





# Amazon EC2 ssh timeout due inactivity

Asked 11 years, 5 months ago   Modified 1 year, 6 months ago   Viewed 74k times    Part of [AWS Collective](#)

  
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I am able to issue commands to my EC2 instances via SSH and these commands logs answers which I'm supposed to keep watching for a long time. The bad thing is that SSH command is closed after some time due to my inactivity and I'm no longer able to see what's going on with my instances.

How can I disable/increase timeout in Amazon Linux machines?

The error looks like this:

Read from remote host ec2-50-17-48-222.compute-1.amazonaws.com: Connection reset by peer


ssh   amazon-ec2   amazon-web-services

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edited Jul 7, 2021 at 3:53

 [hyper-neutrino](#)  
5,182   2   28   50





asked Aug 26, 2011 at 20:07

 [Roberto](#)  
11.3k   15   54   66

6 Answers

Sorted by:

Highest score (default) 

  
182  
  
  



You can set a keep alive option in your ~/.ssh/config file on your computer's home dir:

```
ServerAliveInterval 50
```

Amazon AWS usually drops your connection after only 60 seconds of inactivity, so this option will ping the server every 50 seconds and keep you connected indefinitely.

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edited Sep 29, 2014 at 23:18

 [mauriciomdea](#)  
2,914   3   14   10

answered Sep 22, 2014 at 15:17

- 10   this setting is on the client side, as opposed to the AWS server, right? Would be worth mentioning in the answer. Also, are you sure about the 60 seconds? It certainly takes far longer than that for my connections to time out. – [CupawnTae](#)  
Sep 28, 2014 at 12:54
- 5   Yes, it's on the client side, on your ssh config on your \*nix computer. I'll update the answer, thanks! For me it's actually 120 seconds, but I have a coworker working in another region and it timeouts in 60 seconds for him. Don't ask me why, I don't work at Amazon! That's why I said 'usually' 60 seconds. I thought it prudent to recommend 50 seconds because 1. it will work for almost everyone and 2. it's not going to thrash your network connection, it's just a ping. You could put 10 seconds and it will still be light enough to not fall into some kind of server ban. – [mauriciomdea](#) Sep 29, 2014 at 23:17

Thanks a lot. It was pain to reconnect all the time just after 1 minute of inactivity. It helped me. – [Satish Patel](#) Dec 11, 2016 at 3:23

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- 4 Perfect Answer! To expand, the file should be `chmod 644 .ssh/config` if its not already created by the system.  
– [Tony-Caffe](#) May 2, 2017 at 16:09
- 
- 1 This answer explains this further with two more useful settings: [unix.stackexchange.com/questions/3026/...](https://unix.stackexchange.com/questions/3026/...) – [Nawaz](#) Feb 5, 2021 at 20:39
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Assuming your Amazon EC2 instance is running Linux (and the very likely case that you are using SSH-2, not 1), the following should work pretty handily:

1. Remote into your EC2 instance.

```
ssh -i <YOUR_PRIVATE_KEY_FILE>.pem <INTERNET_ADDRESS_OF_YOUR_INSTANCE>
```

2. Add a "client-alive" directive to the instance's SSH-server configuration file.

```
echo 'ClientAliveInterval 60' | sudo tee --append /etc/ssh/sshd_config
```

3. Restart or reload the SSH server, for it to recognize the configuration change.

- The command for that on **Ubuntu Linux** would be..

```
sudo service ssh restart
```

- On **any other Linux**, though, the following is probably correct..

```
sudo service sshd restart
```

4. Disconnect.

```
logout
```

The next time you SSH into that EC2 instance, those super-annoying frequent connection freezes/timeouts/drops should hopefully be gone.

This also helps with Google Compute Engine instances, which come with similarly annoying default settings.

**Warning:** Do note that **TCPKeepAlive** settings (which also exist) are subtly, yet distinctly different from the **ClientAlive** settings that I propose above, and that changing TCPKeepAlive settings from the default may actually hurt your situation rather than help.

More info here: [http://man.openbsd.org/?query=sshd\\_config](http://man.openbsd.org/?query=sshd_config)

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edited Jan 18, 2017 at 0:57

answered Jun 23, 2014 at 7:47



**naki**

902 6 11

1 Or just: `echo 'ClientAliveInterval 60' >> /etc/ssh/sshd_config` Or uncomment `#ClientAliveInterval` – [DimiDak](#) Sep 30, 2020 at 19:27

@DimiDak Have you actually tried the command that you suggest? Probably like yourself, I always just use nano to do such edits; but the normative recipe-styled format of answers on Stack Overflow called for instructions that are copy-pasteable, and thus I made the same mistake as you did in the untested, original copy-pasteable [ie., not using an interactive text editor app] version of my instructions. The old comments to this answer that seem to have vanished (??) explained this; and the revision history of this answer [[stackoverflow.com/posts/24360827/revisions](https://stackoverflow.com/posts/24360827/revisions)] does also, somewhat. – [naki](#) Sep 30, 2020 at 20:18

What's wrong with `--> echo 'ClientAliveInterval 60' >> /etc/ssh/sshd_config` ? – [DimiDak](#) Sep 30, 2020 at 20:27

On centos7 AMI the command to restart `sshd` is `systemctl reload sshd` – [Chris Wolf](#) Nov 29, 2021 at 15:20



10



Consider using `screen` or `byobu` and the problem will likely go away. What's more, even if the connection is lost, you can reconnect and restore access to the same terminal screen you had before, via `screen -r` or `byobu -r`.

`byobu` is an enhancement for `screen`, and has a wonderful set of options, such as an estimate of EC2 costs.

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answered Sep 5, 2011 at 16:47



[Iterator](#)

20.1k 12 73 109

Is there a good tutorial for either of these? Neither appears to come preinstalled on the EC2 hosts, and from what I have read you're supposed to run them on the server. – [John Salvatier](#) Nov 13, 2013 at 0:58

4 I prefer @brandnewcode's `ServerAliveInterval`, below. I have been using `tmux`, which is similar to `screen`. An unintended benefit of `tmux` is a clock on the status bar which updates every minute, keeping the connection open. tl;dr: `tmux` to start a session, and `tmux a` to re-attach. – [dannyman](#) Apr 2, 2015 at 20:30

8 This should not be marked as the correct answer as it answers a different question. – [Austin Richardson](#) Mar 21, 2016 at 22:48

One of the best solution is what mauriciomdea have given. No need to reconnect. Works like charm. – [Satish Patel](#) Dec 11, 2016 at 3:20

To me that is not a solution to ssh losing it's connection. It is a workaround for it. Gnu screen is useful to keep logs available upon disconnect, but it doesn't keep the connection running. – [Dolf Andringa](#) Jul 13, 2020 at 5:12



9



I know for Putty you can utilize a keepalive setting so it will send some activity packet every so often as to not go "idle" or "stale"

<http://the.earth.li/~sgtatham/putty/0.55/html/doc/Chapter4.html#S4.13.4>

If you are using other client let me know.

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answered Aug 29, 2011 at 13:59



[Jesse Collier](#)

121 3



You can use MobaXterm, free tabbed SSH terminal with below settings-

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Settings -> Configuration -> SSH -> SSH keepalive



remember to restart MobaXterm app after changing the setting.



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answered Jun 7, 2020 at 11:05



[panky sharma](#)

1,889 27 44

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Most perfect and acceptable answer and not sure why no one voted this answer. Thanks @Panky it is solving my problem with extreme easy way as you suggested. – [prashant thakre](#) Apr 24, 2022 at 19:56

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Team follow this approach only, no need to do any changes on EC2 instances. – [prashant thakre](#) Apr 24, 2022 at 19:57

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This suggestion did not work for me. My MobaXterm is version 21.3 build 4736 and I am connecting to AWS EC2 but after around 2 minutes it disconnects even though the keepalive checkbox was selected and MobaXterm was restarted. – [Ahmad](#) Aug 30, 2022 at 16:12

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-12

I have a 10+ custom AMIs all based on Amazon Linux AMIs and I've never run into any timeout issues due to inactivity on a SSH connection. I've had connections stay open more than 24 hrs, without running a single command. I don't think there are any timeouts built into the Amazon Linux AMIs.



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answered Aug 30, 2011 at 19:12



[AlanZ](#)

135 2

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I think it's sufficient to say that more people are getting timed out than not and one possible reason why you're not getting timed-out is because you have a client setting for your ssh which pings the remote peer occasionally to keep the disconnect/reset from occurring on your connections. – [Jim](#) Dec 3, 2015 at 18:58

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