

# Stop the Hard Drive Grinding at Login



*In Ubuntu, is your hard drive grinding at login? Gnome 2 theme crashing? Here is how to fix it.*

## Introduction

When using Ubuntu, you might run into the grinding hard drive problem shortly after login or witness your Gnome theme crashing and defaulting to ugly Gnome. Believe it or not, this is normal operation, but a terrible design. If you have a large hard drive, then the grinding can last minutes and slow down your entire system.

Why does this happen? After watching System Monitor > Resources, the gnome-settings-daemon process appeared as “Uninterruptable” during this annoying wait and disappeared when completed.

The culprit is gnome-settings-daemon!

The grinding is the result of managing the ~/.thumbnails directory. The more thumbnails that exist, the longer the grinding. 36,555 files can cause five minutes of hard drive grinding. Thankfully, this can be fixed to eliminate all hard drive grinding and prevent the Gnome theme from crashing.

## What is going on?

There are two values for managing the thumbnails: **maximum\_age** (how many days to store the thumbnails) and **maximum\_size** (the size of the thumbnail cache in

megabytes). These values are set much too high by default. Lowering these values eliminates the hard drive grinding and Gnome theme crashing.

#### New values:

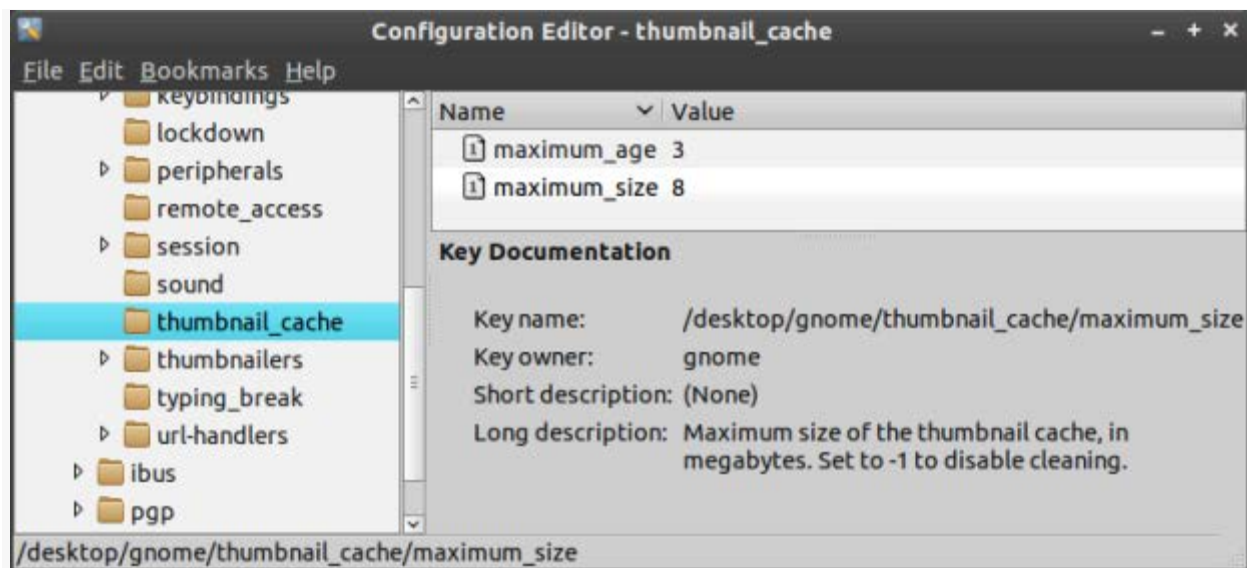
**maximum\_age 3**    Number of days to cache the thumbnails

**maximum\_size 8**    Maximum size of the thumbnail cache in megabytes

## Solution

### Method 1. Use Configuration Editor

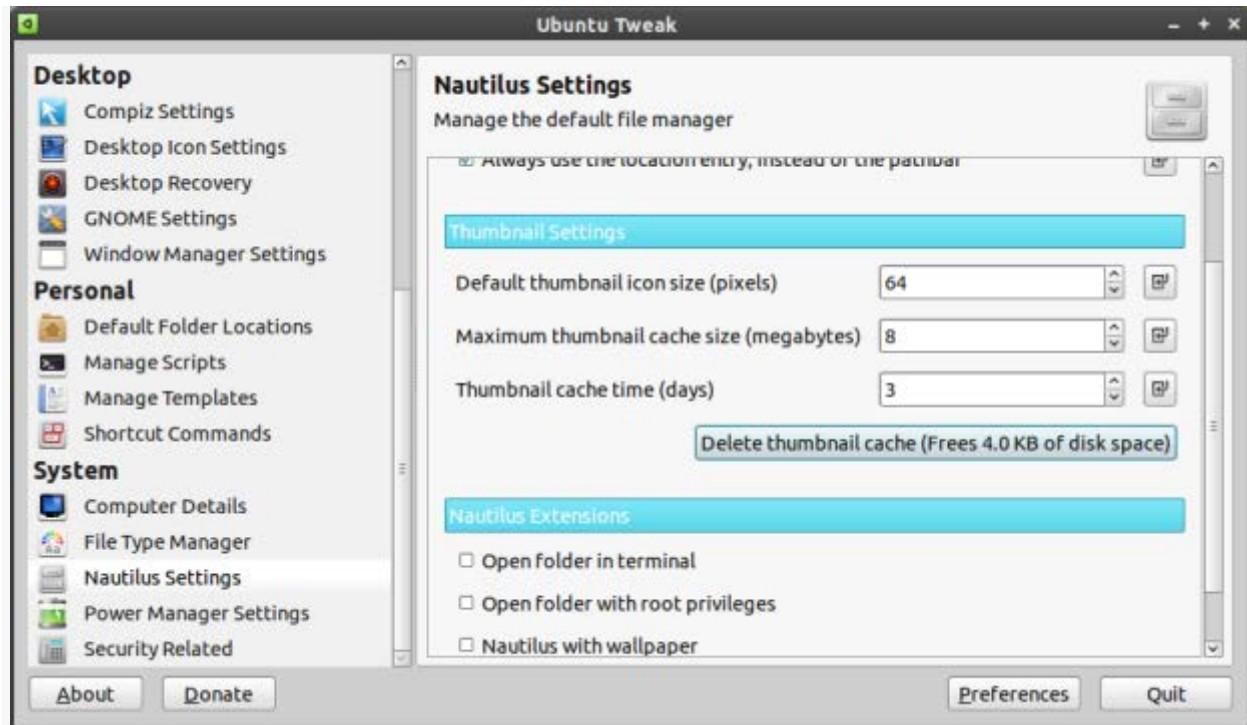
From a terminal, enter `gconf-editor` to launch the Configuration Editor and then navigate to `desktop > gnome > thumbnail_cache` and set `minimum_age` to 3 for 3 days and set `maximum_size` to 8 to limit the thumbnail cache to 8 megabytes. Both values can be set to -1 to disable caching completely, but these values allow some thumbnail caching.



`gconf-editor` adjusts the thumbnail cache settings.

### Method 2. Use Ubuntu Tweak

[Ubuntu Tweak](#) is another program for adjusting the same values. In Ubuntu Tweak, go to System > Nautilus Settings, Thumbnail Settings and set the **Maximum thumbnail cache** size to 8 and the **Thumbnail cache time** to 3. Delete the thumbnail cache to clear it.



Ubuntu Tweak allows you to adjust the thumbnail caching.

I automatically make these adjustments for each new Ubuntu installation, and never again have I experienced hard drive grinding or a crashing ugly Gnome theme.

Source : <https://delightfullylinux.wordpress.com/2012/03/15/stop-the-hard-drive-grinding-at-login/>