

A quick overview of Screen

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So, what is it?

- Desert topping
- Dessert topping
- Floor wax
- All three!
- A GNU application:
 - <http://www.gnu.org/software/screen/>

Screen is like an X Window Manager

- A window manager manages the edges of windows
- Screen manages a set of *terminal* sessions
 - You can switch between them
 - Next/previous: c-a n, c-a p
 - Jump to a particular one: c-a 0 thru c-a 9
 - List them: c-a "
 - Can split and resize them, cut'n'paste (but I never use those bits!)
 - Spawn a new one: c-a c
 - Kill one: c-a k

Screen is a bit like Emacs

- Emacs organizes its activities into:
 - a set of buffers
 - each buffer being the object that holds onto some text being edited
- Screen organizes its activities into:
 - a set of screens
 - each screen being the object holding onto a terminal process being displayed
- Buffers and screens are conceptually shaped much the same
 - Rectangular containers displaying text
 - Some are visible, some are not

But wait, there's more!

- You can disconnect from and reconnect to a Screen session!
 - Start up a session while at work, containing shells where you're doing long running work
 - Disconnect (c-a d)
 - Reconnect from somewhere else to take control
 - Excellent for:
 - Long running batch process that you want to run "online"
 - Evil, evil MS-Access-style web app which needed the web browser to be connected for 18hrs

Named Sessions

- **-S option**

- `screen -S emacs -s /usr/bin/xemacs`

- `screen -S -c ~/.screenrc.torrents`

```
screenname torrents
```

```
nethack on # entertaining messages!
```

```
screen $HOME/screens/runtorrent1
```

```
screen $HOME/screens/runtorrent2
```

```
screen $HOME/screens/runtorrent3
```

```
screen $HOME/screens/runtorrent4
```

- **gnuclient attaches *Emacs* to emacs session**

- `screen -r -d emacs` attaches to the emacs session

- `screen -r -d tor` attaches to the torrents session

Derivative Window Managers

- ratpoison
 - Uses c-t rather than c-a
 - Loses the ability to disconnect from/reconnect to a session :-)
- stumpwm
 - ratpoison development had slowed
 - developers were doing a lot of Lisp "hooks"
 - Chose instead to reimplement from scratch in Common Lisp
 - You can connect in any code at runtime 'on the fly'
 - I often use stumpwm, but have never written any Lisp code to customize it :-)