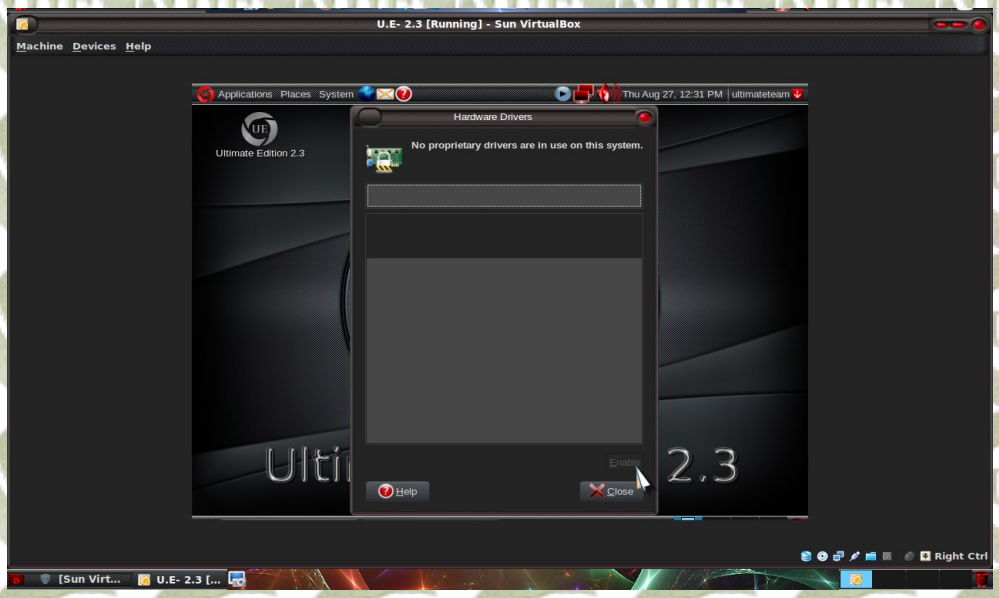
First steps with Ultimate Edition

Desktop

The most important thing to do first is to install your graphics card driver (if they are not automatically detected and installed).

STEP 1:

Install and enable Nvidia/ATI drivers
Go to System->Administration->Restricted Drivers Manager and enable the Nvidia/ATI driver.
Hit the enable in the bottom of the window to install the drivers.
After installing the graphics card driver, update them through Synaptic and restart your computer.



Immediately after the update you will be prompted to restart your computer

Please restart immediately so that the drivers get updated and Xorg.conf also.

After restart you can enable desktop effects. Here's how

STEP 2:

Go to System->Preferences->Desktop Effects, click the 'Enable Desktop Effects' button.
OR:
Right click on your Desktop>Change Desktop Background>Visual Effects> Normal or Extra(your choice !). Enjoy !!!

Right click on desktop screen and select "Change desktop background"

Select level of effects as Normal or Extra under Visuals tab

Compiz-Fusion

What is Compiz?

Compiz is one of the first compositing window managers (component of a computer's graphical user interface that draws windows and/or their borders) for the X Window System that uses 3D graphics hardware to create fast compositing desktop visual effects for window management. In short it is a program which makes your work with windows much more easier and fun, enhances the look of your desktop and gives you new experience with your PC like never before. By default Compiz comes pre-installed in Ultimate Edition.

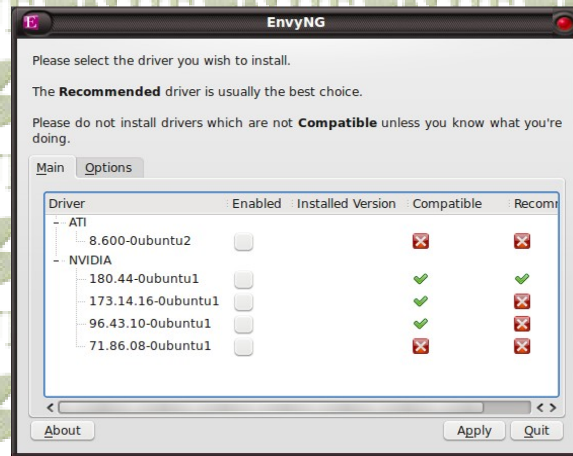
Hardware requirements:

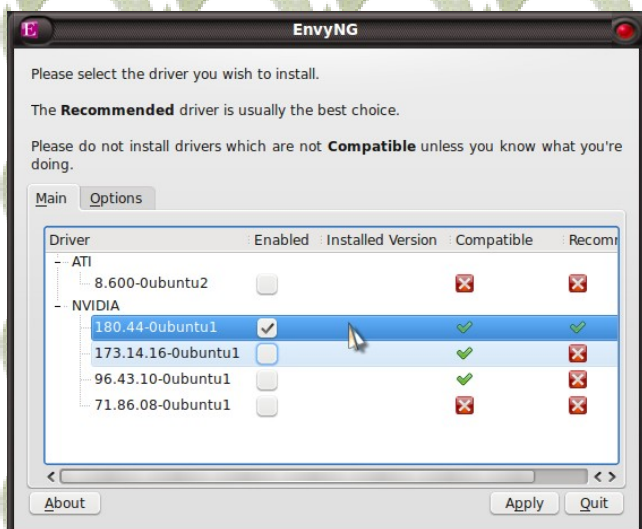
In order to run Compiz, it is required to have more-less advanced graphics controller (video card 64Mb and up). Most NVIDIA and ATI graphics cards are working with Compiz, some Intel cards are supported as well.

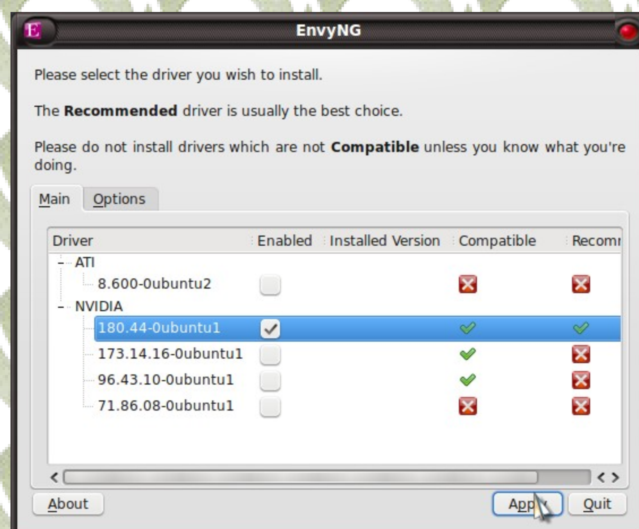
Installing and configuring video hardware to run Compiz:

In most cases advanced video hardware is not going to be installed during installation process of operating system, sometimes there are exceptions and you may experience that video driver will be up and running after install of Ultimate Edition.
So let's proceed to the installation part. There is a small but powerful script pre-installed in Ultimate Edition called "*EnvyNG*", you can find it under *Applications>System Tools>EnvyNG* (figure 1):

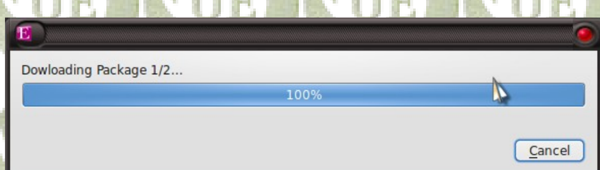
Just click on it and system will open up a program window, it will analyze and suggest the right driver available for you, (see figure 2), there is a "compatible" and "recommended" columns and they both have to be approved (checked) by EnvyNG, so to speak. There are other compatible but not recommended drivers and they can be just fine, however I've experienced some issues with them on certain machines as it was not recommended by EnvyNG script. So all you have to do is check the box and click "apply" in the right corner of the window (figure 3/4).

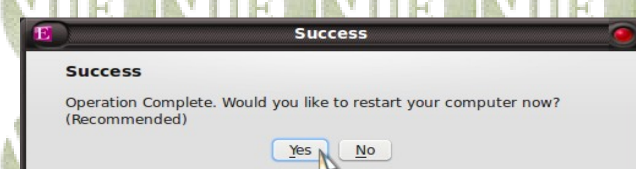






It will do the rest for you (figure 5) and prompt to reboot computer after installation is finished (figure 6).

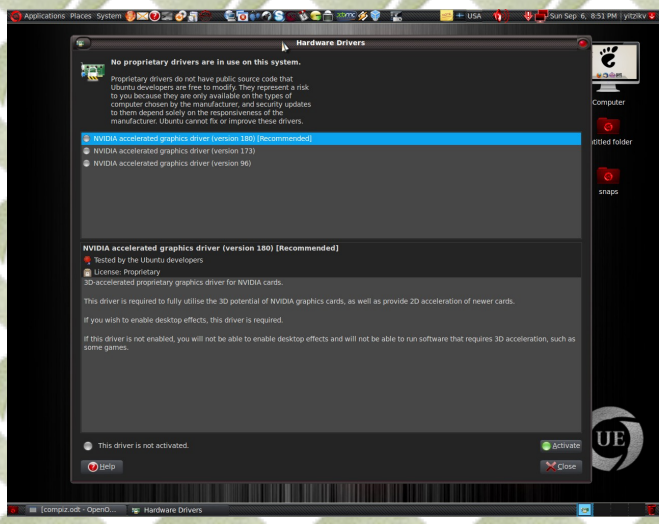




Now, it is very important to restart the system after installation process have finished due to some major system changes, so do not ignore the message and choose "yes" - restart now.
Now you are all ready for Compiz. Piece of cake, isn't it?

As I have mentioned before, this will work on 95% of hardware, but sometimes, with very powerful cards you'll see that envy cannot handle it and not finding any

appropriate driver, so if that is the case there are a lot forums and discussions out there on Internet about this stuff, so don't worry and stay calm, there is nothing impossible in Linux world, especially when it comes to hardware, there is definitely a solution for everything, it is just a matter of finding it.
However there is one more point considering drivers: Ultimate Edition is based on Ubuntu operating system and there is a feature or better say small system application called "*Hardware Drivers*" you can find it under *System>Administration>Hardware Drivers* (figure 7/8)



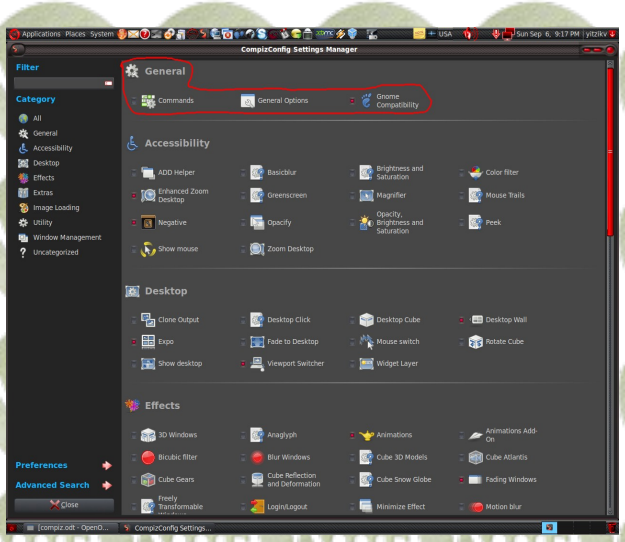
which can and probably will automatically tell you in notification area (top right corner of the screen near the clock) after you install Ultimate Edition and restart your computer, that there is some restricted drivers available to install (in most cases it will be some graphic cards or wireless cards) and similar to EnvyNG, it will give you some options of compatibility and recommendation to install them. Well it might work for you as well, but I've faced some problems with that, it can give you right compatibility but wrong recommendation and after installation, the system can simply crash and even lead sometimes to full re-installation, so I highly recommend to use EnvyNG.

Compiz Plug-Ins:

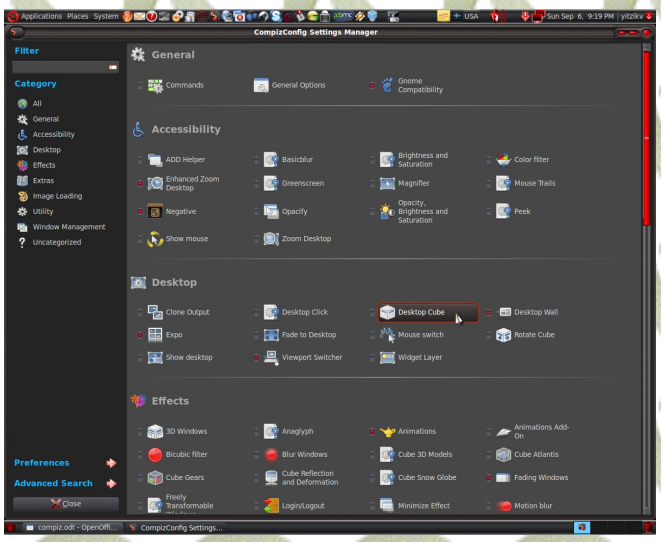
Compiz plug-ins are basically add-ons to Compiz core program which extend it's capabilities and features towards management of windows/desktop. There are some of them pre-installed in Ultimate Edition and there are quiet a few out there to download, free of charge of course. We will review plug-ins download and installation step-by-step in later section.

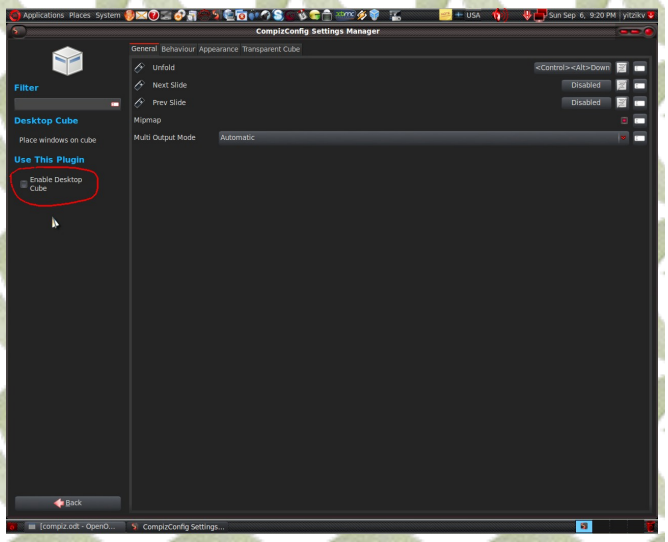
Operating Compiz: CompizConfig Settings Manager.

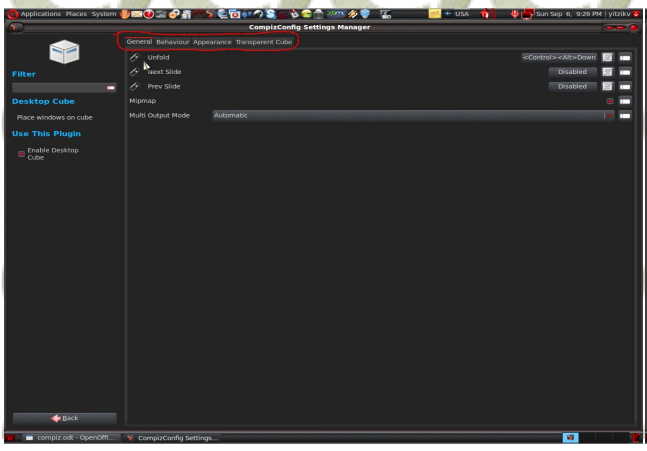
There is a Settings Manager coming along with Compiz, which allows to change various settings of Compiz to user's taste.
Let's Take a look at it, you can find it under *System>Preferences>CompizConfig Settings Manager* (figure 9)
As you can see there are a few options of Compiz core settings under General category (figure 10)

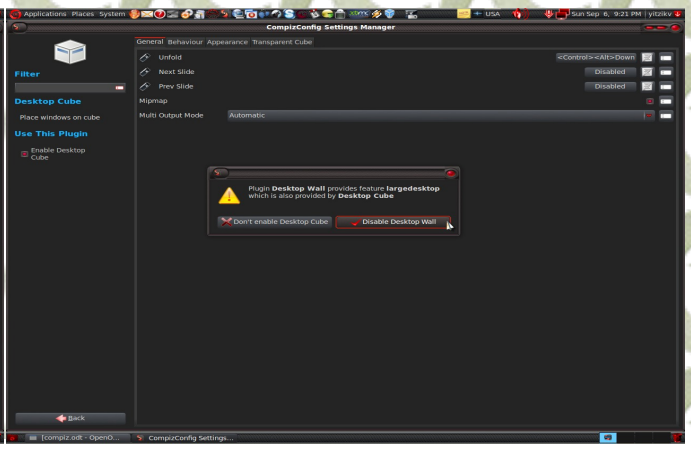


and a bunch different plug-ins/add-ons with their settings under other categories. Let's take a detailed look on settings of one of the most famous plug-in called "*Desktop Cube*", so go ahead and click on "*Desktop Cube*" (figure 11) and Compiz will show you a sub-window of Desktop Cube settings (figure 12).









On the very left side there is a check-box saying enable (same figure 12), so check it and it is now in use. Sometimes when checking the box of certain plug-ins the pop-up window will appear (figure 13), telling you about conflict with another plug-in, what it means is that every plug-in has a keyboard shortcut or a certain purpose which is assigned to it, Compiz analyzes that conflict and gives you a suggestion with a quick fix for it, so if you will face this issue and most likely you will, just make sure to read carefully what does Compiz offer you to do and choose the option you like. Now, as you can see on picture (figure 14), there are 4 tabs on top: *General*, *Behavior*, *Appearance* and *Transparent Cube*.

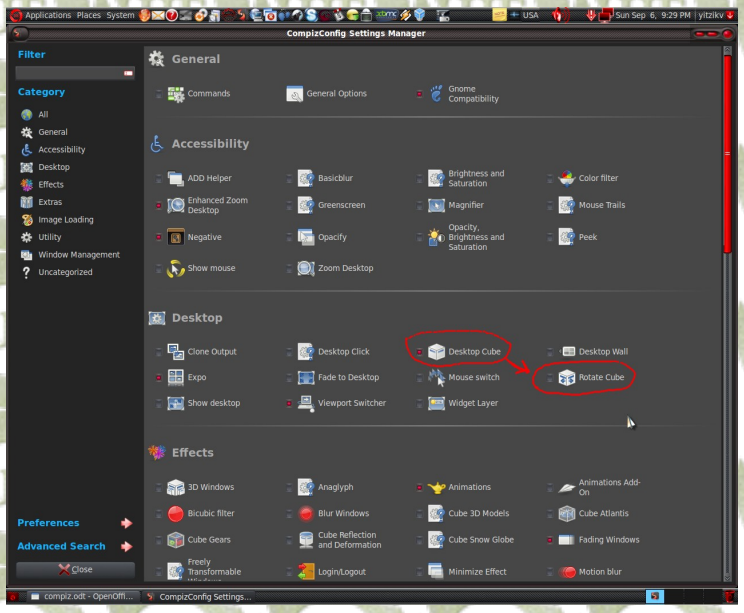
General tab: **you can set here some keyboard shortcuts to use the cube.**

Behavior tab: **set a view of cube to inside, how fast it will work with shortcuts assigned in General tab.**

Appearance: **here you can set a picture/s to show on caps (top and/or bottom) of the cube, set a background image to appear behind the cube when rotating (*skydome option*). You can also apply some cool animation to it *(animate skydome check-box)*, in order to do that you need to download special kind of image named *panorama*, in particular *equirectangular panorama* (sometimes called *perspective projection*, *fish eye image*, *cylindrical panorama*, *spherical panorama*) you can easily find some on Internet using image search of your favorite search engine with keywords I have provided you above.**
Note, the image should be in a high resolution and it depends of the size of your screen as well.
Here is a sample to show you how does it look like:

Transparent Cube: **here you can set the transparency level of the cube when rotating.**

OK, finish here let's move on.

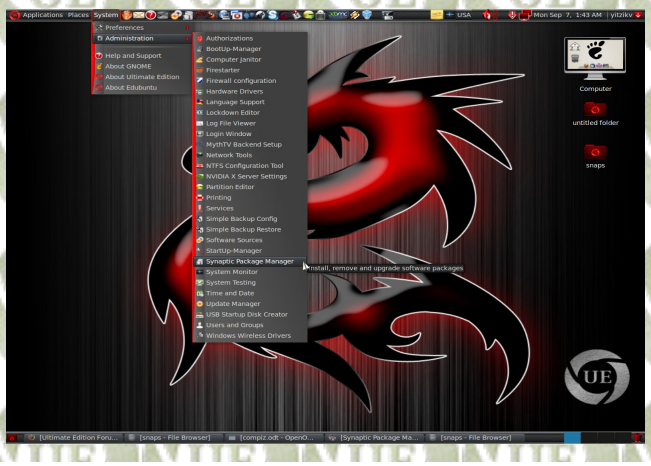


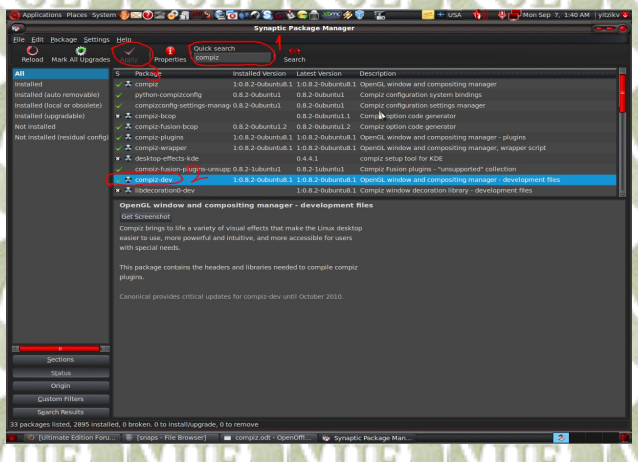
Desktop Cube plug-in is slightly different than the other ones, there is an important add-on to it, which extends it's capabilities, the plug-in is called "*Rotate Cube*" and it is a few plug-ins further in main Settings Manager window (figure 15), so hit back in the bottom left corner of the window and it will bring you back to the main list of all plug-ins. Repeat all steps with Rotate Cube as you have done before with Desktop Cube. The settings are similar just some more stuff to play with, for example how far should the cube zoom when rotating, smoothness of rotation etc. Here you will see 2 tabs: General and Bindings.
Note: The second Bindings tab here is some other keyboard shortcuts and in most plug-ins it's being called that way.

Note: All sub-windows with settings of all plug-ins are very similar one to another so go ahead and have some fun with them.

Additional Plug-Ins Installation:
Optionally you can install additional plug-ins/add-ons to use with your Compiz core program. In order to do that, there are 4 main steps:
1: Install development packages for Compiz.
2: Find and Download Plug-In.
3: Compile and Install.
4: Restart X (log off and log back on)

1: Install development packages for Compiz.
Go to *System>Administration>Synaptic Package Manager* , when the window opens up





go to quick search box (marked "1" in red) and type in compiz, then find "compiz-dev" (marked "2" in red) click on it and choose mark for installation, then click apply (marked "3" in red).

Tip: before you click apply you might want to repeat the search and choose some additional packages to download and install, we will need them optionally for some great source of plug-ins;
The names are "git-core" and "git-buildpackage"

2: Find and Download Plug-In.
After all changes has been applied, close Synaptic Package Manager and open up Terminal
Applications>Accessories>Terminal
Now let's do some typing, shall we? You can simply copy-paste these commands (in red)...
mkdir compiz (creates a directory in home folder named compiz)
cd compiz (enters the directory "compiz")
Now, all plug-ins you will find online and download, should be put in this directory. So download the plug-in and extract it, why extract? It is because most of the files you will download comes in archives.

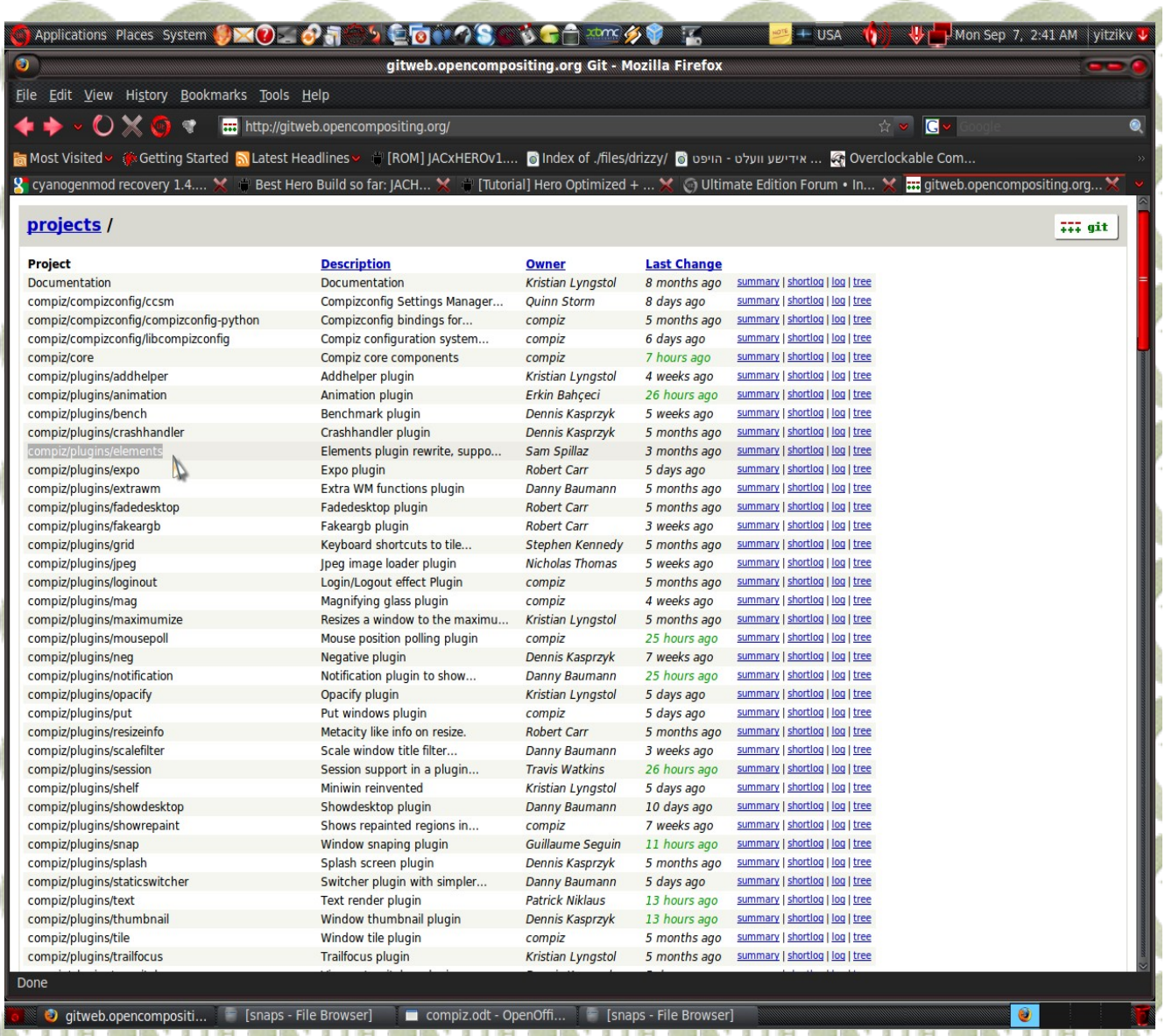
3: Compile and Install.
Terminal again:
cd name of the plugin directory (enters the plug-in derectory)
make clean (makes clean modules in order to compile in a right way)
make (compiles the plug-in)
sudo make install (installs the plug-in)
cd .. (goes one directory up)

4: Restart X (log off and log back on).
I think you can do this yourself by now, LOL :)

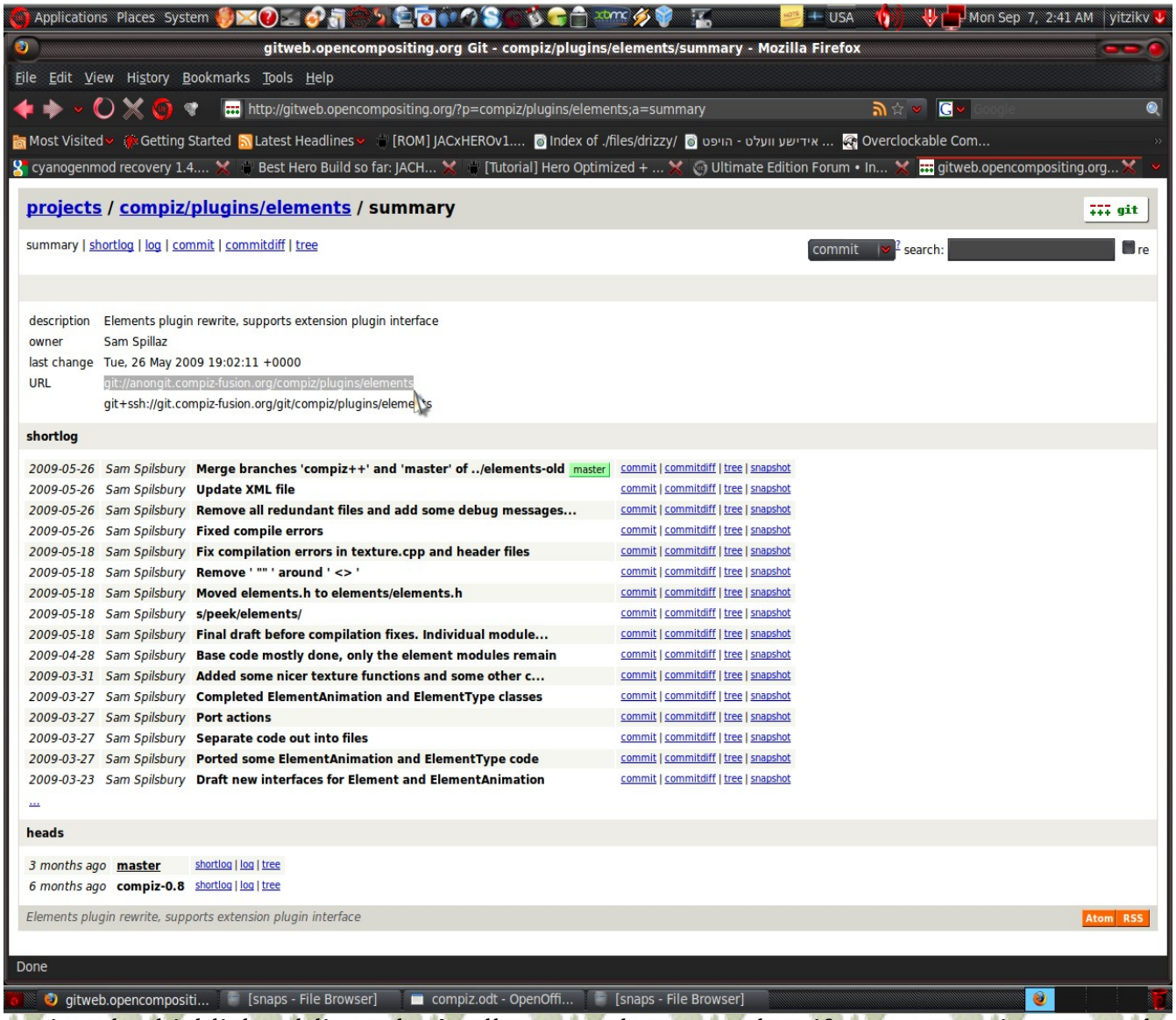
Gitweb:
I suggest to perform this if you know what you are doing.

There is one more source/way, you name it, I want to show you, where you can get the latest and experimental plug-in builds. Remember in step "1" we have installed *git-core* and *git-buildpackage*, so now we will use them to pull some plug-ins from "*gitweb*"
Git is a control system (basically an array of repositories), it can serve as a general tool for directory content tracking.
Gitweb is a web interface for Git, it is written in Perl, it allows to browse git repository (or a set of git repositories) using a web browser.
So this step goes between step "2" and "3".

Go to your web-browser to http://gitweb.opencompositing.org/ and you will see the whole list of plug-ins and stuff. So let's take for example the "elements" plug-in (highlighted) click on it and browser will redirect you to a new page...



it will look like this:



notice the highlighted line, that's all we need to copy, but if you are curious enough, feel free to sniff around and see the changelog. Now going back to step "3", but before you repeat the step "3" put this in terminal:

git clone paste URL from web-browser, in our case git://anongit.compiz-fusion.org/compiz/plugins/elements

what it basically does, is copies/clones the content from gitweb in a current folder on our hard drive. So now you have a sub-directory "elements" in /home/username/compiz/ - our current directory in Terminal session.
Now access this directory:
cd elements
and then step "3":
make clean
make
sudo make instal

Enabling Workstations for cube

Enable workspaces by right clicking on the workspace icon in the taskbar and increase it to minimum 4

Right click on Panel>Workstation and select Preferences and select number of workstations to 4

Now we have 4 workspaces and are ready to work with the cube

Have fun !!!