

XFCE keyboard shortcuts

Change default keyboard bindings in XFCE

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- [Show desktop with Windows + D](#)
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Lock xfce with Windows + L

Default settings

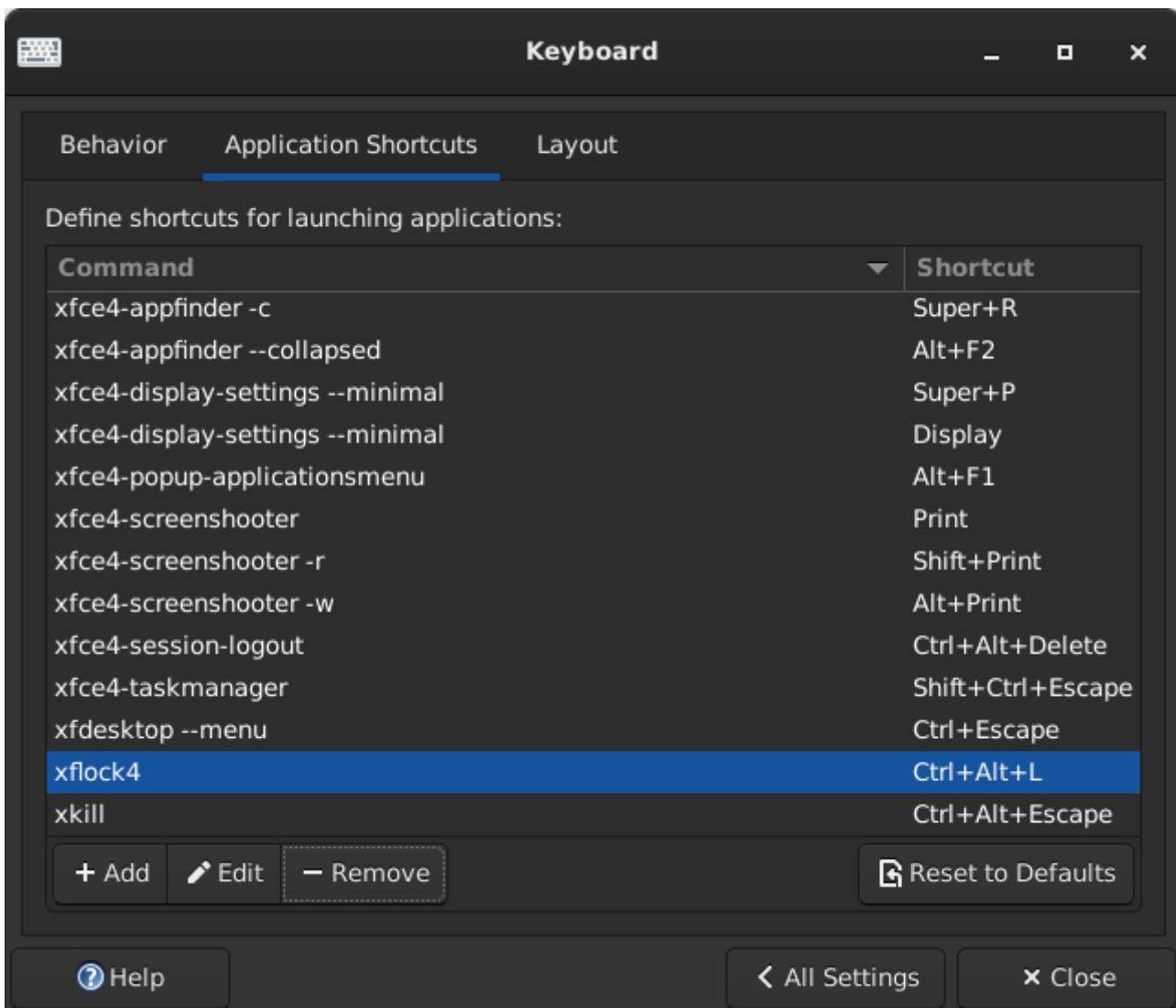
To lock a screen in Xfce by default either:

- Type `xflock4` in the terminal
- Press `Ctrl + Alt + L`

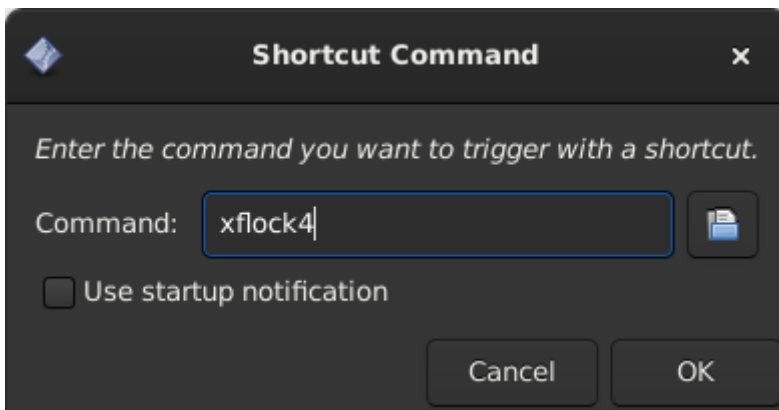
Because the Windows key is basically useless on Linux, I want to bind some shortcuts to it.

Change keyboard shortcut

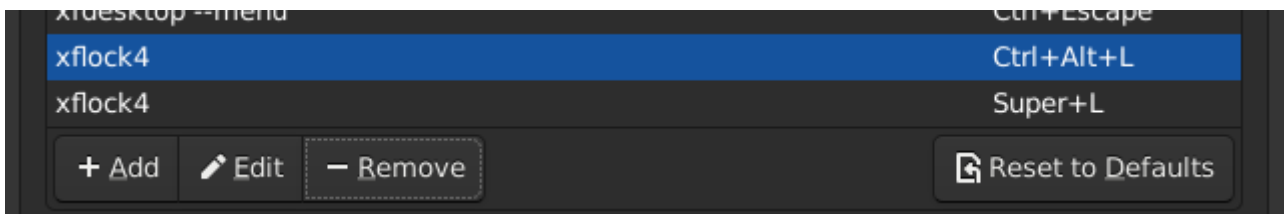
1. To change Keyboard shortcuts, open `Settings Manager` --> `Keyboard` --> `Application Shortcuts`. There you will be able to see all current shortcuts.



2. To add a new one, press the **Add** button at the bottom, type the name of the command you would like to launch with that shortcut and press **OK**. You will then be prompted to press the desired key combination. I am used to **Windows + L**, so I set it that way.



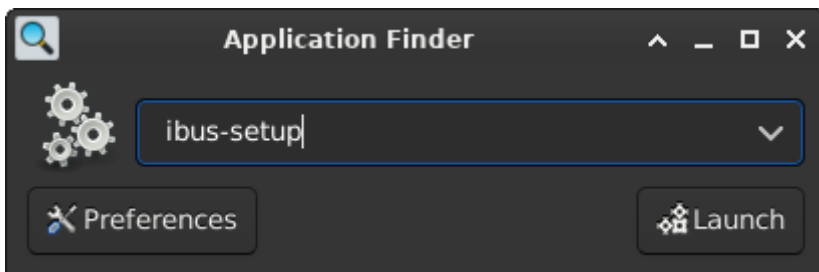
3. Delete the previous shortcut **Ctrl + Alt + L** or keep it.



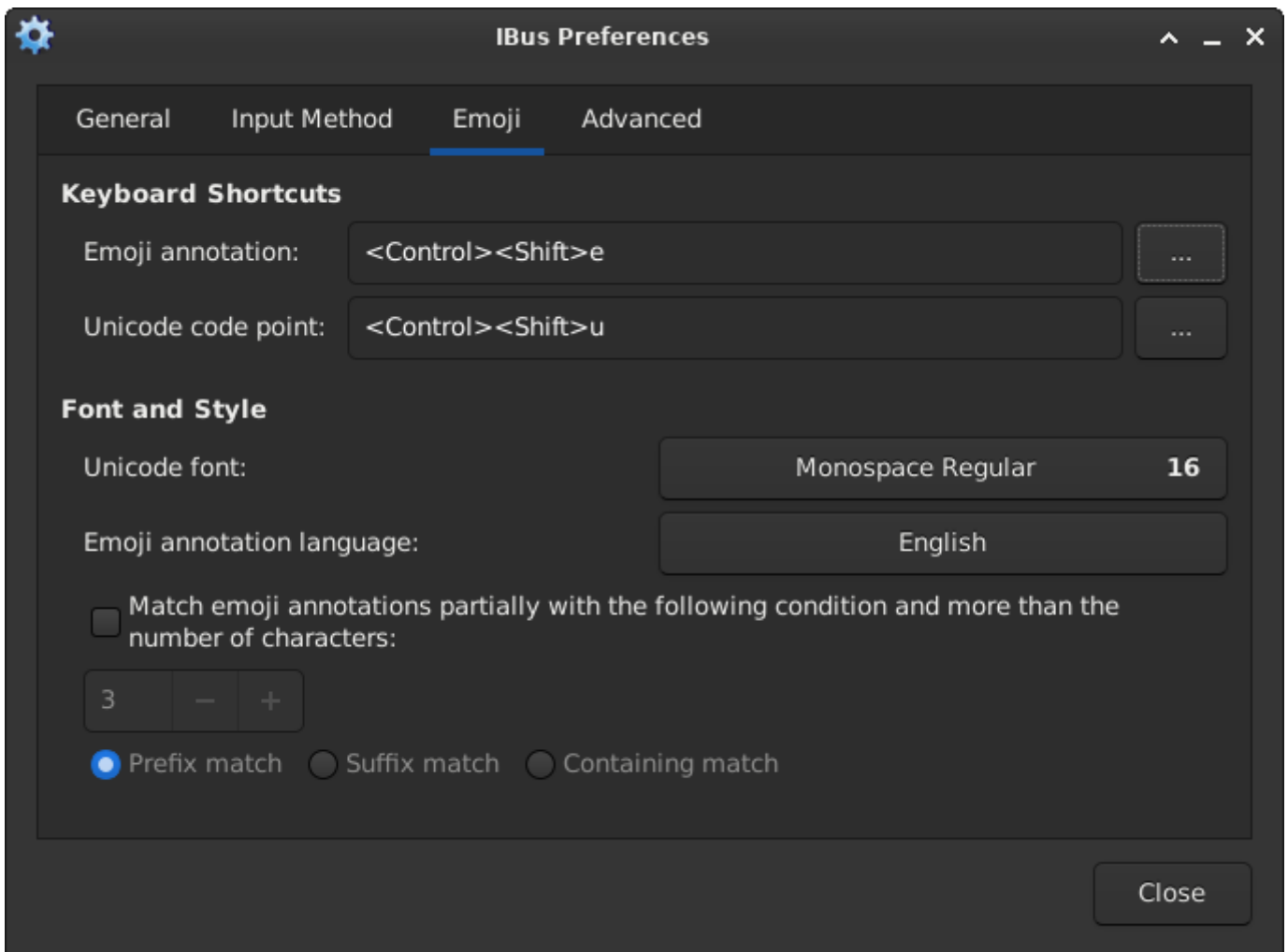
Disable emoji annotation (IBus Preferences)

I have recently found out that the key combination `Ctrl + Shift + E` in my Xfce Debian 11 does something else than I expected. I use it in Bookstack to change a selected part of text to inline code style like `this`. Instead of this however, it calls an Emoji annotation (which, frankly, I will never use).

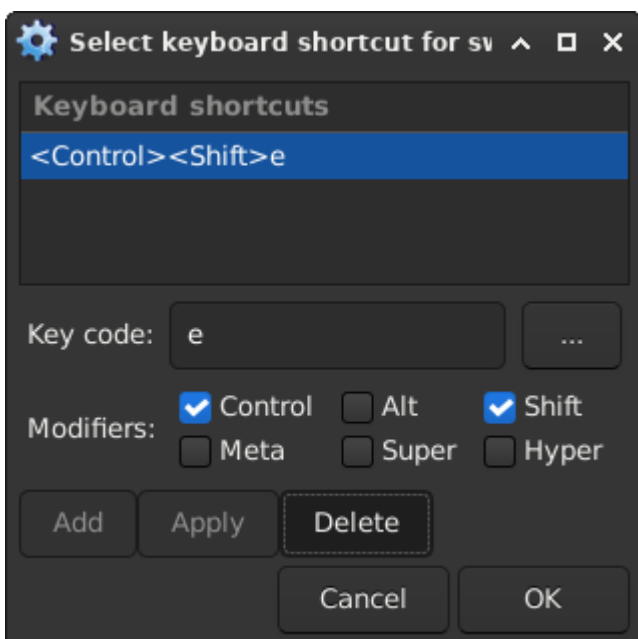
1. To disable this shortcut, open `ibus-setup` (Applications --> Run program or type `ibus-setup` in Terminal).



2. This will open `IBus Preferences`, go to the `Emoji` tab



3. There, click on the three dots button next to `Emoji annotation`, select the shortcut and press `Delete`.



4. The `Emoji annotation` should now be empty and shouldn't interfere with other application shortcuts.



General

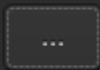
Input Method

Emoji

Advanced

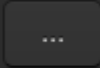
Keyboard Shortcuts

Emoji annotation:



Unicode code point:

<Control><Shift>u

**Font and Style**

Unicode font:

Monospace Regular

16

Emoji annotation language:

English



Match emoji annotations partially with the following condition and more than the number of characters:

3

-

+



Prefix match



Suffix match



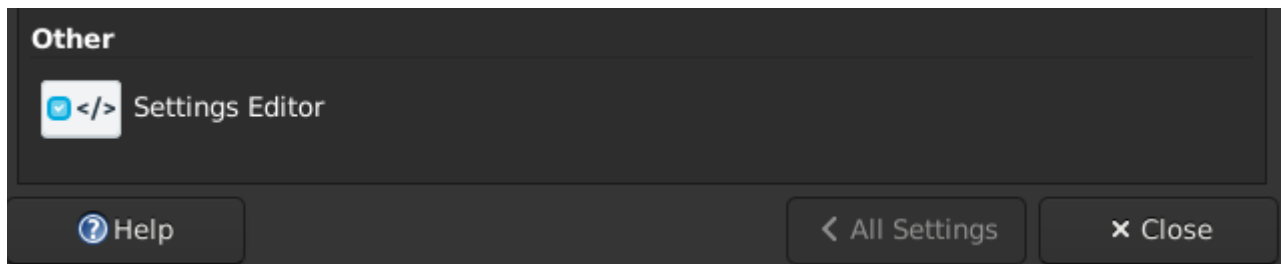
Containing match

Close

Show desktop with Windows + D

Again, `Ctrl + Alt + D` is set as a default shortcut to show desktop. Unfortunately I haven't found it in the Keyboard shortcut settings, so I will have to use the more advanced `Settings Editor`.

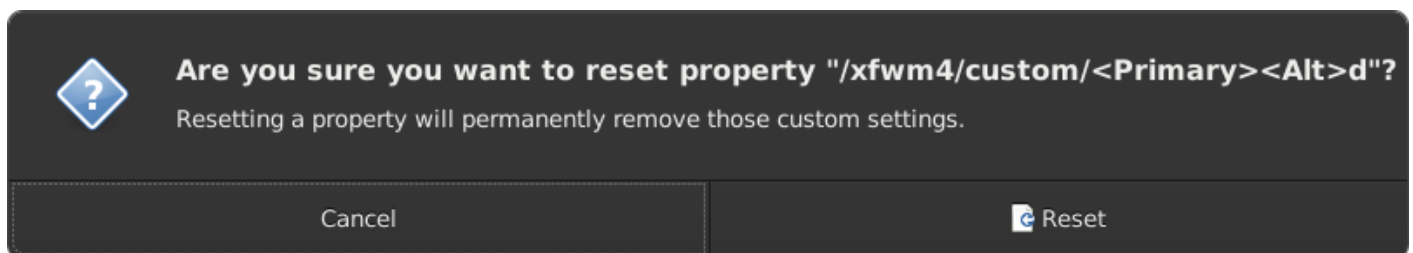
1. `Settings Manager` --> `Settings Editor`



2. Find **Channel** `xfce4-keyboard-shortcuts` and locate a **Property** with `show_desktop_key` value.

xfce4-desktop	<Alt>Tab	String	<input type="checkbox"/>	cycle_windows_key
xfce4-keyboard-shortcuts	Down	String	<input type="checkbox"/>	down_key
xfce4-notifyd	Escape	String	<input type="checkbox"/>	cancel_key
xfce4-panel	Left	String	<input type="checkbox"/>	left_key
xfce4-power-manager	override	Boolean	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
xfce4-session	<Primary><Alt>d	String	<input type="checkbox"/>	show_desktop_key
xfce4-settings-manager	<Primary><Alt>Down	String	<input type="checkbox"/>	down_workspace_key
xfwm4	<Primary><Alt>End	String	<input type="checkbox"/>	move_window_next_workspace_key

3. Click on this **Property** and press the **Reset** button. This will basically delete the **Property** and `Ctrl + Alt + D` won't work for showing the desktop anymore.



4. Now add a new **Property** `/xfwm4/custom/<Super>d` with the same **Value** `(show_desktop_key)` and **Type** `String`

Property: /xfwm4/custom/<Super>d

Type: String ▼

Value: show_desktop_key|

Cancel Save

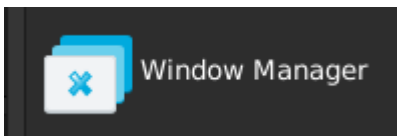
5. Click **Save** and that's it. `Windows + d` will now

work.

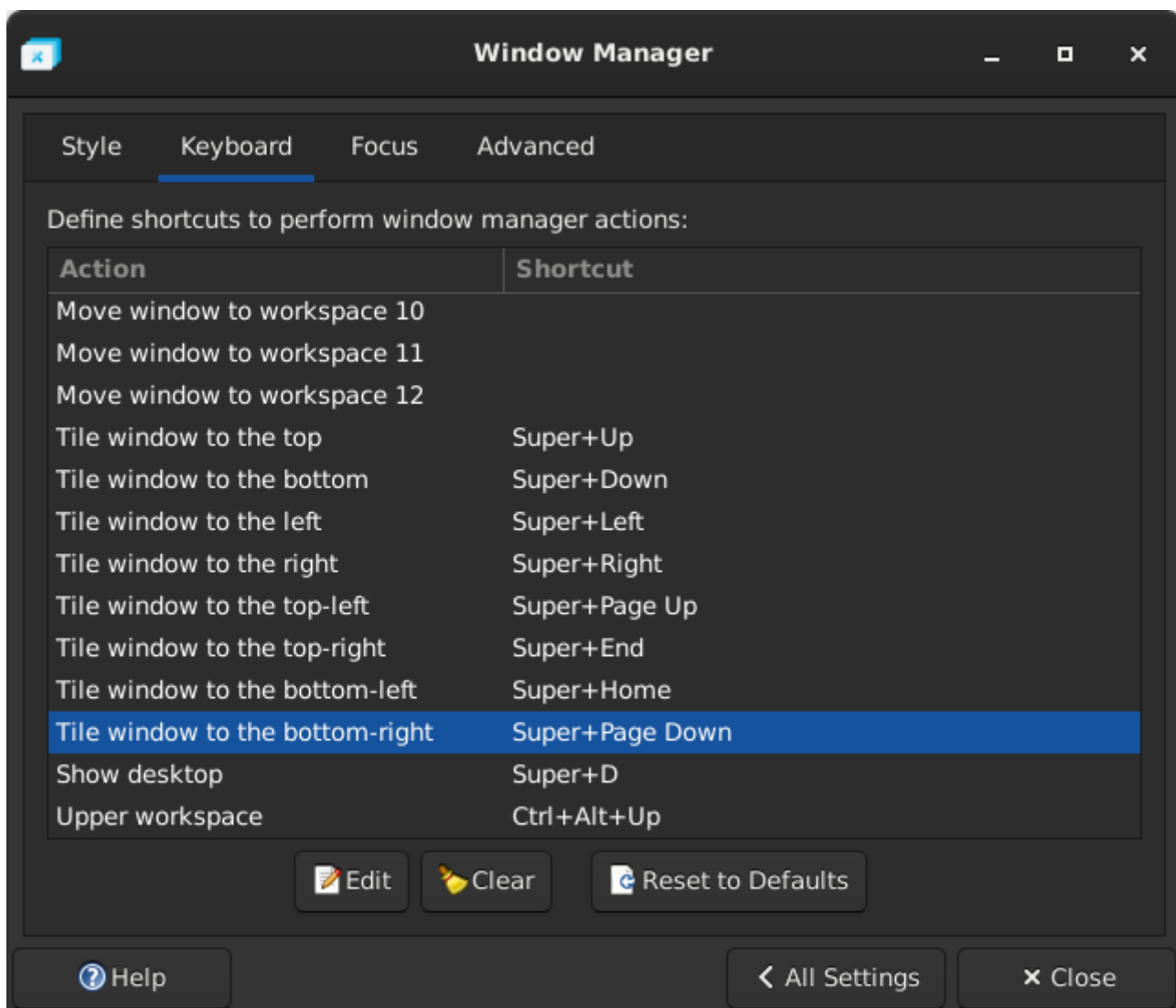
Snap Windows to sides

If you are coming from Windows, you might be familiar with the concept of snapping windows to the left/right side of the screen or to the corners. This is possible within Xfce as well, albeit not as smooth. Without shortcuts, this works by dragging windows to the part of the screen you want it to snap to.

1. Go to **Settings Manager** --> **Window Manager**



2. Open it and go to the **Keyboard** tab. "Tile window to the **X**" is the setting you are looking for, click **Edit** and change it to what suits you.

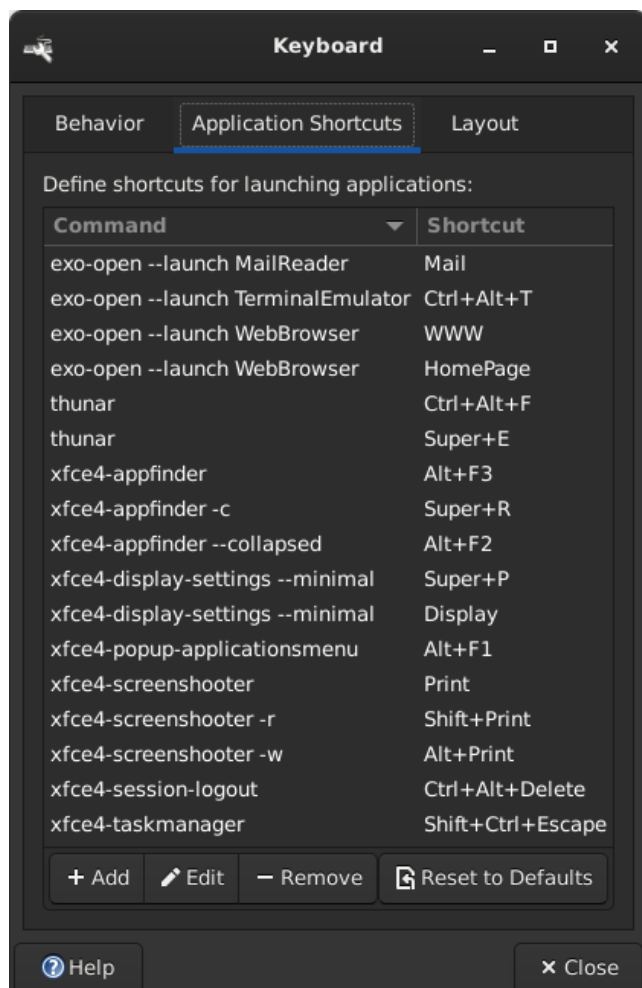


Open Whisker menu with Windows key

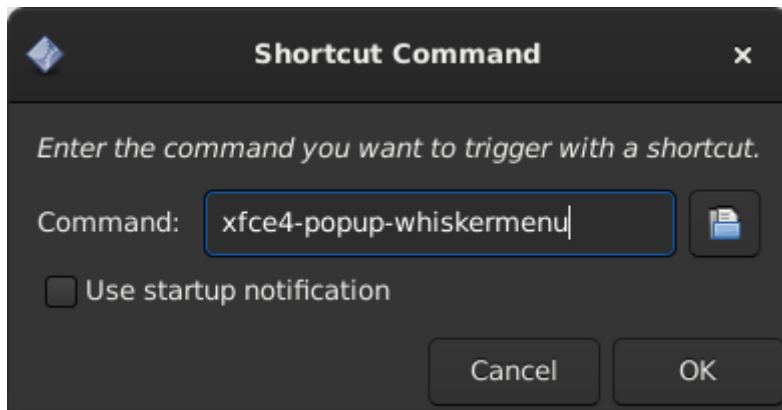
EDIT: There's bug in Xfce (or maybe a feature) that makes it impossible to use shortcuts with only one modifier key, in this case the Windows key. Basically, if you have a keyboard shortcut that uses the Windows/Super key, e.g `Super + Up` and then you make `Super` alone open the Whisker menu (or something else), `Super + Up` shortcut **stops working! To fix this, check the bottom of the article.**

If you come from Windows, you are very likely used to pressing the Windows button and typing a name of an application to launch it. You can achieve the same with Xfce's Whisker menu. Unfortunately it isn't called with the `Windows` (`Super` on non-Windows OSs) key by default. You can change it of course, it's Linux!

1. Go to `Settings Manager` --> `Keyboard` --> `Application Shortcuts`



2. Click the **Add** button and point it to `xfce4-popup-whiskermenu`



3. Click **OK** and press your desired key combination (only the `Super` key in my case).

Done! Pressing the Super/Windows key will now bring up Whisker menu and you can start typing immediately to launch an app you want.

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, there's a problem with using only one modifier key alone as a shortcut, which makes (most) other shortcuts using this modifier key stop working. You will have to download this utility to fix it: <https://github.com/hanschen/ksuperkey>

Unfortunately I haven't made this working yet and decided dropping this shortcut for now.