

# The GNU Netcat project

## *What is Netcat?*

Netcat is a featured networking utility which reads and writes data across network connections, using the TCP/IP protocol. It is designed to be a reliable "back-end" tool that can be used directly or easily driven by other programs and scripts. At the same time, it is a feature-rich network debugging and exploration tool, since it can create almost any kind of connection you would need and has several interesting built-in capabilities.

It provides access to the following main features:

- Outbound and inbound connections, TCP or UDP, to or from any ports.
- Featured **tunneling mode** which allows also special tunneling such as UDP to TCP, with the possibility of specifying all network parameters (source port/interface, listening port/interface, and the remote host allowed to connect to the tunnel).
- Built-in port-scanning capabilities, with randomizer.
- Advanced usage options, such as buffered send-mode (one line every N seconds), and hexdump (to stderr or to a specified file) of trasmitted and received data.
- Optional RFC854 telnet codes parser and responder.

The GNU Netcat is distributed freely under the GNU General Public License (GPL).

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## *Project Goals*

Although the project development is marked as beta, GNU Netcat is already enough stable for everyday use.

Goals of this project are **full compatibility** with the original nc 1.10 that is widely used, and **portability**. GNU Netcat should compile and work without changes on the following hosts:

- Linux (test host: alphaev67-unknown-linux-gnu)
- FreeBSD (test host: i386-unknown-freebsd4.9)
- NetBSD (test host: i386-unknown-netbsdelf1.6.1)
- SunOS/Solaris (test host: sparc-sun-solaris2.9)
- MacOS X (test host: powerpc-apple-darwin6.8)

Other operating systems could be supported with minor source modifications, since the code has been written following the GNU coding standard conventions.

If you find a bug or you want to report a successfull build on another OS, use the [bug tracking system](#).

Soon the project will split releases between "stable" releases and "development" releases to improve development speed and the introduction of new features without requiring too much testing.

For further information, see the README and ChangeLog files in the

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V. 2.0

## Releases Status

**Current Version:**

***Netcat 0.7.1***

**Released on:**

*11 Jan 2004*

## Supporters of Netcat

**Network Administration  
Tools**

package.

If you are courageous enough to try the newest development version or you want to contribute patches, you may want to check out the version in the [CVS repository](#).

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