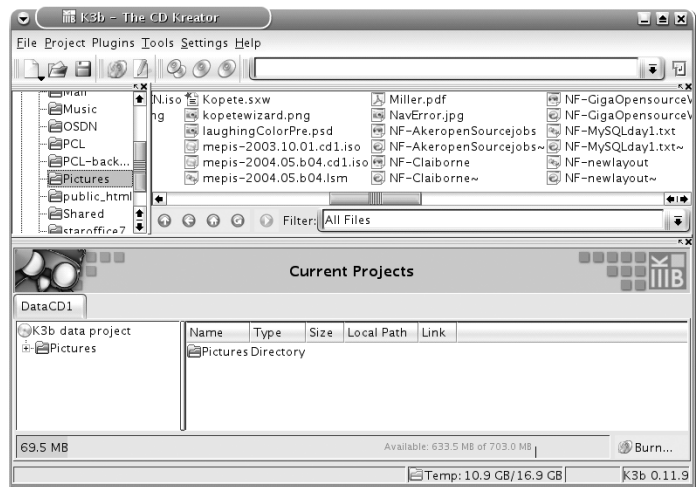
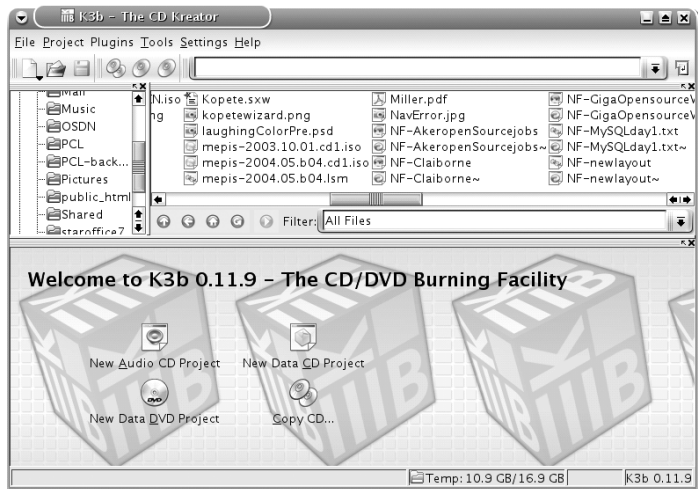
Now we have K3b set up (automatically) and ready to run. So let's do something with it. The main startup screen gives us several choices. We're going to choose "New Data CD Project" because we often create Data CDs. In this case, the data will be a bunch of pictures we took of a sailboat race. We're going to make a CD with all the pictures on it that we can give to the editor of the Sarasota Sailing Squadron's monthly newsletter, "The Burgee," for publication in the next edition.

We have four types of projects from which to choose:

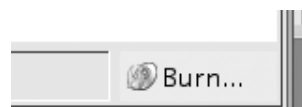
1. New Audio CD Project
2. New Data CD Project
3. New Data DVD Project
4. Copy CD

K3b considers everything other than music "Data," and we're writing to a CD, so we'll choose "New Data CD Project."

After we make that choice, we need to choose the data we want to put on the CD. The top half of our K3b screen is divided into two sections: files on the right, folders on the left. We're going to put an entire "Pictures" folder on CD, so we put our cursor on the "Pictures" directory listing and, while holding our left mouse button, drag it down into the "Current Projects" area, then release the mouse button.



We look down in the lower left corner of the window and see that we have 69.4 megabytes of data in our “Pictures” folder, which will easily fit on a single CD. There’s only one thing left to do, assuming we’ve put either a blank recordable CD or a rewritable CD in our drive: Click the “Burn” button in the lower right corner of the K3b window and sit back.



Making a music CD is exactly the same, except you choose “Audio CD Project,” and instead of selecting a whole folder at once to put on the CD, you might want to place each file (that is, each piece of music) individually on it so you can set the order in which they’ll play on the finished CD. To move files around within the “Project” listing, you just “drag” them to where you want them with the mouse while holding the left mouse button and release the button where you decide they best fit in your custom-made playlist.

## More About Using K3b

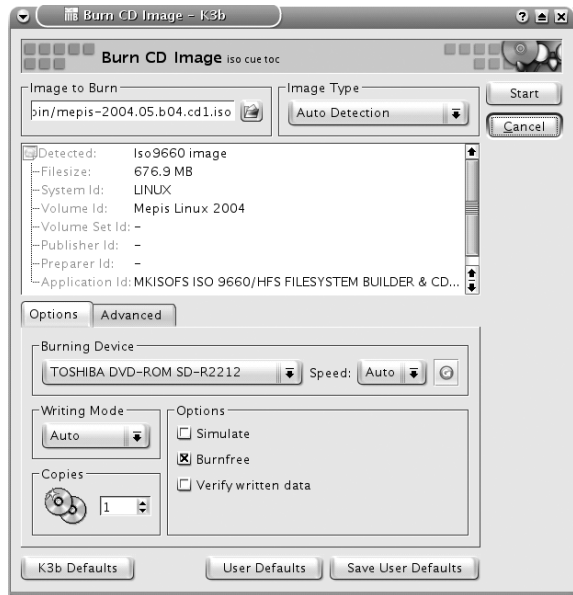
When using Reusable (Rewritable) CDs, K3b will automatically “blank” them—that is, remove what you had on them before—but will ask you to confirm this action first so you don’t delete important material by mistake.

Copying CDs is self-explanatory; just step through the processes as they come up, following the onscreen instructions.

Making or copying DVDs is the same as working with CDs, except you must have a DVD burner and not just a CD burner to use this feature.

Burning ISO images from which your computer can boot directly (like the *SimplyMEPIS* CD in this book) requires a slightly different procedure. Select “Tools,” then “CD,” then “Burn CD Image.” (Or if you have a DVD-write drive, you can burn a bootable DVD instead by clicking “DVD” instead of “CD.” After that, select the ISO image you want to put on CD or DVD, and you will get a special screen for ISO burning.)

The built-in K3b “Help” file is surprisingly good. It contains most of the information you’ll ever need for daily K3b use. We suggest playing with a rewritable CD for your first experiments, because no matter how good your burning software may be (and K3b is very good indeed) a single wrong move, especially when burning a bootable CD, can leave you with a useless plastic “coaster” instead of correctly stored data. Even though rewritable CDs cost more than “single write” recordable CDs, it is worth the few extra bucks to have some around for testing—and if you regularly back up your most important data on CD (as everyone should but few do), you can reuse a single rewritable CD over and over for your most current information instead of accumulating a stack of CDs with old data on them.



## K3b Information and Help

[www.k3b.org](http://www.k3b.org)

[www.MEPIS.org/forum](http://www.MEPIS.org/forum)

