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How to install and configure ProFTPD on Debian Wheezy and Ubuntu 14.04

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This document describes how to install and configure ProFTPD on a Debian Wheezy Server, it will also work on Ubuntu 14.04. ProFTPD is an FTP daemon for unix and unix-like operating systems. ProFTPD is developed, released and distributed under the GNU Public License (GPL), which basically establishes it as free software, meaning that it may be sold, licensed and otherwise manipulated in any way desired as long as full and complete source code either accompanies any ProFTPD packages or is made available by any and all sites that distribute pre-compiled binaries. The software can be modified by anyone at anytime, as long as all derived works also are licensed under the GNU Public License.

This guide will work for both Ubuntu and Debian server.

1 Preliminary Note



Tutorial Info

Author: srijan
Tags: linux, debian, ubuntu, ftp

VMware image download

How to install and configure ProFTPD on Debian as virtual machine image in ova format, compatible with vmware and virtualbox.

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This tutorial is based on a Debian 7.6 server, so you should set up a basic Debian 7.6 server installation before you continue with this tutorial. The system should have a static IP address. I use `192.168.0.100` as my IP address in this tutorial and `server1.example.com` as the hostname.

2 Install ProFTPD

2.1 Installation:

We will first install the ProFTPD and OpenSSL as follows:

```
apt-get install proftpd openssl
```

It will ask for some question about ProFTPD, select *standalone* and press *Ok*.



We can check the ProFTPD version as follows:

```
proftpd -v
```

```
root@server1:~# proftpd -v
ProFTPD Version 1.3.4a
root@server1:~#
```

2.2 Creating ProFTPD Users

For this I will create a group *ftpgroup* and the user *srijan* for ProFTPD. I will restrict the user *srijan* with home directory as */ftshare*

```
addgroup ftpgroup
```

```
adduser srijan -shell /bin/false -home /ftpshare
```

```
root@server1:~# adduser srijan -shell
/bin/false -home /ftpshare
Adding user `srijan' ...
Adding new group `srijan' (1002) ...
Adding new user `srijan' (1001) with
group `srijan' ...
Creating home directory `/ftpshare' ...
Copying files from `/etc/skel' ...
Enter new UNIX password: <--ftppassword
Retype new UNIX password: <--ftppassword
passwd: password updated successfully
Changing the user information for srijan
Enter the new value, or press ENTER for
the default<--ENTER
  Full Name []: <--ENTER
  Room Number []: <--ENTER
  Work Phone []: <--ENTER
  Home Phone []: <--ENTER
  Other []: <--ENTER
Is the information correct? [Y/n] <--Y
root@server1:~#
```

Now we will add the *srijan* user to the *ftpgroup* as follows:

```
adduser srijan ftpgroup
```

Next we need to make the directory protected from removing and renaming its content by any user, so we will change the directory permissions as follows:

```
chmod -R 1777 /ftpshare/
```

Next we need to configure ProFTPD as follows:

```
nano /etc/proftpd/proftpd.conf
```

Make changes like as shown

```
[...]
UseIPv6 off
[...]
<Global>
  RootLogin    off
  RequireValidShell off
</Global>
```

```
DefaultRoot ~

<Limit LOGIN>
    DenyGroup !ftpgroup
</Limit>
```

I am not using *IPV6* so I made *off* above, I am disabling root user login with ProFTPD by *RootLogon off*. *DefaultRoot* is added to restrict users with their home folders access only. *DenyGroup* will allow only the users from *ftpgroup* access to the ftp server, all other connection will get rejected.

Restart the service as:

```
service proftpd restart
```

Sometimes you will get an error while restarting the service, like

```
root@server1:~# service proftpd restart
[ ok ] Stopping ftp server: proftpd.
[....] Starting ftp server: proftpdserver1
proftpd[6052]: mod_tls_memcache/0.1: notice:
unable to register 'memcache' SSL session
cache: Memcache support not enabled
. ok
root@server1:~#
```

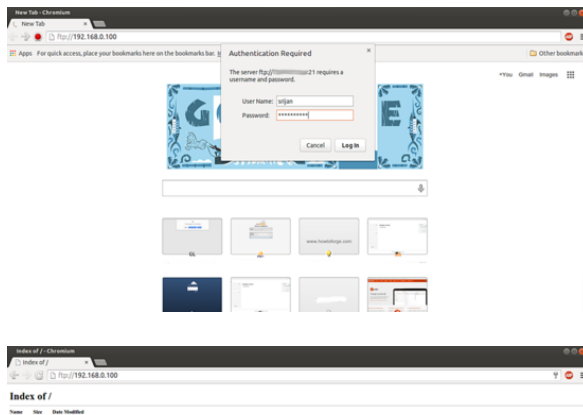
We can overcome this error by editing the file */etc/proftpd/modules.conf* and commenting the line as follows:

```
nano /etc/proftpd/modules.conf
```

```
[...]
#LoadModule mod_tls_memcache.c
[...]
```

It will sort the error.

Now we can do login with the user *srijan* and password at *ftp://192.168.0.100*



3 Enabling TLS In ProFTPD

In order to enable TLS in ProFTPD, open
/etc/proftpd/proftpd.conf

```
nano /etc/proftpd/proftpd.conf
```

Make the changes as follows and un-comment the line:

```
[...]
Include /etc/proftpd/tls.conf
[...]
```

Now we will make the original file backup and then edit the file as shown below:

```
cp /etc/proftpd/tls.conf /etc/proftpd
/tls.conf_orig
cat /dev/null > /etc/proftpd/tls.conf
nano /etc/proftpd/tls.conf
```

Give the entries as shown

```
<IfModule mod_tls.c>
TLSEngine                      on
TLSLog                         /var/log/proftpd
d/tls.log
TLSProtocol                    SSLv23
```

```
TLSOptions                      NoCertRequest
TLRSACertificateFile            /etc/proftpd/ss
l/proftpd.cert.pem
TLRSACertificateKeyFile        /etc/proftpd/ss
l/proftpd.key.pem
TLSVerifyClient                off
TLSRequired                    on
</IfModule>
```

In order to use TLS, we must create an SSL certificate. I will create it in `/etc/proftpd/ssl`, therefore I create that directory first:

```
mkdir /etc/proftpd/ssl
```

Afterwards, we can generate the SSL certificate as follows:

```
openssl req -new -x509 -days 365 -nodes -out
/etc/proftpd/ssl/proftpd.cert.pem -keyout
/etc/proftpd/ssl/proftpd.key.pem
```

```
Country Name (2 letter code) [AU]: <-- Enter your
Country Name (e.g., "DE").
State or Province Name (full name) [Some-
State]: <-- Enter your State or Province Name.
Locality Name (eg, city) []: <-- Enter your City.
Organization Name (eg, company) [Internet Widgits
Pty Ltd]: <-- Enter your Organization Name (e.g., the name of
your company).
Organizational Unit Name (eg, section) []: <-- Enter
your Organizational Unit Name (e.g. "IT Department").
Common Name (eg, YOUR name) []: <-- Enter the Fully
Qualified Domain Name of the system (e.g. "server1.example.com").
Email Address []: <-- Enter your Email Address.
```

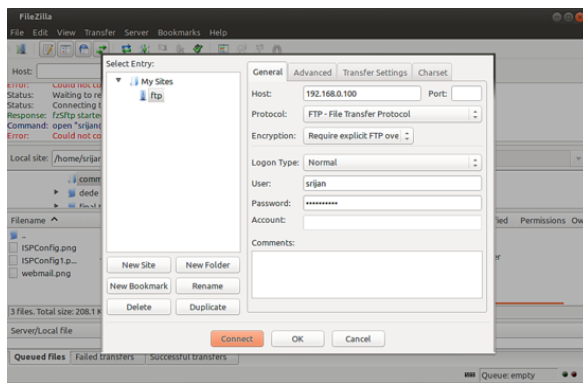
Now for security purpose I will make the certificates only readable as follows:

```
chmod 0440 /etc/proftpd/ssl/proftpd.key.pem
```

Finally restart the ProFTPD service as follows:

```
service proftpd restart
```

We can connect to the ProFTPD server with the FileZilla software. You must have FileZilla installed at the client to connect to the server. Open FileZilla and give it the details as follows:



Details will be

Host = *192.168.0.100*

Protocol = *FTP*

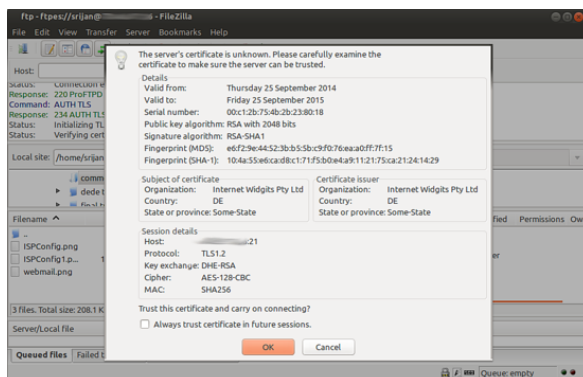
User = *srijan*

Port = can be blank if you have not customized it another port than 21

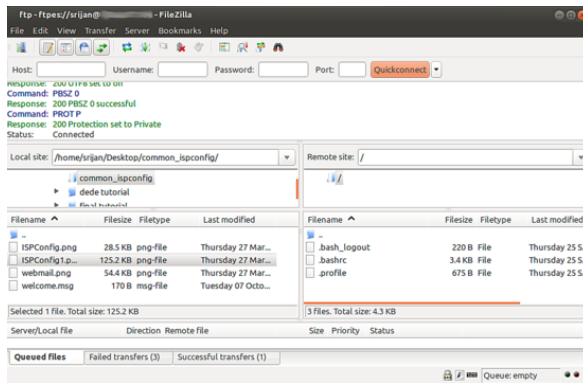
Password = *ftppassword* (just created above)

Note: Since we have encrypted our connection in above step so we will be using Encryption with Require explicit FTP over TLS

If you have not configured TLS then you can use Use Plain FTP



It will ask for trusting the certificates press *OK*



It will be connected to the FTP shared directory.

4 Anonymous FTP access in ProFTPD

We can make anonymous FTP account in ProFTPD, just add these entries in ProFTPD configuration file:

```
nano /etc/proftpd/proftpd.conf
```

And add these entries at the last of the file,

```
[...]
###Anonymous share####
<Anonymous ~ftp>
    User                ftp
    Group               nogroup

<Limit LOGIN>
    AllowAll
</Limit>

# We want clients to be able to login w
ith "anonymous" as well as "ftp"
    UserAlias           anonymous
    ftp

# Cosmetic changes, all files belongs t
o ftp user
    DirFakeUser  on ftp
    DirFakeGroup on ftp

    RequireValidShell    off

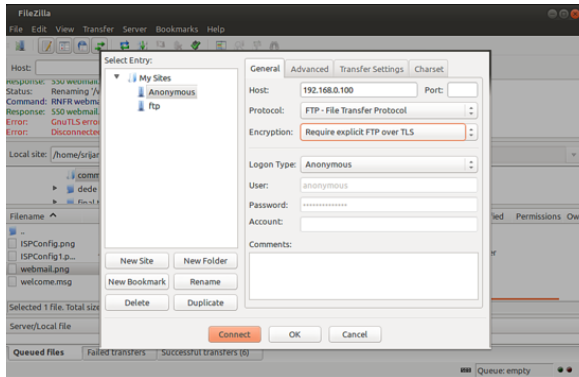
# Limit the maximum number of anonymous
logins
    MaxClients           10

# Limit WRITE everywhere in the anonymo
```



```
us chroot
<Directory *>
    <Limit WRITE>
        DenyAll
    </Limit>
</Directory>
</Anonymous>
~
```

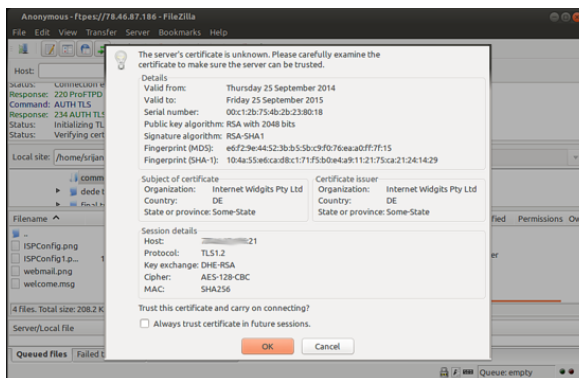
Now connect it through FileZilla as follows:



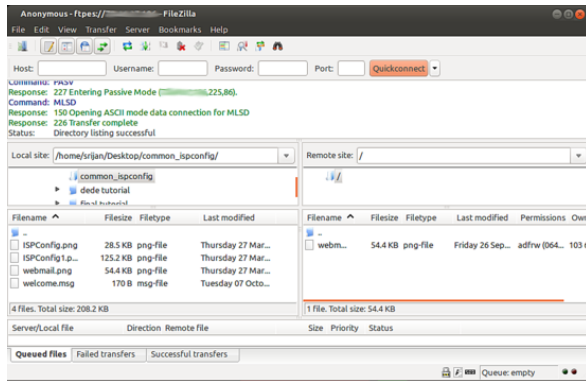
Note: Since we have encrypted our connection in above step so we will be using Encryption with Require explicit FTP over TLS

If you have not configured TLS then you can use Use Plain FTP

Press **Connect**:



It will ask for trusting the certificates press **OK**



We have successfully connected to the server with Anonymous user.

Congratulations! Now we have successfully configured ProFTPD server environment in Debian Wheezy :)

5 Links

- Debian : <https://www.debian.org/>
- Ubuntu : <http://www.ubuntu.com/>
- ProFTPD : <http://www.proftpd.org/>

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Comments

From: peter[Reply](#)

thx. very good!

From: Alphonse[Reply](#)

Many thanks. Helped me setup FTPS (ftp over SSL) for testing server to server file transfers.

From: Honza[Reply](#)

Thanks for tutorial!

Few hints for others:

1. if you are getting errors when trying to connect on proftpd restarts like:

```
""proftpd[1796]: error: no valid servers configured""
```

then make sure your /etc/hosts is in order and matches the server's DNS and hostname

2. for some reason the restart failed for me a lot - the service is not started - I every time need to do:

```
service proftpd stop
```

```
service proftpd start
```

(chaining it with && also doesn't work for me)

3. if you want to make TLS "optional" you need to edit file

```
"/etc/proftpd/tls.conf" like this:
```

```
TLSRequired          off
```

(just in case it's not straightforward for you)

Good luck to you all!

From: Khalil CHARFI[Reply](#)

Hi

Need to uncomment this to make this script useful

```
RequireValidShell      off
```

Best Regards

khalil CHARFI

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