



# Contributing to GNOME Documentation

André Č. Klapper



Traditional way:  
A whole manual to read (and  
maybe some search field)





## Empathy Manual V2.1

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Getting Started
- 3. Accounts
- 4. Contacts and Groups

- About This Document
- Empathy Manual V2.1*
- Introduction
- Getting Started
- Accounts
- Contacts and Groups

Real men  
don't read manuals.



Plus I just wanted to change my  
IM status, not read a book!



A new way:



Task-oriented help („Mallard“)



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar containing the URL `http://library.gnome.org/users/empathy/2.32/`. The page header features the GNOME Documentation Library logo and a search bar. A navigation menu includes a "Users" tab. The main content area is titled "Empathy Internet Messenger" and is divided into sections: "Introduction" (with a sub-section "Introduction to the Empathy instant messenger."), "Account Management" (with sub-sections "Add a new account" and "Change your status"), and "Register for a new account" (highlighted with a dotted border, with the text "Register for an account with one of the supported messaging services.").



Just tell me how to do what I want.  
Don't explain half of your app.





So what's this „Mallard“ thingy?



projectmallard.org:  
It's a markup language.  
Think of HTML, but easier.



projectmallard.org:  
It's a markup language.  
Think of HTML, but easier.



# Your first user help guide



Start your text editor (e.g. gedit).

Create an empty directory, like  
`/home/user/newdocu/`



# Create index.page

```
<page xmlns="http://projectmallard.org/1.0/"  
      type="guide"  
      id="index">  
<title>Beanstalk Help</title>  
</page>
```

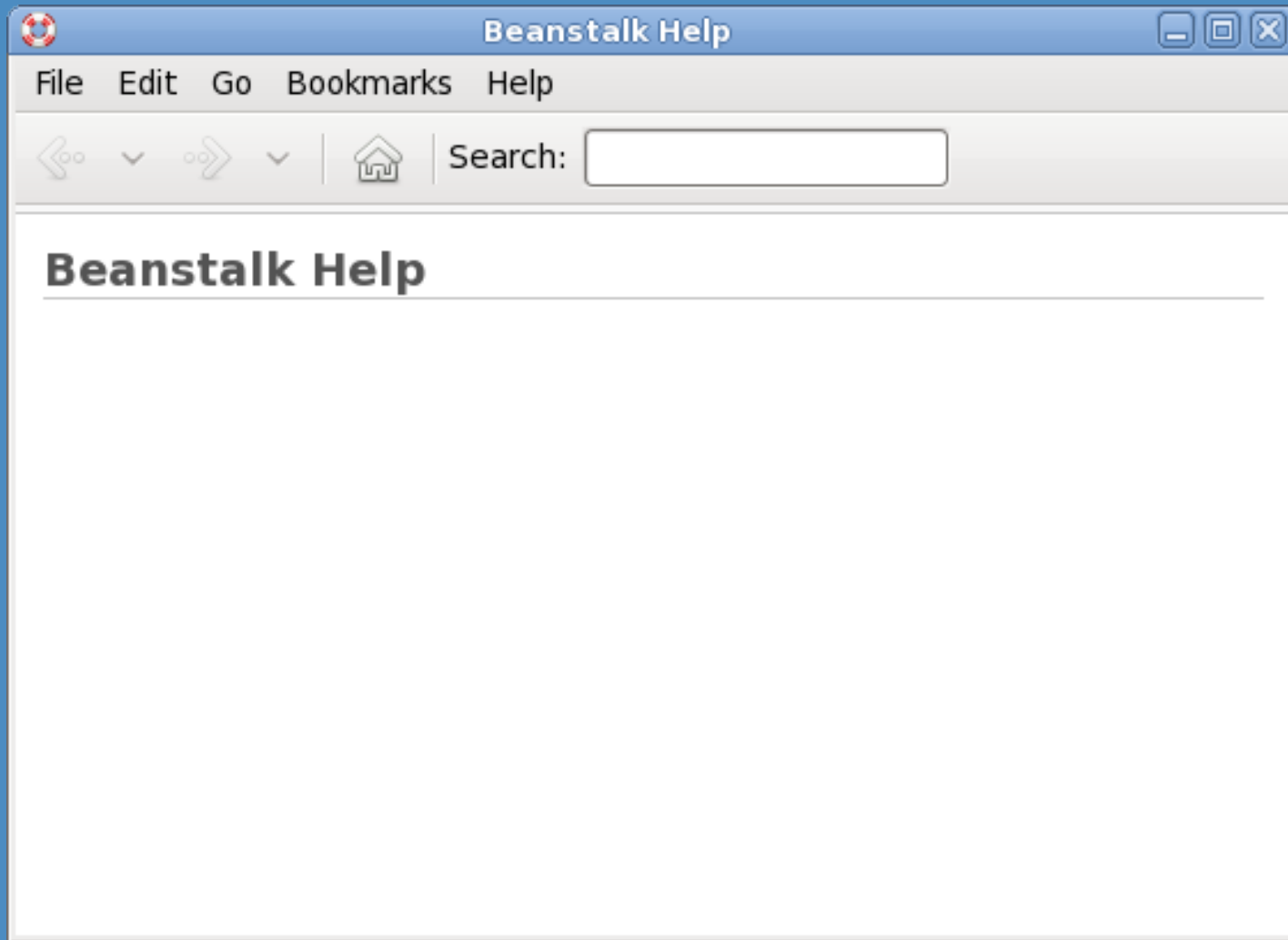
...and save it in that directory.



Now look at it in Yelp  
(that's GNOME's help browser):

```
yelp /home/user/newdocu/
```





(Yes, it's empty.)





# And a second page: planting.page

```
<page xmlns="http://projectmallard.org/1.0/"  
      type="topic"  
      id="planting">  
<title>Planting Beans</title>  
</page>
```

Now let's link this into the  
index.page...

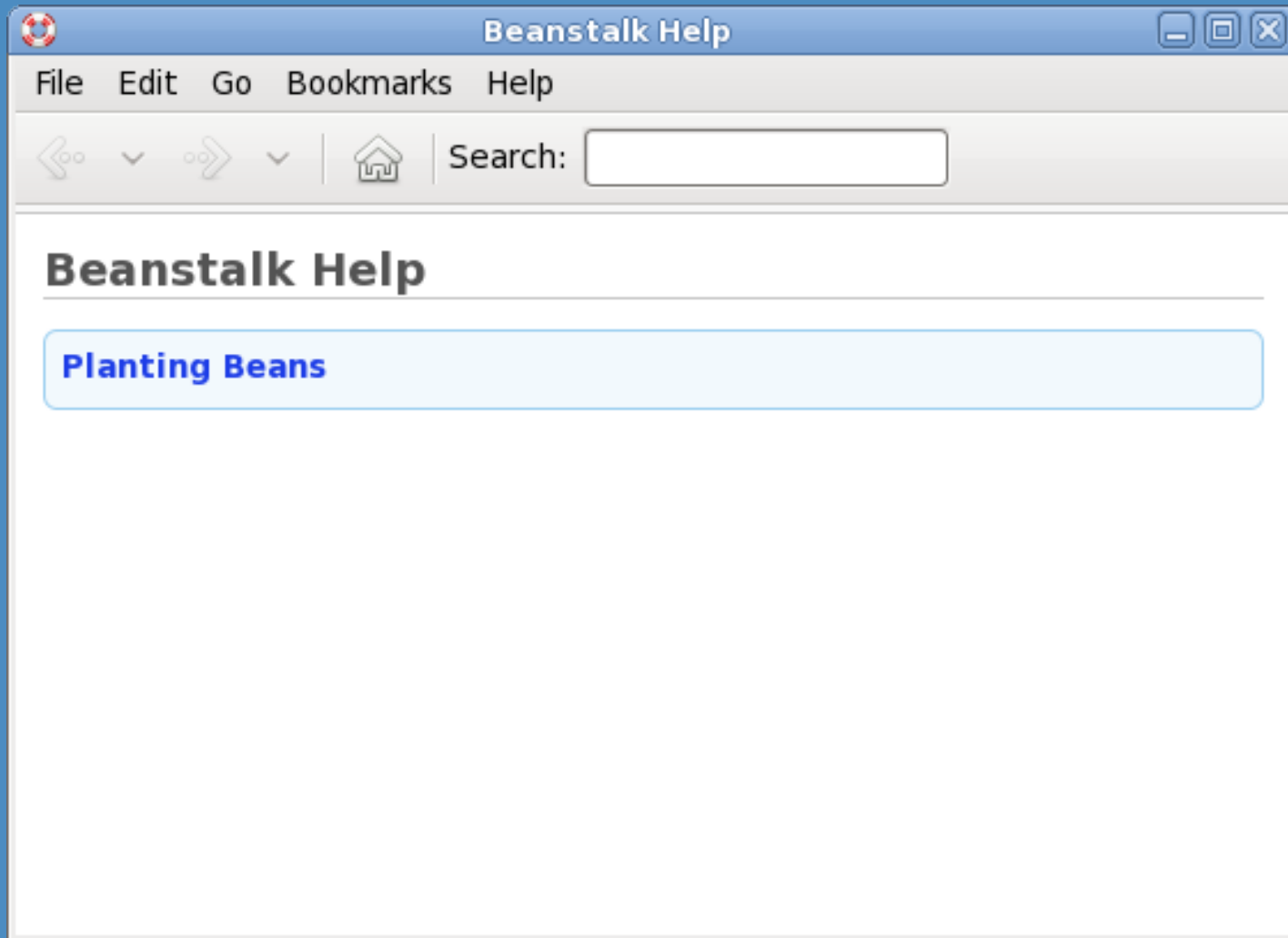


# Linking:

```
<page xmlns="http://projectmallard.org/1.0/"  
      type="topic"  
      id="planting">  
<info>  
  <link type="guide" xref="index"/>  
</info>  
<title>Planting Beans</title>  
</page>
```

Links added in topic instead of guide  
↔ Enhanceability (1 file to add  
instead of another to change)



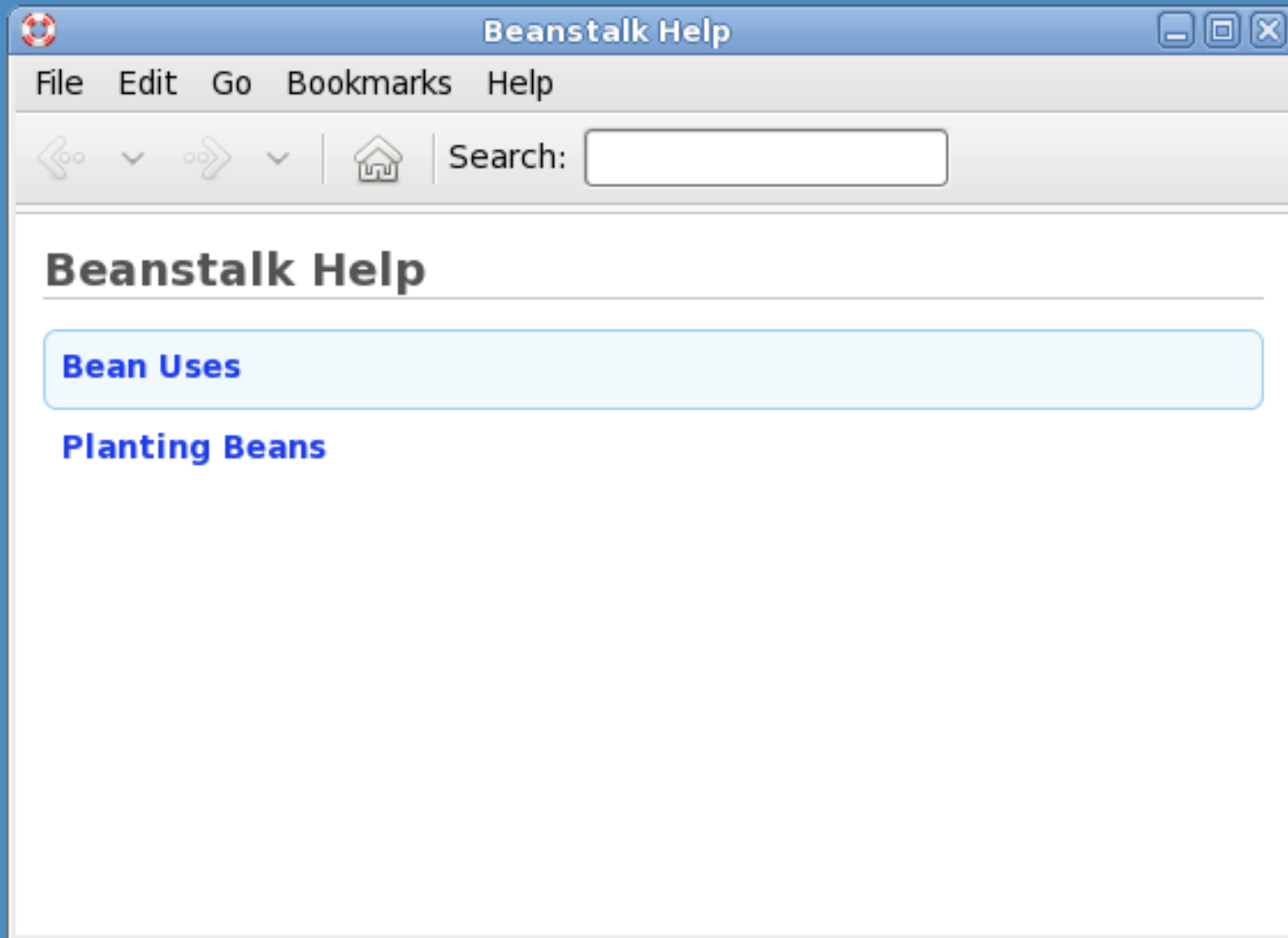


# Adding a second guide: uses.page

```
<page xmlns="http://projectmallard.org/1.0/"
      type="guide"
      id="uses">
  <info>
    <link type="guide" xref="index"/>
    <link type="topic" xref="planting"/>
  </info>
  <title>Bean Uses</title>
</page>
```

...but you can also still add links  
the other way round

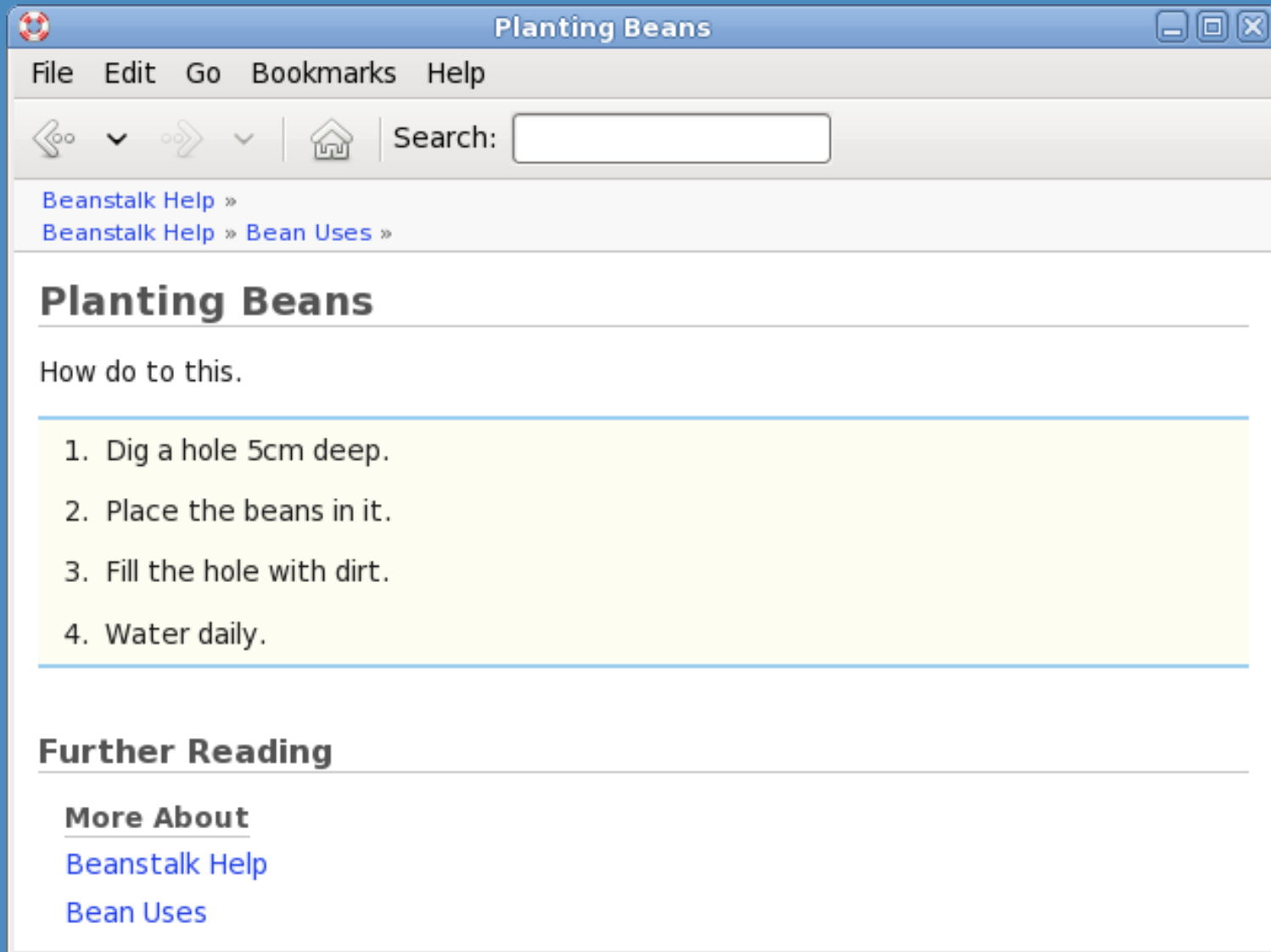




# Adding some content in planting

```
<page xmlns="http://projectmallard.org/1.0/"
      type="topic"
      id="planting">
  <info>  <link type="guide" xref="index"/>
</info>
<title>Planting Beans</title>
<p>How do to this.</p>
<steps>
  <item><p>Dig a hole 5cm deep.</p></item>
  <item><p>Place the beans in it.</p></item>
  <item><p>Fill the hole with dirt.</p></item>
  <item><p>Water daily.</p></item>
</steps>
</page>
```





That's it in short.  
Of course you can also have tables,  
pictures, videos, ....

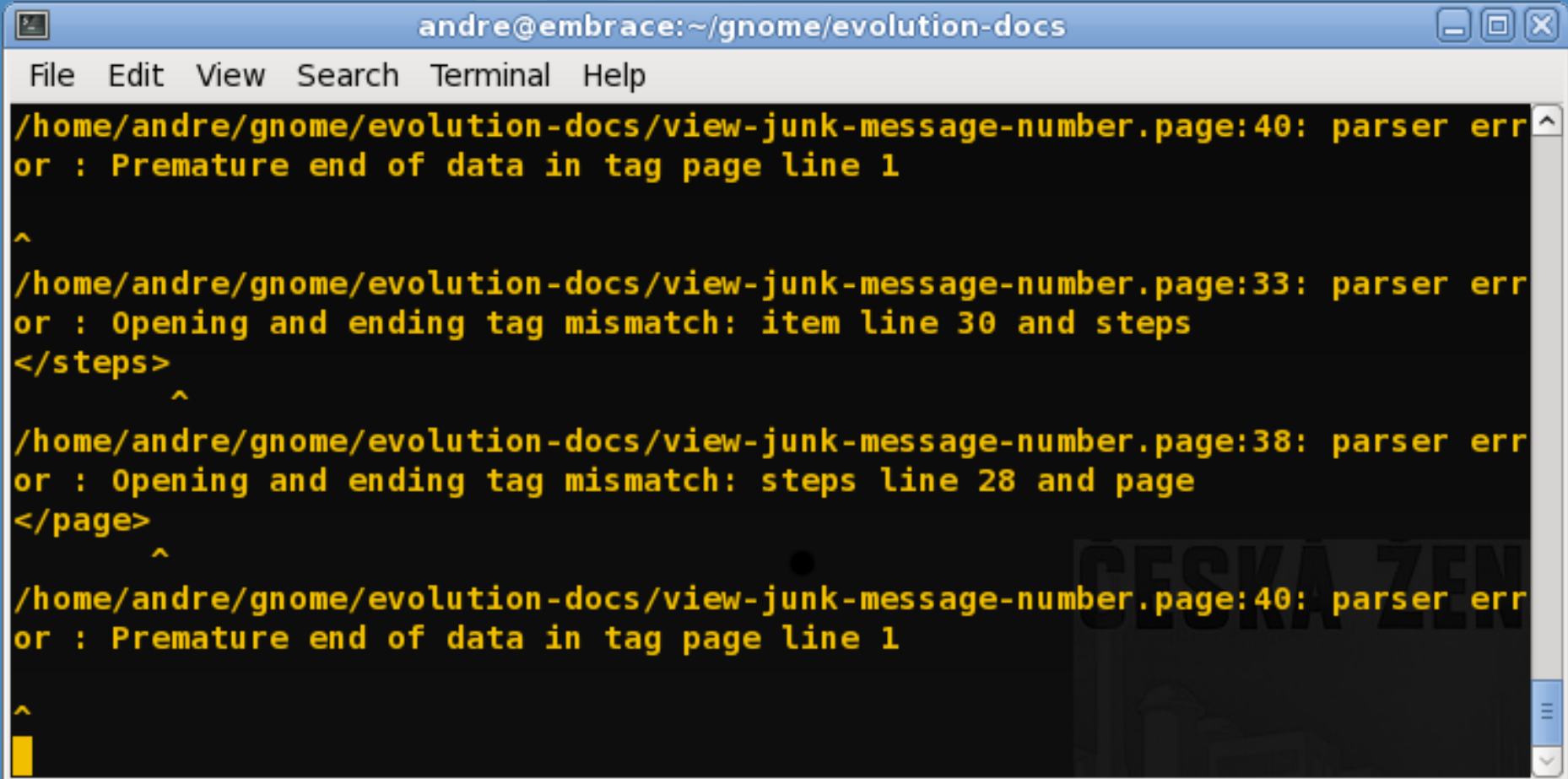




Just spend 10 minutes here:  
[http://projectmallard.org/about/  
learn/tenminutes.html](http://projectmallard.org/about/learn/tenminutes.html)



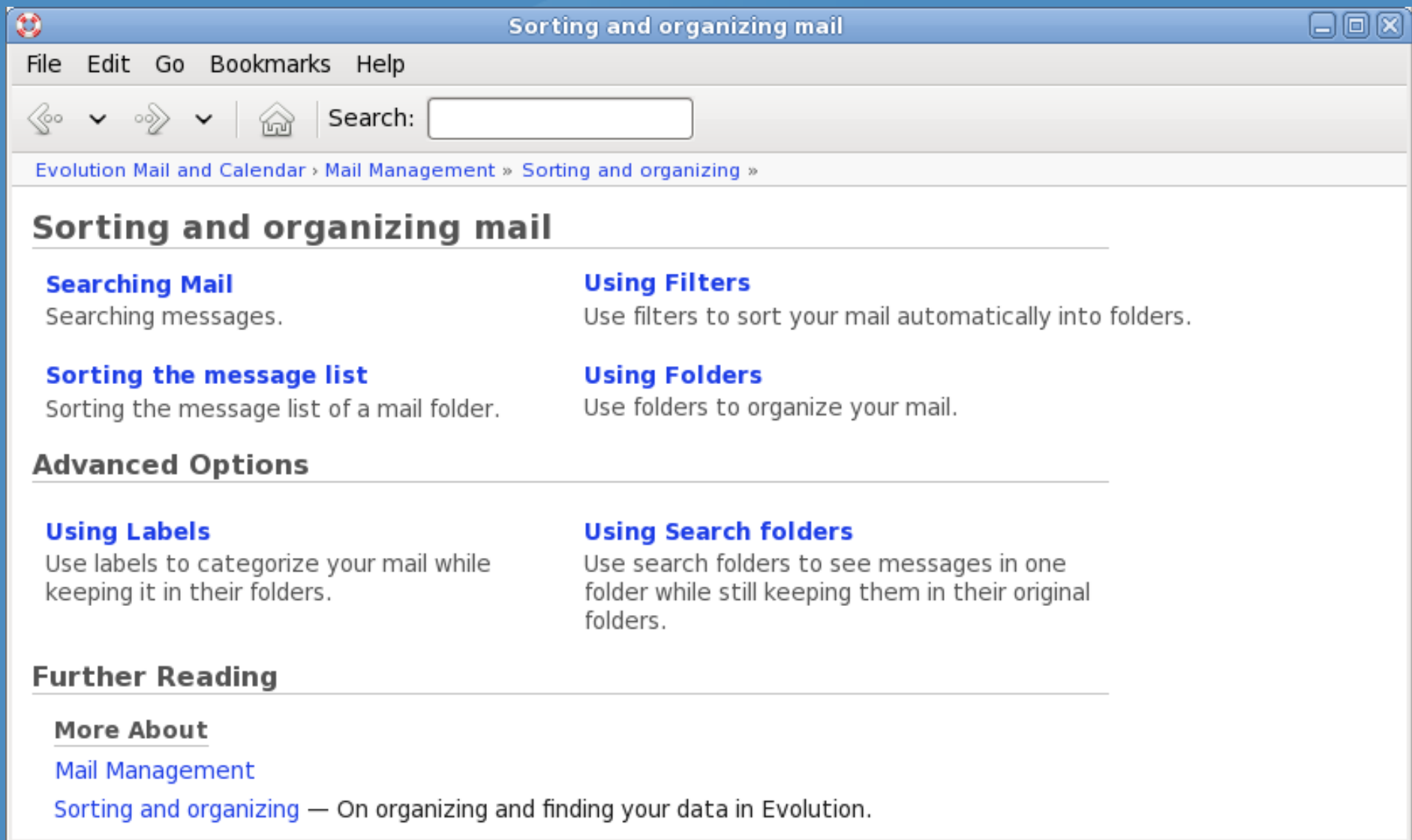
# For validation errors: See terminal

A terminal window titled 'andre@embrace:~/gnome/evolution-docs' with a menu bar (File, Edit, View, Search, Terminal, Help). The terminal output shows four lines of error messages in yellow text on a black background, each preceded by a caret (^) indicating the line number. The errors are: 1. '/home/andre/gnome/evolution-docs/view-junk-message-number.page:40: parser error : Premature end of data in tag page line 1' 2. '/home/andre/gnome/evolution-docs/view-junk-message-number.page:33: parser error : Opening and ending tag mismatch: item line 30 and steps </steps>' 3. '/home/andre/gnome/evolution-docs/view-junk-message-number.page:38: parser error : Opening and ending tag mismatch: steps line 28 and page </page>' 4. '/home/andre/gnome/evolution-docs/view-junk-message-number.page:40: parser error : Premature end of data in tag page line 1' There is a faint watermark 'CESKA ZEN' in the background of the terminal window.

```
andre@embrace:~/gnome/evolution-docs
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
/home/andre/gnome/evolution-docs/view-junk-message-number.page:40: parser error : Premature end of data in tag page line 1
^
/home/andre/gnome/evolution-docs/view-junk-message-number.page:33: parser error : Opening and ending tag mismatch: item line 30 and steps
</steps>
      ^
/home/andre/gnome/evolution-docs/view-junk-message-number.page:38: parser error : Opening and ending tag mismatch: steps line 28 and page
</page>
      ^
/home/andre/gnome/evolution-docs/view-junk-message-number.page:40: parser error : Premature end of data in tag page line 1
^
```



# Yes, this can become complex.



Sorting and organizing mail

File Edit Go Bookmarks Help

Search:

Evolution Mail and Calendar > Mail Management >> Sorting and organizing >>

## Sorting and organizing mail

<b>Searching Mail</b> Searching messages.	<b>Using Filters</b> Use filters to sort your mail automatically into folders.
<b>Sorting the message list</b> Sorting the message list of a mail folder.	<b>Using Folders</b> Use folders to organize your mail.

## Advanced Options

<b>Using Labels</b> Use labels to categorize your mail while keeping it in their folders.	<b>Using Search folders</b> Use search folders to see messages in one folder while still keeping them in their original folders.
--	---

## Further Reading

**More About**

[Mail Management](#)

[Sorting and organizing](#) — On organizing and finding your data in Evolution.



# Planning to write documentation



Identify those topics that are  
important to users.  
Start with the basic ones.



Reuse an existing FAQ?



Analyze questions of last months on  
user mailing list / IRC logs?



# Common „invalid“ bug reports?

Browser address bar: [https://bugzilla.gnome.org/show\\_bug.cgi?id=211404](https://bugzilla.gnome.org/show_bug.cgi?id=211404)

## Bug 211404 - IMAP mail port

**fmaheu [reporter]** 2001-10-01 [Description](#)

Just a nive to have feature that would be appreciated. It would be great if it could be possible to change the port number of the IMAP(and possibly other types of servers) we connect to. What for??

**Dan Winship [developer]** 2001-10-01 [Comment 1](#)

You can do this by typing "localhost:8143" as the hostname in the config dialog.

<b>Product:</b>	<a href="#">Evolution</a>
<b>Component:</b>	Mailer
<b>Version:</b>	pre-1.5
<b>Status:</b>	RESOLVED
<b>Resolution:</b>	NOTABUG
<b>Priority:</b>	Normal
<b>Severity:</b>	enhancement





Have a meeting with the dev team  
to find important issues to cover



The hardest part:  
Try to find good categories



# Example for Evolution (improvable)

(Advanced or corporate stuff in *Italic*)

	<b>Mail</b>	<b>Contacts</b>	<b>Calendar</b>	<b>Memos &amp; Tasks</b>	<b>Intro</b>
		4.1-4.3, 4.5	5	5.8, 5.9	Overview
Create/edit accounts	8.1, 1.1.1		5.7 partially		First time wizard
Searching items					Quick Reference
Organizing	3.x Search Folders, Folders, Filters, Sort, 8.4.3 Labels, Threads, Followup-Flag	Categories, Ad-books (8.9)	Categories, Calendars	Categories, T/M Lists	<b>Authors&amp;Props</b>
	3.7&8.4.5 Spam		8.6.1-3 Settings	<b>Misc</b>	<b>Help&amp;Contact</b> C Report Bugs 8.10 Debug info IRC & mail.list
Corporate	6.x Exchange			8.8 Certs	<b>Migration&amp;sync</b> 1.9 Backup/rest A Outlook 9 Palm 3.1 Import Thunderb./KMail/ SyncEvo/Buteo
	7.x Groupwise				
	2.6 Encryption	4.4/8.9.2 LDAP	5.6/8.6 Schedule& DelegateMeetings 8.6.4 & 8.6.5		
	8.2 Auto completion 8.4.6 AutomaticContacts		2.4/8.4.7 Invitat's	8.7 NetworkPrefs	
	2.1 Reading Mail 8.4.1/2 DisplyPrefs 2.5 IMAP Subscrip's 8.3 IMAP Headers 8.4.4 Headers			<b>Common Probs</b> Mail Other	
	2.2&.3 Writing mail 8.5 Prefs				



But even in doubt: Create new pages and write. Just do it! You can always rename, move & sort later.



# Good practices



Don't blindly reuse text or structure  
from the old manual.



If reusing: Are licenses compatible?  
(e.g. GFDL vs CC = ✕)



Screenshots: Do they really provide an additional value to the help text?





Use a constant string to mark unfinished work (e.g. TODO) -  
Easier to find when collaborating



Avoid fill phrases in title or desc:  
"How to ...", "Explains ...", "A short  
introduction on ..."



Use words with similar meanings  
in desc for better finding (e.g.  
Spam & Junk / Delete & Remove).



# Getting involved



[http://live.gnome.org/  
DocumentationProject/Tasks](http://live.gnome.org/DocumentationProject/Tasks)

(e.g. convert to Mallard format;  
work on Desktop Help; etc.)



[http://mail.gnome.org/mailman/  
listinfo/gnome-doc-list](http://mail.gnome.org/mailman/listinfo/gnome-doc-list)

#docs channel on GimpNet IRC



[http://live.gnome.org/  
DocumentationProject](http://live.gnome.org/DocumentationProject)



# Questions?

Slides available at:

<http://people.gnome.org/~aklapper/gnome-asia2011/>

