

Individual Setup Path Checklist

A comprehensive guide to personal digital sovereignty

How to use this checklist

Work through each section at your own pace. This journey is about progress, not perfection. The timeline is flexible - adjust according to your comfort level and available time.

Phase 1: Software Independence (Months 1-4)

First Steps (Month 1)

- Switch to Perplexity for search needs
- Replace Chrome/Edge with Vivaldi (Finnish) or LibreWolf
- Change default search engine settings
- Replace Microsoft Office with LibreOffice
- Set up Bitwarden for password management
- Install Joplin for note organization with cloud synchronization

Tip: Make a list of browser extensions you rely on and find privacy-respecting alternatives before switching browsers.

Cloud Independence (Month 2)

- Migrate files from Google Drive/OneDrive to NextCloud
- Register personal domain through OVHcloud for digital identity
- Configure Joplin to sync with NextCloud for encrypted notes
- Set up file version history and secure sharing features
- Organize files with clear folder structure
- Create backup strategy for important data

Tip: Start with your most frequently accessed files, then move older archives later in the process.

Communication Migration (Months 3-4)

- Use Thunderbird to access and gradually migrate from Gmail/Outlook
- Set up Mailbox.org (German) or OVHcloud Email with your personal domain
- Use email forwarding during transition period
- Synchronize calendar and contacts using standard protocols (CalDAV/CardDAV)
- Replace messaging apps with Signal or Element
- Create email signature with new contact information

- Update email address on important accounts (financial, government, etc.)
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Phase 2: Hardware Transition (When Ready)

Hardware Selection

- Research sovereign hardware options that fit your needs
- Purchase a Lenovo AMD laptop or Minisforum mini PC
- Consider Framework laptop for repairability
- Prioritize devices with AMD processors over Intel
- Research compatibility with Linux before purchasing
- Consider sustainable and ethical manufacturing when possible

Operating System Migration

- Create backup of all essential data from current system
- Install Linux Mint (beginner-friendly for Windows users)
- Configure system for privacy and security
- Transfer data using external storage or secure synchronization
- Join NZ Linux Users Group for community support
- Learn basic terminal commands for system maintenance
- Set up automatic updates for security patches

Windows Compatibility (If Needed)

- Identify Windows-only applications you rely on
 - Research open-source alternatives to proprietary Windows applications
 - Run essential Windows applications through compatibility layers (Wine/Bottles)
 - Set up virtual machine for Windows-only software if necessary
 - Configure isolated environment for any remaining US-based software
 - Document setup process for future reference
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Going Further: Advanced Sovereignty (Optional)

- Set up a home server for self-hosting services
- Implement network-level privacy with a VPN or PiHole
- Explore federated social media alternatives (Mastodon, etc.)
- Contribute to open-source projects that support digital sovereignty

- Share your experiences to help others on their journey
 - Explore additional hardware independence (e.g., mobile devices)
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Recommended Resources

- Perplexity Search: perplexity.ai
 - Vivaldi Browser: vivaldi.com
 - LibreOffice: libreoffice.org
 - NextCloud: nextcloud.com
 - Joplin: joplinapp.org
 - OVHcloud: ovhcloud.com
 - Mailbox.org: mailbox.org
 - Linux Mint: linuxmint.com
 - Minisforum Mini PCs: minisforum.com
 - NZ Linux Users Group: linux.org.nz
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Benefits of Individual Digital Sovereignty

- **Privacy:** Control over your personal data and communications
- **Security:** Reduced vulnerability to data breaches and surveillance
- **Resilience:** Independence from corporate policy changes and shutdowns
- **Knowledge:** Greater understanding of the tools you use daily
- **Principle:** Alignment between your values and your digital life

For the latest version of this checklist and additional resources, visit MySovereignty.digital

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