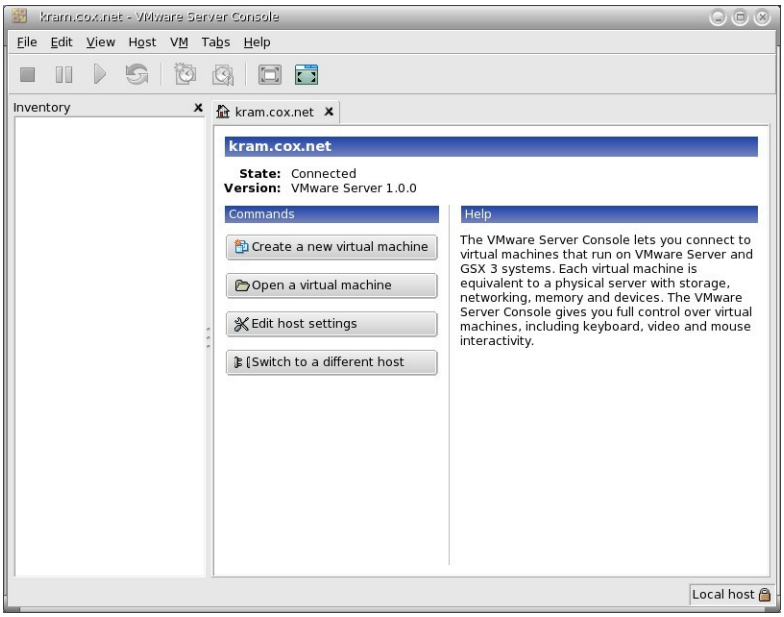
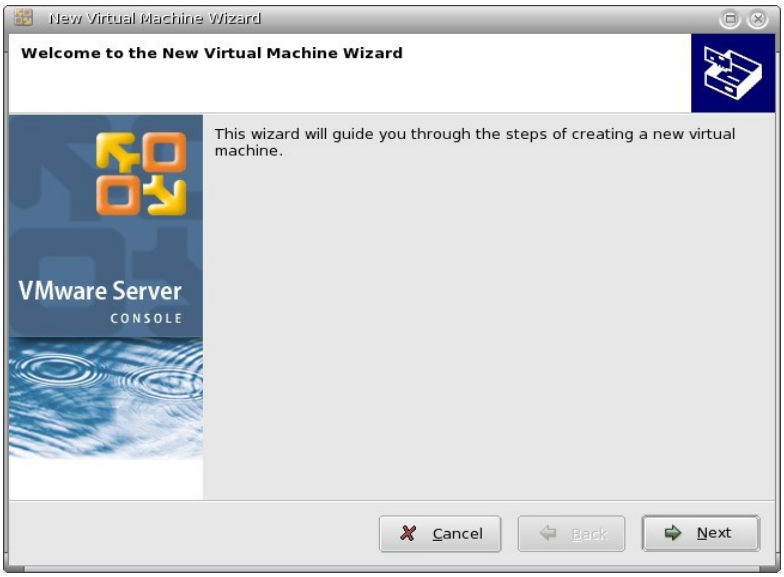
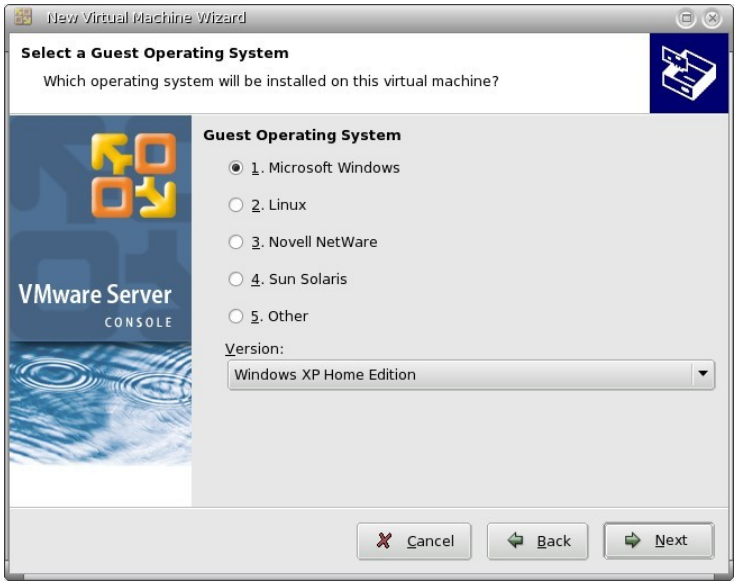
This is what you will see when there are no virtual machines configured. Click on “Create a new virtual machine” to get started.



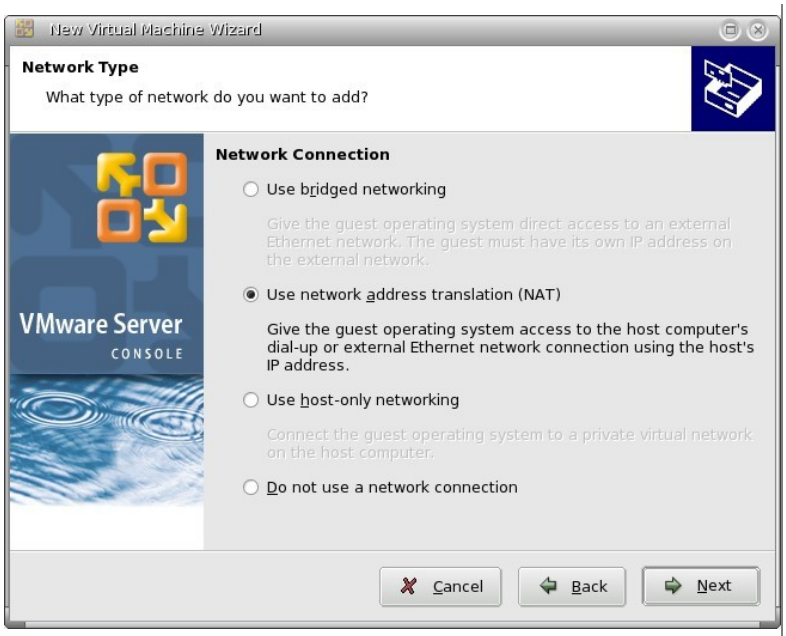
The wizard makes setting up your first virtual machine rather easy.



Choose the guest OS you want to install into this virtual machine.



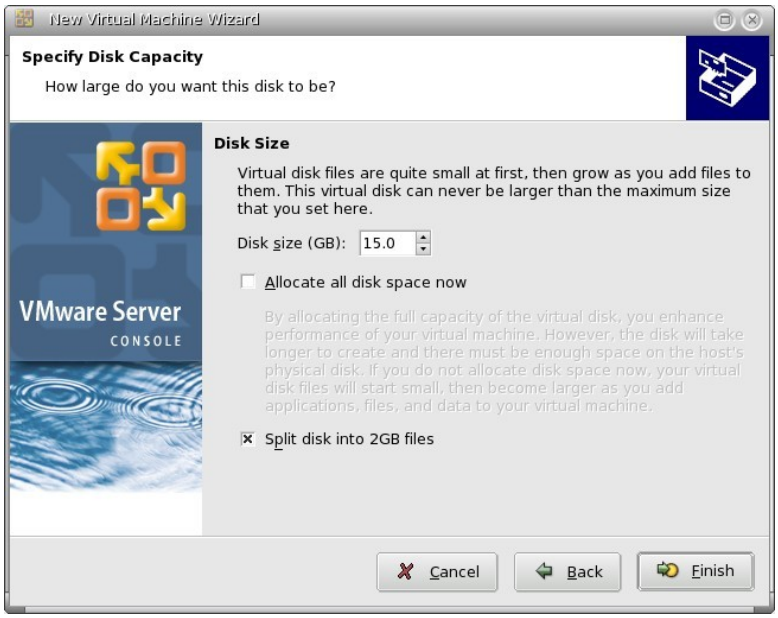
You need to have specified the type of networking you want the virtual machine to have. NAT seems the most appropriate for desktop use.



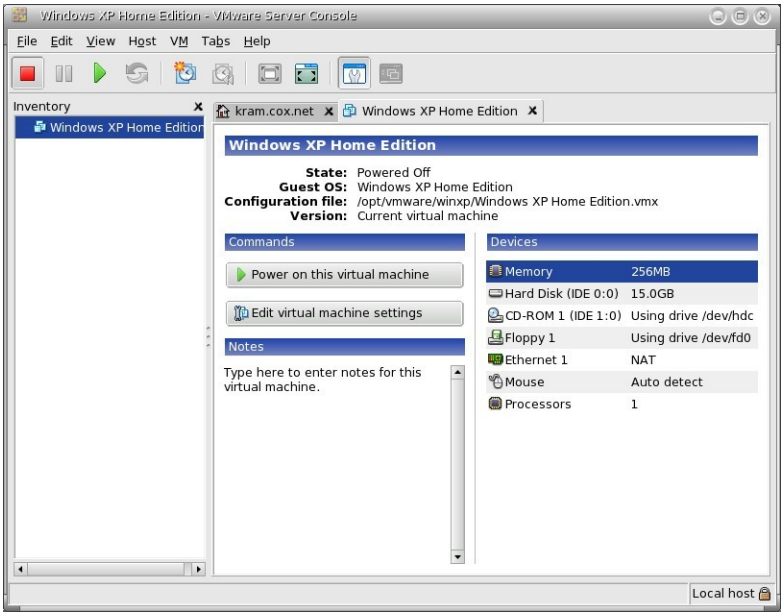
Then you need to select the type and size of virtual hard drive. You have to decide now how big it can become, since you can't change it later to make it bigger.

If you don't allocate all the space now, the image will start small and grow over time, although this is slower. It can also be reduced in total size, later, using vmware tools inside the virtual machine. If you choose to allocate all the space now, then it will be large, but faster, since it doesn't have to allocate more disc space on the fly.

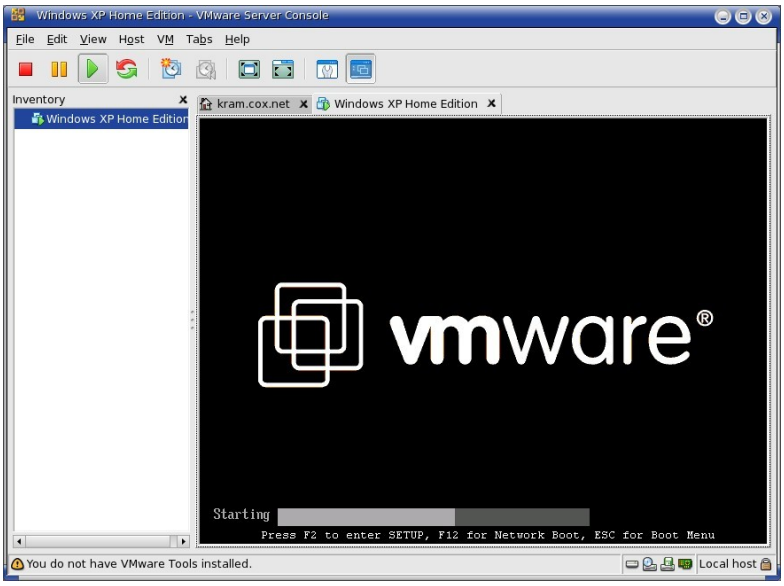
The split makes it easier for backups.



All done. At this point, you can either start the virtual machine or you can configure it further (for example, you might want to create a virtual sound card or virtual USB controller).



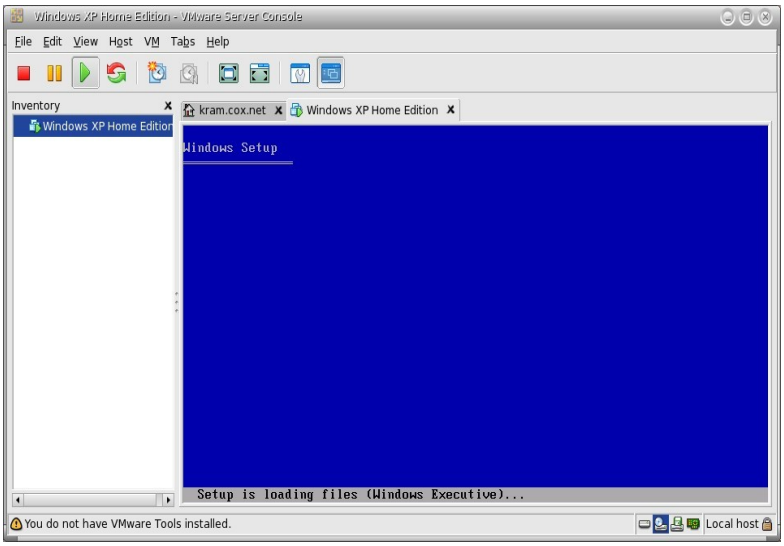
Clicking on the RUN button starts the Vmware virtual machine. It is just like booting a real X86 machine, complete with a virtual BIOS.



If you inserted a bootable media in the CDROM/DVD drive or floppy drive, the virtual machine will boot from it.

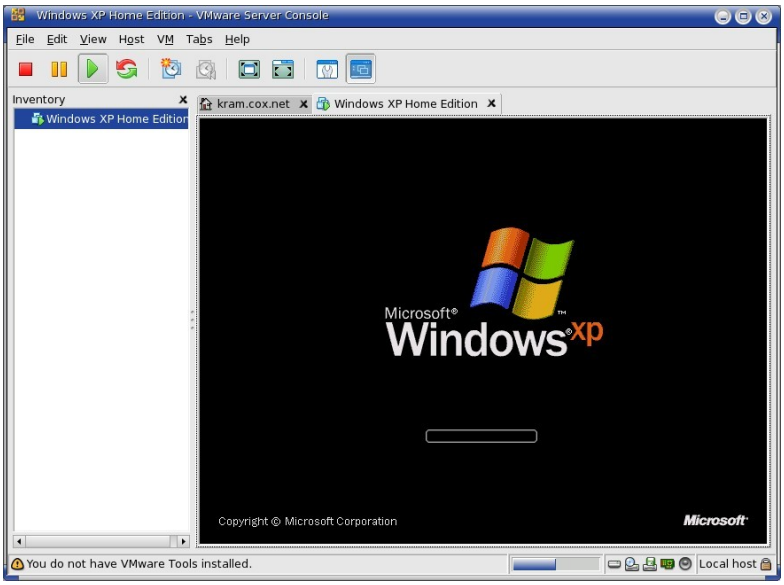
In this case, an MS-Windows XP Home Service Pack 2, non-upgrade CD was inserted...

so we get to the the blue screen of death... oops, I mean the blue screen of installation.



Yep, looks like an MS-Windows XP boot procedure.

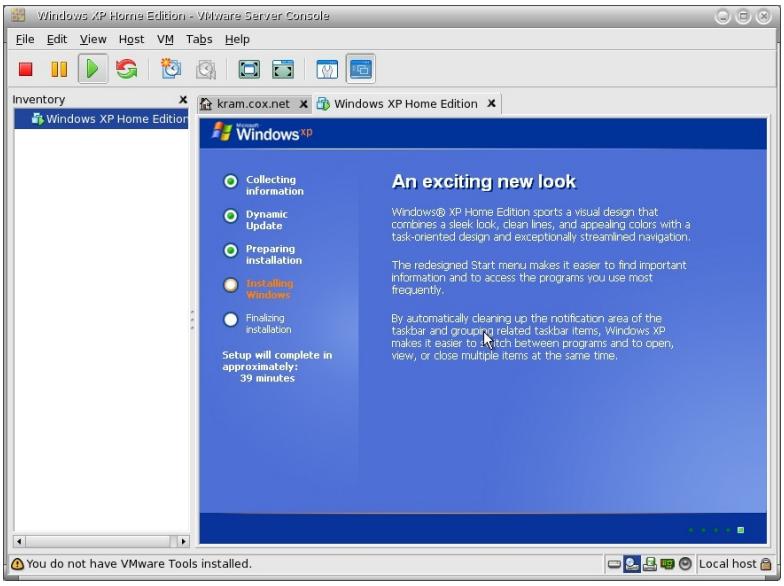
If you like, you can click on View->Full Screen to take over the whole screen. Or just leave it like this to run in a 640x480 window (the default).



The typical MS-Windows text-based, blue screen installer will appear and walk you through installation. It will partition and format the virtual hard drive, and then load the installation files onto it from the CD.

In the MS-Windows style, several reboots will be necessary. A reboot of the virtual machine will look a lot like a reboot of a real machine.

After the first virtual “reboot”, you see what is on the right and installation will continue.

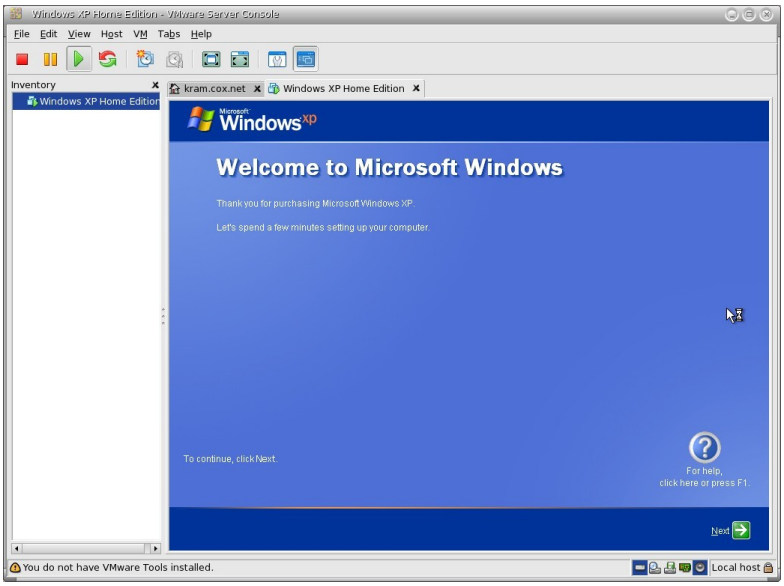


MS-Windows will object to 640x480 after another reboot, automatically change to 800x600 and continue.

Wow- animation, and sound even! Seems to be working fine so far.

The next screens want to check Internet connection and registration, both are skipped for now.

Then enter the “user” names.



All done! Took about the same amount of time as installation on a real machine.

But before you go playing around too much, there is something you should do first...

Now you can customize the guest OS by setting up networking, loading applications, etc.

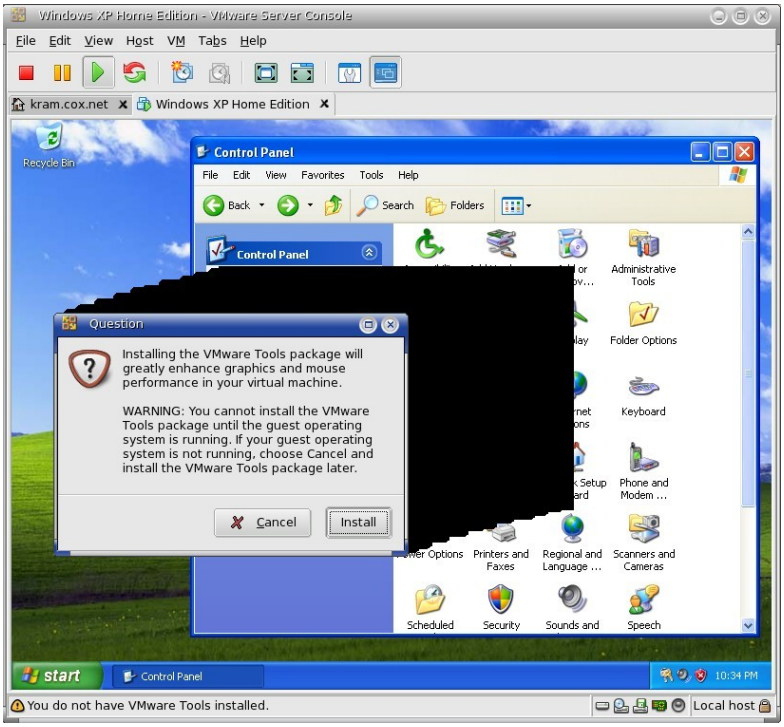
Install the VMWare tools into the guest OS. It is quite easy and it will greatly enhance the speed and efficiency of the OS running in the virtual machine. It will install some MS-Windows drivers, one of which will allow you share files with the host OS (Linux).

Just click on VM on the toolbar at top and choose “VMWare tools install”.

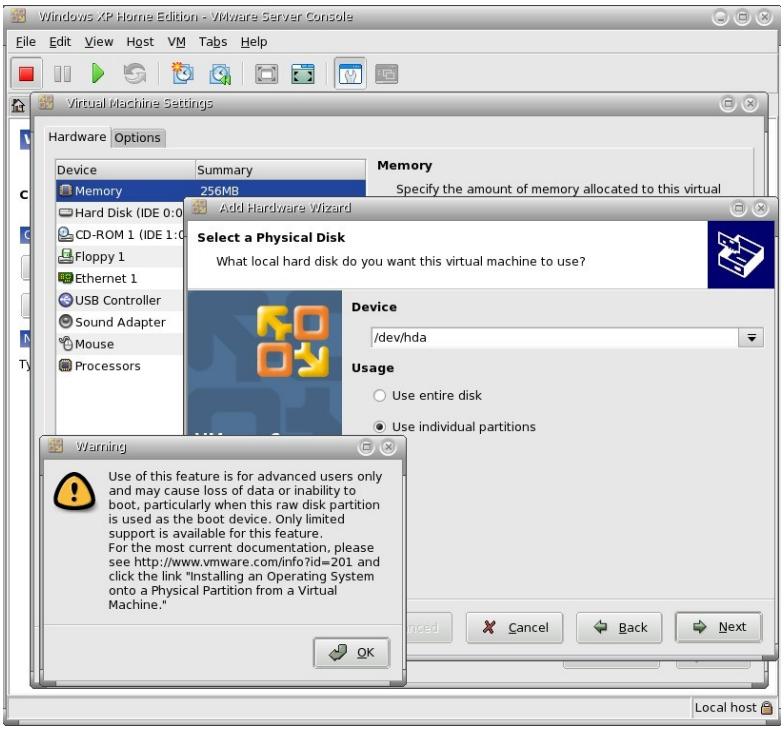
It will magically look like you just somehow started an installation of software under MS-Windows!

As usual, it will require a reboot for MS-Windows to pick up the changes.

Then, you are ready to install apps and use the virtual machine for real.



You might want to stop now, shutdown the guest OS and make a backup. Since we used the “grow over time” option for the virtual machine, it is about as small as it will ever be. By having a backup now, you can go back to this virtual machine state later by restoring the backup files, and it should be small enough to fit on various backup media. For example, /opt/vmware/winxp is now 1.3GB. A gzipped tar archive of that directory is only 640MB, and will just fit on a CDR!

One of the few differences between VMWare Server and VMWare Workstation is that Server does not provide “virtual folders”. This makes it much more difficult to browse the Linux filesystem from inside the XP guest or vice-versa. Other than scp/ftp, the main solution is using SAMBA on the Linux host (which can be complex). Another method is to create a physical fat32 filesystem on one of the partitions of a real hard drive on the host and then add that to the virtual machine. You can CAREFULLY select just that partition. Caution! Incorrect settings could severely damage the host partitions or filesystems and you could lose everything. You can't have the partition mounted under Linux and the guest XP at the same time, however... changes from one side won't be seen by the other. If you decide to try and shrink the guest VM files later, you must first remove any “real” partitions that are mounted under the VM before vmware tools will allow it.	
Here are some links relating to the specific issues with 2006.0 networking with VMWare Server 1.0. Your results may vary (mine did).	http://www.vmware.com/community/message.jspa?messageID=295615 http://qa.mandriva.com/show_bug.cgi?id=19484