This how-to shows how blender-headless is installed for 64-bit linux.

For further questions, mail me tobias.guenther@elaspix.de or @elaspix at twitter

1. Decide how much power you need

  • large cpu instances only run on 64-bit linux

  • small cpu instances as well as the „no-cost" instances only runs on 32-bit linux (this tutorial is for 64-bit linux but should also work for 32-bit linux)

2. start an instance (cpu-medium works well and costs 18 cent/hour)

  • Ubuntu Server 12.04.1 LTS 64-bit

3. upload blender 2.64a for linux 64-bit

  • I'll assume that you know how to access your remote machine via console and access the file system via sftp

  • extract the blender zip file and start blender --help, it should not work as some packages are missing which are not installed by default on a purely headless ubuntu machine

    ◦ to get an overview about which packages are missing use ldd blender to see a list of all required dynamic libraries

4. install missing packages

  • update the source lists with sudo apt-get update

  • the following packages were missing when I tried it last, usually you can install it with sudo apt-get install <name>

    ◦ libglu1-mesa

    ◦ libxi6

    ◦ libsdl-debian

      ▪ if sudo apt-get install libsdl-debian is not working as it happened to me (the package name was not found) I used the following workaround:

      ▪ load the rpm-package from http://rpmfind.net/linux/rpm2html/search.php?query=libSDL-1.2.so.0%28%29%2864bit%29

      ▪ as usually, rpm packages cannot be processed from ubuntu (or at least I don't know to do it, I needed to install a program called alien which transforms the rpm into a deb- package that finally can be installed

      ▪ install alien: sudo apt-get install alien dpkg-dev debhelper build-essential

      ▪ convert the rpm package into deb: sudo alien <packagename>.rpm

      ▪ install the deb package: sudo dpkg -i <packagename>.deb

5. start blender --help and now you should see the blender help which is just a console output. If this is working, you can use blender in headless mode with blender -b <blend-file> -P <python-script> which runs a blender-file without GUI and starts a prepared python script that does your rendering and image saving or whatever your want