

# SFTP Command Examples

🕒 DECEMBER 19, 2016 ([HTTPS://WWW.ROSEHOSTING.COM/BLOG/7-USEFUL-SFTP-COMMAND-LINE-EXAMPLES/](https://www.rosehosting.com/blog/7-useful-sftp-command-line-examples/))

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TIPS AND TRICKS

## 7 USEFUL sftp> COMMAND LINE EXAMPLES



We'll show you 7 useful SFTP command line examples. We are all familiar with the FTP protocol and if you are reading this article you've probably used it for transferring files to your virtual server and your local computer. FTP is very simple protocol, but it is also very insecure. All transmissions, including the username and password, are transferred in clear text and it does not use any type of security or encryption while transferring the data. It means that all data can be read by anyone who may intercept the transmission. Luckily, there is a great replacement for the FTP protocol – SFTP.

**SFTP (<https://www.rosehosting.com/blog/easy-ftp-vsftpd-server-with-virtual-users-on-debian-8-jessie/>)** stands for Secure File Transfer Protocol and it relies on SSH. SFTP allows users to transfer data over a connection that is secured using the well known Secure Shell (SSH) protocol. The SFTP protocol is also faster and uses less data than the FTP protocol. Therefore

we highly recommend using SFTP commands, instead of FTP whenever possible. With SFTP commands, you can transfer your files between your machines using some of the popular SFTP clients such as FileZilla, Cyberduck or WinSCP. You can also do it directly from the Linux command line.

In this article, we will list and explain some of the most popular and useful

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```
sftp user@IP_Address
```

```
user@IP_Address' password:
Connected to IP_Address.
```

You can also use a hostname instead of the IP address.

We already mentioned that SFTP is using the same protocol as SSH, so if SSH is not listening on the default port 22, you can specify the port in the command

```
sftp -oPort=2345 user@IP_Address
```

Where '2345' is the port number you are using.

## 2. SFTP Command Line Example 2 – List all files in the current directory

Using the ls command you can list all files and directories in the current working directory

```
sftp> ls  
directory directory1  file  file.txt file.zip
```

You can also list the files on the local system

```
sftp> ll
```

## 3. SFTP Command Line Example 3 – Navigate through directories

To find the current working directory on the local server use

```
sftp> pwd  
Remote working directory: /home/user
```

for the local server use the following command

```
sftp> lpwd  
Local working directory: /
```

You can easily change the working directory in SFTP. For the remote server use

```
sftp? cd directory
```

and for the local server use

```
sftp> lcd directory
```

## 4.SFTP Command Line Example 4 – Upload files and directories using the put command

You can upload single or multiple files or directories from the local machine to the remote one.

```
sftp> put filename
```

To upload multiple files use the following command

```
sftp> mput file1 file2 file3
```

To upload a directory to the remote server, you have to create the destination directory on the remote server first, and then start the upload

```
sftp> mkdir directory  
sftp> put -r directory/
```

## 5. SFTP Command Line Example 5 – Download files and directories using the get command

Download a single file from the remote to the local machine

```
sftp> get file
```

or download multiple files with the ‘mget’ command

```
sftp> mget file1 file2 file3
```

Download a directory and all its content with the following command

```
sftp> get -r directory
```

## 6. SFTP Command Line Example 6 – Create and remove directories

Create a new directory on the remote server

```
sftp> mkdir newdirectory
```

Create a new directory on the local server

```
sftp> lmkdir newdirectory
```

## 7. SFTP Command Line Example 7 – Getting Help

You can find all SFTP commands with a short description by executing ‘help’ or ‘?’.

sftp> ?

Available commands:

bye  
cd path  
chgrp grp path  
chmod mode path  
chown own path  
df [-hi] [path]  
filesystem containing 'path'  
exit  
get [-Ppr] remote [local]  
reget remote [local]  
help  
lcd path  
lls [ls-options] [path]]  
lmkdir path  
ln [-s] oldpath newpath  
lpwd  
ls [-lafhlmrSt] [path]  
lumask umask  
mkdir path  
progress  
put [-Ppr] local [remote]  
pwd  
quit  
rename oldpath newpath  
rm path  
rmdir path  
symlink oldpath newpath  
version  
!command  
!  
?

Quit sftp  
Change remote directory to 'path'  
Change group of file 'path' to 'grp'  
Change permissions of file 'path' to  
Change owner of file 'path' to 'own'  
Display statistics for current directory

Quit sftp  
Download file  
Resume download file  
Display this help text  
Change local directory to 'path'  
Display local directory listing  
Create local directory  
Link remote file (-s for symlink)  
Print local working directory  
Display remote directory listing  
Set local umask to 'umask'  
Create remote directory  
Toggle display of progress meter  
Upload file  
Display remote working directory  
Quit sftp  
Rename remote file  
Delete remote file  
Remove remote directory  
Symlink remote file  
Show SFTP version  
Execute 'command' in local shell  
Escape to local shell  
Synonym for help



Of course, you don't have to use SFTP Commands if you use our **Linux VPS Hosting** (<https://www.rosehosting.com/linux-vps-hosting.html>) services.

Free Full Managed Support is included in all our VPS Hosting packages so you can simply ask our expert Linux admins to use SFTP commands for you. They are available 24×7 and will take care of your request immediately.

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**raul ()**

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NOVEMBER 30, 2017

Is there any way to change the default prompt “sftp>” to have color, for example? Thanks

**admin (https://www.rosehosting.com)****PERSON** AUTHOR •

REPLY (HTTPS://WWW.ROSEHOSTING.COM/BLOG/7-USEFUL-SFTP-COMMAND-LINE-EXAMPLES/?  
REPLYTOCOM=46357#RESPOND)

NOVEMBER 30, 2017

Yes, you can by changing the PS1 value in .bashrc file, for example:

```
PS1='${debian_chroot:+($debian_chroot)}\[\033[01;35m\]\u@\h\[\033[00m\]:\[\033[01;34m\] \w\[\033[01;37m\] > '
```

**raul ()**

REPLY (HTTPS://WWW.ROSEHOSTING.COM/BLOG/7-USEFUL-SFTP-COMMAND-LINE-EXAMPLES/?  
REPLYTOCOM=46381#RESPOND)

DECEMBER 6, 2017

Yes, this is great for an “ssh” connection, what about an “sftp” connection? The prompt is without color and always “sftp>” no matter what server you are connecting to. Thanks.

**maha ()**

REPLY (HTTPS://WWW.ROSEHOSTING.COM/BLOG/7-USEFUL-SFTP-COMMAND-LINE-EXAMPLES/?  
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JANUARY 4, 2018

How to transfer 2 different files in a single command using sftp.

Actually I tried with mput command . But it is taking the first argument after mput as source file and second argument as destination file.

Example:

```
sftp> mput
```

It is trying to copy file1 to file2 . This is happening only in sftp and it is working fine when using ftp.

can someone please help me to solve using sftp.



admin (<https://www.rosehosting.com>)

AUTHOR •

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JANUARY 4, 2018

Using `MPUT` you can upload multiple files from a local directory to a remote directory. Are you trying to upload or download the files? To download multiple files from a remote directory to a local directory you can use `MGET` .



maha ()

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JANUARY 5, 2018

Yes , I am trying to upload the file from local to remote using mput as below.

```
sftp> mput file1 file2
```

But it is taking file1 as source file and file2 as destination file path.

But i need to upload file1 and file2 to remote server in a single command.



admin (<https://www.rosehosting.com>)

 AUTHOR •

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JANUARY 5, 2018

mput is an undocumented alias to put. If you have issues with mput, you should consider using rsync over ssh.



Mark Senogles ()

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JANUARY 24, 2018

If I am using SFTP to push an empty file from Linux to the Mainframe to create a primer file in generation 1 of the dataset, how do I specify the file specifications so that version one has the same file specs that were defined when the dataset was created?

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