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# How to Extend the Default Ubuntu LVM Partition Job Board

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**POV:** You're a sysadmin who set up a one-off Linux machine for an app you needed, and now it's out of disk space.

You originally spun up a VM, installed a recent Ubuntu OS, and just hit *Next, Next, Finish* through the guided install. Linux is not your bread and butter, you usually deal in Windows, and you just need to get this done.

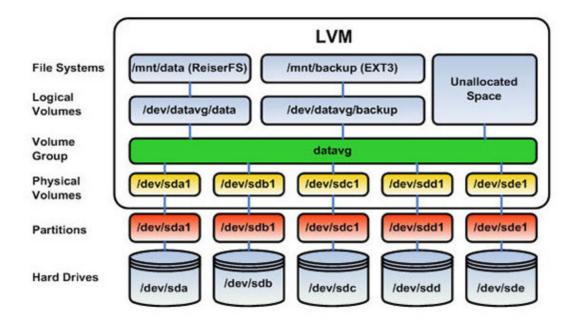
**Approx Reading Time: 10 minutes** 

Note: In my examples, I'm using an "all-defaults" setup of **Ubuntu 20.04 Server** with a single **100GB disk**.

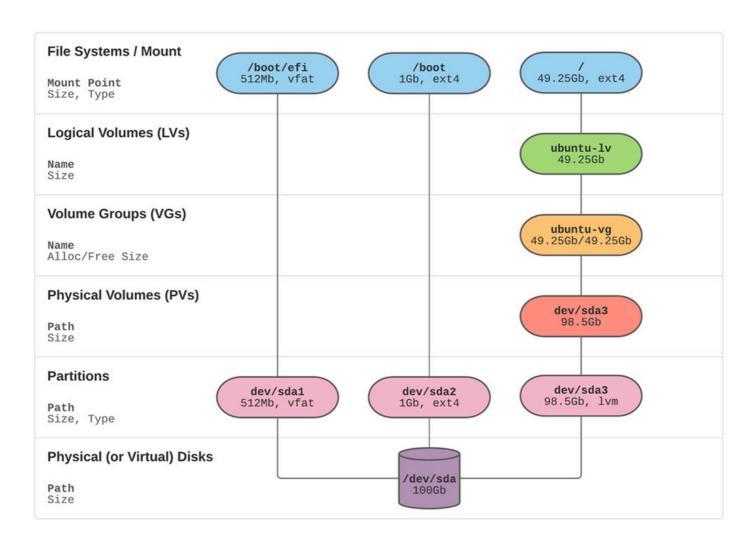
### **Linux LVM Briefly Explained**

If you followed the default settings in the Ubuntu installation, then the storage for your Linux OS is probably using the Logical Volume Manager (LVM). LVM is an abstraction framework which exists between your physical (or virtual) disks and your Linux file system (which is likely <a href="mailto:ext4">ext4</a></a>
(<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ext4">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ext4</a>). It is used to group separate block devices (partitions) together into Volume Groups (VGs), and then chop those VGs up into logical block devices, or Logical Volumes (LVs). LVs are the abstracted block devices upon which your usable file system resides.

Below is a good visualization of how LVM works. In this example, we have five different disks, each with a single partition mapped to Physical Volumes (PVs), all being grouped into a single Volume Group (VG). The Volume Group is chopped up into two different Logical Volumes (LVs), and each LV is being used for a filesystem.



Using a similar visualization, the below diagram shows how the Ubuntu installer (using all default options) divided up my 100GB disk.



### **Ubuntu Installer Default Settings**

When installing Ubuntu, it has you approve a storage layout in a couple different screens (shown below). By default this storage layout will have a couple small boot partitions, and a third partition, which will be used by your LVM to create your root filesystem. You should be able to see the consistency between the screens below and the diagram above.

```
Configure a guided storage layout, or create a custom one:

(X) Use an entire disk

[ 360022480f626dcb39903386ec75175df local disk 100.000G ▼ ]

[X] Set up this disk as an LVM group

[ ] Encrypt the LVM group with LUKS

Passphrase:

Confirm passphrase:
```

```
Storage configuration
FILE SYSTEM SUMMARY
                            49.2486 new ext4 new LVM logical volume • ]
1.0006 new ext4 new partition of local disk • ]
512.000M new fat32 new partition of local disk • ]
[/boot
[/boot/efi
AVAILABLE DEVICES
[ ubuntu-vg (new)
                                                                                                                 LVM volume group
                                                                                                                                                     98.496G ▶ ]
                                                                                                                                                     49.248G
USED DEVICES
[ ubuntu-vg (new)
ubuntu-lv ne
                                                                                                                 LVM volume group
                                                                                                                                                     98.496G ► ]
49.248G ►
                          new, to be formatted as ext4, mounted at /
[ 360022480f626dcb39903386ec75175df local disk partition 1 new, primary ESP, to be formatted as fat32, mounted at /boot/efi partition 2 new, to be formatted as ext4, mounted at /boot partition 3 new, PV of LVM volume group ubuntu-vg
                                                                                                                                                   100.000G > ]
512.000M >
1.000G >
98.498G >
```

### **Use Your Default Free Space**

As you can see above: the Ubuntu installer (by default) **left almost half of my disk space unusable by the root file system!** I've looked around to find an explanation on why these are the default settings, but can't find anything. Before extending your underlying hypervisor disk or storage volume, you may want to see if you have free space available and ready to be used to extend your existing file system. If you used the Ubuntu defaults during installation, then there is a good chance you have this free space.

Start by checking your root filesystem free space with df -h. As you can see I am only using **14%** of my **~49GB** volume, but we'll pretend I'm close to 100% and need to make that 49GB volume larger.

```
Filesystem
                                     Size
                                           Used Avail Use% Mounted on
                                     1.9G
udev
                                              0
                                                1.9G
                                                         0% /dev
                                     389M
                                           900K
                                                 388M
                                                         1% /run
tmpfs
/dev/mapper/ubuntu--vg-ubuntu--lv 49G
                                           6.3G
                                                 40G 14% /
                                     1.9G
                                                        0% /dev/shm
tmpfs
                                              0
                                                 1.9G
tmpfs
                                                           /run/lock
                                     5.0M
                                              0
                                                 5.0M
                                                         80
                                                        0% /sys/fs/cgroup
                                     1.9G
                                              0
tmpfs
                                                 1.9G
/dev/loop0
                                      56M
                                            56M
                                                    0 100% /snap/core18/2128
/dev/loop1
                                            71M
                                                    0 100% /snap/lxd/21029
                                      71M
/dev/loop2
                                      33M
                                            33M
                                                    0 100% /snap/snapd/12704
                                                 802M 12% /boot
                                     976M
                                           107M
/dev/sda2
/dev/sda1
                                     511M
                                           5.3M
                                                 506M
                                                        2% /boot/efi
                                                    0 100% /snap/core18/2246
/dev/loop3
                                      56M
                                            56M
/dev/loop4
                                                    0 100% /snap/snapd/13640
                                      33M
                                            33M
/dev/loop5
                                      62M
                                            62M
                                                    0 100% /snap/core20/1169
                                     389M
                                             0
                                                         0% /run/user/0
tmpfs
/dev/loop6
                                      68M
                                            68M
                                                    0 100% /snap/lxd/21835
root@test:-#
```

To check for existing free space on your Volume Group (where it is left by the installer default settings), run the command vgdisplay and check for free space. Here you can see I have **49.25GB** of free space ready to be used. If you don't have any free space, move on to the next section to use some free space from an extended physical (or virtual) disk.

```
root@test:-# vgdisplay
  --- Volume group ---
 VG Name
                        ubuntu-vg
 System ID
 Format
                         lvm2
 Metadata Areas
 Metadata Sequence No
                         read/write
 VG Access
 VG Status
                        resizable
 MAX LV
 Cur LV
 Open LV
                         0
 Max PV
     PV
 Cur
 Act PV
 VG Size
                        <98.50 GiB
 PE Size
                         4.00 MiB
 Total PE
                         25215
  Alloc PE / Size
                         12608 / 49.25 GiB
 Free PE / Size
                        12607 / <49.25 GiB
  VG UUID
                         aawC0E-hjBV-B5FG-TvwM-5iM3-jcGa-3QU2zf
root@test:-#
```

To use up that free space on your Volume Group (VG) for your root Logical Volume (LV), first run the lvdisplay command and check the Logical Volume size, then run lvextend -I +100%FREE /dev/ubuntu-vg/ubuntu-lv to extend the LV to the maximum size usable, then run lvdisplay one more time to make sure it changed.

```
oot@test:-# lvdisplay
  --- Logical volume -
                         /dev/ubuntu-vg/ubuntu-lv
 LV Path
 LV Name
                         ubuntu-lv
  VG Name
                         ubuntu-vg
 LV UUID
                         hIKHcl-VBar-e0w0-9cro-9Usa-pgYv-uanFOv
 LV Write Access
                         read/write
  LV Creation host, time ubuntu-server, 2021-11-11 17:52:56 +0000
 LV Status
                         available
                        49.25 GiB
 LV Size
 Current LE
                         12608
  Segments
 Allocation
                         inherit
  Read ahead sectors
                         auto
  - currently set to
                         256
                         253:0
 Block device
root@test:-#
root@test:-#
root@test:-# lvextend -1 +100%FREE /dev/ubuntu-vg/ubuntu-lv
 Size of logical volume ubuntu-vg/ubuntu-lv changed from 49.25 GiB (12608 extended)
 Logical volume ubuntu-vg/ubuntu-lv successfully resized.
root@test:~#
root@test:-#
root@test:-# lvdisplay
  --- Logical volume
                         /dev/ubuntu-vg/ubuntu-lv
 LV Path
 LV Name
                         ubuntu-lv
                         ubuntu-vg
 VG Name
                         hIKHcl-VBar-e0w0-9cro-9Usa-pgYv-uanFOv
 LV UUID
 LV Write Access
                         read/write
 LV Creation host, time ubuntu-server, 2021-11-11 17:52:56 +0000
 LV Status
                         available
  # open
                        <98.50 GiB
 LV Size
 Current LE
                         25215
 Segments
  Allocation
                         inherit
 Read ahead sectors
                         auto
  - currently set to
                         256
 Block device
                         253:0
root@test:-#
```

At this point you have increased the size of the block volume where your root filesystem resides, but you still need to extend the filesystem on top of it. First, run df -h to verify your (almost full) root file system, then run resize2fs /dev/mapper/ubuntu-vg-ubuntu-lv to extend your filesystem, and run df -h one more time to make sure you're successful.

```
ot@test:-# df -h
Filesystem
                                             Used Avail Use% Mounted on
udev
                                       1.9G
                                                    1.9G
                                                           0% /dev
                                                            1% /run
                                       389M
tmpfs
                                             900K
                                                    388M
/dev/mapper/ubuntu--vg-ubuntu--lv
                                       49G
                                             6.3G
                                                     40G
                                                          14% /
                                                ٥
                                                    1.9G
                                                              /dev/shm
tmpfs
                                       5.0M
                                                0
                                                    5.0M
                                                           0% /run/lock
tmpfs
                                       1.9G
                                                0
                                                    1.9G
                                                           0% /sys/fs/cgroup
/dev/loop0
                                        56M
                                              56M
                                                         100% /snap/core18/2128
/dev/loop1
                                        71M
                                              71M
                                                       0
                                                         100% /snap/lxd/21029
/dev/loop2
                                        33M
                                              33M
                                                       0
                                                         100% /snap/snapd/12704
/dev/sda2
                                       976M
                                             107M
                                                    802M
                                                          12% /boot
/dev/sda1
                                       511M
                                             5.3M
                                                    506M
                                                           2% /boot/efi
/dev/loop3
                                                       0 100% /snap/core18/2246
                                        56M
                                              56M
                                        33M
                                              33M
                                                       0 100% /snap/snapd/13640
/dev/loop4
/dev/loop5
                                        62M
                                              62M
                                                       0 100% /snap/core20/1169
                                       389M
                                                          0% /run/user/0
tmpfs
                                               0
                                                    389M
/dev/loop6
                                              68M
                                                         100% /snap/lxd/21835
                                        68M
root@test:-#
root@test:-#
root@test:-# resize2fs /dev/mapper/ubuntu--vg-ubuntu--lv
resize2fs 1.45.5 (07-Jan-2020)
Filesystem at /dev/mapper/ubuntu--vg-ubuntu--lv is mounted on /; on-line resizin
old_desc_blocks = 7, new_desc_blocks = 13
The filesystem on /dev/mapper/ubuntu--vg-ubuntu--lv is now 25820160 (4k) blocks
root@test:-#
root@test:-#
root@test:-# df -h
                                             Used Avail Use% Mounted on
Filesystem
                                      Size
                                       1.9G
                                                 0
                                                    1.9G
                                                            0% /dev
tmpfs
                                       389M
                                             900K
                                                    388M
                                                            1%
                                                              /run
/dev/mapper/ubuntu--vg-ubuntu--lv
                                       97G
                                             6.3G
                                                     87G
                                                           78 /
                                                    1.9G
                                                            0% /dev/shm
tmpfs
                                       1.9G
                                                    5.0M
                                                0
tmpfs
                                       5.0M
                                                           0% /run/lock
                                       1.9G
                                                0
                                                    1.9G
                                                           0% /sys/fs/cgroup
tmpfs
                                              56M
                                        56M
                                                       0 100% /snap/core18/2128
/dev/loop0
/dev/loop1
                                        71M
                                              71M
                                                       0
                                                         100% /snap/lxd/21029
/dev/loop2
                                                         100% /snap/snapd/12704
                                        33M
                                              33M
                                                       0
/dev/sda2
                                       976M
                                             107M
                                                    802M
                                                          12% /boot
                                             5.3M
/dev/sda1
/dev/loop3
                                       511M
                                                    506M
                                                           2% /boot/efi
                                                         100% /snap/core18/2246
                                        56M
                                              56M
                                                       0
/dev/loop4
                                                       0 100% /snap/snapd/13640
                                        33M
                                              33M
/dev/loop5
                                        62M
                                              62M
                                                       0 100% /snap/core20/1169
                                                0
tmpfs
                                                    389M
                                                           0% /run/user/0
/dev/loop6
                                        68M
                                              68M
                                                       0 100% /snap/lxd/21835
 root@test:-#
```

And that's it. You just allocated the free space left behind by the Ubuntu installer to your root filesystem. If this is still not enough space, continue on to the next section to allocate more space by extending an underlying disk.

## Use Space from Extended Physical (or Virtual) Disk

First you need to increase the size of the disk being presented to the Linux OS. This is most likely done by expanding the virtual disk in KVM/VMWare/Hyper-V or by adjusting your RAID controller / storage system to increase the volume size. You can often do this while Linux is running; without shutting down or restarting. I've extended my **100GB** disk to **200GB** for my example machine.

Once that is done, you may need to get Linux to rescan the disk for the new free space. Check for free space by running cfdisk and see if there is free space listed, use "q" to exit once you're done.

```
Disk: /dev/sda
           Size: 100 GiB, 107374182400 bytes, 209715200 sectors Label: gpt, identifier: 7C00EE2F-9E6E-4CE5-BDE6-2FC8D99412D6
  Device
                         Start
                                          End
                                                     Sectors
                                                                  Size Type
  /dev/sdal
                          2048
                                      1050623
                                                     1048576
                                                                  512M EFI System
                                                                    1G Linux filesystem
  /dev/sda2
                       1050624
                                                     2097152
                                      3147775
                                                                98.5G Linux filesystem
 /dev/sda3
                       3147776
                                    209713151
                                                  206565376
 Partition UUID: CD94AE21-BA11-45A0-84C3-008E007D9057
 Partition type: Linux filesystem (OFC63DAF-8483-4772-8E79-3D69D8477DE4)
Filesystem UUID: sL0bD6-1Y5z-Y01x-co90-zNBz-rV7j-xWuiJk
     Filesystem: LVM2_member
[ Delete ] [ Resize ] [ Quit ] [ Type ] [ Help ] [ Write ] [
                                                                                  Dump
```

If you don't see free space listed, then initiate a rescan of /dev/sda with echo 1>/sys/class/block/sda/device/rescan. Once done, rerun cfdisk and you should see the free space listed.

	Start	End	Sectors	Size	Type
/dev/sdal	2048	1050623	1048576	512M	EFI System
/dev/sda2	1050624	3147775	2097152	1G	Linux filesystem
/dev/sda3	3147776	209713151	206565376		Linux filesystem
Free space	209713152	419430366	209717215	100G	
Partition UUID	: 8F1A4C8B-DE4D-4	780-B068-5268	6E8F997F		
Partition type	: EFI System (C12			93EC93B	)
Partition type	e: EFI System (C12 ): 8722-3C16			93EC93B	)
Partition type ilesystem UUID Filesystem	e: EFI System (C12 ): 8722-3C16	A7328-F81F-11		93EC93B	)

Select your /dev/sda3 partition from the list and then select "Resize" from the bottom menu. Hit ENTER and it will prompt you to confirm the new size. Hit ENTER again and you will now see the /dev/sda3 partition with a new larger size.

Select "Write" from the bottom menu, type **yes** to confirm, and hit **ENTER**. Then use "q" to exit the program.

Now that the LVM partition backing the /dev/sda3 Physical Volume (PV) has been extended, we need to extend the PV itself. Run pvresize /dev/sda3 to do this and then use pvdisplay to check the new size.

```
root@test:-# pvresize /dev/sda3
Physical volume "/dev/sda3" changed
  1 physical volume(s) resized or updated / 0 physical volume(s) not resized
root@test:-#
root@test:-#
root@test:-#
root@test:-#
root@test:-# pvdisplay
  --- Physical volume
  PV Name
                          /dev/sda3
 VG Name
                          ubuntu-va
 PV Size
                          <198.50 GiB / not usable 1.98 MiB
  Allocatable
                          4.00 MiB
  PE Size
  Total PE
                          50815
                          25600
  Free PE
 Allocated PE
                          25215
 PV UUID
                          sL0bD6-1Y5z-Y01x-co90-zNBz-rV7j-xWuiJk
root@test:~#
```

As you can see above, my PV has been increased from 98.5GB to 198.5GB. Now let's check the Volume Group (VG) free space with vgdisplay.

```
root@test:-# vgdisplay
  --- Volume group ---
 VG Name
                         ubuntu-vq
  System ID
                         lvm2
  Format
 Metadata Areas
                         1
 Metadata Sequence No
                         4
  VG Access
                         read/write
 VG Status
                         resizable
 MAX LV
                         0
 Cur LV
                         1
                         1
  Open LV
 Max PV
                         0
 Cur PV
                         1
 Act PV
 VG Size
                         <198.50 GiB
  PE Size
                         4.00 MiB
  Total PE
                         50815
  Alloc PE / Size
                         25215 / <98.50 GiB
                         25600 / 100.00 GiB
 Free PE / Size
  VG UUID
                         aawC0E-hjBV-B5FG-TvwM-5iM3-jcGa-3QU2zf
root@test:-#
```

We can see above that the VG has 100GB of free space. Now let's check the size of our upstream Logical Volume (LV) using Ivdisplay, extend the LV to use up all the VG's free space with Ivextend -I +100%FREE /dev/ubuntu-vg/ubuntu-Iv, and then check the LV one more time with Ivdisplay to make sure it has been extended.

```
root@test:-# lvdisplay
   --- Logical volume
  LV Path
                           /dev/ubuntu-vg/ubuntu-lv
  LV Name
                           ubuntu-lv
                           ubuntu-vg
  VG Name
                          hIKHcl-VBar-e0w0-9cro-9Usa-pgYv-uanFOv
  LV UUID
  LV Write Access
                          read/write
 LV Creation host, time ubuntu-server, 2021-11-11 17:52:56 +0000
  LV Status
                           available
  # open
 LV Size
                          <98.50 GiB
  Current LE
                           25215
  Segments
  Allocation
                           inherit
 Read ahead sectors
                           auto
  - currently set to
                           256
  Block device
                           253:0
root@test:-#
root@test:-#
root@test:-# lvextend -1 +100%FREE /dev/ubuntu-vg/ubuntu-lv
 Size of logical volume ubuntu-vg/ubuntu-lv changed from <98.50 GiB (25215 externogical volume ubuntu-vg/ubuntu-lv successfully resized.
root@test:
root@test:-#
root@test:-# lvdisplay
  --- Logical volume
 LV Path
                           /dev/ubuntu-vg/ubuntu-lv
 LV Name
                           ubuntu-lv
  VG Name
                           ubuntu-vg
 LV UUID
                          hIKHcl-VBar-e0w0-9cro-9Usa-pgYv-uanFOv
  LV Write Access
                          read/write
 LV Creation host, time ubuntu-server, 2021-11-11 17:52:56 +0000
  LV Status
                           available
  # open
 LV Size
                          <198.50 GiB
  Current LE
                           50815
  Segments
  Allocation
                           inherit
  Read ahead sectors
                           auto
  - currently set to
                           256
  Block device
                           253:0
root@test:-#
```

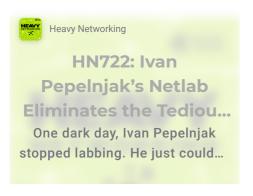
At this point, the block volume underpinning our root filesystem has been extended, but the filesystem itself has not been resized to fit that new volume. To do this, run df -h to check the current size of the file system, then run resize2fs /dev/mapper/ubuntu—vg-ubuntu—lv to resize it, and df -h one more time to check the new file system available space.

```
ot@test:~# df -h
Filesystem
                                             Used Avail Use% Mounted on
                                      Size
udev
                                       1.9G
                                                0
                                                   1.9G
                                                           0% /dev
                                       389M
                                             896K
                                                   388M
                                                           18
                                                              /run
/dev/mapper/ubuntu--vg-ubuntu--lv
                                       97G
                                             6.3G
                                                    87G
                                                           78
                                                              /dev/shm
                                      5.0M
                                                0
                                                   5.0M
tmpfs
                                                           0% /run/lock
                                                0
                                                           0% /sys/fs/cgroup
tmpfs
                                       1.9G
                                                   1.9G
/dev/loop0
                                              56M
                                                        100% /snap/core18/2128
                                       56M
                                                       0
/dev/loop1
                                        56M
                                              56M
                                                       0 100% /snap/core18/2246
/dev/loop2
                                       33M
                                              33M
                                                       0
                                                        100% /snap/snapd/13640
/dev/loop3
                                       33M
                                              33M
                                                       0
                                                         100% /snap/snapd/12704
                                                       0 100% /snap/lxd/21029
/dev/loop4
                                       71M
                                              71M
                                       62M
                                              62M
                                                       0 100% /snap/core20/1169
/dev/loop5
/dev/loop6
                                              68M
                                                       0
                                       68M
                                                         100% /snap/lxd/21835
/dev/sda2
                                      976M
                                             107M
                                                   802M
                                                          12% /boot
                                             5.3M
/dev/sda1
                                      511M
                                                   506M
                                                           2% /boot/efi
                                      389M
                                                0
                                                   389M
                                                           0% /run/user/0
tmpfs
root@test:-#
root@test:-#
root@test:-# resize2fs /dev/mapper/ubuntu--vg-ubuntu--lv
resize2fs 1.45.5 (07-Jan-2020)
Filesystem at /dev/mapper/ubuntu--vg-ubuntu--lv is mounted on /; on-line resizind
old_desc_blocks = 13, new_desc_blocks = 25
The filesystem on /dev/mapper/ubuntu--vg-ubuntu--lv is now 52034560 (4k) blocks
root@test:-#
root@test:-#
root@test:~# df -h
Filesystem
                                      Size
                                             Used Avail Use% Mounted on
udev
                                      1.9G
                                                0
                                                   1.9G
                                                           0% /dev
                                       389M
                                             896K
                                                   388M
                                                           1%
/dev/mapper/ubuntu--vg-ubuntu--lv
                                                           48 /
                                             6.3G
                                                   181G
                                      196G
                                                              /dev/shm
tmpfs
                                                   5.0M
                                      5.0M
                                                0
                                                           0% /run/lock
tmpfs
tmpfs
                                       1.9G
                                                0
                                                   1.9G
                                                           80
                                                              /sys/fs/cgroup
/dev/loop0
                                       56M
                                              56M
                                                       0 100% /snap/core18/2128
/dev/loop1
                                       56M
                                              56M
                                                       0 100% /snap/core18/2246
/dev/loop2
/dev/loop3
                                                         100% /snap/snapd/13640
100% /snap/snapd/12704
                                       33M
                                              33M
                                                       0
                                       33M
                                              33M
                                                       0
/dev/loop4
                                        71M
                                              71M
                                                       0
                                                        100% /snap/lxd/21029
/dev/loop5
                                       62M
                                              62M
                                                       0
                                                         100% /snap/core20/1169
/dev/loop6
                                       68M
                                              68M
                                                       0
                                                         100% /snap/lxd/21835
/dev/sda2
                                      976M
                                             107M
                                                   802M
                                                          12% /boot
                                      511M
/dev/sda1
                                             5.3M
                                                   506M
                                                           2% /boot/efi
tmpfs
                                      389M
                                                0
                                                   389M
                                                           0% /run/user/0
root@test:-#
```

And there you go. You've now taken an expanded physical (or virtual) disk and moved that free space all the way up through the LVM <u>abstraction layers (https://packetpushers.net/podcast/day-two-cloud-081-abstractions-should-save-typing-not-thinking/)</u> to be used by your (critically full) root file system. Time to check it off the to-do list and move on to the next IT emergency.

**About John W Kerns:** John Kerns is a network and automation engineer for a VAR based in Southern California and has been in the industry for over 12 years. He maintains a few open-source projects on GitHub and writes for Packet Pushers.

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