

Getting started with Tmux

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This guide will go through the installation and basic usage of Tmux to get you up and running.

What is tmux?

Tmux is a terminal multiplexer an alternative to [GNU Screen](#) . In other words, it means that you can start a Tmux session and then open multiple windows inside that session. Each window occupies the entire screen and can be split into rectangular panes.

With Tmux you can easily switch between multiple programs in one terminal, detach them

Tmux sessions are persistent, which means that programs running in Tmux will continue to run even if you get disconnected.

All commands in Tmux start with a prefix, which by default is `ctrl+b`.

This article is also available in [Russian](#).

Installing Tmux

You can easily install Tmux using the package manager of your distro.

Installing Tmux on Ubuntu and Debian

```
$ sudo apt install tmux
```

Installing Tmux on CentOS and Fedora

```
$ sudo yum install tmux
```

Installing Tmux on macOS

```
$ brew install tmux
```

Starting Your First Tmux Session

To start your first Tmux session, simply type `tmux` in your console:

```
$ tmux
```

This will open a new session, create a new window, and start a shell in that window.

Once you are in Tmux you'll notice a status line at the bottom of the screen which shows information about the current session.

You can now run your first Tmux command. For example, to get a list of all commands, you would type:

```
ctrl+b ?
```

Creating Named Tmux Sessions

By default, Tmux sessions are named numerically. Named sessions are useful when you run multiple Tmux sessions. To create a new named session, run the `tmux` command with the following arguments:

```
$ tmux new -s session_name
```

It's always a good idea to choose a descriptive session name.

Detaching from Tmux Session

You can detach from the Tmux session and return to your normal shell by typing:

```
ctrl+b d
```

The program running in the Tmux session will continue to run after you detach from the session.

Re-attaching to Tmux Session

To attach to a session first, you need to find the name of the session. To get a list of the currently running sessions type:

```
$ tmux ls
```

The name of the session is the first column of the output.

Output

```
0: 1 windows (created Sat Sep 15 09:38:43 2018) [158x35]  
my_named_session: 1 windows (created Sat Sep 15 10:13:11 2018) [78x35]
```

As you can see from the output, there are two running Tmux sessions. The first one is named `0` and the second one `my_named_session`.

```
$ tmux attach-session -t 0
```

Working with Tmux Windows and Panes

When you start a new Tmux session, by default, it creates a single window with a shell in it.



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To create a new window with shell type `ctrl+b c`, the first available number from the range `0...9` will be assigned to it.

A list of all windows is shown on the status line at the bottom of the screen.

Below are some most common commands for managing Tmux windows and panes:

- `ctrl+b c` Create a new window (with shell)
- `ctrl+b w` Choose window from a list
- `ctrl+b 0` Switch to window 0 (by number)
- `ctrl+b ,` Rename the current window
- `ctrl+b %` Split current pane horizontally into two panes
- `ctrl+b "` Split current pane vertically into two panes
- `ctrl+b o` Go to the next pane
- `ctrl+b ;` Toggle between the current and previous pane
- `ctrl+b x` Close the current pane

Customizing Tmux

When Tmux is started, it reads its configuration parameters from `~/.tmux.conf` if the file is present.

Here is a sample `~/.tmux.conf` configuration with customized status line and few additional options:

```
~/.tmux.conf
```

```
# Improve colors
set -g default-terminal 'screen-256color'

# Set scrollback buffer to 10000
set -g history-limit 10000

# Customize the status line
set -g status-fg green
set -g status-bg black
```

```
Activities Terminal Sat 22:39 vagrant@localhost: ~
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
top - 22:39:27 up 4 min, 4 users, load average: 0.16,
Tasks: 195 total, 1 running, 161 sleeping, 0 stopped
%Cpu(s): 4.0 us, 2.0 sy, 0.0 ni, 94.1 id, 0.0 wa, 0
KiB Mem : 2041236 total, 407932 free, 1028552 used,
KiB Swap: 2097148 total, 2097148 free, 0 used.
PID USER PR NI VIRT RES SHR S %CPU
1203 vagrant 20 0 2990808 292788 96268 S 2.0
1072 vagrant 20 0 390584 74648 34568 S 1.0
2064 vagrant 20 0 44096 4016 3384 R 1.0
1 root 20 0 159692 8960 6664 S 0.0
2 root 20 0 0 0 0 S 0.0
3 root 20 0 0 0 0 I 0.0
4 root 0 -20 0 0 0 I 0.0
5 root 20 0 0 0 0 I 0.0
6 root 0 -20 0 0 0 I 0.0
7 root 20 0 0 0 0 S 0.0
8 root 20 0 0 0 0 I 0.0
9 root 20 0 0 0 0 I 0.0
10 root rt 0 0 0 0 S 0.0
11 root rt 0 0 0 0 S 0.0
12 root 20 0 0 0 0 S 0.0
13 root 20 0 0 0 0 S 0.0
14 root 0 -20 0 0 0 I 0.0
15 root 20 0 0 0 0 S 0.0
16 root 20 0 0 0 0 S 0.0
17 root 20 0 0 0 0 S 0.0
18 root 20 0 0 0 0 S 0.0
19 root 0 -20 0 0 0 I 0.0
20 root 20 0 0 0 0 S 0.0
21 root 25 5 0 0 0 S 0.0
22 root 39 19 0 0 0 S 0.0
23 root 0 -20 0 0 0 I 0.0
24 root 0 -20 0 0 0 I 0.0
25 root 0 -20 0 0 0 I 0.0
26 root 0 -20 0 0 0 I 0.0
27 root 0 -20 0 0 0 I 0.0
[0] 0:man* "localhost" 22:39 15-Sep-18

TMUX(1) BSD General Commands Manual TMUX(1)
NAME
tmux - terminal multiplexer
SYNOPSIS
tmux [-2CluvV] [-c shell-command] [-f file]
[-L socket-name] [-S socket-path]
[command [flags]]
DESCRIPTION
tmux is a terminal multiplexer: it enables a
number of terminals to be created, accessed, and
controlled from a single screen. tmux may be
detached from a screen and continue running in
the background, then later reattached.
l page tmux(1) line 1 (press h for help or q to quit)
vagrant@localhost:~$ cat .tmux.conf
# Improve colors
set -g default-terminal 'screen-256color'

# Set scrollback buffer to 10000
set -g history-limit 10000

# Customize the status line
set -g status-fg green
set -g status-bg black
vagrant@localhost:~$
```

Basic Tmux Usage

Below are the most basic steps for getting started with Tmux:

01. On the command prompt, type `tmux new -s my_session`,
02. Run the desired program.
03. Use the key sequence `ctrl-b + d` to detach from the session.
04. Reattach to the Tmux session by typing `tmux attach-session -t my_session`.

Conclusion

windows, detach and resume sessions, and personalize your Tmux instance using the `.tmux.conf` file.

To learn more about Tmux type `man tmux` in your terminal or visit the [Tmux User's Manual](#) page.

If you have any questions or feedback, feel free to leave a comment.

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