

Installing and Using Xcursors together with KDE

Disclaimer: This manual is not meant to be complete, nor exhaustive nor correct. If you feel like using it, use it at your own risk.

Some Background

The latest versions of XFree (4.2.99+) support the use of cursors with:

- Multiple Colors
- Transparency
- Animated
- Different Sizes

By default, Xfree includes two sets of cursors apart from the usual one: “redglass” and “whiteglass”

The configuration file paths could be different depending on the distro you are using, but in general, you probably find the cursor themes under:

/usr/X11R6/lib/X11/icons or /usr/share/icons

Just look for “redglass” and “whiteglass” themes in order to make sure you are dealing with the correct path.

How to Create Your Own Set of Cursors

The new version of XFree includes a tool called “xcursorgen” which permits to create cursors from png files. So:

- 1) First, draw your own cursor with any tool you might like (gimp, sodipodi, karbon, kontour, k2d, krita, xfig,...)
- 2) Then save with “png” file format
- 3) Create the configuration file for this cursor (see below)
- 4) Convert it to cursor format with “xcursorgen” (see below)
- 5) Install the cursor in the proper path (see “How to Install New Cursors” section)

The configuration files for a given cursor have lines in the shape of:

<size> <xhot> <yhot> <filename>

For example, we create a file called “left_ptr.conf” that says (Be careful not to add any extra empty lines):

32 0 0 left_ptr.png

The example above means that: the name of the png file is “left_ptr.png”, has size 32x32, and the click point (hot-spot) is at [0,0]

In order to generate the final cursor, one has to type:

xcursorgen <config_file> <cursorname>

For example,

xcursorgen left_ptr.conf left_ptr

This creates a cursor file called “left_ptr”

In order to create **animated cursors**, follow the same instructions, but generate several “png” images, and add a configuration file like the following one:

```
<size> <xhot1> <yhot1> <filename1> <ms-delay1>  
<size1> <xhot2> <yhot2> <filename2> <ms-delay2>  
<size2> <xhot3> <yhot3> <filename3> <ms-delay3>  
<size3> <xhot4> <yhot4> <filename4> <ms-delay4>
```

where “ms-delay” indicates the delay before displaying the next cursor image.

How to Install the New Cursors

If you intend to install this cursor set, just type “make install”, and it should install the cursor set for you. Otherwise, if you are trying to install another set of cursors, you have two options:

- 1) Install it as root for all users
- 2) Install it as normal user for yourself

Installing as root

First, locate where your redglass and whiteglass themes are installed.
In the same directory, you'll find a directory called “default” which should contain a “index.theme” file and a “cursors” directory

Edit the index.theme file, and replace whatever theme it's using by your own theme's name. For example:

```
[Icon Theme]  
Inherits=my_theme
```

Create a new directory with this name (my_theme), and create a new “cursors” subdirectory there. Just copy all the cursors into this new directory, and the installation has finished.

There's another way of doing the installation as root: just copy all the cursor to the “default/cursors” directory, and leave the index.theme line as it was.

Installing as normal user

- 1) Create a directory called “.icons” in your \$(HOME) directory.
- 2) Create a file called index.theme in it that contains something like:

```
[Icon Theme]  
Inherits=redglass
```

(replace 'redglass' with whatever theme you want to use as default)

- 3) Create a subdirectory called “cursors” under ~/.icons , and copy all your cursors there

Problems With Qt/KDE

Qt replaces most of the cursors by its own cursors, instead of the ones that belong to XFree.

There're no replacements for all the Qt cursors in XFree's standard icon sets. For example Qt uses double arrows for resizing the borders which do not exist in the standard XFree cursor sets. This leads to two different options:

- 1) Create specific cursors for Qt and symlink to their hash keys, which I have done now
or
- 2) patch Qt (patch attached as suggested in <http://lists.kde.org/?l=kde-core-devel&m=103801812617164&w=2d>)

There are still missing hash keys, since the hashes and cursors specified in the link below don't seem to work:

http://bugs.kde.org/show_bug.cgi?id=54359#c1

Acknowledgments:

Thanks a lot to "Deciare" in kde-look.org for all the information that he has provided.
"SadEagle" for the prompt report about the "bugfix"
And thanks to Zack Russin, who developed the QT patch.