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How to Give Root Privileges to a User in Linux

By Bobbin Zachariah | Updated March 16, 2021 | Tutorials

The "root" super user is the king of users in Linux/Unix. Having root access grants full and unlimited access to the Linux box.

In this tutorial, I will show you how to allow root access to a user in a Linux system. Typically, root level access is used in system administration. So it is always a pain to give root access to other users. You need to be careful and should withdraw the access once the need to do so is over.

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Method 1: Adding to Root Group using usermod

Let see how we can grant normal user root access by adding to root group.

```
# adduser user1
# adduser user2
# groupadd test
```

These are the groups I have in my Linux box.

```
# groups
root bin daemon sys adm disk wheel
```

I am going to add user1 to root group as follows:

```
# usermod -G root user1
```

The command given below provides the existing user with the root privilege

```
# usermod -g 0 -o root_user
```

```
# useradd -m -d root user3
# groups user3
user3 : user3 root
```

Another option using [useradd command](#)

```
useradd -c "Imitation Root" -d /home/root_user -m -k /
```

Method 3: Editing /etc/passwd file

Edit /etc/passwd for the particular user. Change the user's UID and GID to '0'. This will give root permissions to user.

```
root:x:0:0:root:/root:/bin/bash
temproot:x:128:128:temproot
```

Now, temproot user should have root privilege:

```
root:x:0:0:root:/root:/bin/bash
temproot:x:0:0:temproot
```

Note: This is not the recommended method for granting root access

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To give full access to specific users

Add the entry given below in the file:

```
bob, tom ALL=(ALL) ALL
```

Following this method is not a good idea because this
allows both bob and tom to use the su command to grant
themselves permanent root privileges. Thereby skipping
the command logging features of sudo.

Granting access to specific files to one particular user

This entry allows bob and all the other members of the
group operator to gain access to all the program files in
the /sbin and /usr/sbin directories, as well as the
privilege of running the command /usr/oracle/backup.pl.

```
bob, %operator ALL= /sbin/, /usr/sbin, /usr/oracle/bac
```

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If you have any questions or thoughts to share on this
topic, use the feedback form.

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RR

November 4, 2016 at 9:00 am

I tried method 3 and found it to be dangerous.
After making the suggested changes, I was not
able to login to my user. Please re check the
procedure again

Reply

Bobbin Zachariah

November 5, 2016 at 1:47 am

In the third method we are only changing user id
and group id.. and it should not affect login.

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If you do the 3rd option, it will turn the user into
a root user, thus not allowing any remote
connections

Reply

Heyat Afroz

February 9, 2020 at 1:09 am

About Method 4.
I tried the following command visudo and which
took me to /etc/sudoer in edit mode, I entered the
details under
root (ALL=ALL)ALL. I entered the user under this.

But post this I was not able to exit the file even
after using esc Key and then selecting :wq!

It kept on entering the values whatever I was
typing. FInally I had to kill the terminal to come
out of it.

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February 9, 2020 at 1:16 am

Hi Heyat,

Try editing and save some other file using vi
editor and see if you have the same problem.

Reply

SPT

March 20, 2020 at 1:48 am

I have only one user. Was always changing to root
in a terminal by typing "sudo -s". Does this means
that my existing user is having root privileges or
am I just switching to root for the session?

Reply

Bobbin Zachariah

March 20, 2020 at 3:24 am

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shell for easy command execution.

Reply

jagan

September 19, 2020 at 6:23 am

you are just switching to root user that dosent't means the user has root privileges if you want to check the user has root privileges try to edit any file or folder in the root directory when you get acces denied you don't have the root privileges.

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