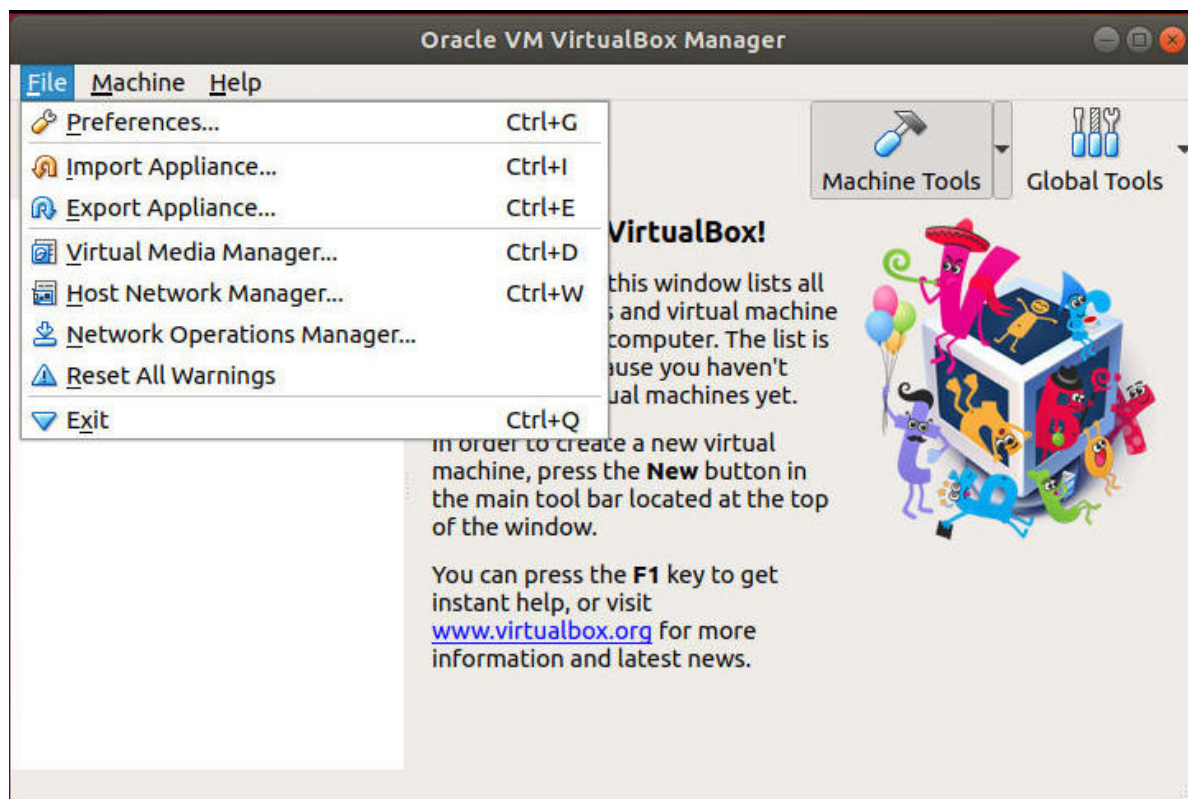


How to Import/Export OVA Files in VirtualBox

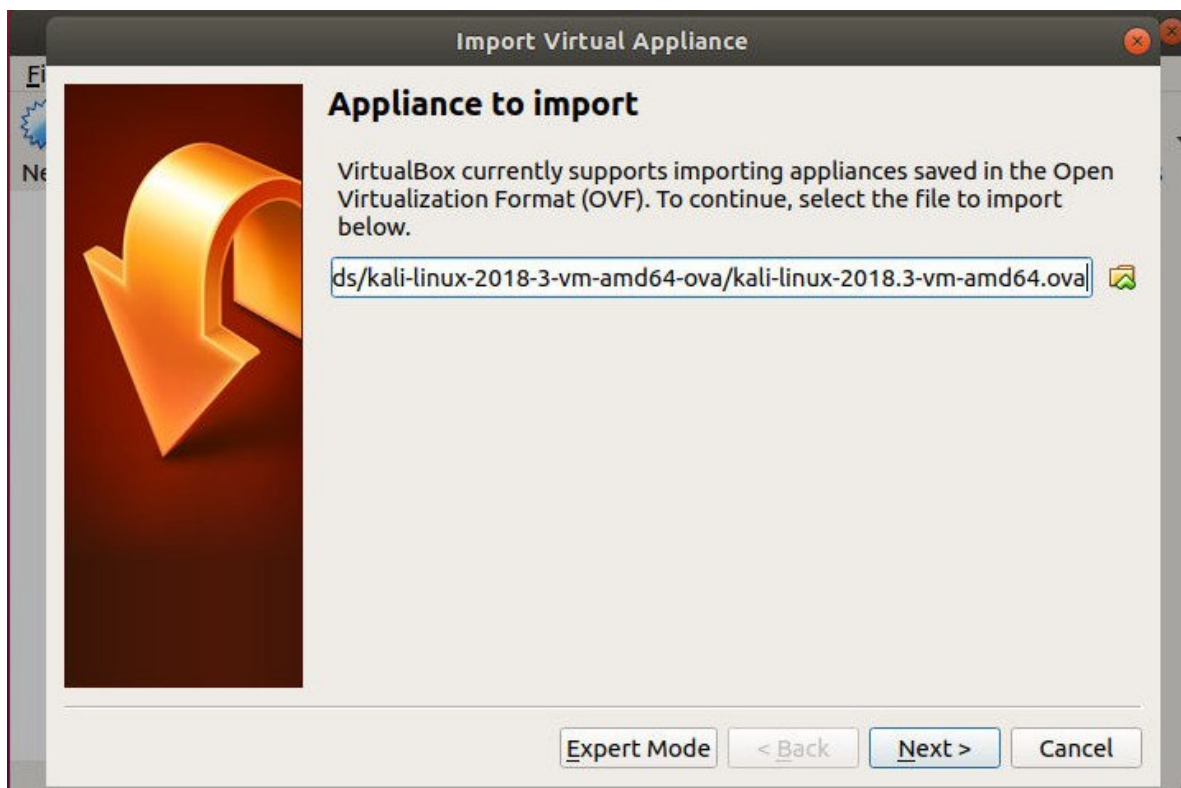
One of the biggest strengths in working with virtual machines is their portability. It's great to be able to create VMs on one machine and move them to another, or you can create and clone an entire deployment of VMs. At the same time, you can find pre-configured virtual machines online that you can import in a snap and get working right away.

Oracle's VirtualBox makes all of this very simple. If you're not familiar, VirtualBox is VM management for the desktop. It's a graphical application that you can use to create and manage your virtual machines easily on your desktop or workstation. There's no complicated install or configuration necessary.

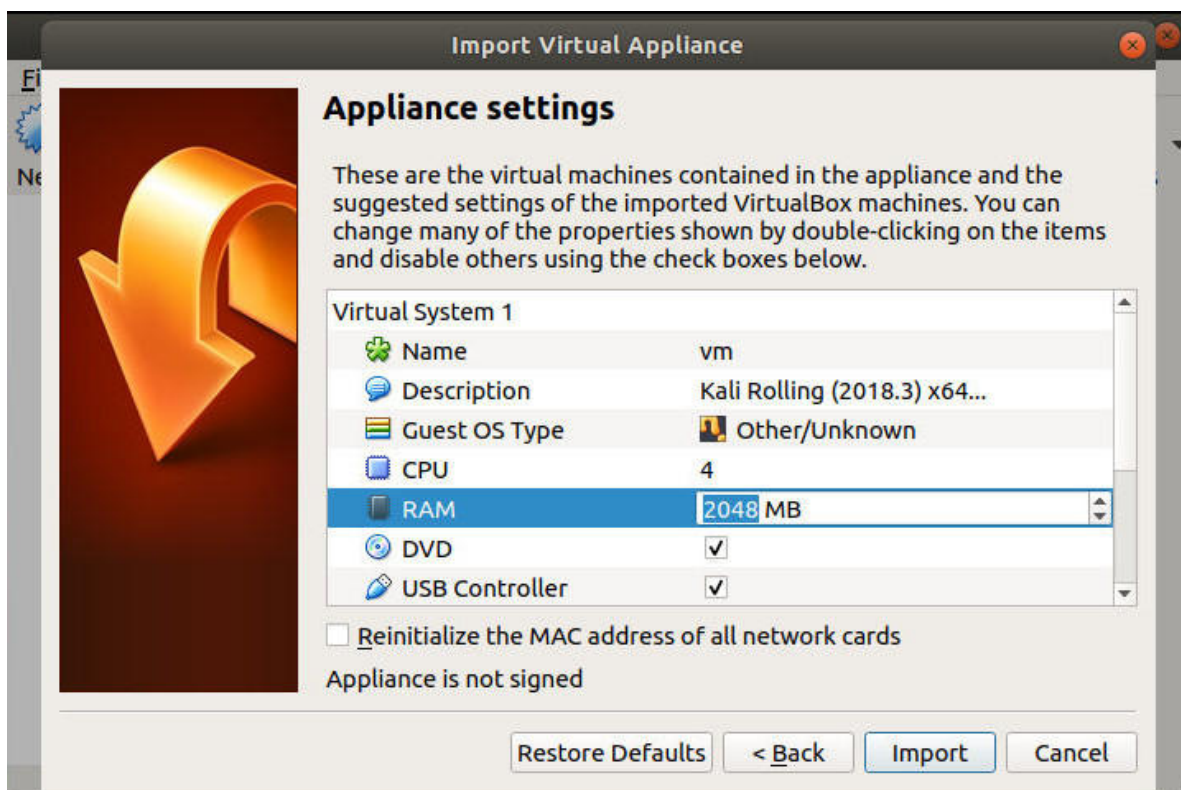
Importing an OVA



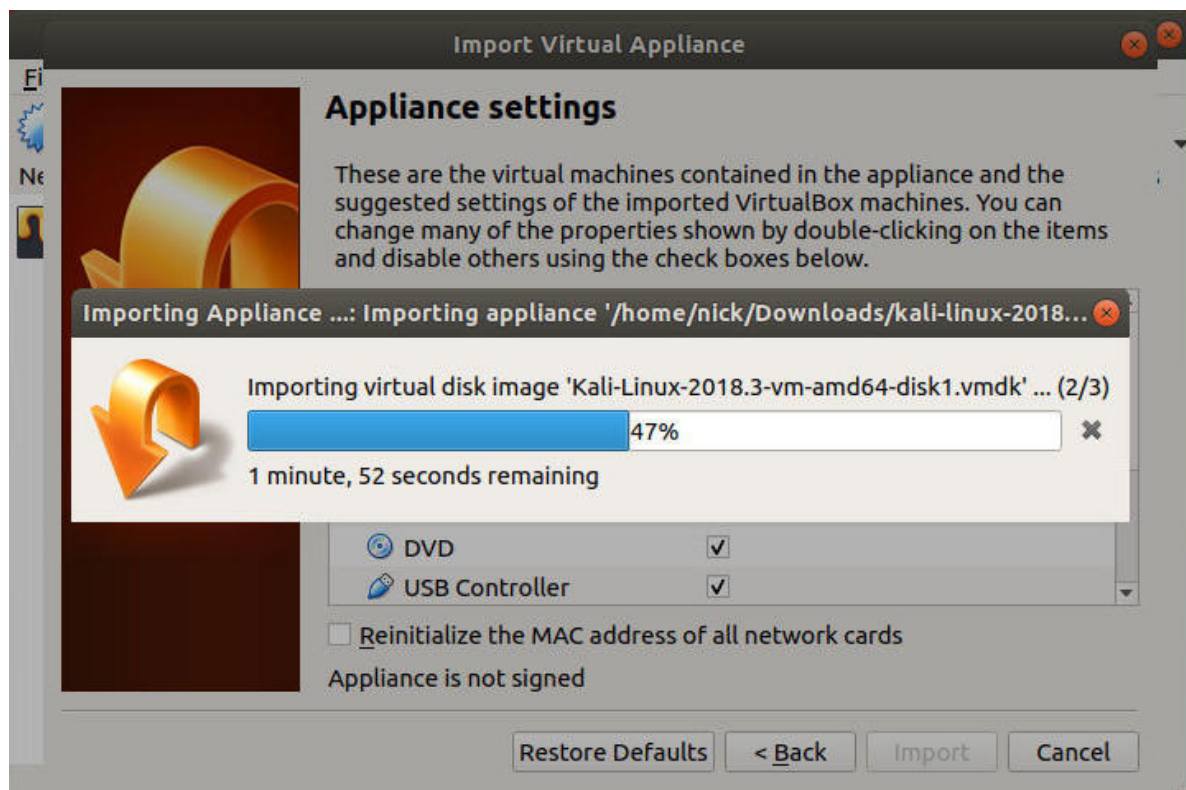
When you have VirtualBox running, locate "File" in the top menu, and click on it. Then, select "Import Appliance." VirtualBox refers to virtual machines as appliances.



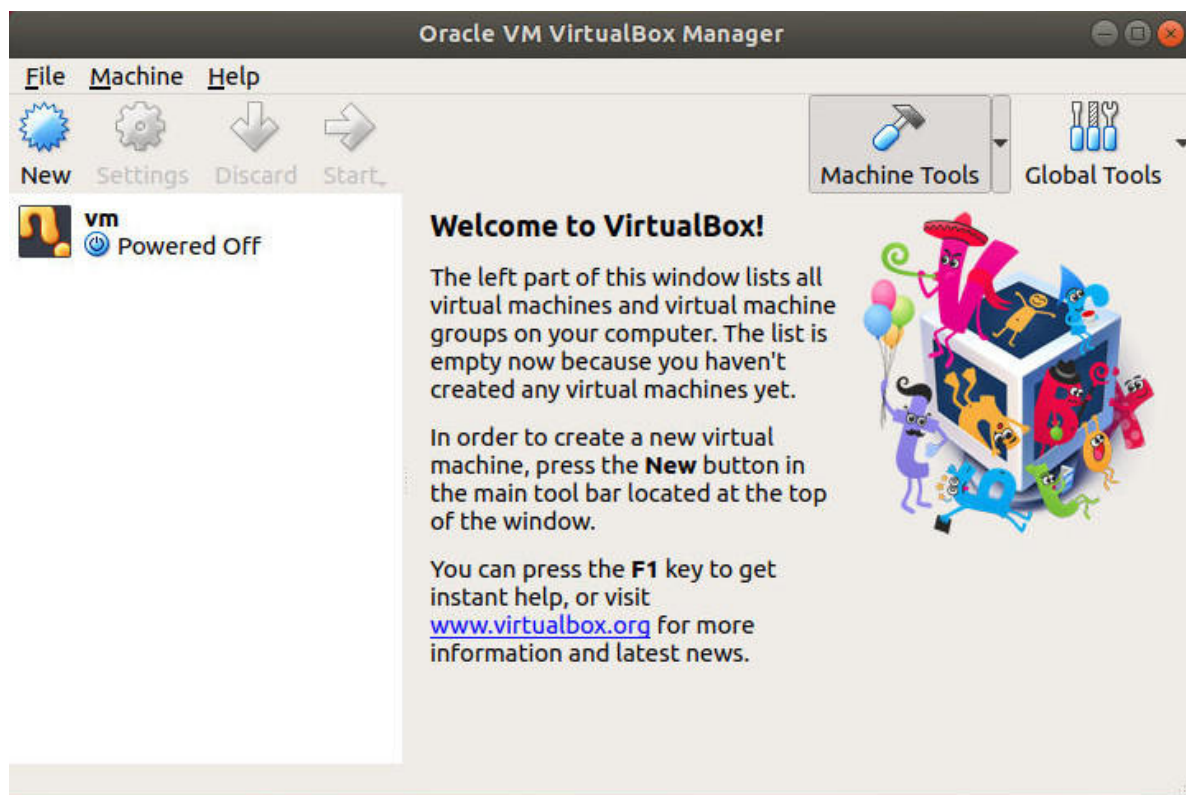
A new window will pop open with a field for you to select your .ova file. Browse to the file that you'd like to import. VirtualBox will take a few seconds to read the information on the file.



The window will shift to a table that lets you choose the settings for your soon-to-be-imported appliance. From here, you can set key features of the virtual machine, like the amount of available memory. When you're ready, finish up and let VirtualBox run the import process.



After the process completes, your VM will be ready to use.



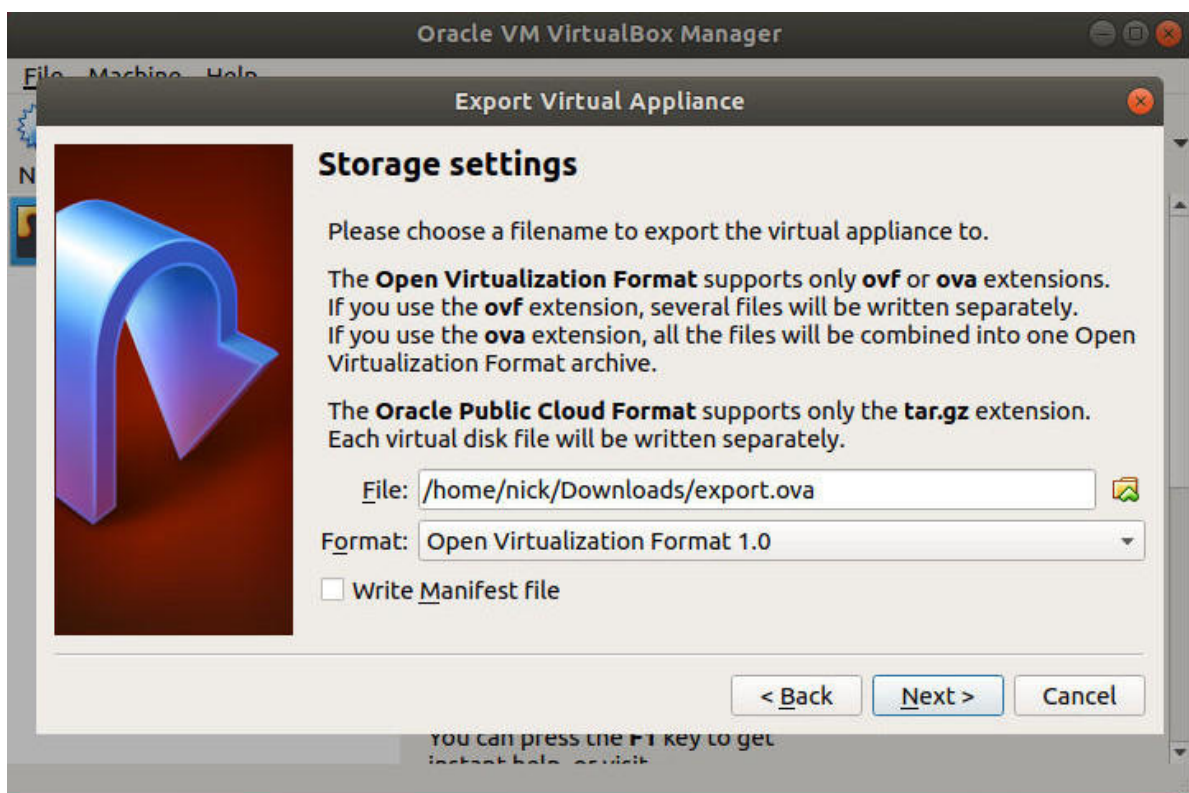
Exporting an OVA

Exporting OVA files might be even more important than importing them. It's a great way to back up and take snapshots of your VMs. Exporting your OVAs also enables you to clone them across multiple machines or run simultaneous instances of your VMs on the same computer.

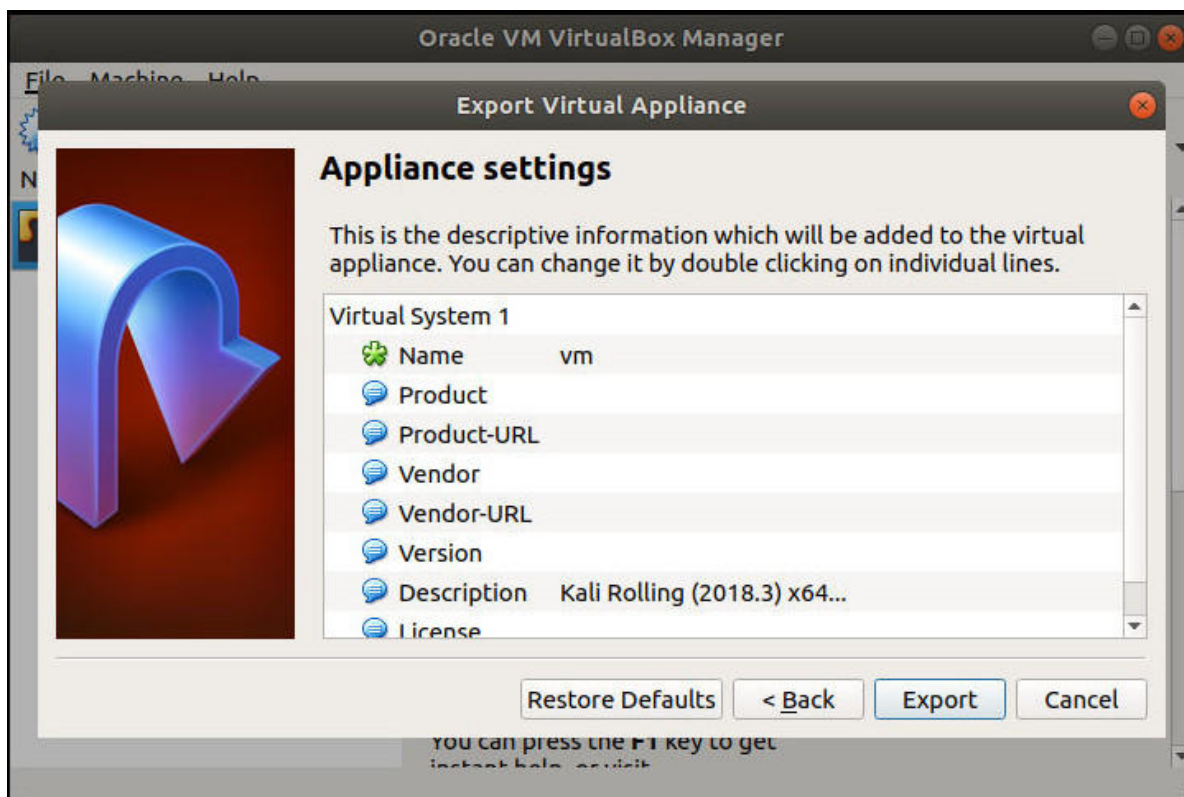
Return to the "File" menu and, this time, click "Export Appliance."



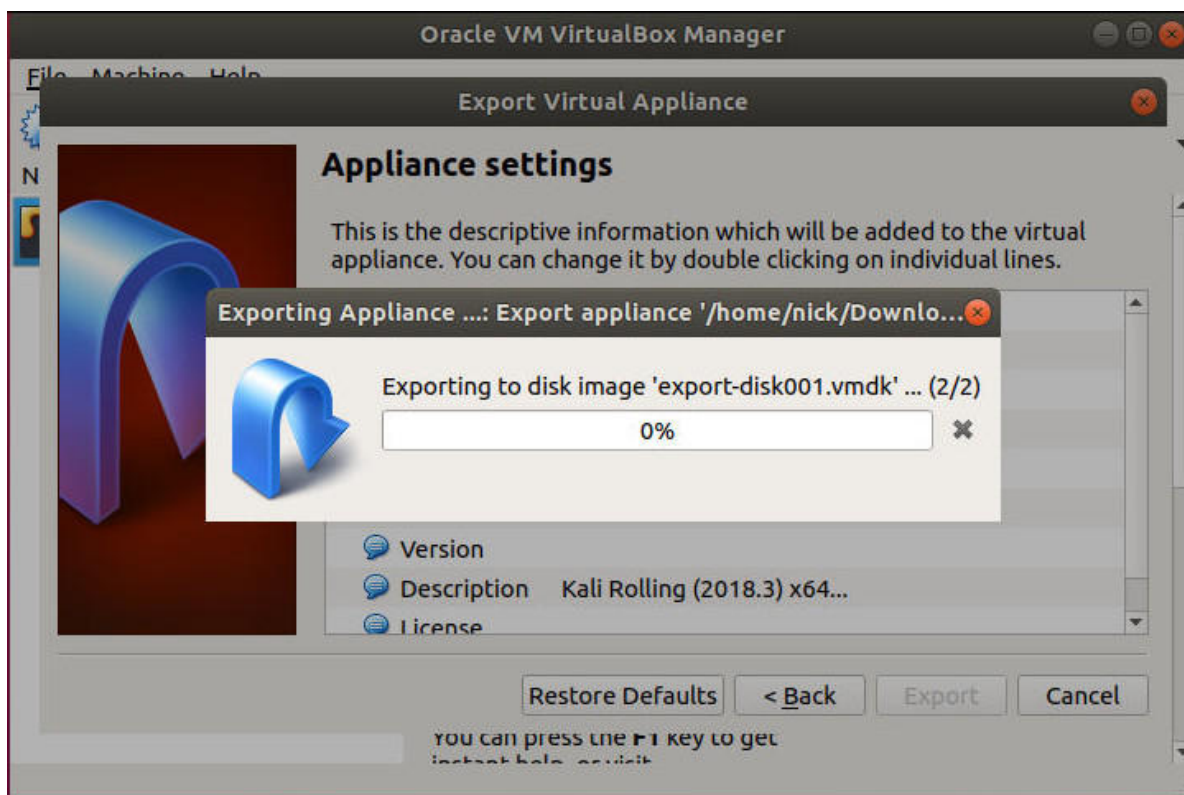
VirtualBox will open a new window with a listing of your available virtual machines. Select the VM you want to export.



The following window allows you to select the location for your exported OVA file. These files can be very large, so make sure you have enough space available in that destination drive to support the resulting file.



The next screen is the final one in the export process. It's another table, and it allows you to attach some identifying information and specifics to your file before packing it up. Generally, the name and description are the ones you'll be using, but you can certainly use the more detailed product fields for VMs that you intend to distribute.



With everything set, VirtualBox will kick off the process of rolling your VM into an OVA file. Depending on the size of the VM, it might take some time, but it takes a few minutes on average.

There you have it! You're now in full control of your OVA files. The ability to move, duplicate, and import

your virtual machines is invaluable, and it affords you much more efficient VM workflows.

Is this article useful?