Flan Reference Manual

Version 2.4 (Build 2014.0)
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This is the manual for version Version 2.4 (Build 2014.0) of Flan (http://www.aperture.akron.oh.us/software/flan), last updated on August 26, 2026.

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1 Introduction to Flan

Flan (aka the Flan Local-Access Notifier) is a free digital calendar signage software, originally written for use at the University of Akron's College of Business. It is intended currently for use with the FreeBSD Operating System and the XLibre display server.

For information regarding Flan, please refer to the: project's Web pages (`https://www.aperture.akron.oh.us/software/flan`). Questions via e-mail may be sent to flan@aperture.akron.oh.us (`mailto:flan@aperture.akron.oh.us`).

1.1 Downloading Flan

Flan is licensed under the Anton McClure Software License Terms. See the file `LICENSE` for details.

Tarballs downloads are available from Aperture's release download server over either the HTTP (`http://release.dl.aperture.akron.oh.us/software/flan/`) or HTTPs (`https://release.dl.aperture.akron.oh.us/software/flan/`) protocol.

1.1.1 Requirements

Flan requires the following when running:

- XLibre (or another X11 display server)
- XPM library
- ical library
- xml2 library

1.2 Running Flan

Assuming that you've got a Flan configuration file set up already, simply run the command:

```
$flan /optional/path/to/config
```

If your are not currently using X11, you should run it with xinit like so:

```
$xinit flan /optional/path/to/config
```

If all goes well, Flan should open on your current TTY. If you want to automate Flan, you may use the included systemd service file to do so. By default, the systemd script is configured to use TTY7 as Flan is intended to run standalone without an underlying desktop environment or window manager.

If you need to set up your config file, the next chapter, "Settings", goes over all of the settings categories and options that you will find in the standard issue sample config.

2 Configuration and Settings

A sample configuration file may be found within the tarball for any given version. The settings are described below as follows. At the end of the chapter is all of the settings as they will appear in the sample configuration file.

2.1 Main Settings

These, long with source (ICS/XML) files, were the first editable options in Flan, with the goal of making it useful for more than just room 101 at the University of Akron College of Business.

refresh

Time between data reloads.

days

Number of days shown on-screen.

logo

XPM image file used as on-screen logo.

title

Title of calendar/organization.

mode

File type used. This can be either ics for calendar files, or xml for XML documents.

regex

Expression used to separate title and subtitle.

2.2 Font Settings

All of the fonts must be written using the X Logical Font Description (XLFD) format.

m

Primary calendar font

a

Secondary header font

l

Primary header font

d

Secondary calendar font

i

Info bar font

2.3 Color Settings

t_bgc
: Header background color

t_txt
: Header text color

b_bgc
: Calendar background color

b_txt
: Calendar text color

s_bgc
: Info bar background color

s_txt
: Info bar text color

c_bgc
: Cell background color

2.4 Text Settings

Text is just written with the left and right sides separated by '\\'. This is not the default text, but Anton did not like how the PDF copy formatted it when the default text was used here.

'`Left side text\\Right side text`'

2.5 SRC Settings

Calendars are just written as title=link.

'`Test 1=ftp://ftp.example.cascaded.org/cal/test1.ics`'

2.6 All Together

All of the default settings as intended may look something like this:

```
; Sample flan.cfg for Flan
; http://www.aperture.akron.oh.us/software/flan
;
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; All rights reserved.

[main]
refresh=3600
days=3
logo=/usr/local/share/flan/default.xpm
title=Planning Flan
```

```
mode=ics
regex=^(.+)[[:space:]]?--[[:space:]]?(.*)

[fonts]
m=-*-helvetica-medium-r-normal-*-20-*-*-*-*-*-*-*
a=-*-times-bold-r-normal-*-24-*-*-*-*-*-*-*
l=-*-new century schoolbook-bold-r-normal-*-34-*-*-*-*-*-*-*
d=-*-helvetica-medium-r-normal-*-17-*-*-*-*-*-*-*
i=-*-new century schoolbook-medium-r-*-*-17-*-*-*-*-*-*-*

[colors]
t_bgc=#4A6B8C
t_txt=#FFFFFF
b_bgc=#CCD3D7
b_txt=#224466
s_bgc=#3A5B71
s_txt=#E3E3E5
c_bgc=#FFFFFF

[text]
This is the planning flan\\This is test text
Save this to /usr/local/etc/flan.cfg\\and edit as needed.

[src]
Test 1=/usr/local/share/flan/test1.ics
Test 2=/usr/local/share/flan/test2.ics
Test 3=/usr/local/share/flan/test3.ics
```

3 Updates and Upgrades

At this time, Flan does not have a built-in way to check for and install software updates. You can, however, automate this process by having a script periodically download a copy of a tarball, extract the tarball, and then install the files to their appropriate locations from there. For example, you may put the flan binary in '`/usr/local/bin/`' and the manual files in '`/usr/local/share/doc/`' for future reference. There is no right or wrong place for anything, so you don't need to worry about a rigid file structure.