How to install FTP Server on Ubuntu

Whether you want to run an Ubuntu server or simply want to remotely copy files, setting up an Ubuntu FTP server is simple.

What is FTP Server?

FTP (File Transfer Protocol) is the system used to upload (set) or download (retrieve) files from a server. You may have used it without realizing it before, when retrieving files or uploading images to the web. Or you may have used an FTP client to connect directly to an FTP file server.

For this to happen, FTP server software must be installed on the remote file host.

Whether you are building a Linux home server, web server, game server or whatever server is suitable for your project, FTP is the simplest way to transfer data from one system to another.

Install a server on Ubuntu

Installing FTP server on Ubuntu is very simple. The best approach is probably vsftpd. Follow the steps below to install and configure FTP server on Ubuntu with vsftpd.

1. Install Vsftpd

You may already have vsftpd installed on your machine. To test it out, open a command line window and type:

```
sudo apt list --installed
```

Vsftpd could be near the bottom of the list. If you haven't already, just install with:

```
sudo apt install vsftpd
```

Once installed, it's time to get started with configuring vsftpd. Let's start by making a copy of the original configuration file. If something goes wrong or mistaken, the default configuration can be restored.

```
sudo cp /etc/vsftpd.conf /etc/vsftpd.conf_default
```

Once done, launch it with the command:

```
sudo systemctl start vsftpd
```

Confirm the server is running with:

```
sudo systemctl enable vsftpd
```

With vsftpd installed, you can begin the setup.

2. Create FTP user

First you need an FTP user account. With this account, you can use any FTP client to access files stored on the server through vsftpd. In the terminal, enter:

```
sudo useradd –m username
```

With the username and password set, create a test file in your account's home directory to confirm that it works:

```
sudo password username
```

When you first connect to your FTP Ubuntu server, you will see testfile.txt.

```
cd /home/username sudo nano testfile.txt
```

3. Secure Ubuntu FTP server

However, before setting up the connection, you need to make sure that the FTP ports are open in Ubuntu. By default, they are closed for security reasons in ufw (Uncomplicated Firewall).

To allow access via port 20, use:

```
sudo ufw allow 20/tcp
```

If your distribution uses a different firewall or you have an alternative installed, check the documentation for open ports.

For users to upload and install files in the configuration file:

```
sudo nano /etc/vsftpd.conf
```

Look for write_enabled and uncomment the entry, make sure it's set to "YES":

```
write_enable=YES
```

Press **Ctrl** + **X** to exit and **Y** to save.

For publicly accessible FTP servers, you will want to limit access per user. chroot can limit each user in its home directory. In vsftpd.conf, find and uncomment this line (uncomment the #):

```
chroot_local_user=YES
```

Press **Ctrl** + **X** to exit, **Y** to save.

For many users, creating a list is a smart choice.

First, open vsftpd.chroot_list in a text editor.

```
sudo nano /etc/ vsftpd.chroot_list
```

Here, list the usernames you want to limit in their own folders. Save and exit, then go back to vsftpd.conf and make sure chroot_local_user = YES uncommented:

```
#chroot_local_user=YES
```

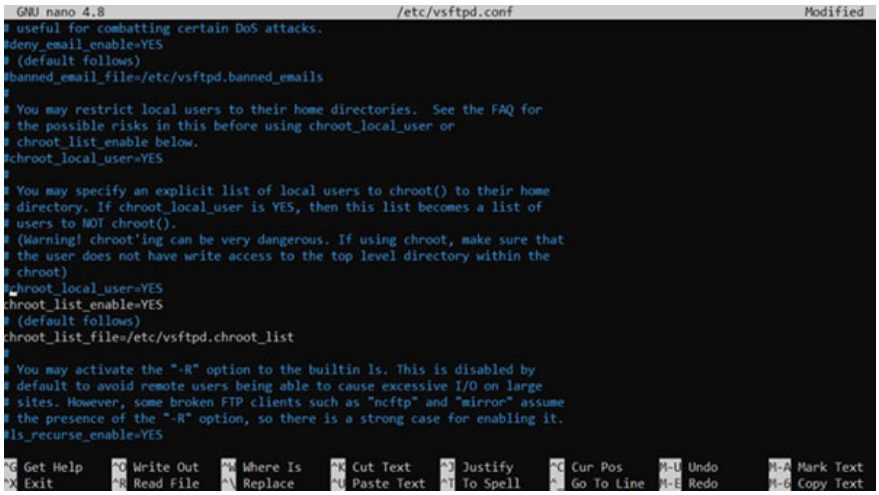
Instead, uncomment:

```
chroot_list_enable=YES
```

and

```
chroot_list_file=/etc/vsftpd.chroot_list
```

The result will look like this:



Continue, save and exit. Finally, restart the FTP service:

```
sudo systemctl restart vsftpd.service
```

Finally, use the **hostname** command to check the name of your Ubuntu server. You can then use it to connect to the FTP server. If you prefer to use an IP address, enter the command **ip address** and make a note of it.

4. Connection encryption: FTP + SSL = FTPS

You can also force encryption of traffic to and from your FTP Ubuntu server using SSL / TLS.

In the vsftpd.conf file look for "SSL encrypted connections" and add the following information:

```
ssl_enable=YES rsa_cert_file=/etc/ssl/certs/ssl-cert-snakeoil.pem rsa_private_ke
```

Save and exit the file. Now you can specify FTPS as the connection protocol in your FTP client.

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