

WHOIS Command Full Reference Guide (Kali Linux Edition)

Overview

The `whois` command is used to retrieve registration information for domain names, IP addresses, and autonomous systems from WHOIS servers. This guide explains the full help output from `whois -h` on Kali Linux and adds practical examples, making it easy to study, document, or expand.

Command Usage

```
whois [OPTION]... OBJECT...
```

- `OBJECT` can be a domain name, IP address, ASN (Autonomous System Number), etc.

General Options

Option	Description
<code>-h HOST</code> , <code>--host HOST</code>	Connect to a specific WHOIS server
<code>-p PORT</code> , <code>--port PORT</code>	Use a custom port when connecting to the server
<code>-I</code>	Query <code>whois.iana.org</code> and follow its referral
<code>-H</code>	Hide legal disclaimers
<code>--verbose</code>	Verbose mode: show detailed steps of query execution
<code>--no-recursion</code>	Disable recursion from registry to registrar server
<code>--help</code>	Display help information and exit
<code>--version</code>	Show version information and exit

Example:

```
whois -h whois.iana.org example.com
```

Connects to the IANA WHOIS server and queries `example.com`.

RIPE and RIPE-like Server Flags

These options work only on [RIPE](#) and compatible WHOIS servers:

Option	Description
<code>-l</code>	Find one level less specific match
<code>-L</code>	Find all levels less specific matches
<code>-m</code>	Find one level more specific matches
<code>-M</code>	Find all levels of more specific matches
<code>-c</code>	Find smallest match containing a <code>mnt-irt</code> attribute

Example:

```
whois -h whois.ripe.net -M 193.0.6.139
```

Shows all more specific matches for the IP.

Match Filtering and Output Control

Option	Description
<code>-x</code>	Exact match only
<code>-b</code>	Return brief IP ranges with abuse contact
<code>-B</code>	Disable object filtering (shows emails, etc.)
<code>-G</code>	Disable grouping of associated objects

Special Lookups and Filters

Option	Description
<code>-i ATTR[,ATTR]...</code>	Inverse lookup by attribute (e.g., <code>mntner</code> , <code>admin-c</code>)
<code>-T TYPE[,TYPE]...</code>	Limit search to specific object types (e.g., <code>person</code> , <code>inetnum</code>)
<code>-K</code>	Return only primary keys

Example:

```
whois -h whois.ripe.net -i mnt-by RIPE-NCC-HM-MNT
```

Returns objects maintained by the specified maintainer.



Recursion and Referral Control

Option	Description
<code>-r</code>	Disable recursive lookups
<code>-R</code>	Show local copy even if referral exists

Example:

```
whois -R example.com
```

Returns the local copy of the record without following referrals.



Advanced Data Queries

Option	Description
<code>-a</code>	Search all mirrored databases
<code>-s</code> <code>SOURCE[,SOURCE] . . .</code>	Query specific source database(s)
<code>-g SOURCE:FIRST-LAST</code>	Get updates from source within specified serial range
<code>-t TYPE</code>	Request template for object of specified type
<code>-v TYPE</code>	Request verbose template for type
<code>`-q [version</code>	<div>sources</div> <div>types]</div> <div>Query specific server info</div>

Example:

```
whois -t inetnum
```

Fetches the template used for `inetnum` object entries.



Practical Use Cases

1. Basic Domain WHOIS

```
whois example.com
```

2. WHOIS Lookup for IP Address

```
whois 8.8.8.8
```

3. WHOIS Using a Specific Server

```
whois -h whois.ripe.net example.com
```

4. Retrieve Object with Emails

```
whois -B example.com
```



Add Your Notes

Add practical use cases, screenshots of outputs, specific WHOIS responses from known registrars, and differences between ARIN, RIPE, and APNIC outputs here.



References

- [IANA WHOIS](#)
 - [RIPE Database Documentation](#)
 - `man whois` command for in-depth UNIX manual
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