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Mounting VirtualBox shared folders on Ubuntu Server 16.04 LTS

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Update 7/28/2019: An updated version of this guide for Ubuntu Server 18.04 LTS is now available. Feel free to check it out.

Mounting VirtualBox shared folders on Ubuntu Server 16.04 LTS

This guide will walk you through steps on how to setup a VirtualBox shared folder inside your Ubuntu Server guest. Tested on Ubuntu Server 16.04.3 LTS (Xenial Xerus)

Steps:

1. Open VirtualBox

2. Right-click your VM, then click Settings

3. Go to Shared Folders section

4. Add a new shared folder

5. On Add Share prompt, select the Folder Path in your host that you want to be accessible inside your VM.

6. In the Folder Name field, type `shared`

7. Uncheck Read-only and Auto-mount, and check Make Permanent

8. Start your VM

9. Once your VM is up and running, go to Devices menu -> Insert Guest Additions CD image menu

10. Use the following command to mount the CD:

```
sudo mount /dev/cdrom /media/cdrom
```

11. Install dependencies for VirtualBox guest additions:

```
sudo apt-get update
sudo apt-get install build-essential linux-headers-`uname -r`
```

12. Run installation script for the guest additions:

```
sudo /media/cdrom/./VBoxLinuxAdditions.run
```

13. Reboot VM

```
sudo shutdown -r now
```

14. Create "shared" directory in your home

```
mkdir ~/shared
```

15. Mount the shared folder from the host to your ~/shared directory

```
sudo mount -t vboxsf shared ~/shared
```

16. The host folder should now be accessible inside the VM.

```
cd ~/shared
```

Make the mount folder persistent

This directory mount we just made is temporary and it will disappear on next reboot. To make this permanent, we'll set it so that it will mount our `~/shared` directory on system startup

1. Edit fstab file in /etc directory

```
sudo nano /etc/fstab
```

2. Add the following line to fstab (separated by tabs) and press Ctrl+O to Save.

```
shared  /home/<username>/shared vboxsf defaults 0 0
```

3. Edit modules

```
sudo nano /etc/modules
```

4. Add the following line to `/etc/modules` and save

```
vboxsf
```

5. Reboot the vm and log-in again

```
shutdown -r now
```

6. Go to your home directory and check to see if the file is highlighted in green.

```
cd ~
ls
```

If it is then congratulations! You successfully linked the directory within your vm with your host folder.

Bonus:

How to point apache's web directory to our folder in the host.

1. Remove apache's old `html` directory (WARNING! Backup your data if necessary)

```
sudo rm -rf /var/www/html
```

2. Add a symbolic link in its place

```
sudo ln -s ~/shared /var/www/html
```

fursserg commented Jun 15, 2018

Some systems may need option comment=systemd.automount in their fstab entry (source).

ssy341 commented Dec 7, 2018 • edited ▾

hi,
this guide is a right way,Many thanks! I found so many ways, but all can't work except this.
below code can mount folder as root user

```
sudo mount -t vboxsf shared ~/shared
```

but we hope mount folder as ubuntu user or other, try this:

```
sudo mount -t vboxsf -o uid=1000,gid=1000 shared ~/shared
```

ref:https://ubuntuforums.org/showthread.php?t=1398340#yui-gen40
ps: through `id` commond get uid and gid

natrod commented Feb 5, 2019

Great writeup, however if you plan on sharing your apache's web directory through this method, i assume you would face permission issues since you would not be unable to change the group of the contents inside the shared folder. Do correct me if I'm wrong here please.

scheng123 commented Feb 14, 2019 • edited ▾

Nice job, only the mounting of the cdrom is a bit wrong. First, you should create a /media/cdrom if the user doesn't have it already `sudo mkdir /media/cdrom`. The command should be `sudo mount -t iso9660 /dev/cdrom /media/cdrom` not `sudo mount /dev/cdrom /media/cdrom` (Reference: https://docs.oracle.com/cd/E10926_01/doc/owb.101/b12150/appbcdmount.htm). Nice job otherwise!

estorgio commented Mar 5, 2019 • edited ▾   Author   Owner

Hi everyone. I'm really surprised that my gist was getting some user engagement (comments, stars, forks, etc). To be honest I wrote this just for my own reference and I didn't expect it would rank well on Google and get some traffic.

Took me this long to notice since I usually don't get notifications when somebody comments on my gist.

@fursserg @ssy341
While I was making this I used a fresh new install of Ubuntu Server 16.04.3 LTS with default VM settings on VirtualBox (with Windows 7 SP1 as host) so if you're using a different setup from mine then chances are you might get some different results.

@natrod
As far as I can remember I didn't encountered any issues with Apache with regards to file permissions. It could be an issue if you're using linux as host. I used Win 7 while I was testing this so that could be a factor.

@scheng123
Thank you very much for the tip. I was just about to upgrade my guest to Ubuntu 18.04 LTS and I found out that CD-ROM mounting no longer works as expected. Maybe I should make a new version of this guide for Ubuntu 18.04 LTS when I have the time.

timothy commented May 21, 2019

I am using VertualBox 6 and Ubuntu 18.04. I do not see a checkbox that says "Make Permanent" as stated in step 7. On step 10 I get "mount: /media/cdrom: mount point does not exist." error, and on step 15 I get "/sbin/mount.vboxsf: mounting failed with the error: Protocol error" error. Let me know if anyone knows what went wrong. Thanks!

sagrawal-idrc commented May 31, 2019 • edited ▾

Host: Windows Server 2012 R2
Guest: Ubuntu Server 18.04 LTS

I had to additionally install following to get the shared folder mounted:

```
sudo apt-get install virtualbox-guest-utils virtualbox-guest-dkms
```

After rebooting, the shared folder appears under `/media`; `vboxadd-service.service` still fails for me though.

nuistzhou commented Jun 18, 2019

Well, according to the chosen answer here, you could just skip steps 9 - 13 if the guest OS is Ubuntu, this works well when host OS is either Windows or Mac OS.

sliawatimena commented Jul 25, 2019

Dear all,

Host: Ubuntu 18.04 LTS
Guest: Windows 10 Pro
VirtualBox 6.0.10

After I issue this command twice
```
$ sudo apt-get install virtualbox-guest-utils virtualbox-guest-dkms
```
I got make it permanent tick box. However in my Windows E: is a cdrom drive, not a harddisk as expected.

How to correct this? Thank you very much in advance.

Warmest Regards,
Suryadi

estorgio commented Jul 28, 2019 • edited ▾   Author Owner

Hi everyone,

I just posted an updated version of this guide for Ubuntu Server 18.04 LTS. Feel free to check it out.
https://gist.github.com/estorgio/0c76e29c0439e683caca694f338d4003

@sagrawal-idrc @sliawatimena
This guide only works with Ubuntu 16.04 LTS. If you're using the newer Ubuntu 18.04 LTS then please see the updated version of the guide.

halilteyfik commented Sep 16, 2019

sütü seven kamyoncu <3

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