

# Setting Up a Local Mail Server on Ubuntu with Postfix, Dovecot, and Mutt

## 1 Introduction

This guide provides step-by-step instructions to set up a mail server on Ubuntu using **Postfix** as the SMTP server, **Dovecot** as the IMAP/POP3 server, and **Mutt** as the email client. The setup allows sending and receiving emails locally.

## 2 Prerequisites

- A machine running Ubuntu (preferably 22.04 LTS or later).
- Root or sudo privileges.

## 3 Step 1: Update System Packages

Update and upgrade your system to ensure you have the latest versions of all packages:

```
1 sudo apt update
2 sudo apt upgrade -y
```

## 4 Step 2: Install Required Packages

Install Postfix, Dovecot, and Mutt:

```
1 sudo apt install postfix dovecot-core dovecot-imapd mutt -y
```

## 5 Step 3: Configure Postfix (SMTP Server)

Open the Postfix configuration file:

```
1 sudo nano /etc/postfix/main.cf
```

Update the following parameters in `main.cf`:

```

1 myhostname = localhost
2 mydomain = localdomain
3 myorigin = $mydomain
4 inet_interfaces = all
5 mydestination = $myhostname, localhost.$mydomain, localhost,
   $mydomain
6 home_mailbox = Maildir/

```

Restart Postfix to apply changes:

```

1 sudo systemctl restart postfix

```

## 6 Step 4: Configure Dovecot (IMAP/POP3 Server)

Open the Dovecot configuration file:

```

1 sudo nano /etc/dovecot/dovecot.conf

```

Enable the IMAP protocol by adding/updating:

```

1 protocols = imap
2 mail_location = maildir:~/Maildir

```

Open the authentication configuration file:

```

1 sudo nano /etc/dovecot/conf.d/10-auth.conf

```

Uncomment and set:

```

1 disable_plaintext_auth = no

```

Restart Dovecot to apply changes:

```

1 sudo systemctl restart dovecot

```

## 7 Step 5: Configure Mutt (Email Client)

Create a configuration file for Mutt:

```

1 nano ~/.muttrc

```

Add the following configuration to the file:

```

1 set from = "user@localhost"
2 set realname = "Your Name"
3 set mbox_type = Maildir
4 set folder = "~/Maildir"
5 set spoolfile = "~/Maildir/INBOX"
6 set record = "~/Maildir/Sent"

```

Save and exit.

## 8 Step 6: Testing the Mail Server

### 8.1 Send an Email

Use Mutt to send a test email:

Open Mutt:

```
1 mutt
```

Press **m** to compose a new email.

Enter the recipient email address (e.g., `user@localhost`).

Write your message and send it.

### 8.2 Check Received Emails

Use Mutt to check the received email:

Open Mutt:

```
1 mutt
```

View your inbox for the test email.

## 9 Step 7: Logs and Debugging

Check Postfix logs:

```
1 sudo tail -f /var/log/mail.log
```

Check Dovecot logs:

```
1 sudo tail -f /var/log/dovecot.log
```

## 10 Notes

- This setup is intended for local use only. For a production mail server, you'll need additional configurations for domains, SSL/TLS, and security.
- Ensure your firewall allows required ports:
  - **25** (SMTP)
  - **143** (IMAP)