

Table Of Contents

Table Of Contents ..... 1

Task: Copy files / backup files from remote Linux server ..... 2

Task: Exclude files from backup ..... 2

Task: Automatic backup using a shell script ..... 2

[Home](#) > [Faq](#) > [BASH Shell](#)

## How to backup the remote files in Linux / UNIX

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**Q.** How do I make remote backups under Linux? I've CentOS 5 Linux server located in remote data center and I'd like to backup it to local or another server?

**A.** Both Linux / UNIX come with handy tools to make secure remote backups. You can use tool called rsync for automating remote backups of your Linux, UNIX, Windows server, Mac OS X and BSD systems. rsync is a program with many more options and uses the rsync remote-update protocol to greatly speed up file transfers when the destination file is being updated.



[1]

## Task: Copy files / backup files from remote Linux server

Let us say you would like to backup files from remote server called server.nixcraft.in and directory called /home/vivek to local directory called /backup, type the command as follows on local system:

```
$ rsync -avz -e ssh vivek@server.nixcraft.in:/home/vivek/ /backup
```

You need to supply password for vivek user.

## Task: Exclude files from backup

You can also skip few files from backup. Let us say you don't want to backup all C source code file, enter:

```
$ rsync --exclude '*.cpp' -avz -e ssh vivek@server.nixcraft.in:/home/vivek/ /backup
```

## Task: Automatic backup using a shell script

SSH always prompts for a password. To automate process via a shell script you need to remove password using SSH key i.e. generate passphraseless keys, enter (type at local system):

```
$ ssh-keygen -t dsa
```

When asked for to enter passphrase, just press [ENTER] key twice. Now copy public key to remote server:

```
$ scp ~/.ssh/id_dsa.pub vivek@server.nixcraft.in:~/.ssh/authorized_keys
```

Now you can login without a password. For more information see - howto setup [SSH with DSA public key authentication](#) [2] and [RSA key authentication](#) [3] for password less login.

Now create a simple shell script as follows:

```
$ vi backup.sh
```

Append code:

```
#!/bin/bash
rsync --exclude '*.cpp' --exclude '*.log' -avz -e ssh
vivek@server.nixcraft.in:/home/vivek/ /backup
```

Setup executable permission using chmod command:

```
$ chmod +x backup.sh
```

Use [cron to command to backup](#) [4] remote server:

```
$ crontab -e
```

Make a backup everyday:

```
@daily /path/to/backup.sh
```

Save and close the file.

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[1] Image: <http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/faq/category/linux/>

[2] SSH with DSA public key authentication: <http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/ssh-password-less-login-with-dsa-publickey-authentication/>

[3] RSA key authentication: <http://www.cyberciti.biz/tips/ssh-public-key-based-authentication-how-to.html>

[4] cron to command to backup: <http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/how-do-i-add-jobs-to-cron-under-linux-or-unix-oses/>

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