
Tp-Note: fast note taking with templates and filename synchronization

Organize your notes with your favourite editor and markup-language

Jens Getreu

Table of Contents

1. How students take notes	2
1.1. Fast start note-taking (when the lecture starts)	3
1.2. Taking notes about a file	6
1.3. Bookmark and comment a hyperlink	8
1.4. Copy a page from a book	11
2. How it works: Organize your files and notes with sort-tags	14
3. Quickstart	15
3.1. Installation	16
3.2. Usage	16
3.3. Troubleshooting	17
3.4. Optional customization	18
4. Integration with file manager	18
4.1. Linux file manager configuration	19
4.2. Windows file explorer configuration	22

Markup languages like *Markdown*, *ReStructuredText*, *asciidoc*, *textile*, *txt2tags* or *mediawiki* are perfectly suited for fast note-taking. Type your notes with your favourite editor and chose your favourite markup language¹.

¹ *Tp-Note* is preconfigured to work with many well-known external text editors: e.g.: `code`, `atom`, `retext`, `geany`, `gedit`, `mousepad`, `leafpad`, `nvim-qt`, and `gvim` under Linux and `notepad++` and `notepad` under Windows. To register your own text editor, please consult the man-page. For best user experience, I recommend text editors with internal markup previewer.

Tp-Note helps you to quickly get started writing notes with its powerful template system. As *Tp-Note* takes care that the note's filename is always synchronized with its document title, you will find back your notes easily.

Tp-Note is available for Linux, Windows and iOS. This manual illustrates its main use-cases and how to get started:

1. Fast start note-taking (when the lecture starts).
2. Take a note about an existing (downloaded) file.
3. Bookmark and comment a hyperlink.

If you want to customize *Tp-Note* with own templates, another markup language, please consult the [man-page] for more technical details.

The project is hosted on Github: [getreu/tp-note](https://github.com/getreu/tp-note)². The project's webpage is on <http://blog.getreu.net>³. The documentation of this project is dived into two parts:

- User manual

[tp-note user manual - html](https://blog.getreu.net/projects/tp-note/tp-note--manual.html)⁴

[tp-note user manual - pdf](https://blog.getreu.net/_downloads/tp-note--manual.pdf)⁵

- Unix man-page (more technical)

[tp-note manual page - html](https://blog.getreu.net/projects/tp-note/tp-note--manpage.html)⁶

[tp-note manual page - pdf](https://blog.getreu.net/_downloads/tp-note--manpage.pdf)⁷

1. How students take notes

A fellow student still uses paper and pen. I ask her why, and she replied "I can better concentrate. My computer distracts me. I will do all other things, but not listening."

² <https://github.com/getreu/tp-note>

³ <http://blog.getreu.net/projects/tp-note/>

⁴ <https://blog.getreu.net/projects/tp-note/tp-note--manual.html>

⁵ https://blog.getreu.net/_downloads/tp-note--manual.pdf

⁶ <https://blog.getreu.net/projects/tp-note/tp-note--manpage.html>

⁷ https://blog.getreu.net/_downloads/tp-note--manpage.pdf

Tp-Note: fast note taking with templates and filename synchronization

This is certainly true. As far as I am concerned, I am not good at logistics. For me having all documents and notes in one little machine is a blessing.

To illustrate how to work with *Tp-Note* here my most common workflows.

1.1. Fast start note-taking (when the lecture starts)

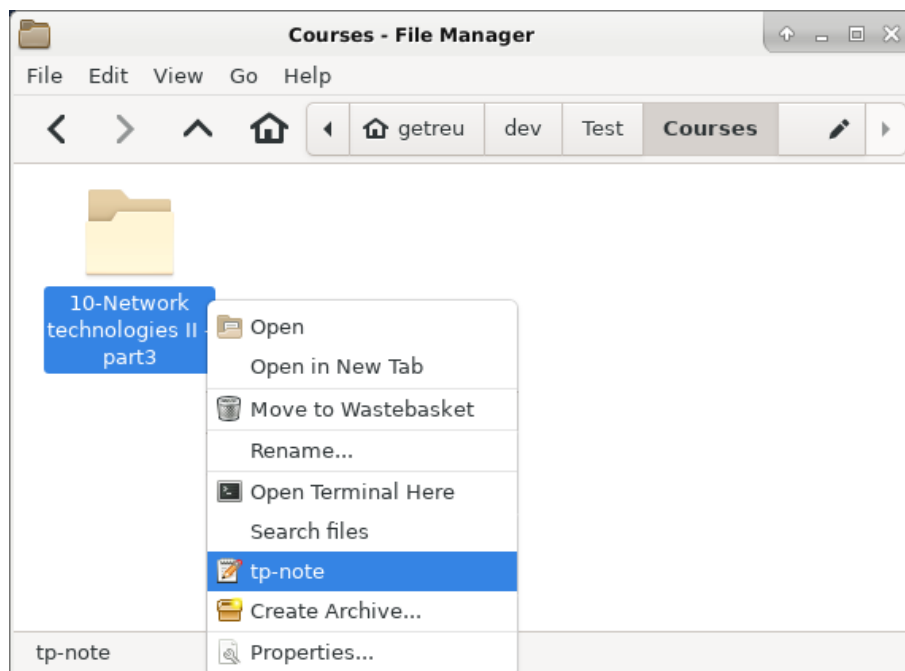


Figure 1. The folder in which the new note will be created.

Alternatively you can open the folder you want to create a new note in and right-click on some empty white space.

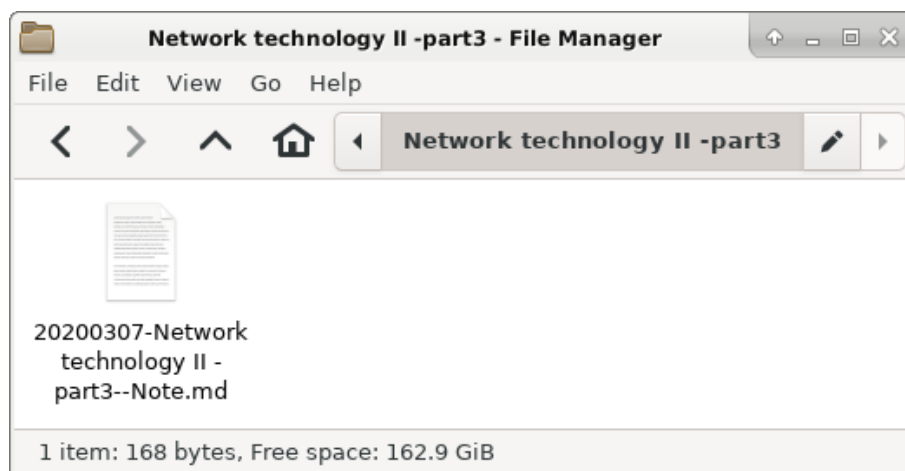


Figure 2. The new unmodified note created by template on disk

Typ-Note: fast note taking with templates and filename synchronization

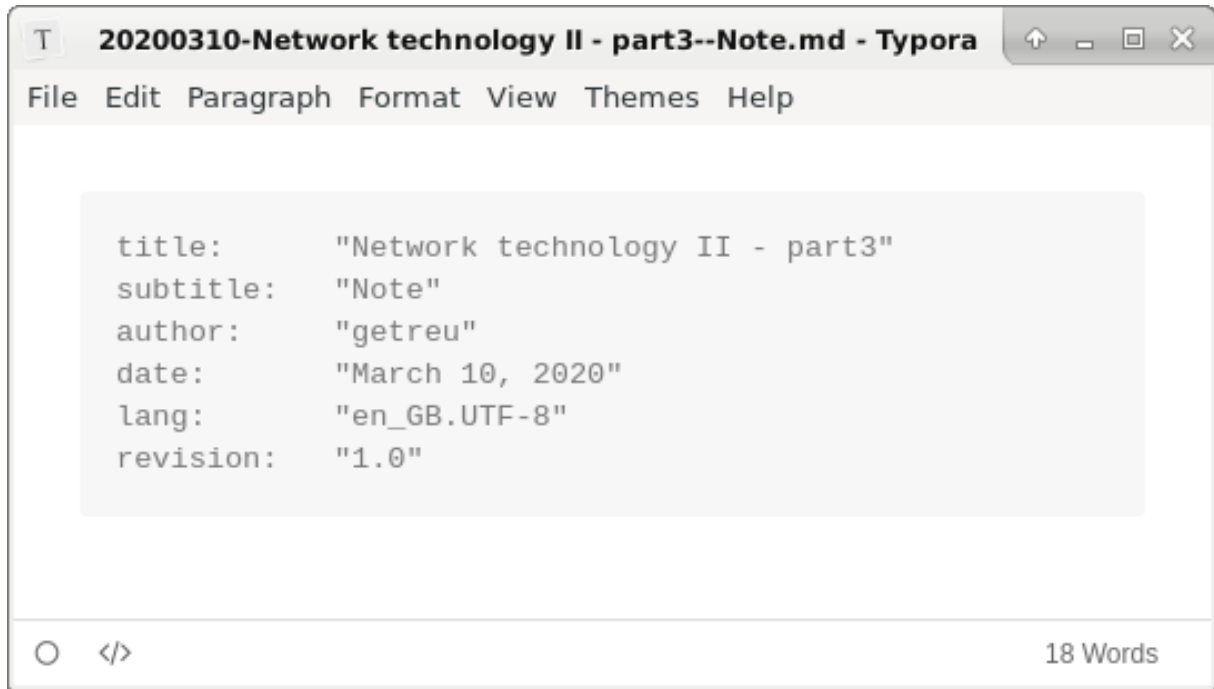


Figure 3. The new unmodified note created by template

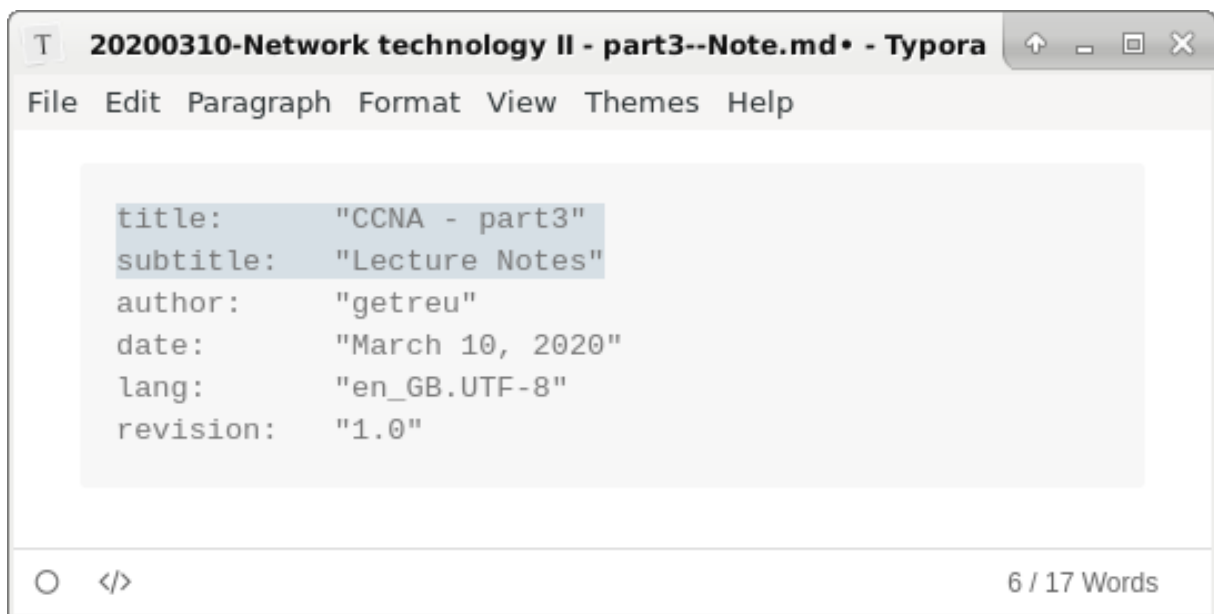


Figure 4. Change the title

Tp-Note: fast note taking with templates and filename synchronization

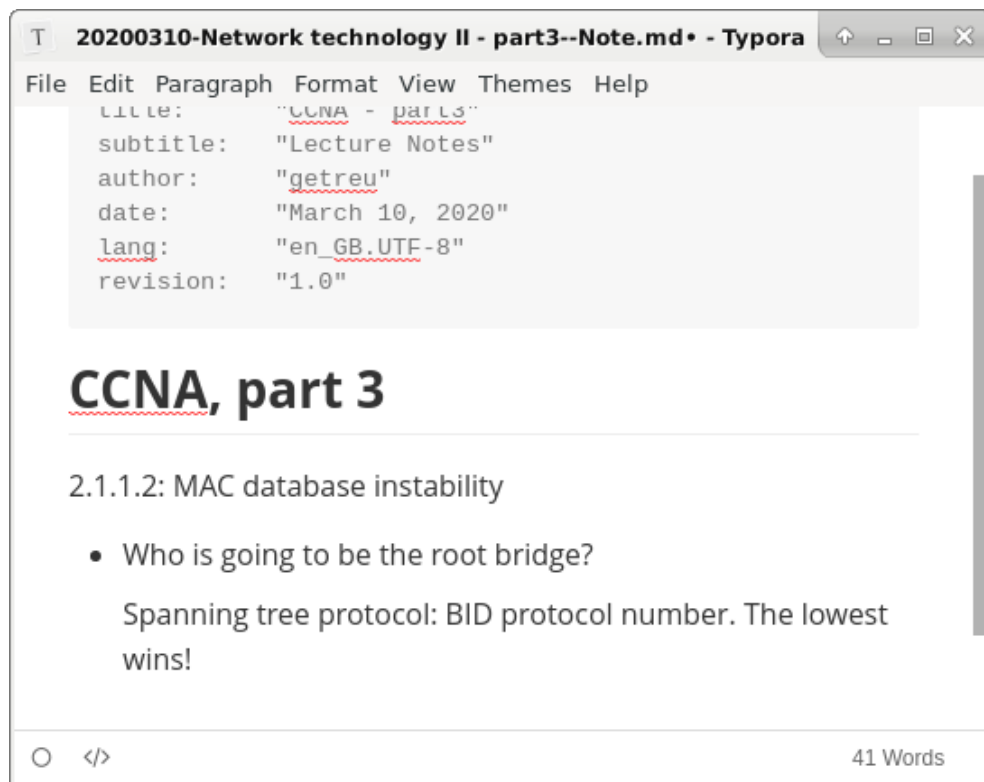


Figure 5. Add some text

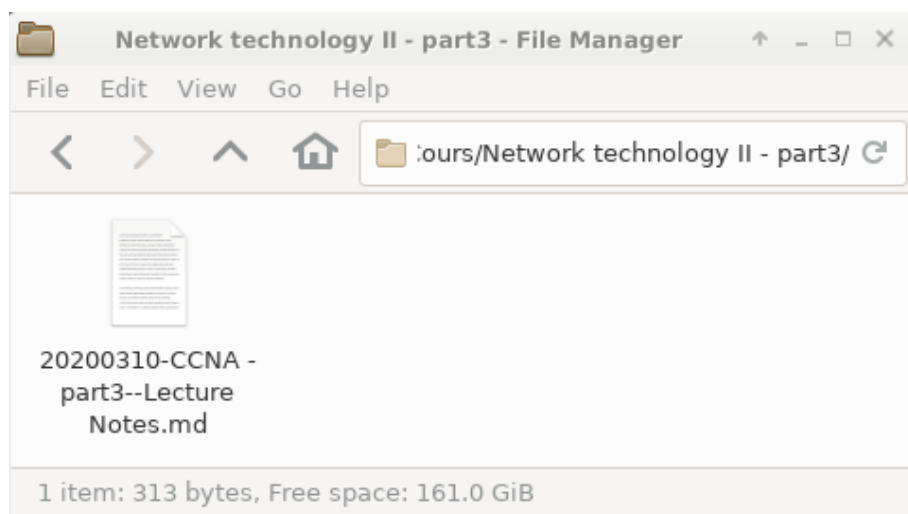


Figure 6. The new note file on disk after closing the editor

Note

Before and after launching the editor *Tp-Note* renames the file to be in sync with the note's metadata (i.e. title and subtitle). For more details see [Document title - filename sync]

1.2. Taking notes about a file

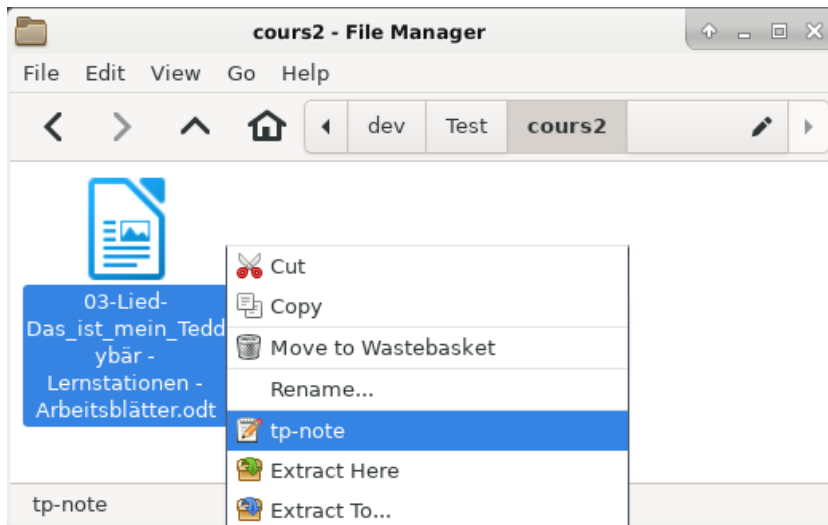


Figure 7. We want to take a note about a pdf



Figure 8. The new unmodified note created by template

The source-code of the note shows, that the link has a target. The left-click, opens the `.odt` document.

Tp-Note: fast note taking with templates and filename synchronization

```
---
title:      "03-Lied-Das_ist_mein_Teddybär - Lernstationen -
Arbeitsblätter"
subtitle:   "Note"
author:    "getreu"
date:      "March 10, 2020"
lang:      "en_GB.UTF-8"
revision:  "1.0"
---
```

03-Lied-Das_ist_mein_Teddybär - Lernstationen - Arbeitsblätter.odt

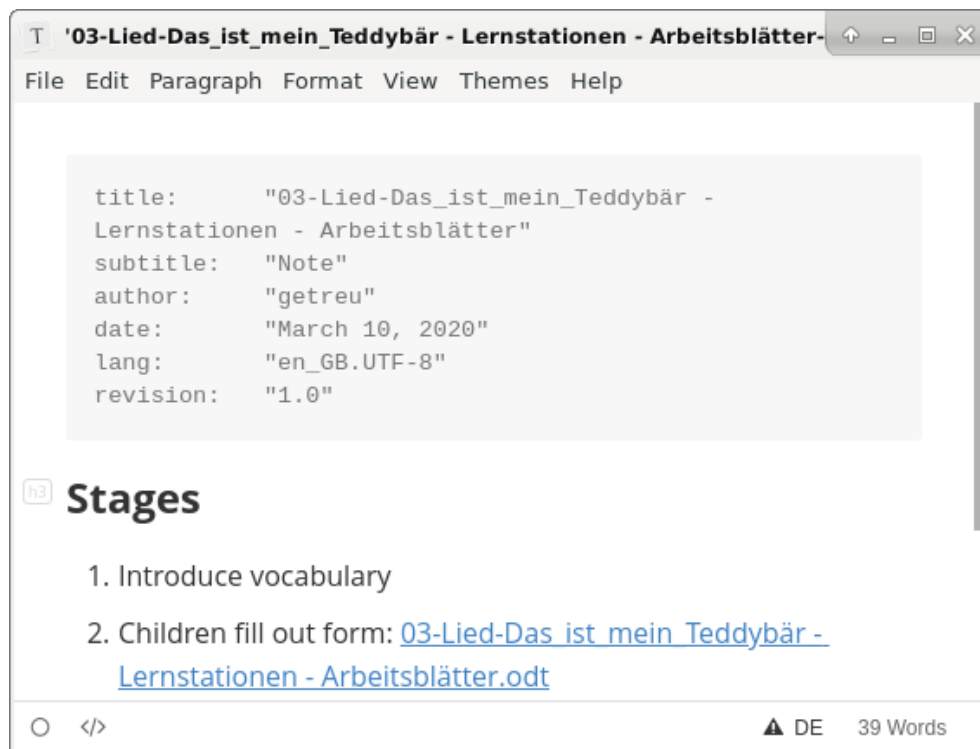


Figure 9. Annotate

Tp-Note: fast note taking with templates and filename synchronization

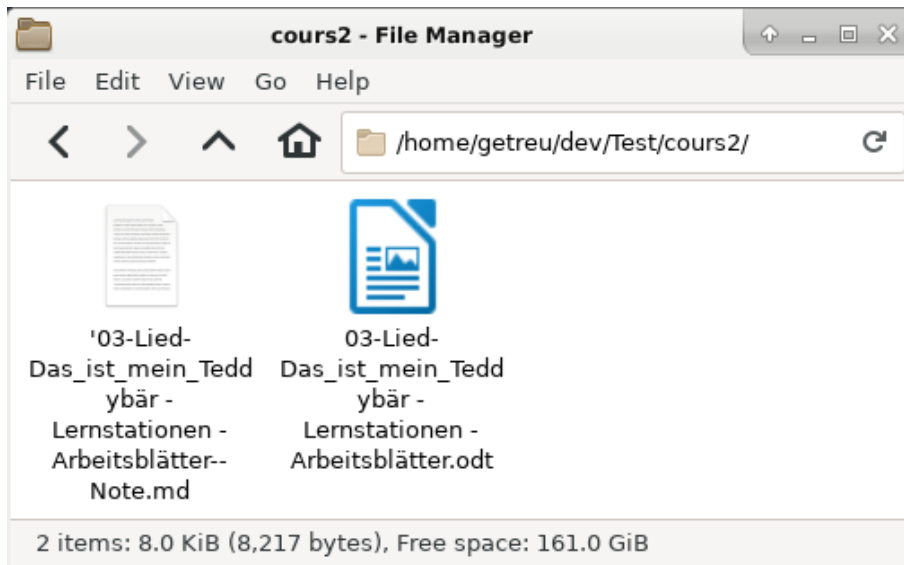


Figure 10. The new note file on disk after closing the editor

1.3. Bookmark and comment a hyperlink

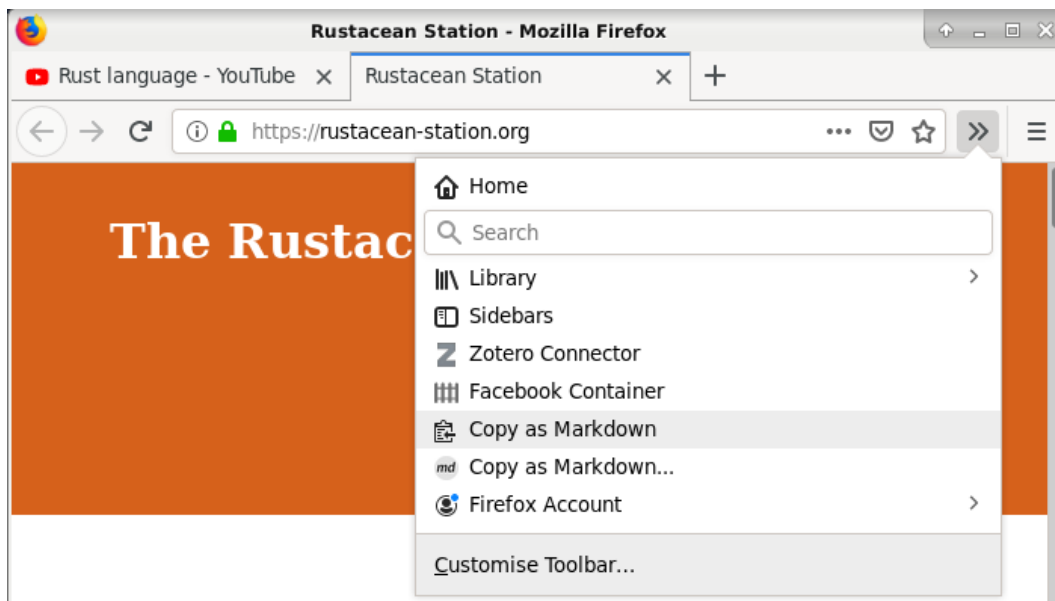


Figure 11. Copy a link in markdown format

To copy a link in markdown format a browser addon is needed. I recommend the addons [Copy as Markdown](https://addons.mozilla.org/en-GB/firefox/search/?q=copy%20as%20markdown)⁸ and [Copy Selection as Markdown](https://addons.mozilla.org/en-GB/firefox/addon/copy-selection-as-markdown/?src=search)⁹ available for Firefox.

⁸ <https://addons.mozilla.org/en-GB/firefox/search/?q=copy%20as%20markdown>

⁹ <https://addons.mozilla.org/en-GB/firefox/addon/copy-selection-as-markdown/?src=search>

Tp-Note: fast note taking with templates and filename synchronization

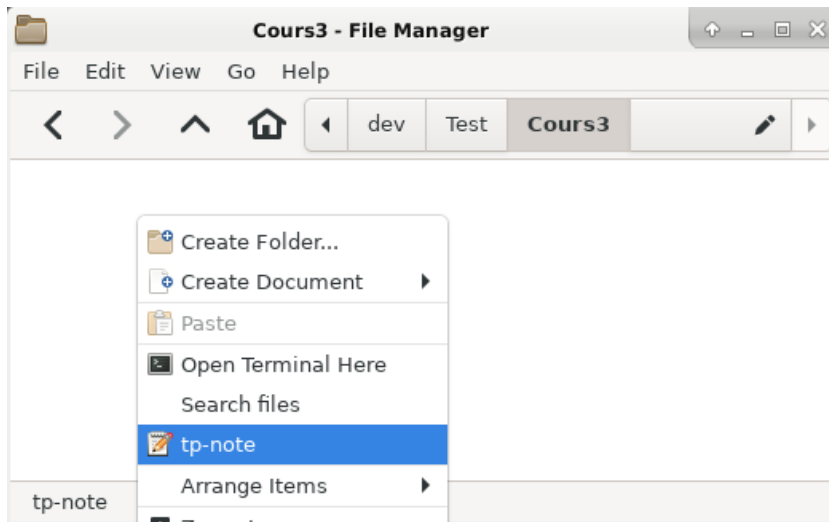


Figure 12. Right-click on or in the new note's destination folder and start tp-note

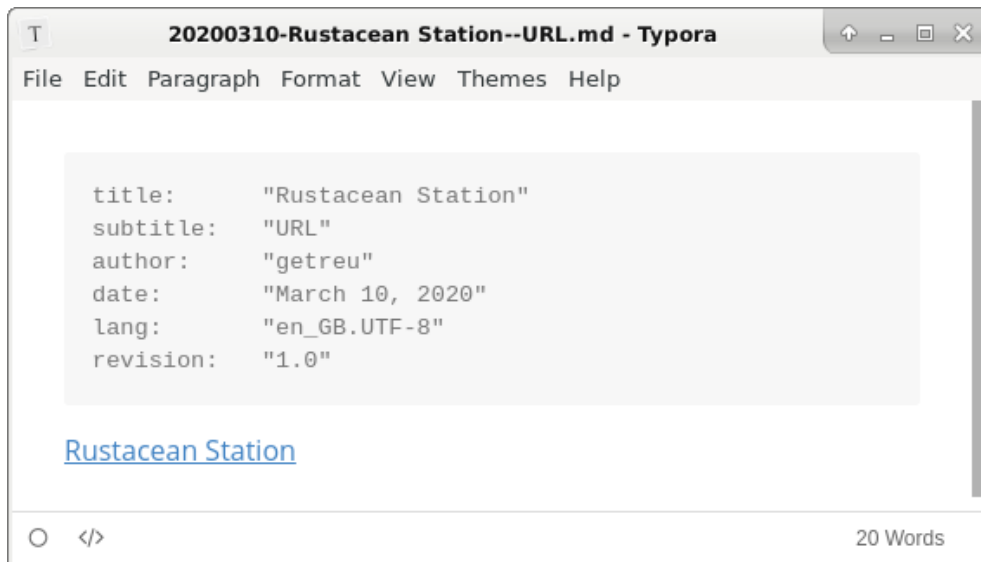


Figure 13. The new unmodified note created by template

The source code of the note shows the link target:

```
---
title: "Rustacean Station"
subtitle: "URL"
author: "getreu"
date: "March 10, 2020"
lang: "en_GB.UTF-8"
revision: "1.0"
---
```

Tp-Note: fast note taking with templates and filename synchronization

[Rustacean Station](https://rustacean-station.org/)

In this example we copied only one Markdown-link “Rustacean Station”. Furthermore, *Tp-Note* allows you also to insert a list of Markdown links in a template. For example with [Copy as Markdown](#)¹⁰ you could copy a link list of all open tabs. In this case, *Tp-Note* would retain only the name of the first link as document title, whereas the whole link-list would appear in the body of the note.

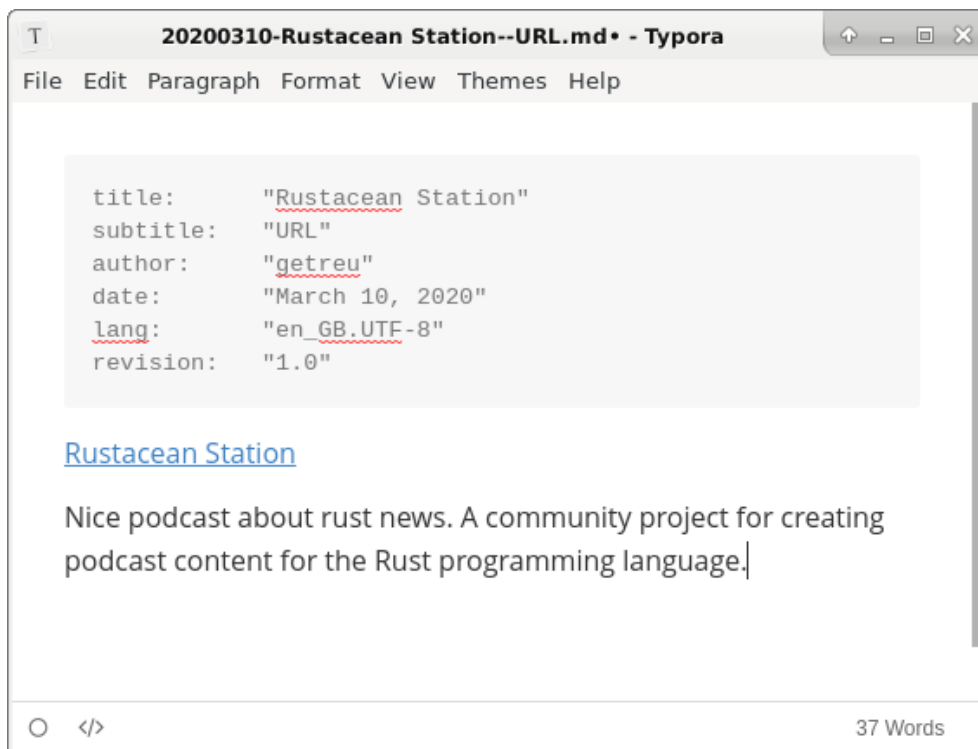


Figure 14. Annotate

¹⁰ <https://addons.mozilla.org/en-GB/firefox/search/?q=copy%20as%20markdown>

Tip-Note: fast note taking with templates and filename synchronization

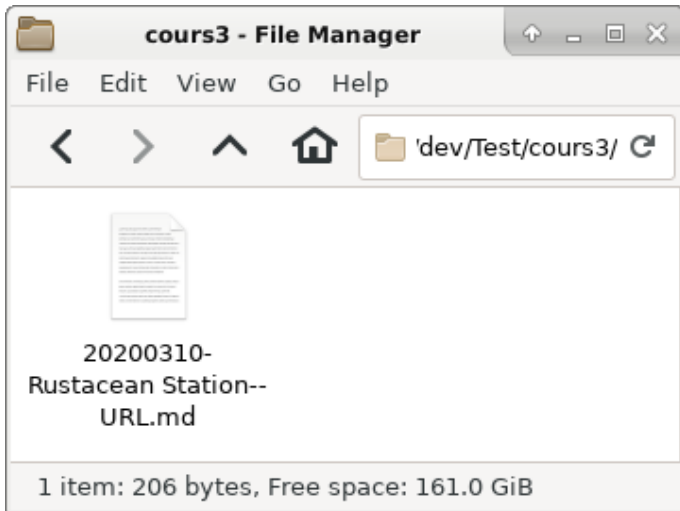


Figure 15. The new note file on disk after closing the editor

1.4. Copy a page from a book

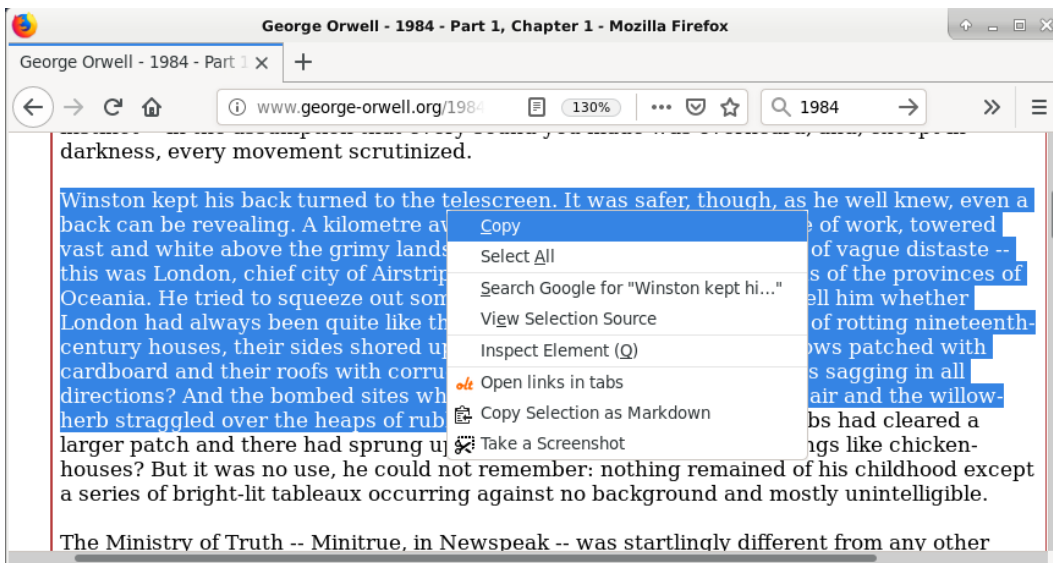


Figure 16. Copy some chapters

Tp-Note: fast note taking with templates and filename synchronization

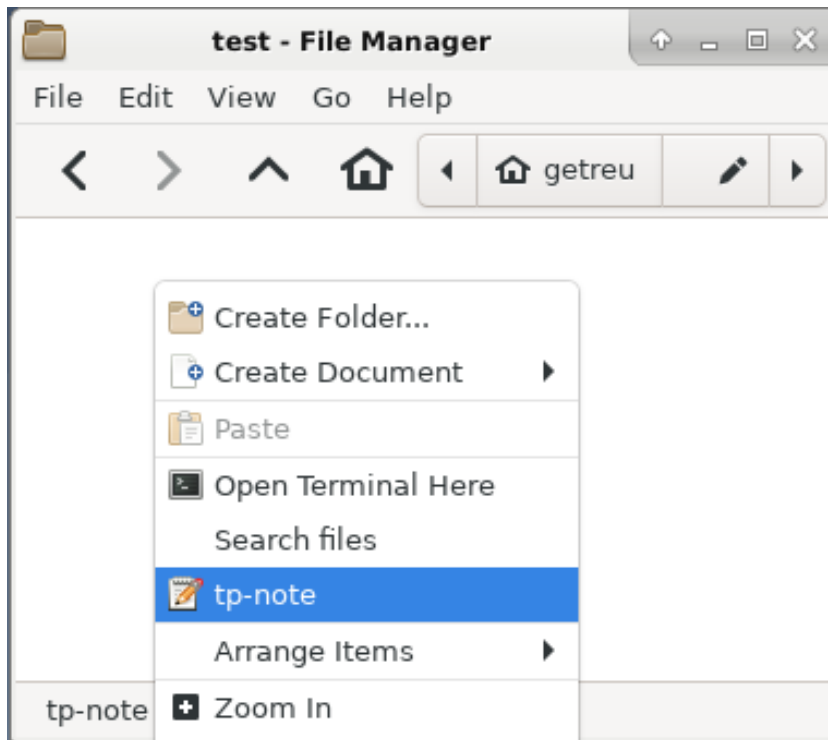


Figure 17. Right-click on or in the new note's destination folder and start tp-note

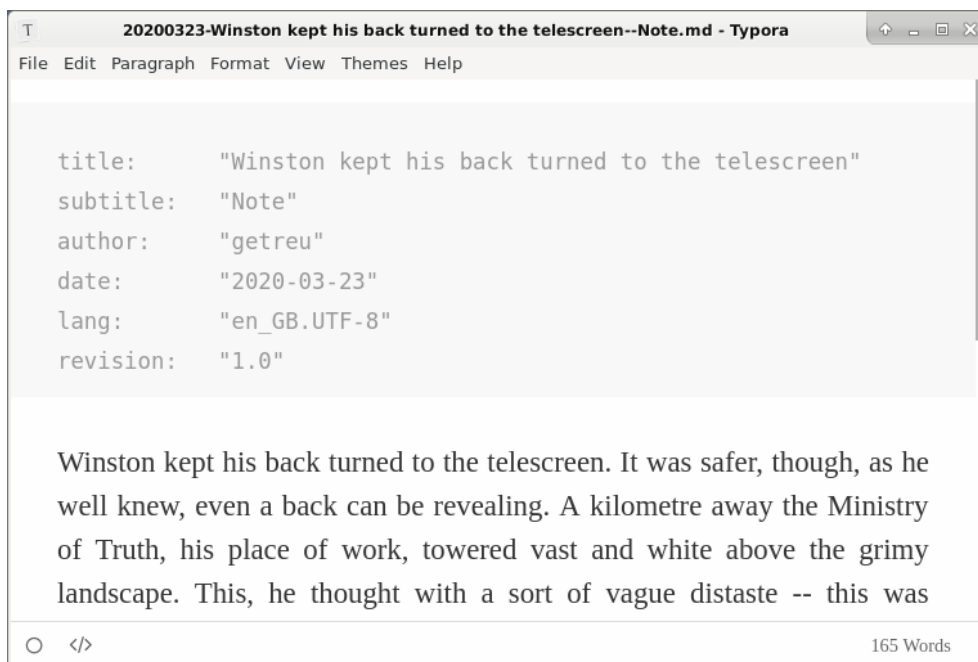


Figure 18. The new unmodified note created by template

Tp-Note: fast note taking with templates and filename synchronization

The source code of the note shows the completed template:

```
---  
title:      "Winston kept his back turned to the telescreen"  
subtitle:   "Note"  
author:    "getreu"  
date:      "2020-03-23"  
lang:      "en_GB.UTF-8"  
revision:  "1.0"  
---
```

Winston kept his back turned to the telescreen. It was safer, though, as he well knew, even a back can be revealing. A kilometre away the Ministry of Truth, his place of work, towered vast and white above the grimy landscape...

In this example we copied only text. *Tp-Note* suggests the first sentence as title. This can be changed before saving as illustrated above. Here we just save and observe the file on the disk.

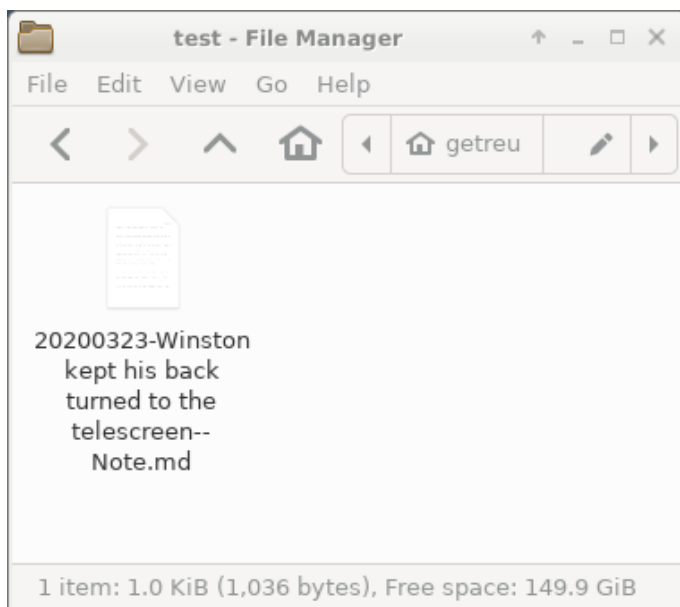


Figure 19. The new note file on disk after closing the editor

2. How it works: Organize your files and notes with sort-tags

Consider the following *Tp-Note*-file:

.....
20151208-Make this world a better place--Suggestions.md
.....

The filename has 4 parts:

.....
{{ sort-tag }}-{{ title }}--{{ subtitle }}.{{ extension }}
.....

A so called *sort-tag* is a numerical prefix at the beginning of the filename. It is used to order files and notes in the file system. Besides numerical digits, a *sort-tag* can be any combination of `0123456789-_11` and is usually used as:

- *chronological sort-tag*

.....
20140211-Reminder.doc
20151208-Manual.pdf
.....

- or as a *sequence number sort-tag*.

.....
02-Invoices
08-Tax documents
09_02-Notes
.....

The figures below illustrate organizing files with **sort-tags*".

¹¹ The characters `_` and `-` are not considered to be part of the *sort-tag* when they appear in first or last position.

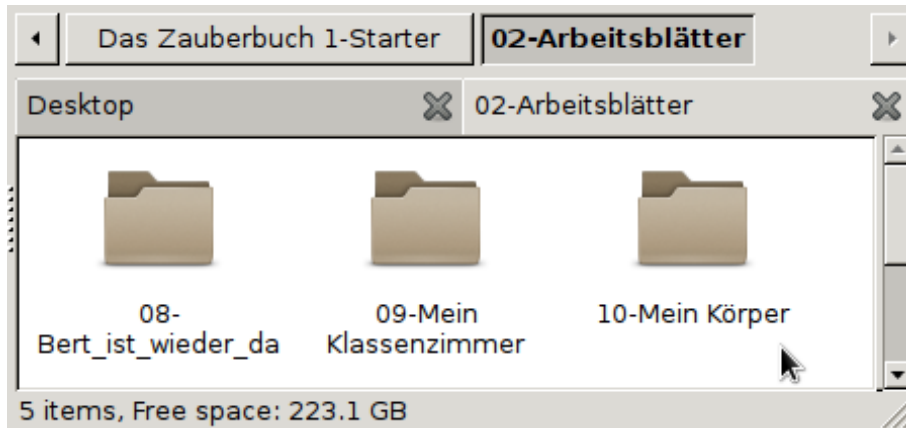


Figure 20. Folders with sequence number sort-tag

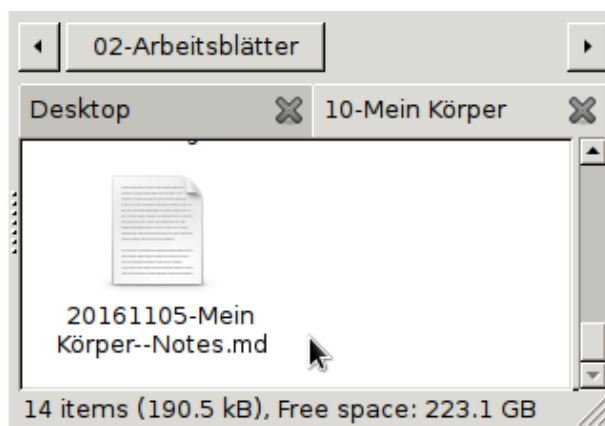


Figure 21. File with chronological sort-tag

When *Tp-Note* creates a new note, it prepends automatically a *chronological sort-tag* of today. The `{{ title }}` part is usually derived from the parent directory's name omitting its own *sort-tag*.

3. Quickstart

Tp-Note can be easily configured for your personal preferences and needs¹². However, this section explains the basic standard setup to get you started quickly.

¹² For a personalized setup read *Tp-Note*'s man-page.

3.1. Installation

- **Windows**

Download the [tp-note executable for Windows](#)¹³ ¹⁴ and place it on your desktop.

- **Linux**

Download the *Tp-Note*-binary for Linux and place it on your Desktop:

```
> cd ~/Desktop
> wget https://blog.getreu.net/projects/tp-note/_downloads/x86_64-unknown-linux-gnu/release/tp-note
> chmod 755 tp-note
```

A new *Tp-Note*-icon appears on your desktop.

3.2. Usage

To create a new note, either double-click on the *Tp-Note*-icon, or drag a folder or file and drop it on the *to-note*-icon. This opens an editor with your new note.

For more comfort, I recommend integrating *Tp-Note* into the file-manager's context menu. See section [Integration with file manager](#) for more details. There you also will find a list of tested Markdown-editors, if you wish to use one. *Tp-Note* works with every Unicode text editor and Markdown-editor (see section [Optional customization](#) and man-page for more details).

Tp-Note's note-files can be converted into e.g. `.docx`, `.odt`, `.html` with [Pandoc](#)¹⁵ and then printed.

¹³ https://blog.getreu.net/projects/tp-note/_downloads/x86_64-pc-windows-gnu/release/tp-note.exe

¹⁴ Versions for other operating systems and a Debian package are [available here](https://blog.getreu.net/projects/tp-note/_downloads/) [https://blog.getreu.net/projects/tp-note/_downloads/].

¹⁵ <https://pandoc.org/>

3.3. Troubleshooting

- **Windows**

When you see only Chinese characters in notepad, update Windows to the latest version or install [Notepad++](#)¹⁶.

Display *Tp-Note*'s error messages:

1. Open the command-prompt: Click on *Windows-Start*, type `cmd` and [Enter].

2. Type:

```
.....  
Desktop\tp-note.exe -d >Desktop\debug.txt 2>&1  
.....
```

This creates the file `debug.txt` on your desktop. Open the file and scroll to the end.

- **Linux**

Display *Tp-Note*'s error messages:

1. Open a console and change to the directory where you saved the *Tp-Note*-executable.

2. Type:

```
.....  
> tp-note -d 2>&1 | less  
.....
```

¹⁶ <https://notepad-plus-plus.org/>

3.4. Optional customization

- Your preferred markup language is not *Markdown*, but *ReStructured-Text*, *T2t*, *Textile*, *Wiki*, *Mediawiki* or *Asciidoc*? Change it!

Please refer to *Tp-Note*'s man-page to learn how to change its templates in the configuration file.

- Your preferred text editor is not *ReText*? Change it!¹⁷

Note-taking with *Tp-Note* is more fun with a good markup (Markdown) text editor, although any Unicode text editor will do (even Notepad >= Windows 10-update 1903). *Tp-Note* is preconfigured to work with:

- [Typora — a markdown editor, markdown reader.](#)¹⁸
- [ReText: Simple but powerful editor for Markdown and reStructured-Text](#)¹⁹
- *VS-Code*, *Atom* ...

Please refer to *Tp-Note*'s man-page to learn to register your text editor in *Tp-Note*'s configuration file.

- You prefer working in a desktop environment instead of working on a shell?

Read [Integration with file manager](#).

4. Integration with file manager

This section shows how to integrate *Tp-Note* in the context menu of your file manager. The context menu appears, when you click right on a file icon, on a directory icon or on the white space in between (cf. figure below). In the following we will configure the file-manager to launch *Tp-Note* with the path to the selected icon.

¹⁷ *Tp-Note* is preconfigured to work with many well-known external text editors: e.g.: `code`, `atom`, `retext`, `geany`, `gedit`, `mousepad`, `leafpad`, `nvim-qt`, and `gvim` under Linux and `notepad++` and `notepad` under Windows. To register your own text editor, please consult the man-page. For best user experience, I recommend text editors with internal markup previewer.

¹⁸ <https://typora.io/>

¹⁹ <https://github.com/retext-project/retext>

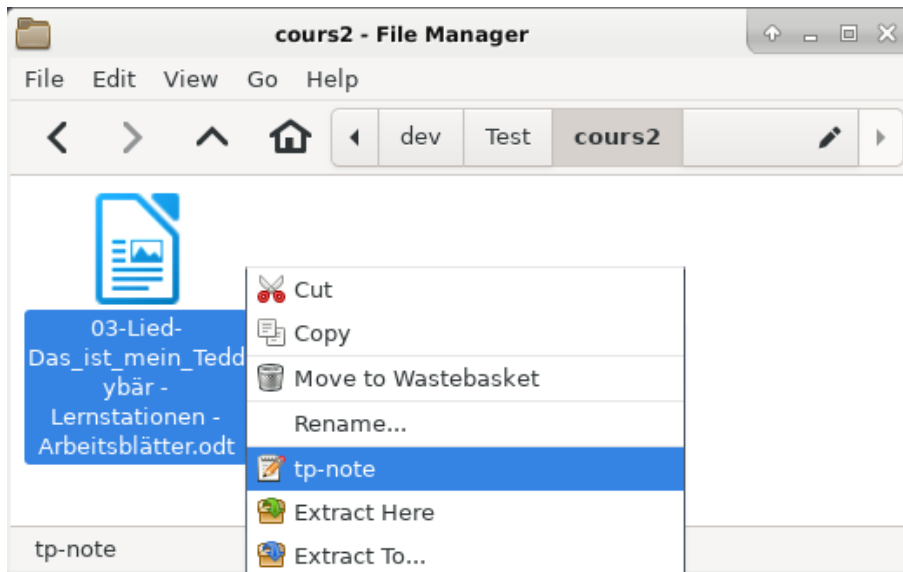


Figure 22. Tp-note in the context-menu (right-click menu)

4.1. Linux file manager configuration

To simplify the configuration we first place the binary *Tp-Note* in our `$PATH` :

```
> cd /usr/local/bin
> sudo wget https://blog.getreu.net/projects/tp-note/_downloads/x86_64-unknown-linux-gnu/release/tp-note
> sudo chmod 755 tp-note
```

Debian and *Ubuntu* user can also download a binary package from [debian/tp-note](https://blog.getreu.net/projects/tp-note/_downloads/x86_64-unknown-linux-gnu/debian/tp-note)²⁰ and install it with:

```
> sudo dpkg -i tp-note_X.X.X_amd64.deb
```

Most file-manager allow extending the context menu. As an example, the following images show the configuration of the *Thunar*-file-manger. In *Thunar*'s menu go to:

```
Edit -> Configure custom actions...
```

²⁰ https://blog.getreu.net/projects/tp-note/_downloads/x86_64-unknown-linux-gnu/debian/

Tp-Note: fast note taking with templates and filename synchronization

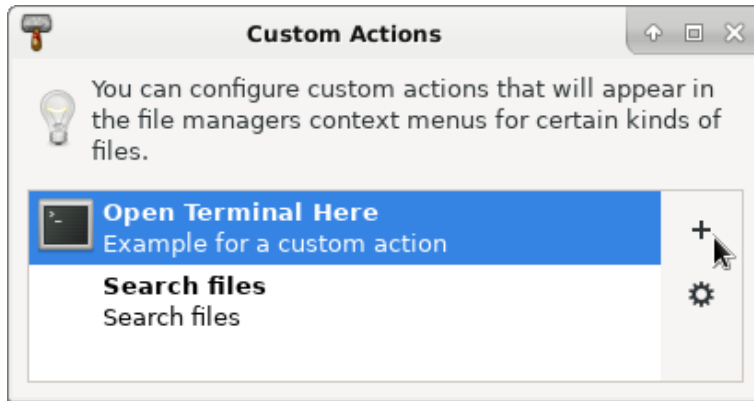


Figure 23. Thunar's custom action configuration

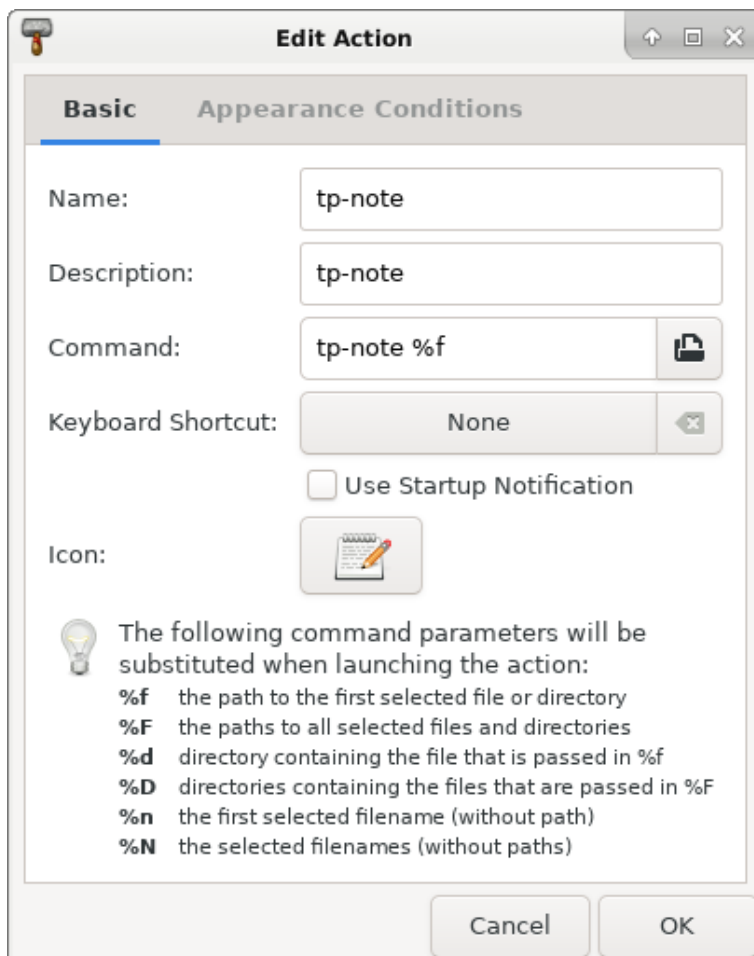


Figure 24. Edit custom action

Tp-Note: fast note taking with templates and filename synchronization

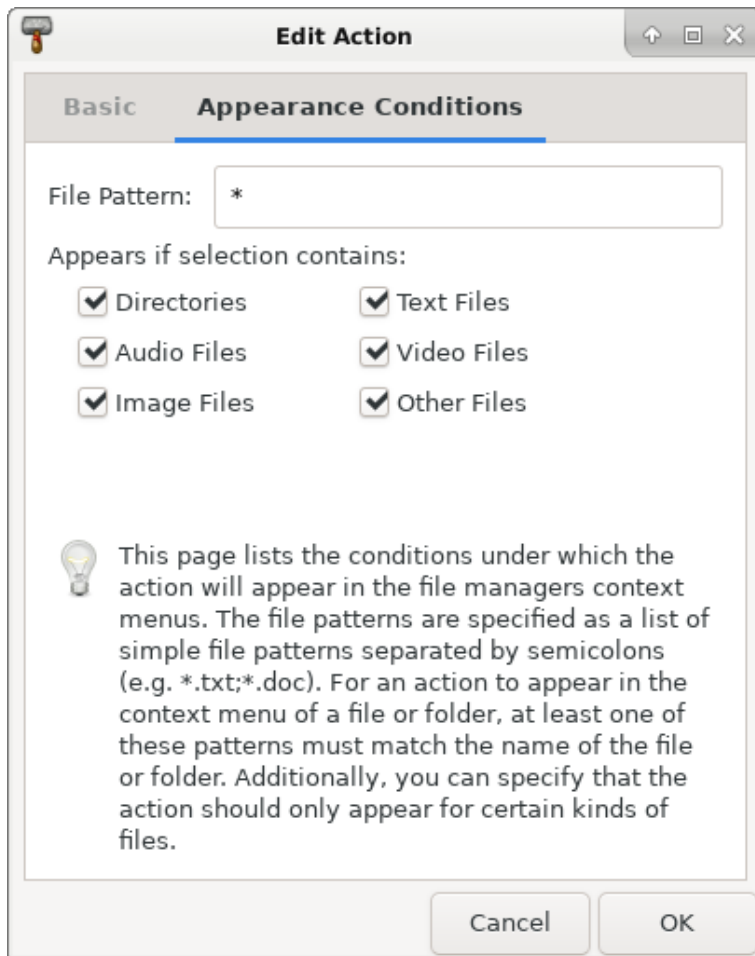


Figure 25. Appearance Condition

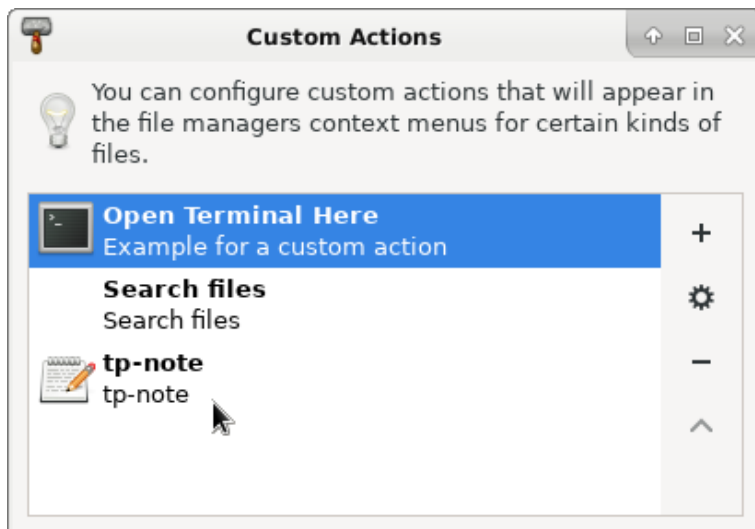


Figure 26. Thunar's custom action configuration with tp-note

4.2. Windows file explorer configuration

The following works for me with Windows-version 10.0.18362.

1. Make the directory `C:\Windows\tp-note\` and move `tp-note.exe` into it.
2. Open the *notepad* text editor and paste the following registry-key into it.

```
Windows Registry Editor Version 5.00
```

```
[HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT\Directory\Background\shell\Tp-Note]
```

```
[HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT\Directory\Background\shell\Tp-Note\command]
```

```
@="\"C:\\Program Files\\tp-note\\tp-note\""
```

```
[HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT*\OpenWithList\tp-note.exe]
```

```
@=""
```

3. Save the file as:

- File name: `tp-note.reg`
- Save as type: `All files`
- Encoding: `UTF-16 LE`

4. Double-click on `tp-note.reg` and confirm several times.