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How do I change the hostname without a restart?

I want to change the OS hostname but I do not want to restart.

I have edited `/etc/hostname` but it requires a restart to get implemented. How to avoid this?

restart   hostname

edited Aug 27 '14 at 20:08   asked Dec 14 '11 at 8:56

guaka   Deepak Rajput
373   3   11   **2,816**   9   22   36

13 Answers

It's easy. Just click the Gear icon (located at upper right corner of the screen), open "About this computer" screen (located at Gear icon) and edit "Device name".

Or, in a terminal, use the following command:

```
sudo hostname your-new-name
```

This will set the hostname to your-new-name until you restart. See `man hostname` and How do I change the computer name? for further information. Do not use `_` in your name.

Note

After a restart your changes in `/etc/hostname` will be used, so (as you said in the question), you should still use

```
sudo -H gedit /etc/hostname
```

(or some other editor) so that file contains the hostname.

To test that the file is set up correctly, run:

```
sudo service hostname start
```

You should also edit `/etc/hosts` and change the line which reads:

```
127.0.1.1       your-old-hostname
```

so that it now contains your new hostname. (This is required otherwise many commands will cease functioning.)

edited May 20 '17 at 13:12   answered Dec 14 '11 at 10:27

Community ♦   jasperado
1   **5,698**   2   10   11

1	i dont want to restart – Deepak Rajput Dec 15 '11 at 3:12
19	I know. that's why you should use the 'hostname' command. I just wanted to clarify, that the 'hostname' command does only change the hostname until you restart/crash/etc. Afterwards it will read the name from the file again. – jasperado Dec 16 '11 at 0:31
5	Depends. If you entered the command you do not need to restart. The hostname is changed already. But only UNTIL your next restart. – jasperado Dec 16 '11 at 14:32
15	Note that you also have to change the `/etc/hosts` (see other answers) – JB. Feb 25 '13 at 15:50
7	In short, although `hostname` will cause the new name to take immediate effect, it is not "permanent" unless you also change `/etc/hostname` and `/etc/hosts`, since those are the files that will be read after a restart or a crash, which of course, you may not be expecting ahead of time. – Tim Parenti Jul 25 '13 at 15:05

Ubuntu 13.04 onwards

The `hostnamectl` command is part of the default installation on both Desktop and Server editions.

It combines setting the hostname via the `hostname` command and editing `/etc/hostname`. As well as setting the static hostname, it can set the "pretty" hostname, which is not used in Ubuntu. Unfortunately, editing `/etc/hosts` still has to be done separately.

```
hostnamectl set-hostname new-hostname
```

This command is part of the `systemd-services` package (which, as of Ubuntu 14.04, also includes the `timedatectl` and `localectl` commands). As Ubuntu migrates to `systemd`, this tool is the future.

edited Feb 13 '15 at 15:58   answered Aug 27 '14 at 21:03

muru
115k   17   238   403

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1   Note this isn't available everywhere. Just looked on my Ubuntu 14.04 LTS ARM-7 installation, and `hostnamectl` doesn't exist. Guess some flavours of Ubuntu aren't using systemd yet. — Stéphane Jul 6 '15 at 2:52

1   @Stéphane the commands are part of the systemd suite, but they are available independently. In this case, 13.04-14.10 don't use systemd as init, by the command is available. — muru Jul 6 '15 at 5:05

@muru, you show 2 items are needed: editing of `/etc/hosts` and invoking `hostnamectl`. I think there may have to be a 3rd item which would be similar to `export HOSTNAME=xxx`. Also the order might matter. I have problems invoking `sudo` if the order is wrong. I infer that `sudo` depends upon `/etc/hosts` so it is better to do that one first if either of the other 2 operations require `sudo`. — H2ONaCl Jan 31 '17 at 13:54

@H2ONaCl the shell variable is set on startup, just open another shell and the hostname variable should be fine. As for sudo, the error about hostname resolution has never actually prevented me from doing anything. — muru Jan 31 '17 at 13:57

@muru, I agree `sudo` works but it's better to eliminate the "error" message even if it is just a "warning" so I think the edit to `/etc/hosts` has to happen first. If we are interactive then yes the user can open a new terminal but if we are in a script I think it's better to get the 3rd change immediately so I suggested `export HOSTNAME=xxx`. — H2ONaCl Jan 31 '17 at 14:00

Without Restart

Changing the hostname or computer name in ubuntu **without restart**

Edit /etc/hostname and change to the new value,

```
nano /etc/hostname
```

Edit /etc/hosts and change the old 127.0.1.1 line to your new hostname

```
127.0.0.1    localhost
127.0.1.1    ubuntu.local    ubuntu   # change to your new hostname/fqdn
```

Note : i have read it on a forum > Edit /etc/hosts and change the old 127.0.1.1 line to your new hostname (if you dont do this, you wont be able to use sudo anymore. If you hav e already done it, press ESC on the grub menu, choose recovery, and edit your host file to the correct settings)

Now after a reboot, your hostname will be the new one you chose

Without Reboot

To change **without a reboot**, you can just use hostname.sh after you edit /etc/hostname. You must keep both your host names in /etc/hosts (127.0.0.1 newhost oldhost) until you execute the command below:

```
sudo service hostname start
```

Note : Above command to make the change active. The hostname saved in this file (/etc/hostname) will be preserved on system reboot (and will be set using the same service).

edited May 12 '17 at 10:12   answered Feb 13 '12 at 20:16

Josip Rodin   **One Zero**
263   1   9   **15.7k**   22   69   104

On Ubuntu 12.10, the last part doesn't work with the following error message `sudo: unable to resolve host old-hostname`. For that part, @jesperado solution works well. — Frédéric Grosshans Nov 23 '12 at 10:54

3   If you don't update `/etc/hosts`, mant things start to fail on 12.04.2 LTS, including the `w` command, Apache, `/sbin/reboot` and much more. **Make sure to update `/etc/hosts`** — Josh Aug 13 '13 at 20:10

You refer to both `127.0.0.1` for localhost and `127.0.1.1` for a custom hostname. Right? Then, towards the end of your answer, for an action *without a rebot*, you reference `/etc/hosts` and `127.0.0.1 newhost oldhost`. So, there is no need for a `127.0.1.1` address? — Nikos Alexandris Dec 19 '15 at 11:22

didn't work for me. i had to use `sudo nano /etc/hosts` for the change to take effect; without sudo, just `nano /etc/hosts` didn't save the change — conman253 Jan 30 at 23:30

The default name was set when you were installing Ubuntu. You can easily change it to whatever you want in both Desktop & Server by editing the hosts and hostname files. Below is how:

1. Press `Ctrl` `Alt` `t` on keyboard to open the terminal. When it opens, run the below command: `sudo hostname NEW_NAME_HERE`

This will change the hostname until next reboot. The change won't be visible immediately in your current terminal. Start a new terminal to see the new hostname.

2. To change the name permanently, run command to edit the host files:

   `sudo -H gedit /etc/hostname` and `sudo -H gedit /etc/hosts`

For Ubuntu server without a GUI, run `sudo vi /etc/hostname` and `sudo vi /etc/hosts` and edit them one by one. In both files, change the name to what you want and save them.

Finally, restart your computer to apply the changes.

edited Oct 19 '16 at 13:43	answered Nov 1 '14 at 22:47
muru	Mohsen Gh.
115k 17 238 403	**521** 4 15

Here is a script that changes the hostname in the prescribed way. It ensures that not only `sudo` but also X11 applications continue to function with no restart required.

Usage: `sudo ./change_hostname.sh new-hostname`

```bash
#!/usr/bin/env bash
NEW_HOSTNAME=$1
echo $NEW_HOSTNAME > /proc/sys/kernel/hostname
sed -i 's/127.0.1.1.*/127.0.1.1\t'"$NEW_HOSTNAME"'/g' /etc/hosts
echo $NEW_HOSTNAME > /etc/hostname
service hostname start
su $SUDO_USER -c "xauth add $(xauth list | sed 's/^.*\//'"$NEW_HOSTNAME"'\//g' |
awk 'NR==1 {sub($1,"\"&\""); print}')"
```

edited Mar 7 '14 at 17:18	answered Mar 7 '14 at 6:30
	Lucas
	445 5 14

> What does the last line in script `su $SUDO_USER -c "xauth add $(xauth list | sed 's/^.*\//'"$NEW_HOSTNAME"'\//g' | awk 'NR==1 {sub($1,"\"&\""); print}')"` do? Just curious. – Fr0zenFyr Mar 10 '14 at 12:22

4
> @Fr0zenFyr: it takes a valid X11 authentication token (`xauth list`) and replaces the old hostname with the new hostname (`sed`). Then `awk` puts quotes around the first argument to `xauth add` because `xauth`'s input and output format are not symmetric. – Lucas Mar 11 '14 at 21:36

> Thanks for the explanation. I had always rebooted for the changes to take effect. +1 – Fr0zenFyr Mar 12 '14 at 4:02

> @trakz: Actually 127.a.b.c whatever the number, is all localhost as per IETF RFC. (most people just don't know this, but as most don't, edit approved) – Fabby Jan 7 '15 at 21:25

Without restart:

1. change hostname in `/etc/hostname`

2. update `/etc/hosts` accordingly

3. `sudo sysctl kernel.hostname=mynew.local.host`

Check your current hostname with `hostname -f`

answered Mar 31 '15 at 14:46
Tombart
475 5 16

To get your current hostname:

`cat /etc/hostname`

This can be changed in any text editor. You would also need to update entry other than localhost against 127.0.0.1 in /etc/hosts.

edited Oct 19 '16 at 13:43	answered Sep 14 '14 at 1:12
muru	tagMacher
115k 17 238 403	**278** 3 12

1
> Or just run the command "hostname" from the command line. – elomage Oct 1 '15 at 13:28

```
sudo hostname your-new-name
sudo /etc/init.d/networking restart
```

That should do the job I think

answered Dec 20 '13 at 12:43

OmarQunsul
49   2

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5   I don't think this will survive a restart – Collin Anderson Sep 15 '14 at 15:54

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1. Replace the contents of `/etc/hostname` with the desired hostname (you can edit with
   `sudo nano /etc/hostname`)
2. In `/etc/hosts` , replace the entry next to 127.0.**1**.1 with the desired hostname (you can
   edit with `sudo nano /etc/hosts`)
3. Execute `sudo service hostname restart; sudo service networking restart`

answered May 8 '15 at 18:26

George
342   4   13

I have read the answers, But I think Probably you are looking for this:

Just execute these two commands after editing the `/etc/hostname` file.

```
$ sudo service hostname restart
$ exec bash
```

That's all. No need to restart.Also make sure you also change the name in
`/etc/hosts` file.

answered Sep 28 '16 at 18:55

Raman
512   1   4   19

Ubuntu 16.04

This is without **restart** and without any terminal use.

- Go to **System Settings -> Details**.
- There it is. Beside **Device name**, there is a text-
  box.
- Edit text-box and close window.

Open terminal. See for yourselves.

(For older versions, the text-box is not editable.)

edited Mar 13 '17 at 18:47   answered Mar 13 '17 at 18:26

Zanna   shonku
43k   12   96   206   **49**   7

The classical answer to the original poster's question is that, once you've edited
`/etc/hostname` , you make it apply without restart by running hostname(1) with the `-F` (`--
file`) option as root:

```
sudo hostname -F /etc/hostname
```

The hostname(5) handling with `/etc/hostname` and the said program has been the same in
Debian and its derivatives for over twenty years now, and the package providing it has been
tagged essential and required, and IIRC the init scripts have literally used the same thing for
decades (`/etc/init/hostname.conf` still contains it), so I have to say I am genuinely puzzled
how nobody had mentioned this already :)

answered Oct 14 '17 at 17:55

Josip Rodin
263   1   9

Ubuntu 16.04

Solution based on answer from the DigitalOcean
Comunity.

Edit *hosts* file.

```
$ sudo nano /etc/hosts
```

Replace *oldname* with new one.

```
127.0.0.1   localhost newname
```

Setup new hostname.

```
$ sudo hostnamectl set-hostname newname
```

answered Jan 12 at 6:29

Jekis
144   4

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protected by Community ♦ Oct 19 '16 at 13:42

Thank you for your interest in this question. Because it has attracted low-quality or spam answers that had to be removed, posting an answer now requires 10 reputation on this site (the association bonus does not count).

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