Table Of Contents

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How to make a Linux File unchangeable (unalterable) so that no one can modify it

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Q. How do I write protect file under Linux so that no one can modify it?

A. You need to use chattr command, which changes the file attributes on a Linux second extended file system. The chattr command supports various attributes.

A file with the i attribute cannot be modified: it cannot be deleted or renamed, no link can be created to this file and no data can be written to the file. Only the superuser or a process possessing the CAP_LINUX_IMMUTABLE capability can set or clear this attribute in other words you make a file unchangeable or unalterable.

[1]

For example if you want file /data/financial.txt unchangeable by anyone on your system, type the following command (login as the root user):

```
# chattr +i /data/financial.txt
```

Now no one can delete or modify file /data/financial.txt. To reset back permission, type the following command:

```
# chattr -i /data/financial.txt
```

Use lsattr command to lists the file attributes on a second extended file system. It is use to see attributes set by chattr command.

```
# lsattr financial.txt
```

Output:

```
----i----------- financial.txt
```

See also:

- Linux Password trick using chattr command
- FreeBSD: How to write protect important file (even root can NOT modify/delete it) [2]

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URLs in this post:

[1] Image: **http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/faq/category/file-system/**
[2] FreeBSD: How to write protect important file (even root can NOT modify/delete it): **http://www.cyberciti.biz/tips/howto-write-protect-file-with-immutable-bit.html**