

REVERT KALI LINUX LOGIN TO CLASSIC BACKTRACK COMMAND LINE LOGIN

blackMORE Ops January 28, 2014 How to, Kali Linux, Linux

Revert Kali login to classic BackTrack command line login

If you were too used to Backtrack Linux and want to revert your Kali Linux Login to classic Backtrack command line login, then you're not alone. The whole idea of command line login was to get a fast and quick access to a system where you can perform some task as quickly as possible and waste time and resources on Window or Desktop Manager. If you're using an old laptop or an old Desktop that doesn't have a powerful graphics card, running Kali Linux with GNOME (gdm3) Desktop is wasting valuable CPU and Memory and making your already dying hardware slower. You type in something, and get an output few seconds later. You hate it, I'd hate it too. Nothing to worry... in this guide I will demonstrate 2 different ways of reverting your Kali Linux Login to classic BackTrack command line login. The first one is possibly the safest if you're not too sure what you're expecting, the second way if slightly more advanced (well, not much but you need some Linux command understanding to run Kali Linux anyway).

In both method, I've shown how to disable gdm3 which is default in Kali Linux GNOME Desktop. If you're using KDE, I am assuming you don't want it disabled cause you're enjoying your shiny Desktop too much.. But in case you want to disable KDM at startup, use the first method (aka Quickest Method) to achieve that. It's just more safer and quicker in every sense.

Once you've done making the changes, your Kali Linux login will be similar to the screenshot below (el classico BackTrack command line login)

```
Kali GNU/Linux 1.0.6 kali tty1
kali login: root
Password:
Linux kali 3.12-kali1-amd64 #1 SMP Debian 3.12.6-2kali1 (2014-01-06) x86_64

The programs included with the Kali GNU/Linux system are free software;
the exact distribution terms for each program are described in the
individual files in /usr/share/doc/*/copyright.

Kali GNU/Linux comes with ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY, to the extent
permitted by applicable law.
root@kali:~#
root@kali:~# _
```

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Quickest Method

You can achieve the same with the following

Install chkconfig package and link gdm3 with startx

Issue the following commands to install chkconfig package and soft-link gdm3 with startx.

```
apt-get install chkconfig -y  
ln -s /usr/sbin/gdm3 /usr/bin/startx
```

```

root@kali: ~
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
root@kali:~#
root@kali:~#
root@kali:~# apt-get install chkconfig -y
Reading package lists... Done
Building dependency tree
Reading state information... Done
The following NEW packages will be installed:
  chkconfig
0 upgraded, 1 newly installed, 0 to remove and 0 not upgraded.
Need to get 10.3 kB of archives.
After this operation, 59.4 kB of additional disk space will be used.
Get:1 http://http.kali.org/kali/ kali/main chkconfig all 11.4-54.60.1-1 [10.3 kB]
Fetched 10.3 kB in 6s (1,479 B/s)
Selecting previously unselected package chkconfig.
(Reading database ... 334174 files and directories currently installed.)
Unpacking chkconfig (from .../chkconfig_11.4-54.60.1-1_all.deb) ...
Processing triggers for man-db ...
Setting up chkconfig (11.4-54.60.1-1) ...
root@kali:~#

```

Check current status of gdm3

Once you've installed chkconfig, use the following command to check run-level status of all running services. In here, we are particularly interested in gdm3 service. If you're running KDE Desktop, you might have to look for KDM service.

```
chkconfig -l
```

Now we know what we should be expecting. So let's move on and disable gdm3 from loading.

```

root@kali: ~
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
root@kali:~#
root@kali:~# chkconfig -l

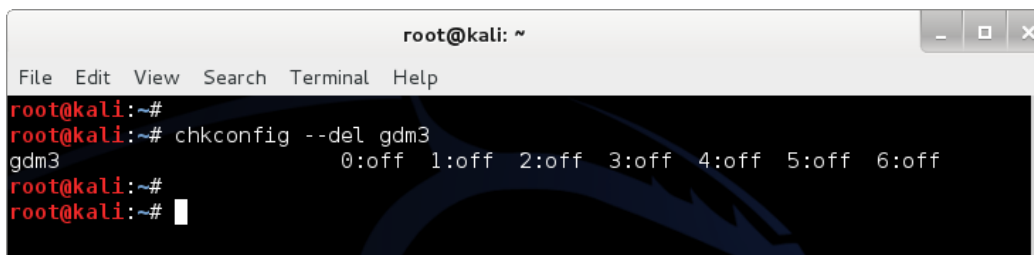
```

alsa-utils	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
apache2	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
arpwatch	0:off	1:off	2:on	3:on	4:on	5:on	6:off	
atd	0:off	1:off	2:on	3:on	4:on	5:on	6:off	
atftpd	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
avahi-daemon	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
beef-xss	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
binfmt-support	0:off	1:off	2:on	3:on	4:on	5:on	6:off	
bluetooth	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
bootlogs	0:off	1:on	2:on	3:on	4:on	5:on	6:off	
bootmisc.sh	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
checkfs.sh	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
checkroot-bootclean.sh	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
checkroot.sh	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
console-screen.sh	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
console-setup	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
cron	0:off	1:off	2:on	3:on	4:on	5:on	6:off	
cryptdisks	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
cryptdisks-early	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
darkstat	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
dbus	0:off	1:off	2:on	3:on	4:on	5:on	6:off	
dns2tcp	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
dradis	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
gdm	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
gdm3	0:off	1:off	2:on	3:on	4:on	5:on	6:off	
greenbone security assistant	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
hdpdm	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
hostname.sh	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
hwclock.sh	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
iodined	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
kbd	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
keyboard-setup	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
killingprocs	0:off	1:on	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
lmd	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
lvm2	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
metasploit	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
mirodo	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	
motd	0:off	1:on	2:on	3:on	4:on	5:on	6:off	
mountall-bootclean.sh	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
mountall.sh	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
mountdevsubfs.sh	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
mountkernfs.sh	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
mountnfs-bootclean.sh	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on
mountnfs.sh	0:off	1:off	2:off	3:off	4:off	5:off	6:off	S:on

Disable gdm3 from run-level

Issue the following command to delete gdm3 from run-level. Nothing to worry, we can revert it back easily. Once you've deleted gdm3 from run-level, then reboot.

```
chkconfig --del gdm3  
reboot
```

A terminal window titled 'root@kali: ~' with a menu bar (File, Edit, View, Search, Terminal, Help). The terminal shows the command 'chkconfig --del gdm3' being executed. The output is 'gdm3 0:off 1:off 2:off 3:off 4:off 5:off 6:off'. The prompt 'root@kali:~#' is shown twice, indicating the command was entered and the output was displayed.

```
root@kali:~#  
root@kali:~# chkconfig --del gdm3  
gdm3 0:off 1:off 2:off 3:off 4:off 5:off 6:off  
root@kali:~#  
root@kali:~#
```

Once reboot is done, login via console and issue the following command if you need GUI once again.

```
startx
```

All we are doing here is removing gdm3 from Check Config (startup) and linking gdm3 with startx. Once reboot, we can use startx if you want GUI again.

If you want to exit out of GUI, press

```
CTRL+ALT+F1
```

and press

```
CTRL+C
```

That will take you back to same old command line window. Pretty savvy!!

Rollback Changes:

To rollback this change, all you need to do is issue one command and reboot. How easy is that!.. Beats typing is few more commands and making another unnecessary mistake ...

```
chkconfig --add gdm3  
reboot
```

```

root@kali: ~
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
root@kali:~#
root@kali:~# chkconfig --add gdm3
gdm3          0:off  1:off  2:on   3:on   4:on   5:on   6:off
root@kali:~#
root@kali:~#

```

As you can see from the screenshot above, we've retained the runlevel as shown in the previous screenshot... That was the whole reason I wanted to use chkconfig instead of mulling over command line and making another typo...

Old school method

Here's another copy paste method. It's really upto the user on how he want's to achieve the outcome. I particularly like the one above as it got a better way of managing things and less cool stuffs. In my mind, the less you need to do to achieve results, the better the outcome is. But hey, you might be interested in the followings for learning purposes, I'm not here to judge... So here goes...

```

cp -n /etc/X11/default-display-manager{,.bkup}
echo > /etc/X11/default-display-manager
cp -n /etc/gdm3/daemon.conf{,.bkup}
sed -i 's/^.*AutomaticLoginEnable = .*/AutomaticLoginEnable = True/' /etc/gdm3/daemon.conf
sed -i 's/^.*AutomaticLogin = .*/AutomaticLogin = root/' /etc/gdm3/daemon.conf
ln -s /usr/sbin/gdm3 /usr/bin/startx # Old school ;)

```

Step by step walk-through with explanations

STEP 1: Remove our Default Display Manager

Since we don't want any graphical default display, we're going to simply clear the file out completely. First, open a terminal. From here, we will backup our default display manager before we clear it out:

```

cp /etc/X11/default-display-manager /etc/X11/default-display-manager.backup
echo "" > /etc/X11/default-display-manager

```

STEP 2: Set GDM3 to autologin.

Because we want to save time we might be better off enabling autologin for our desktop session. I've only shown how to autologin in GNOME Desktop here (gdm3), but if you're using KDE, then the step's are slightly different. There's a separate post about [how you can enable autologin in Kali Linux for both GNOME and KDE](http://www.blackmoreops.com/2014/01/28/revert-kali-linux-login-classic-backtrack-command-line-login/) which might be worth checking out.

Since we're forced to login to even use the command line, there is really no reason to have GDM3 prompt

us to login — in a situation where we boot up wanting the desktop environment. So, we can tell gdm3 to autologin (to an account of your choosing) when, and if, you decide to load it.

```
cp /etc/gdm3/daemon.conf /etc/gdm3/daemon.conf.backup
leafpad /etc/gdm3/daemon.conf
```

Now, under section “

```
[daemon]
```

” we want to change both

```
AutomaticLoginEnable
```

and

```
AutomaticLogin
```

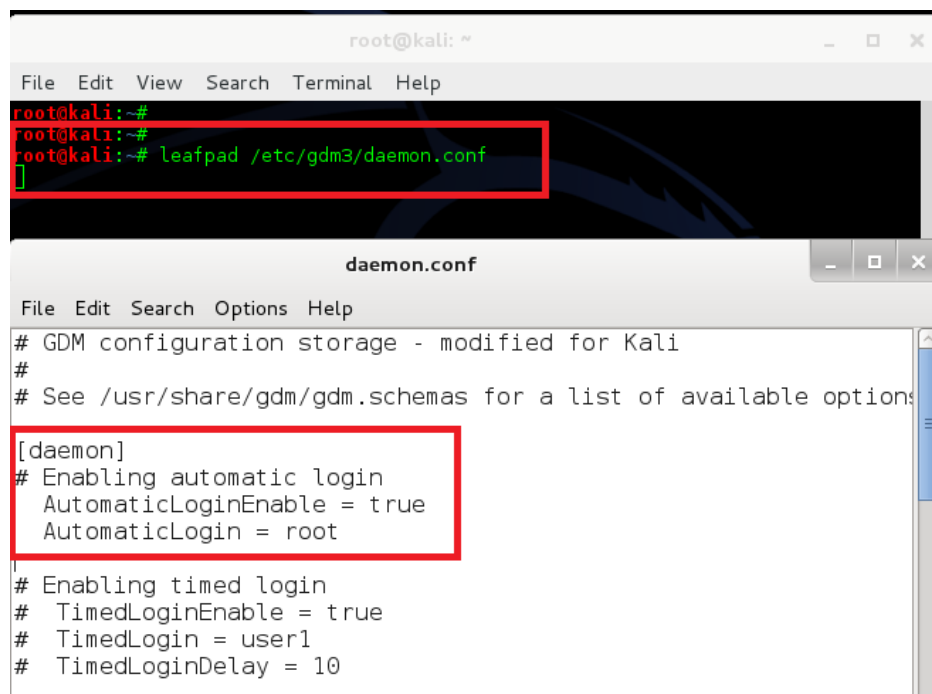
lines

```
[daemon]
# Enabling automatic login
# AutomaticLoginEnable = true
# AutomaticLogin = user1
```

Should now look like:

```
[daemon]
# Enabling automatic login
AutomaticLoginEnable = true
AutomaticLogin = root
```

Here’s a screenshot from it from one of previous post that shows [how to enable login in Kali Linux for KDE and GNOME](#).



NOTES

Now, whenever you boot into Kali, you'll be prompted to login at the command line, rather than the gdm3 GUI. Once logged in, you can always startup your desktop environment by simply typing in

```
gdm3
```

(optional) STEP 3: Use the the classic 'startx' command to run GNOME

Simply open a terminal and type the following:

```
ln -s /usr/sbin/gdm3 /usr/sbin/startx
```

Now, rather than using gdm3 to start gnome, you'd use '

```
startx
```

.'

All in all, I still think the first method was better, quicker and cleaner. You might have a different view as you might want to control things at every level.

Thanks for reading. Let me know how it went and if you found this article useful, share this page and don't forget to [Like our Facebook page](#)