Table of Contents

Useful Programs	
ncdu	
parallel	2
parallelrmlint	
Digikam	3
Nativefier	3
Shorter list	

Useful Programs

Here are some sometimes-handy programs:

There are many that I don't even need to shout-out, they're quite well known such as youtube-dl, mpv, ffmpeg, vlc, so on.

ncdu

A fancier du. Sometimes, when your disk is almost full, you want to know what is using up the disk space. On Windows, tools like WinDirStat achieve this function.

On GNU/Linux, du will list the space of files used. However, the ncurses version is more useful

ncdu

It will print out in descending order the list of items using disk space.

parallel

The actual thread-ripper. Most programs are single threaded, but most modern systems have multiple cores. Parallel can help you run multiple instances of a program in parallel. This is especially useful when working with inputs and outputs that can be divided and merged later. For example, converting a folder of audio recordings to a different codec, or splitting text to process it in smaller chunks.

GNU Parallel takes in a list of files (or parameters) to give the multiple threads and can queue them. Say you have text files 1-100, parallel can run 8 at once, and when one finishes, queue the next one from the list.

rmlint

Useful deduplication. Can be set to reflink instead of delete, very handy for unorganized ppl like me w/ tons of duplicates.

example usage:

rmlint -vv -g -c sh:link .

2024-04-19 15:03 3/4 Useful Programs

Digikam

Very nice photo library and album collection. Includes ability to process raw photos internally or with Rawtherapee. Has some effects built in. Does face-recognition (offline) if trained. Easy to tag and sort stuff. Overall, nice.

It seems to struggle with my 60k photo multi-family setup a bit, but it's probably because I use a shared database on my home server. Easy enough to export an album as jpegs, burn onto a DVD and give to relatives.

Nativefier

Turn terrible web apps into slightly less terrible electron based apps...

Mainframe→individial→mainframe(cloud)→? eventually I guess we'll go back to local compute?

Shorter list

My expanding list of things I've found handy.

- Multimedia
 - MPV/VLC
 - Imagemagick/Ffmpeg/Sox
 - yt-dlp (youtube-dl fork)
 - MPD (music) with ncmpcpp or Cantata
 - IXL utilities for JPEG-XL, VPX for VP9, AVIF, AV1
- Better Unix utilities (Thanks to vmeson/rwmacleod for pointing these ones out)
 - rg (better grep)
 - fd (better find)
- Filesystems
 - sshfs
 - ∘ s3fs
 - o zfs
 - btrfs
- Backup
 - borg
 - growisofs (for multisession DVD/BD backup)
 - ddrescue for generating image of semi-dead disks (or disc)
 - photorec/testdisk for recovery, try it before you need it.

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