



Translation(s): English - [Italiano](#) - [Русский](#)

Rename a computer

This page explains how to change a system's `hostname` (i.e. rename a computer/server)

Executive summary: [DebianMan: hostname\(1\)](#) isn't enough.

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Core networking

- Update `/etc/hostname`
- Update `/etc/hosts`, so local address(es) resolves with the new system name.
- Reload the network configuration. You have two options:
 - Reload configuration files
 - ⚠ This will temporarily disconnect your system from the network (ssh usually resists short disconnection)
 - ⚠ This might definitively disconnect your system from the network because networking might not restore connections; please reboot, which is not lazy, but ensures that your setup is really correct

```
invoke-rc.d hostname.sh start
invoke-rc.d networking force-reload
invoke-rc.d network-manager force-reload
```

[ToDo](#): is it useful to reload `network-manager`?

- *or the lazy way*: Restart the system.

systemd

Versions of Debian with `systemd` installed can use `hostnamectl set-hostname mymachine` This tool depends on `dbus` so be sure to install that first. Related [🌐 documentation](#).

Application specific

avahi

Avahi is used to publish (announce) local services. If you tweaked `/etc/avahi/*` you should run:

```
invoke-rc.d avahi-daemon force-reload
```

ejabberd

Refer to the [🌐 Change Computer Hostname](#) section of the ejabberd documentation website.

Exim

Reconfigure Exim (this adjusts `/etc/exim4/update-exim4.conf.conf` and `/etc/mailname`):

```
dpkg-reconfigure exim4-config
```

Or adjust manually `/etc/exim4/update-exim4.conf.conf` (`hostname=`). You need to restart the service.

Mailname

Reconfigure Exim (see above) or adjust manually `/etc/mailname`. You don't need to restart the service.

Message Of The Day

Adjust `/etc/motd`. You don't need to restart a service.

OpenSSH server

Adjust `/etc/ssh/ssh_host_rsa_key.pub`, `/etc/ssh/ssh_host_dsa_key.pub`, `/etc/ssh/ssh_host_ed25519_key.pub` and `/etc/ssh/ssh_host_ecdsa_key.pub` (`root@hostname at the end`). You need to restart the service.

Self-signed SSL certificate

Recreate the self-signed certificate created by the [DebianPkg: ssl-cert](#) package using the hostname currently configured on your computer.

```
make-ssl-cert generate-default-snakeoil --force-overwrite
```

You need to restart the services using it, e.g. `apache2`.

ssmtp

Ssmtp is a light weight, send-only SMTP server.

Adjust `/etc/ssmtp/ssmtp.conf` (`hostname=`, etc.). You don't need to restart the service.

sysklogd

In order to make new hostname appear on syslog you should restart `sysklogd` service

fail2ban

fail2ban scan logs to detect connection failures and can ban IP on too many failures.

The hostname may be in the sender mail address in `/etc/fail2ban/jail.local`. You need to reload the service.

lvm

Logical Volume Manager (LVM) is a device mapper target that provides logical volume management.

Hostname appears in the backup configuration file `/etc/lvm/backup/<your Volume Group>`.

md

On a system that is using md on the root device boot will fail once `update-initramfs -u` is run if the hostname in `/etc/mdadm/mdadm.conf` does not match the hostname in the superblocks of the array members.

To change the hostname in the superblocks at the `(initramfs) _` prompt (or from rescue media):

```
mdadm -A /dev/md/0 --update=name --name=new_hostname:0 /dev/sd[ab]1 # use YOUR devices
```

The md device must be down to be renamed.

Best reference: <https://lists.debian.org/debian-arm/2016/02/msg00072.html>

Idea of script to help you on

Intrusive script

Please understand that this script is **dangerous**. You should check if all the files listed by `grep -rl "$old" /etc` must really be modified **before** launching this script:

[Toggle line numbers](#)

```
1 #!/bin/bash
2 #
3 usage() {
4     echo "usage : $0 <new hostname>"
5     exit 1
6 }
7
8 [ "$1" ] || usage
9
10 old=$(hostname)
11 new=$1
12
13 grep "$old" /etc/ -rl 2>/dev/null |
14 while read file
15 do
16     sed "s:$old:$new:g" "$file" > "$file.tmp"
17     mv -f "$file.tmp" "$file"
18 done
```

Take care you'd better do a grep before...

Improved intrusive script

This script will do the same stuff like the one above but it will ask you with a shell dialog which files you want modify before editing them.

[Toggle line numbers](#)

```

1  #!/bin/bash
2  #
3
4  # Fetching new and old hostname
5  OLD_HOSTNAME=$(hostname)
6  NEW_HOSTNAME=$1
7
8  WHIPTAIL_TITLE="Changing hostname"
9  WHIPTAIL_BACKTITLE="ShrimpDev <dev@csoellinger.at>"
10 WHIPTAIL_TEXT="Below you will find a checklist with all files where we found your old hostna
11
12 not_root() {
13     echo "ERROR: You have to be root to execute this script"
14     exit 1
15 }
16
17 usage() {
18     echo "usage : $0 <new hostname> [Optional:--backup/Set backup mode on] [Optional:--debug
19     exit 1
20 }
21
22 # Check if user is root
23 [ $EUID != 0 ] && not_root
24
25 # Check if we have at least one parameter
26 [ "$1" ] || usage
27
28 [ "$1" == "--backup" ] && usage
29 [ "$1" == "--debug" ] && usage
30
31 DEBUG="NO"
32 BACKUP="NO"
33
34 if [ "$2" == "--debug" ] || [ "$3" == "--debug" ]; then
35     DEBUG="YES"
36 fi
37
38 if [ "$2" == "--backup" ] || [ "$3" == "--backup" ]; then
39     BACKUP="YES"
40 fi
41
42 [ "$DEBUG" == "YES" ] && echo "DEBUG (NO FILES WILL BE CHANGED)"
43 [ "$BACKUP" == "YES" ] && echo "BACKUP MODE ON"
44
45 # Grep all possible targets
46 TARGETS=$(grep "$OLD_HOSTNAME" /etc/ -rl)
47 let TARGETSLENGTH=${#TARGETS[@]}
48
49 CHECKLIST=()
50 for ((i=0; i<${#TARGETS[@]}; i++)); do
51     CHECKLIST+=("${TARGETS[$i]}" "" "ON")
52 done
53
54 CHECKLIST_RESULT=$(whiptail --clear --fb --title "$WHIPTAIL_TITLE" --backtitle "$WHIPTAIL_B/
55 CHECKLIST_RESULT=${CHECKLIST_RESULT//\//}

```

```

56 CHECKLIST_RESULT_ARR=(`echo $CHECKLIST_RESULT | tr ' ' '\n'`)
57
58 clear
59
60 for CHECKLIST_ITEM in "${CHECKLIST_RESULT_ARR[@]}"; do
61     echo "sed \"s:${OLD_HOSTNAME}:${NEW_HOSTNAME}:g\" \"${CHECKLIST_ITEM}\" > \"${CHECKLIST_
62     [ "$DEBUG" == "NO" ] && sed "s:$OLD_HOSTNAME:$NEW_HOSTNAME:g" "$CHECKLIST_ITEM" > "$CHEI
63
64     if [ "$BACKUP" == "YES" ]; then
65         echo "cp \"${CHECKLIST_ITEM}\" \"${CHECKLIST_ITEM}.BCK\""
66         [ "$DEBUG" == "NO" ] && cp "$CHECKLIST_ITEM" "$CHECKLIST_ITEM.BCK"
67     fi
68
69     echo "mv -f \"${CHECKLIST_ITEM}.tmp\" \"${CHECKLIST_ITEM}\""
70     [ "$DEBUG" == "NO" ] && mv -f "$CHECKLIST_ITEM.tmp" "$CHECKLIST_ITEM"
71
72     echo ""
73 done
74
75 exit 0

```

Not-so intrusive script

```

#!/bin/bash

#
usage() {
    echo "usage : $0 <new hostname>"
    exit 1
}

[ "$1" ] || usage

old=$(hostname)
new=$1

for file in \
    /etc/exim4/update-exim4.conf.conf \
    /etc/printcap \
    /etc/hostname \
    /etc/hosts \
    /etc/ssh/ssh_host_rsa_key.pub \
    /etc/ssh/ssh_host_dsa_key.pub \
    /etc/motd \
    /etc/ssmtp/ssmtp.conf
do
    [ -f $file ] && sed -i.old -e "s:$old:$new:g" $file
done

```

See also

- [DebianMan: hostname\(1\)](#), [DebianMan: hostname\(7\)](#)