



# In Depth: Evolution

**T**he Evolution program isn't part of the OpenOffice.org suite. It was originally created by Ximian, an organization founded by the creators of the GNOME Desktop Project and acquired by Novell in August 2003. Even long after the acquisition, Evolution is still being improved by many of the key GNOME desktop developers.

Although it's not explicitly described as such by its developers, Evolution is considered the "official" GNOME desktop e-mail program. The Evolution interface retains the same look and feel as many elements of the Ubuntu desktop.

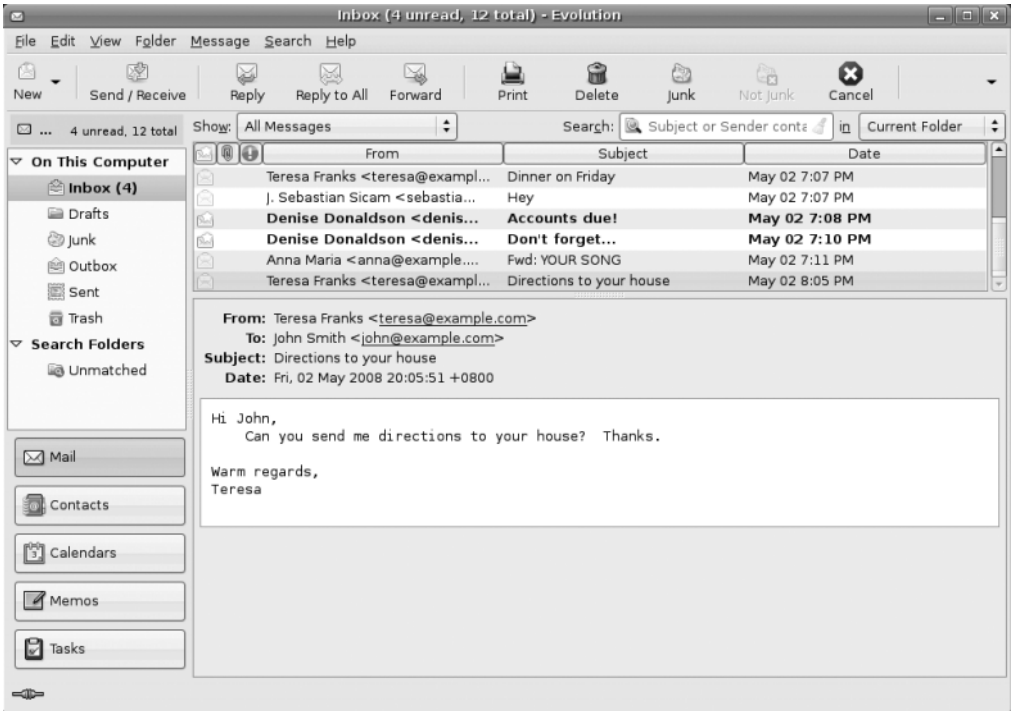
In terms of functionality, Evolution is similar to Microsoft Outlook. As well as being a powerful e-mail client, it incorporates contacts management, a calendar, a to-do list, and a memo function. Evolution is even able to connect to Microsoft Exchange (2000 and later) groupware servers and synchronize with contact and calendar data, in addition to fetching e-mail. Of course, it can also connect to standard POP3/SMTP e-mail servers, as well as IMAP, Novell GroupMail, and a handful of other mail server technologies. This means it is compatible with practically every e-mail system in use today. For more details about how to set up Evolution, see Chapter 8.

Although Evolution offers many of the functions of Microsoft Outlook, it differs in some key ways. This chapter describes how to use Evolution's main features.

## Evolution Modes

Evolution consists of five components: Mail, Contacts, Calendars, Memos, and Tasks. These are interconnected but operate as separate modes within the program. Each mode can be selected using the switcher located at the bottom-left side of the program window. Simply click the button for the mode you wish to use. The program window, toolbar, and menu system will change to accommodate whichever mode is selected. Figure 27-1 shows the program in the default Mail mode.

**Tip** You can shrink the switcher component to small icons by clicking **View ► Switcher Appearance ► Icons Only**.



**Figure 27-1.** You can switch between Evolution's modes by clicking the buttons at the bottom left of the program window.

The five Evolution modes work as follows:

**Mail:** The e-mail component is at the heart of Evolution, and all the functions you might be used to are provided. Once the Mail mode is selected, at the top left of the program window, you'll find the mail folders. These include the Inbox and Sent folders, along with any other mail folders you create. On the right is the list of e-mail messages, and beneath this is the message preview pane, where the body of any message you select will be displayed. Above the message list is the search box, which works like most e-mail search routines: type the relevant word(s) and press Enter. Notable icons running along the top of the window include the New button, which will let you compose an e-mail message, and the Send/Receive button, which will download new messages and also send any messages in the Outbox folder.

**Contacts:** Tied in with the mail function but acting as a separate and very powerful entity on its own, the Contacts mode lets you store every pertinent detail about colleagues, friends, and others. Once the mode is selected, at the left side of the program window, you'll see the various contact folders. For most users, there will be just one, named Personal, but if you specified a groupware server during setup, you will also be able to connect to this by clicking its entry. At the top right is the list of contacts. Clicking any contact displays that individual's information at the bottom of the window, in the contact information area. The search bar at the top of the window beneath the toolbar lets you quickly search for contacts by name. The New button on the toolbar lets you create a new contact, where you can enter a wealth of data. To edit an existing entry, double-click its entry and fill in the additional details.

**Calendars:** The Calendars mode is arguably Evolution's second most useful function. You can add events in half-hour increments, and view your schedule in day, week, and month views by clicking the relevant button on the toolbar. Once the mode is selected, at the top left of the program window, you'll find the various calendars you can access. For most users, the Personal calendar will be the principal one, but you can also access shared calendars here. Assuming the default day view is in operation, beneath this you'll see the monthly calendar and, in the middle of the program window, the appointment list, with half-hour entries covering the working day. By default, the current day is shown. To select a different day, simply double-click the day in the month view. You can switch among day, week, and month appointment views by clicking the Day, Work Week, and Month buttons on the toolbar. On the right of the window, any tasks and memos that have been created are displayed, as described next.

**Memos:** The best way to think of Evolution's Memos mode is as a personal notepad. Once the Memos mode is selected, the list of memos will appear on the right side of the screen, and the contents of the memo at the bottom. Memos can consist of virtually any amount of text, along with attachments. They're ideal for jotting notes during phone calls, for example.

**Tasks:** Effectively, this is a simple to do list. Once the mode is selected, your tasks will be listed on the right side of the program window. Beneath this will be details of any selected task.

## Basic E-Mail Tasks

Evolution's e-mail functionality is arguably the heart of the program. Although it offers a lot of features, it is quite simple to use. If you've ever used any other mainstream e-mail client, such as Microsoft Outlook, you have a head start.

This section describes how to accomplish several everyday tasks within the e-mail component of Evolution. When you start Evolution, the e-mail mode is selected automatically. However, if it isn't, or if you've switched to a different mode within the program, simply click the Mail button at the bottom left of the program window.

## Sending and Receiving E-Mail

Once Evolution has been set up correctly to work with your e-mail servers, as outlined in Chapter 8, you can simply click the Send/Receive button on the toolbar to connect to the server(s) and both send and receive e-mail.

You may need to enter your password if you didn't enter it during setup. You can check the Remember Password box to avoid having to type it again, but this will mean the password is stored on your hard disk, posing a security risk if other people have access to your PC.

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**Note** Although e-mail is normally sent as soon as you click the Send button when composing it, if the sending has been delayed for any reason (such as being offline at the time), it will be sent as soon as you click the Send/Receive button. Until that point, it will be held in the Outbox folder on the left side of the program window.

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Any outstanding mail is sent first, and then the receiving procedure is started. As shown in Figure 27-2, a status dialog box will tell you how many messages there are and the progress of the download. Clicking the Cancel button will stop the procedure (although some messages may already have been downloaded). When you get a new e-mail, an envelope icon blinks in the notification area in the top right of the desktop, and a small window appears to tell you that you have mail.



**Figure 27-2.** You'll see a progress display whenever you click the Send/Receive button.

## E-MAIL SIGNING AND ENCRYPTION

In Chapter 9, you learned how to use the Seahorse application to set up a public key pair. This allows you to encrypt e-mail messages destined for other people, so that only they can read the messages (provided you have their public key), and digitally sign your own e-mail, so recipients can be sure messages came from you (provided they have *your* public key). If you've followed the instructions to set up the key pair, you now need to configure Evolution to use it. After doing this, and when you send a new e-mail message, you can select whether you wish to encrypt the e-mail and/or digitally sign it.

Remember that setting up encryption is *not* obligatory, and relatively few people in the wider world use e-mail encryption or signing.

Assuming you've already set up an account within Evolution, here's the procedure for configuring Evolution for encryption and digital signing:

1. Click Edit ► Preferences, ensure the Mail Accounts icon is selected on the left side of the window, and select your mail account in the list on the right side of the window. Then click the Edit button. In the dialog box that appears, click the Security tab.
2. You now need to find your PGP key ID using Seahorse. Click Applications ► Accessories ► Passwords and Encryption Keys. Locate your key in the list under the My Personal Keys tab, and look under the Key ID heading. You should see an eight-character hexadecimal number, like F0C1B52A. Write this down, remembering that any 0 you see is a zero, and not the letter O.
3. Switch back to the Evolution dialog box and type the PGP key ID you found into the PGP/GPG Key ID box. If you wish every e-mail message you send to be digitally signed automatically, which is a good idea (the message itself *won't* be encrypted, so even if the recipients are not using encryption, they will still be able to read it), put a check in the Always Sign Messages When Using This Account box. Then click OK.

Encrypting outgoing messages, or signing them if you haven't selected to automatically do so, is easy. When composing a new message, click the Security menu entry and select either or both PGP Sign and PGP Encrypt. Remember that you'll need to have imported the recipient's public key via Seahorse if you want to encrypt a message addressed to that person, or you'll see an error. If you sign a message, upon sending it, you'll be prompted to enter the PGP passphrase you entered when you created the key pair back in Chapter 9.

If upon sending an e-mail message, you see the error message "Failed to execute GPG: Broken pipe," it's likely you mistyped your key ID when you configured Evolution. Try again.

If you receive a message that has been encrypted using your public key, Evolution will automatically prompt you to enter your PGP passphrase to decrypt it. This is the passphrase you entered when creating your key pair back in Chapter 9.

When you receive a message from someone who uses digital signing, and you have that person's public key, the message should contain a green bar along the bottom containing the words "Valid signature." If you see words to the effect that the signature is invalid, or if the signature is missing, then you should be suspicious and independently verify the authenticity of the e-mail message.

## Reading E-Mail

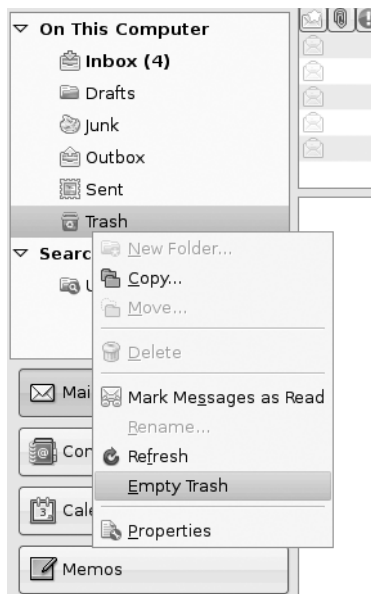
Simply click an e-mail message to view it in the preview pane at the bottom of the screen. Alternatively, you can double-click a message to open it in its own program window (selecting a message and pressing Enter will have the same effect).

As with most e-mail clients, any unread messages in the list appear in bold, and messages that have been read appear in ordinary type. By default, each message is marked as read after 1.5 seconds, but you can alter this value. To change it, click Edit ► Preferences, click the Mail Preferences icon in the Preferences dialog box, click the General tab, and then change the value under the Message Display heading. A value of 0 will cause the mail to switch to read status as soon as it's clicked, which can be useful if you want to quickly clear a lot of messages.

You can also mark many messages as read by highlighting them all, right-clicking an individual one, and selecting Mark As Read from the menu that appears. You can select multiple messages in the usual way: Shift-click to select a consecutive list, or Ctrl-click for nonconsecutive selections.

## Deleting Messages

You can delete messages by highlighting them and pressing the Delete key. Alternatively, right-click any message (or a selection of them) and select Delete. The message will then be moved to the Trash folder. To empty the Trash folder, right-click the folder, and select Empty Trash, as shown in Figure 27-3.



**Figure 27-3.** To permanently delete messages, right-click the Trash folder and select Empty Trash.

If you move any messages from folder to folder, as described later in the “Sorting and Filtering Messages” section, a copy of the mail will end up in the Trash folder. This is because Evolution doesn’t literally move messages. Instead, it copies them from the old to the new location and deletes the original. This can be a little disconcerting at first, but there’s nothing to worry about. The mail message will remain wherever you moved it, and it won’t disappear.

## Flagging Messages

You can flag messages in a variety of ways to help remind you of their status or purpose. The simplest form of flagging is to mark a message as important: right-click the message and select Mark As Important, or click in the space beneath the Important column (this is located to the left of the From column). This will add an exclamation mark symbol alongside the message.

Alternatively, you can add several different flags by right-clicking a message and selecting Mark for Follow Up. The choices, which can be selected from the Flag drop-down list in the dialog box that appears, range from Do Not Forward to No Response Necessary and Review. This heading will then appear in the message preview at the bottom of the window whenever the mail is selected.

If you prefer a simple color-coding scheme, you can mark up a message by right-clicking it and selecting Label. Then assign a color. As you’ll see, each color relates to a key word or phrase. You can edit both the colors and the key phrases by clicking Edit ► Preferences, clicking Mail Preferences on the left of the dialog box, and clicking the Labels tab.

### IMPORTING OUTLOOK E-MAIL VIA THUNDERBIRD

Back in Chapter 4, we discussed a method of exporting e-mail from various Microsoft e-mail programs, which use proprietary formats, so that it can be imported under Ubuntu. To recap, you can install the Mozilla Thunderbird e-mail client under Windows, import your e-mail into it from Outlook or Outlook Express, and then export Thunderbird’s mailbox (.mbox) files for *importing* within Evolution.

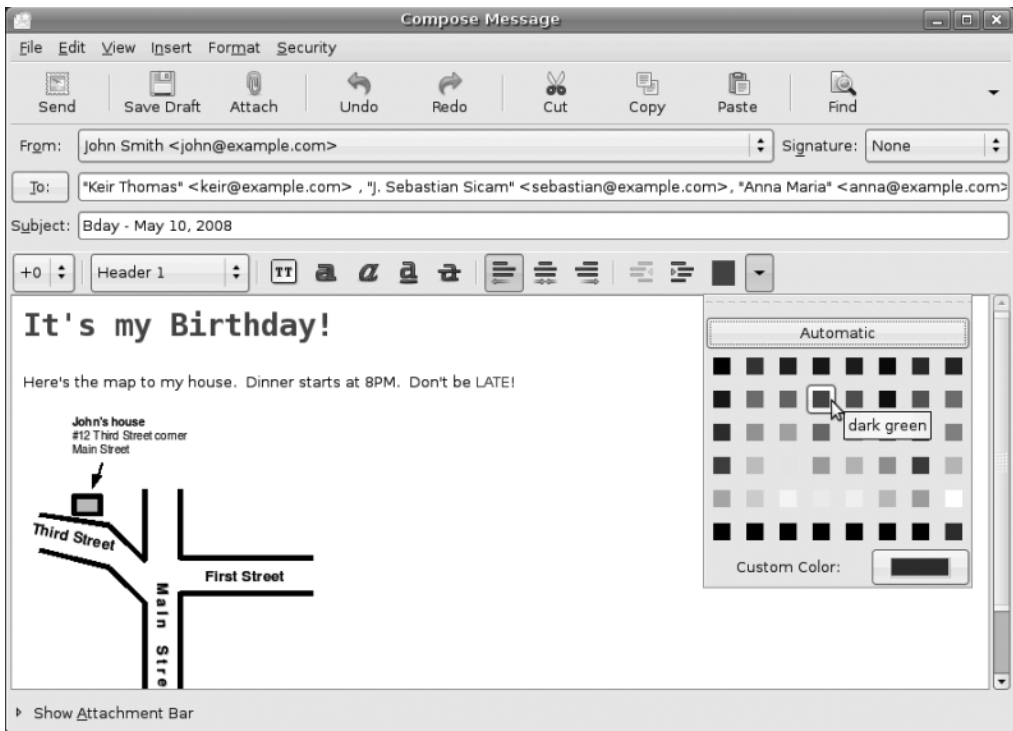
If you followed these instructions and now have the .mbox files ready for use with Evolution, it’s easy to import them. Click File ► Import. In the Import dialog box, click the Forward button, and select Import a Single File. Click Forward again, and click the Filename drop-down list. This will open a file browsing dialog box, in which you can locate the .mbox file, and click Open. If you have more than one .mbox file, you’ll need to import each one manually. The Automatic entry in the dialog box refers to the file type and will select the correct file type by file extension.

## Composing a Message

Creating a new e-mail is as simple as clicking the New button at the top left of Evolution's program window. Fill in the To and Subject details as usual, and then type in the main body of the message.

To add a CC or BCC, click the To button, and select addresses from your contacts list in the dialog box that appears (selecting the CC or BCC button as appropriate). Alternatively, if you would like to have the CC and BCC fields visible and available at all times, click their entries under the View menu of the Compose a Message window.

As with most Microsoft mail programs, new e-mail can be sent either as plain text or as HTML. Plain text mode is the default. To switch to HTML, click the entry on the Format menu. The advantage of HTML mail is that you can vary the style, size, and coloring of text, so you can emphasize various words or paragraphs, as illustrated in Figure 27-4. In addition, if you click Insert ► Image, you can insert pictures from the hard disk. Other options on the Insert menu let you insert tables, dividing lines (click the Rule menu entry), and hyperlinks.



**Figure 27-4.** New messages can be formatted in HTML, allowing you to change the color of text as well as its size.



The disadvantage of HTML e-mail is that the person receiving the message will need an HTML-compatible e-mail program to be able to read it. Your mail is also more likely to be tagged as spam by the recipient's server, due to the widespread abuse of HTML and images in mail by spammers.

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**Tip** Many people in the Linux community frown on HTML-formatted e-mail and prefer plain text messages.

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Words are automatically spell-checked in the new e-mail, and are underlined in red if the spell checker thinks they are misspelled. To correct the word, right-click it, select a dictionary, and then select the correctly spelled word from the list provided.

By default, if you chose the English language during the installation of Ubuntu, the Evolution spell checker will offer only an English (American) dictionary. You can switch to a British or Canadian dictionary by selecting Edit ► Preferences in the main Evolution window, clicking the Composer Preferences icon, and then clicking the Spell Checking tab. Select an alternative dictionary or multiple dictionaries by checking the boxes to the left of the dictionary names.

While composing an e-mail, you can switch languages by selecting Edit ► Current Languages in the menu of the Compose Message window. If the language that you require is not listed, this means that you need to install an additional Aspell dictionary package with the Synaptic Package Manager. These dictionary packages usually have a two-letter suffix indicating the language that they support; for example, `aspell-fr` is the French dictionary package.

## Creating an E-Mail Signature

E-mail signatures are the blocks of text that appear automatically at the end of new e-mail messages you compose. They save you the bother of typing your name and contact details each time. To create an e-mail signature, follow these steps:

1. Click Edit ► Preferences. Select Composer Preferences from the left side of the dialog box, and click the Signatures tab.
2. Click the Add button at the top right of the dialog box.
3. In the Edit Signature dialog box, type what you wish to appear as your signature. The signature can either be in plain text or HTML (click Format ► HTML). Don't forget that in HTML mode, you can insert lines (Insert ► Rule), which can act as a natural divider at the top of your signature to separate it from the body of the e-mail, as shown in the example in Figure 27-5.



**Figure 27-5.** *Creating an e-mail signature saves you from having to type your contact details each time.*

4. Click the Save and Close icon at the top left.
5. Click Mail Accounts in the Preferences dialog box, and double-click your mail account in the list on the right side.
6. In the dialog box that appears, click the Identity tab. In the Signature drop-down list, click the signature you just created.
7. Click OK and then Close in the Preferences dialog box. Your new signature will then automatically appear in new messages.

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**Tip** Enter a few carriage returns at the top of your signature so that when you create a new e-mail, you have enough space to click and type without accidentally clicking within the signature.

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## Advanced E-Mail Tasks

Evolution offers several features that can help you to organize your e-mail. You can create new folders, as well as filter, sort, and search through your messages.

## Creating New Folders

If you want to better organize your e-mail, you can create your own folders, which will then appear in the list on the left side of the program window.

To create a new top-level folder, which will appear in the list alongside the standard folders (Inbox, Junk, Outbox, and so on), right-click On This Computer, and select New Folder. Then make sure that On This Computer is selected in the folder view of the dialog box that appears. Type a name and click Create.

You can also create second-level folders, which will effectively be “inside” other folders and will appear indented below their parent folder within the list. For example, you might want to create a series of folders within the main Inbox folder to sort your mail from various individuals or organizations. To do this, right-click Inbox, select New Folder, and give the folder a name in the dialog box that appears, as shown in Figure 27-6. Once the new folder has been created, click the arrow next to Inbox to expand the display to show your new subfolder.



**Figure 27-6.** You can create your own folders to better organize your mail.

You can then drag-and-drop messages into the new folders, or simply right-click them, select Move to Folder, and select the folder from the dialog box that appears. This can be useful if you wish to select a handful of messages by holding down the Ctrl key. All you need to do then is right-click one of them and select Move to Folder.

You can also copy messages from one location to another, thus producing two copies of the same message. Simply right-click the message, select Copy to Folder, and select the folder from the list. Alternatively, you can hold down the Ctrl key while you drag the message to the new location.

## Dealing with Junk E-Mail

Evolution includes intelligent junk mail filtering. Any mail that Evolution thinks is spam or junk mail will end up in the Junk folder. When you first start using Evolution, you should check the folder regularly, because there's a chance Evolution might have made a mistake. However, this is a good thing, because by right-clicking the message and selecting Mark As Not Junk, the Evolution junk mail filter will be able to better understand what to consider as junk in your particular Inbox.

In a similar way, if you find that Evolution misses a junk e-mail, and it ends up in your Inbox, you can right-click it and select Mark As Junk. Alternatively, select it and click the Junk icon on the main toolbar.

To empty the Junk folder, select all the messages (Ctrl+A), right-click, and select Delete. Bear in mind that, as with any folder, once the messages are deleted, they will appear in the Trash, and you can restore them from there if necessary.

## Sorting and Filtering Messages

You can filter incoming messages according to practically any criteria, including who sent the message, its subject line, words within the body of the mail, its size, or even if it has attachments. Coupled with the ability to create folders, this allows you to automatically sort messages as soon as they're received.

To set up filters, click Edit ► Message Filters. Click the Add button and, in the Rule Name box, start by giving the new rule a descriptive name by which you'll be able to recognize it in the future. You might think this isn't important, but you may create tens, if not hundreds of filters, so being able to identify filters will be very helpful.

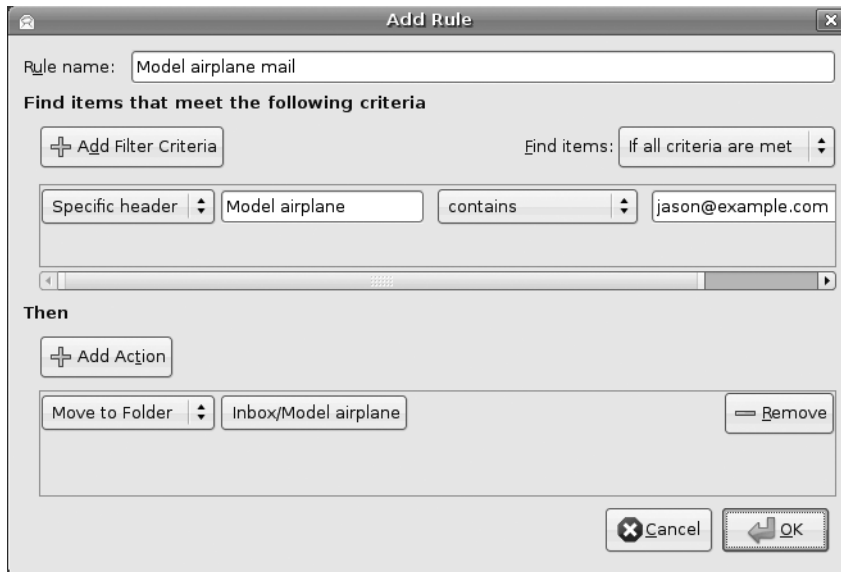
As shown in Figure 27-7, the Add Rule dialog box is split into two halves: "Find items that meet the following criteria" and "Then." As implied by the labels, if the selected conditions are met, then the selected actions will take place.

The "Find items" part is used to identify the mail. You can select to filter based on almost any criteria, such as who appears in the Sender field of the message, words that appear in the Subject line, the date sent, and so on. Simply select what you require from the drop-down list directly beneath the Add Filter Criteria button. In most cases, you'll then need to specify details for the filter. For example, if you select to filter by the address of the individual sending the e-mail, you'll need to provide that e-mail address.

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**Tip** Several If rules can be created. For example, you could create a rule to filter by the address of the sender, and then click the Add Filter Criteria button to create another rule to filter by text in the Subject line. By clicking If All Criteria Are Met in the Find Items drop-down list, the mail will be filtered only if both conditions are met. By selecting If Any Criteria Are Met from the drop-down list, the mail will be filtered if either condition is met.

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**Figure 27-7.** *Creating message filters lets you automatically organize your e-mail as soon as it's received.*

Once you've set the Find conditions, you need to select from the Then section of the dialog box. This tells Evolution what to do with the filtered mail. The obvious course of action is to move the e-mail to a particular folder, which is the default choice, but you can also delete the e-mail, set a particular flag, beep, or even run a particular program! As with the rules for finding items, you can set more than one condition here, so you can have Evolution beep and then delete the message, for example.

## Creating Search Folders

Evolution's search folder feature is a more powerful alternative to message filters. Using search folders, you can filter mail based on a similar set of criteria, but you can choose to include messages in the results that might be *associated* with the filtered messages. For example, if you choose to filter by a specific individual's e-mail address, you can select to have any replies you sent to that person included in the results, rather than simply messages received from her. In addition, you can apply search folders to specific e-mail folders on an ongoing basis, rather than all incoming e-mail.

It's important to note, however, that a search folder isn't a filter. The messages aren't moved into the new folders. They stay where they are in your Inbox (or any other folder they might be contained in). Despite the name, search folders are actually little more than saved searches. They just *act* like filters. However, search folders are dynamically updated—if a message is deleted from the Inbox folder, for example, it will also stop appearing in any relevant search folder.

You can create a new search folder by clicking **Edit ► Search Folders** and then clicking the **Add** button. You can choose to search specific folders (the default), all local folders, or all active remote folders (which includes any of your mail stored on a server elsewhere). As with creating message filters, clicking the drop-down box beneath the **Add** button will let you select filtering criteria. The choices are broadly similar to those for message filters, in that you can filter by e-mail address, size of e-mail, message body, and so on.

In the **Include Threads** drop-down box, you can select what kind of results you would like the search filter to return:

- **None** simply returns e-mail messages matching the criteria.
- **All Related** returns every single message that is associated with the criteria.
- **Replies** returns results that include replies to the messages returned via the filter.
- **Replies and Parents** returns results that include replies and also any initial message that you or others might have sent that inspired the message included in the filter results.
- **No Reply or Parent** returns results that include only initial messages sent to you.

Search folder results are listed under **Search Folders** on the left side of the Mail mode window. The **Unmatched** folder, present by default, simply shows any messages that aren't included in any of the search folders.

The search folder feature is very powerful and worth spending some time investigating.

### TIPS FOR USING EVOLUTION E-MAIL

In many ways, Evolution is similar to e-mail programs you might have used in the past, but it also has a few of its own quirks and idiosyncratic ways of working. Here are a handful of preferences you might want to set to have Evolution behave in a more familiar way:

- **Forward e-mail inline:** If you attempt to forward a message, Evolution will attach it to a new message as a file. The person receiving the e-mail will then need to double-click the file to view the forwarded e-mail, which can be confusing. The solution is to make Evolution forward the message *in-line*, which is to say that Evolution will quote it beneath the new mail message, like Microsoft e-mail programs. To do this, click **Edit ► Preferences**, click **Composer Preferences** on the left side of the dialog box, click the **Forward Style** drop-down list, and select **Inline**.
- **Change the plain text font:** Any messages sent to you in plain text format, rather than HTML, will appear in the message preview pane in a Courier-style font. To have messages display in a more attractive and readable typeface, click **Edit ► Preferences**, select **Mail Preferences** on the left side of the dialog box, and then remove the check from **Use the Same Fonts As Other Applications**. In the **Fixed Width Font** drop-down list, select an alternative font. The standard Ubuntu font is called **Sans** and is a good choice.

- **Always create HTML e-mail:** Evolution defaults to plain text e-mail for any new messages you create. If you want to always create HTML messages, click Edit ► Preferences, click Composer Preferences on the left side of the dialog box, and then put a check alongside Format Messages in HTML.
- **Empty Trash on exit:** To automatically get rid of deleted messages each time you quit Evolution, click Edit ► Preferences, click Mail Preferences on the left side of the dialog box, and put a check alongside Empty Trash Folders on Exit. Then select how often you would like this to happen from the drop-down list: every time you quit Evolution, once per day, once per week, or once per month.
- **Vertical message window:** As an alternative to positioning the message preview window beneath your messages, Outlook lets you position the message at the right of the message list, thus forming three vertical columns (folders, messages, and preview). To switch to this view under Evolution, click View ► Preview ► Vertical View.

## Contacts

Evolution includes a powerful contacts manager component that can catalog information about individuals. At its most basic, the contact manager stores e-mail addresses for use within the e-mail component of Evolution, but you can enter significant additional data about each individual, including addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, and even a photograph for easy identification. This should allow Evolution to become your sole personal information manager.

To switch to the Contacts mode, click the button at the bottom-left side of the program window. Once in the Contacts mode, you can view information in several ways. Click View ► Current View to choose from the following views:

**Address Cards:** This is the default view and shows the contacts as virtual index cards arranged alongside each other at the top of the program window. Click the scroll bar beneath the cards to move through them.

**List View:** This shows the contact information as a simple list, arranged vertically, with various elements of the contact's personal information listed alongside, such as phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

**By Company:** This organizes the data in a similar way to List view but sorted by the company the contacts work for (if such data has been entered into the contact entries).

## Adding or Editing Contact Information

By far, the best way of initially building up your contacts list is to right-click e-mail addresses at the head of messages, in Mail mode, and select Add to Addressbook. This will add a simple contact record consisting of the individual's name and e-mail address.

When using Microsoft mail applications, simply replying to an e-mail from an individual is enough to add that contact to your address book. Evolution is capable of this behavior, too, but the feature isn't activated by default. To set this up, click Edit ► Preferences, click Mail Preferences on the left side of the dialog box, and click the Automatic Contacts tab. Next, put a check in the box marked Automatically Create Entries in the Addressbook When Responding to Messages. From the Select Address Book for Automatic Contacts drop-down list, select Personal. In the same dialog box, you can import contacts from the Pidgin instant messaging client.

You can then edit the contact details by double-clicking the entry in Contacts mode. This will let you enter a variety of information, as shown in Figure 27-8. To import a photo for this contact, click the top-left icon. You can use any picture here, and you don't need to worry about its size, because it will be resized automatically by Evolution (although its aspect ratio will be preserved). The imported photo will appear in the lower area of the Contacts window when you click the contact's name.

The screenshot shows the 'Contact Editor - Sicam, J.' window. It features three tabs: 'Contact', 'Personal Information', and 'Mailing Address'. The 'Personal Information' tab is selected, displaying a photo placeholder on the left. To the right of the photo are input fields for 'Full Name...' (containing 'J. Sebastian Sicam'), 'Nickname:', 'File under:' (a dropdown menu showing 'Sicam, J.'), 'Where:', and 'Categories...'. Below these fields are sections for 'Email', 'Telephone', and 'Instant Messaging'. The 'Email' section has 'Work' and 'Home' dropdowns with corresponding text boxes; 'Work' is filled with 'sebastian@example.com'. The 'Telephone' section has 'Business Phone', 'Home Phone', 'Mobile Phone', and 'Business Fax' dropdowns with text boxes; 'Business Phone' and 'Home Phone' are filled with '01222 223223' and '01222 353533' respectively. The 'Instant Messaging' section has 'AIM', 'Yahoo', 'MSN', and 'ICQ' dropdowns with text boxes; 'AIM' and 'Yahoo' are filled with 'jsgsicam'. At the bottom of the window are three buttons: 'Help' (with a question mark icon), 'Cancel' (with an 'X' icon), and 'OK' (with a checkmark icon).

**Figure 27-8.** A lot of information can be entered for each contact, and, by clicking the button at the top left, you can also add a photograph.



## Creating a Contact List

Contact lists are simply lists of e-mail addresses. Once a list is created, you can right-click its entry in the contacts list, and then choose to send a message to the list or forward it to someone else as a vCard. The obvious use of contact lists is for sending group e-mail messages.

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**Note** vCard is a virtual business card. Effectively, it's a small file that contains personal information. As well as personal data, vCards can contain pictures and audio clips. They're understood by practically all business-level e-mail programs, including Microsoft Outlook and Apple Mail.

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To create a contact list, click the small down arrow next to the New button in Contacts mode, and select the option from the list. Give the list a name in the relevant box, and simply click and drag contacts from the main program pane onto the bottom of the Contact List Editor pane. This will automatically add their names and e-mail addresses. Alternatively, you can type their e-mail addresses manually into the field under the Members heading, and then click the Add button, which can be useful if the individual isn't in your contact list.

By checking the Hide Addresses When Sending Mail to This List option, you can ensure that the e-mail addresses are added to the BCC field of a new message, so people on the list don't see the others on the list.

## Calendars

The Calendars mode of Evolution allows you to keep an appointments diary. Entries can be added in half-hour increments to the working day, and you can easily add events to days that are weeks, months, or even years in advance. Viewing a day's appointments is as simple as clicking its entry in the monthly view at the top right of the program window.

## Specifying Appointment Types

You can make the following three types of diary entries:

**Appointments:** These are events in your diary that apply to you only. You might have a meeting with a colleague, for example, or might simply want to add a note to your diary to remind you of a particular fact.

**All Day Events:** A training day or a holiday could be entered as an all day event. However, all day events don't block your diary, and you can still add individual appointments (after all, just because your day is taken up with an event, that doesn't mean you won't need to make individual appointments during the event). All day events appear as a light-blue bar at the top of the day's entry in your diary.

**Meetings:** Meetings are like appointments, but you also have the option of inviting others to attend. The invitations are sent as iCal attachments to e-mail, so users of Microsoft Outlook should be able to reply to them (provided Outlook is properly configured; see the program's documentation for details, and note that iCal is sometimes referred to by the specification number RFC 2446/2447). Once an individual receives a meeting invitation, he can click to accept or decline. When Evolution receives this response, the individual's acceptance or declination will be automatically added to the diary entry.

## Adding or Editing a Diary Entry

These instructions assume the Calendars mode is set to Day view, which shows a full working day diary alongside a monthly calendar. To ensure Day view is selected, click the Day icon on the main toolbar running across the top of the screen. Day view is the default calendar view under Evolution. The other choices are Week, Month, and Work Week (which shows appointments during the week in daily columns). If you switch to another view, Evolution will always work in that view until you change back again.

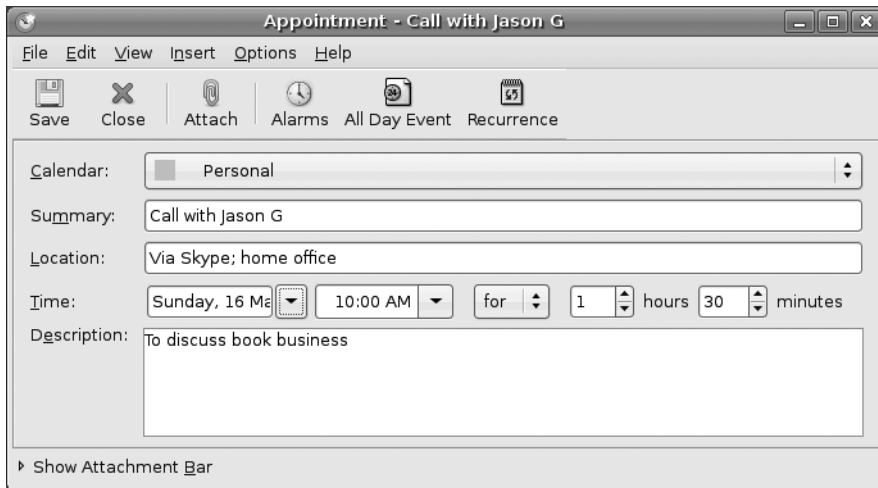
To add a new diary entry, simply select the day in the monthly calendar on the left, and then select the time the appointment is to start in the day viewer. Then right-click and choose an appointment, an all day event, or a meeting. To edit an existing diary entry, double-click its entry in the list.

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**Note** When you right-click in Calendars mode, you'll also see an option to add a task. Adding a task in Calendars mode automatically links it to the selected day and time. Task items due on the current day are marked in dark blue.

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At its most basic, all an appointment needs in order to be entered into your diary is some text in the Summary field, as shown in Figure 27-9. By default, appointments and meetings are assumed to last for half an hour, but you can change this by clicking the down arrow in the Minutes or Hours fields. For what it's worth, appointments can go on for days—just select a sufficient quantity of hours. You can actually set the meeting duration to 10,000 hours (wouldn't that be the meeting from hell?!)



**Figure 27-9.** When creating a new appointment, you can add all the details you need, but don't forget to set how long it lasts!

By clicking the Recurrence button, you can set the appointment to be booked into your diary according to certain intervals. Start by putting a check in the This Appointment Recurs box, and then select a time interval. For example, selecting 1 week will mean that the appointment is booked into your diary automatically on a weekly basis. After this, select a day of the week for the recurring appointment. Following this, you must specify the number of recurrences. You can specify an ending date for the appointment or select Forever. In the calendar view at the bottom of the dialog box, you'll be able to see how this looks. Days in bold are those that have appointments.

It's also possible to set exceptions, as when the meeting might skip a week. This could be useful to work around holidays, for example. Simply click the Add button, and then type a date or click the down arrow to select the date from a calendar.

Once you're finished, click the Close button to add the details of the recurring event to the appointment.

In the case of meeting appointments, you can click the Add button to invite others to the meeting via iCal invitations, which will be sent out by e-mail as soon as you've finished creating the appointment. Simply click the Add button, and in the empty field that appears, start typing the contact name of the individual you want to invite. If the person is already in your contacts list, the name will be automatically completed, but you can also type individual e-mail addresses. By selecting the entry and clicking Edit, you can alter the role of the individual. The choices are Chair, Required Participant, Optional Participant, Non-Participant (that is, somebody you want to inform about the meeting but who doesn't need to attend), and Unknown (for all other instances).

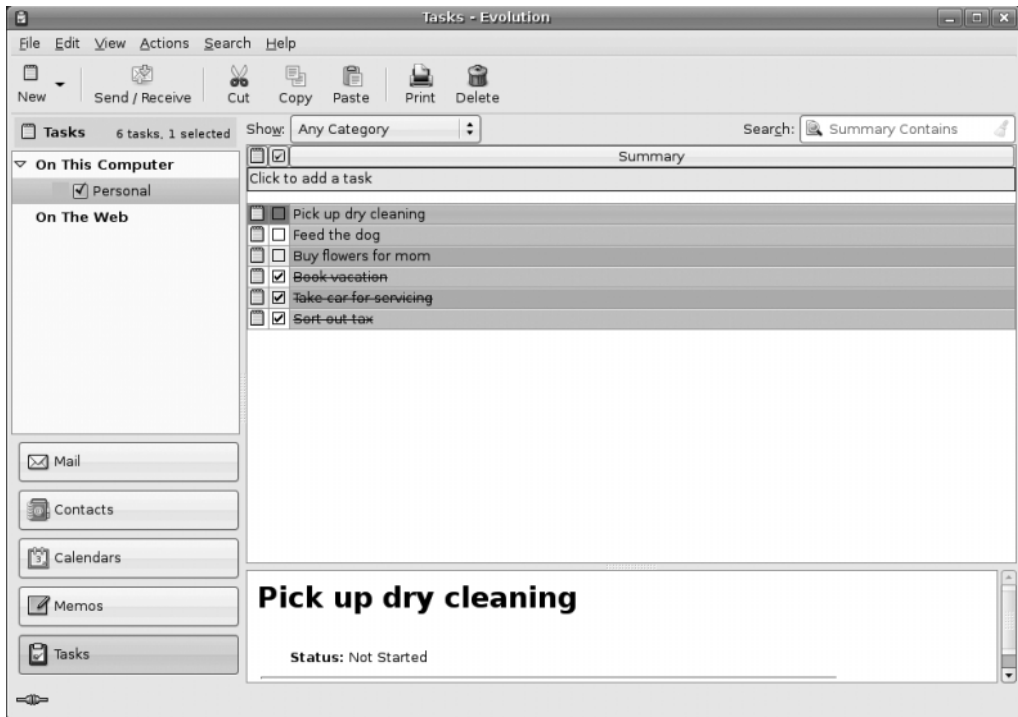
Clicking the Free/Busy button will open a new dialog box showing who can and can't attend, according to replies to the invitations sent out (obviously, this is a feature you'll be using after you initially created the appointment). On the left side of the dialog box, you will see the list of attendees and also their status: whether they've accepted, declined, or sent a busy/tentative reply (in which case, you might choose to reschedule the meeting).

## Memos and Tasks

The Memos and Tasks modes are the simplest components within Evolution. Memos mode allows you to jot down simple notes, and Tasks mode allows you to create a to do list.

In both modes, which can be selected by clicking their buttons at the bottom left of the screen, the program window consists simply of an area where you can click to add a new memo/task, a list area, and a preview area, which will show any details of the currently selected task.

In the case of Tasks mode, after you've made an entry, clicking the check box alongside it will mark it as completed. Completed items appear with strikethrough, as shown in Figure 27-10.



**Figure 27-10.** The Tasks mode lets you catalog chores that you want to do during the day.

To add a new memo or task, click the bar that reads Click to Add a Memo (or Task), type a description, and then press Enter. You will be able to enter more tasks or memos in the same field.

Double-clicking a task or memo allows you to fine-tune its details. For example, you can add a due date for a task, so you'll know when the task must be completed. You can also add a description for future reference and attach files by clicking the relevant button on the toolbar. By clicking the Status Details button in the Task Details dialog box, you can also set a percentage figure for completion of the task, as well as its priority, ranging from Low to High.

## Summary

This chapter has been a whistle-stop tour of Evolution's main features. We've looked at e-mail creation and organization, contacts management, working with the appointments calendar, and editing the task list.

Evolution is a powerful program. Be sure to take a look at its help documentation (Help ► Contents) to learn more about it.

In the next part of the book, we look at keeping your system running. As a first step, the next chapter explains how to install, remove, and otherwise manage the software installed under Ubuntu.