

# How to Sell Your Mac and Switch to Linux

A Practical Guide for People Who Are Done Paying the Apple Tax

From Nolan Law Firm — [nemolegal.com/tools](https://nemolegal.com/tools)

## Why Someone Actually Does This

I run an RTX 3090 workstation on Ubuntu 24.04. It's faster than any Mac I've ever used, costs a fraction of a comparable Apple Silicon machine, and does everything I need — AI inference, server management, document automation, content production. The Mac tax is real and I stopped paying it.

This isn't for everyone. If you're locked into Final Cut Pro, Logic Pro, or iOS development, stay on Mac — those tools don't exist on Linux and the workarounds aren't good enough. But if your work is web-based, server-based, or AI-based, you probably don't need macOS.

## What You Actually Lose

Be honest with yourself about this list before you do anything:

<b>You lose:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Final Cut Pro</li><li>Logic Pro</li><li>GarageBand (sort of — Ardour exists)</li><li>iMessage / FaceTime</li><li>AirDrop</li><li>iOS app development (Xcode)</li><li>Seamless iPhone sync</li><li>Apple Watch support</li></ul>	<b>You gain:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Full control of your hardware</li><li>No forced updates or locked settings</li><li>Better terminal environment</li><li>Native Docker, SSH, server tools</li><li>AI/ML tools work without workarounds</li><li>No 'Gatekeeper' blocking software</li><li>Lower cost hardware with same or better performance</li><li>Privacy — less telemetry</li></ul>
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## What to Actually Buy

You don't need expensive hardware. Linux runs well on modest specs. Here are the real options:

Option	Best For	Rough Cost
Refurbished ThinkPad (X1 Carbon, T-series)	Portable work, traveling attorney	\$300-600 used
Mini PC (Beelink, Minisforum, Intel NUC)	Desktop replacement, always-on server	\$200-500 new
Custom desktop build	AI/ML work, GPU compute	\$800-2000+
Old PC you already own	Testing Linux before committing	\$0

## Which Linux to Install

**Ubuntu 24.04 LTS.** That's the answer for most people. It's what I run. It has the largest community, the best hardware support, and LTS means Long Term Support — security updates for five years without having to reinstall.

There are dozens of other distributions (distros). Ignore them until you're comfortable with Ubuntu. The distro wars are a hobby for people who've already solved the basic problems.

## How to Migrate Your Files

Before you do anything else:

1. Back up your Mac to Time Machine or an external drive.
2. Export anything iCloud-only to local files — documents, photos, notes.
3. Note your passwords — use a password manager that works cross-platform (Bitwarden is free and excellent).
4. Export browser bookmarks.

Your actual documents (Word, PDF, spreadsheets) open fine in LibreOffice on Linux. Google Docs and Microsoft 365 web apps work in any browser. The file migration is usually the easiest part.

## The First 10 Things to Install

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sudo apt update && sudo apt upgrade -y

sudo apt install curl git build-essential -y

# Then via browser or snap:

# Firefox or Chrome

# VS Code (code.visualstudio.com)

# Bitwarden (bitwarden.com)

# LibreOffice (usually pre-installed)

# VLC (sudo apt install vlc)

# Docker (docs.docker.com/engine/install/ubuntu/)
```

## Selling the Mac

Before selling: **Sign out of iCloud** (System Settings → Apple ID → Sign Out). Then **Erase All Content and Settings** (System Settings → General → Transfer or Reset). This wipes the machine and removes it from your Apple account.

Where to sell: Apple Trade In (easy but low value), Swappa (fair market value), Facebook Marketplace or Craigslist (highest return, more effort).

A 2021 M1 MacBook Air in good condition still sells for \$600-800 on the used market. That buys a solid Linux machine with cash left over.