Nmap Cheatsheet

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This document shall contain everything I have learned so far about nmap. I must keep it up-to-date because I feel a bit inundated in this cybersecurity journey to be frank.

1 Basic Nmap Commands

1.1 Service and Version Detection (-sV)

This is the Service Detection flag (yes; $\neg sV$ is a single flag, not a combination of both s AND V), which will tell you the name and description of the identified services.

```
Service and Version Detection
$ sudo nmap -sV {target_IP}
Starting Nmap 7.80 (https://nmap.org) at 2025-03-28 06:27 GMT
Nmap scan report for 10.10.171.202
Not shown: 994 closed ports
                        VERSION
7/tcp
        open echo
        open tcpwrapped
        open daytime?
17/tcp
        open
             qotd?
                          OpenSSH 9.6p1 Ubuntu 3ubuntu13.5 (Ubuntu
22/tcp
       open ssh
8008/tcp open
                          lighttpd 1.4.74
2 services unrecognized despite returning data. If you know the
   service/version, please submit the following fingerprints at
   https://nmap.org/cgi-bin/submit.cgi?new-service :
# [Detailed fingerprint data omitted for brevity]
Service Info: OS: Linux; CPE: cpe:/o:linux:linux_kernel
Service detection performed. Please report any incorrect results
   at https://nmap.org/submit/ .
Nmap done: 1 IP address (1 host up) scanned in 14.00 seconds
```

1.2 Default Script Scan (-sC)

I sometimes use this one instead of $\neg sV$ because it runs $default\ scripts^1$, which can give out additional information depending on the services running on the target. You can see a comparison in outputs between the two flags in the two boxes below.

```
Default Script Scan
Nmap scan report for 10.10.219.233 Host is up (0.00024s latency).
Not shown: 65526 closed ports
25/tcp open smtp
| Not valid before: 2021-08-10T12:10:58
|_Not valid after: 2031-08-08T12:10:58
  bind.version: 9.18.28-1~deb12u2-Debian
110/tcp open pop3
|_pop3-capabilities: PIPELINING SASL UIDL STLS AUTH-RESP-CODE RESP-CODES CAPA TOP
111/tcp open rpcbind
                       111/tcp rpcbind
    100000 2,3,4
100000 2,3,4
100000 3,4
143/tcp open
|_imap-capabilities: more LOGIN-REFERRALS have IDLE post-login STARTTLS listed
    ENABLE capabilities LOGINDISABLEDA0001 Pre-login SASL-IR OK ID LITERAL+
    IMAP4rev1
993/tcp open imaps
|_imap-capabilities: LOGIN-REFERRALS more IDLE capabilities OK post-login ENABLE
    listed have Pre-login SASL-IR AUTH=PLAINA0001 ID LITERAL+ IMAP4rev1
995/tcp open pop3s
|_pop3-capabilities: PIPELINING SASL(PLAIN) UIDL USER AUTH-RESP-CODE RESP-CODES
| Not valid before: 2021-08-10T12:10:58
```

¹Default NSE Scripts, Nmap.org

Service Version Detection for Comparison Starting Nmap 7.80 (https://nmap.org) at 2025-03-28 09:21 GMT Not shown: 991 closed ports PORT STATE SERVICE VERSION OpenSSH 9.2p1 Debian 2+deb12u3 (protocol 22/tcp open ssh 25/tcp open smtp Postfix smtpd 53/tcp open domain ISC BIND 9.18.28-1~deb12u2 (Debian Linux) 80/tcp open http nginx 1.22.1 110/tcp open pop3 Dovecot pop3d 111/tcp open rpcbind 2-4 (RPC #100000) 143/tcp open imap Dovecot imapd 993/tcp open ssl/imap Dovecot imapd 995/tcp open ssl/pop3 Dovecot pop3d MAC Address: 02:DD:7B:88:3D:75 (Unknown) Service Info: Host: debra2.thm.local; OS: Linux; CPE: cpe:/o: linux:linux kernel Service detection performed. Please report any incorrect results at https://nmap.org/submit/ . Nmap done: 1 IP address (1 host up) scanned in 13.00 seconds

1.3 OS Detection (-O)

Nmap sends a series of TCP and UDP packets to the remote host and examines practically every bit in the responses.

1.4 Aggressive Scan

What if you can have both OS detection and version detection with a single scan? That's what the aggressive scan is for. It enables OS detection, version detection, script scanning, and traceroute.

```
Aggressive Scan
$ sudo nmap -A {target_IP}
256 b9:bc:8f:01:5f:59:23:d3:3a:a2:2d:04:10:e5:04:2d (ECDSA)
80/tcp open http nginx 1.22.1 |_http-title: Welcome to nginx on Debian!
110/tcp open pop3 Dovecot pop3d |_pop3-capabilities: PIPELINING SASL UIDL STLS AUTH-RESP-CODE RESP-CODES CAPA TOP
                      port/proto service
111/tcp rpcbind
    100000 2,3,4
100000 2,3,4
100000 3,4
                          111/udp rpcbind
111/tcp6 rpcbind
111/udp6 rpcbind
      * OK [CAPABILITY IMAP4rev1 SASL-IR LOGIN-REFERRALS ID ENABLE IDLE LITERAL+ AUTH=PLAIN] Dovecot ready.
      * OK [CAPABILITY IMAP4rev1 SASL-IR LOGIN-REFERRALS ID ENABLE IDLE LITERAL+ AUTH=PLAIN] Dovecot ready.
      BAD Command received in invalid state.
      BAD Command received in invalid state.
      OPTIONS RTSP/1.0
995/tcp open pop3s? | fingerprint-strings:
    6.16 ms 10.10.219.233
```

2 Host Discovery

2.1 ARP Scan (-PR)

The ARP scan, -PR, is what you'd typically use if you're already in the network that you want to scan for live systems. The -sn flag here is necessary because it prevents nmap from scanning for open ports after the ARP scan.

```
ARP Scan
$ sudo nmap -sn -PR 192.168.100.7/24
Starting Nmap 7.95 (https://nmap.org) at 2025-03-29 02:07 +03
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.1
MAC Address: # This will show for all the live hosts, for all the
upcoming Discovery Host scans in this document, but I'll redact
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.9
Host is up (0.092s latency).
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.12
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.13
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.15
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.16
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.25
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.28
Host is up (0.061s latency).
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.7
Host is up.
```

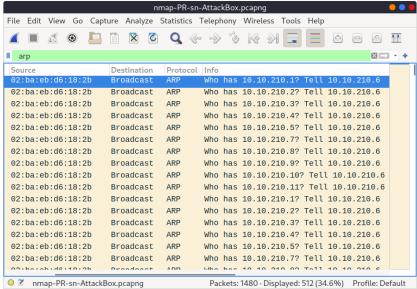


Figure 1: Wireshark capture of ARP scan packets, a network different from the aforementioned by the way.

2.2 ICMP Scans

We'd rarely send these ICMP packets for the discovery of our system's own subnet, ARP Scans would be better in that case since firewalls tend to block ICMP packets a lot.

2.2.I Echo Scan (-PE)

Either way, the -PE scan sends the ICMP Type 8 packets (i.e. same as your ping command).

```
## Starting Nmap -sn -PE 192.168.100.7/24

Starting Nmap 7.95 ( https://nmap.org ) at 2025-03-29 03:06 +03 Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.1 Host is up (0.0039s latency).

Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.12 Host is up (0.33s latency).

Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.13 Host is up (0.74s latency).

Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.15 Host is up (0.072s latency).

Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.16 Host is up (0.32s latency).

Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.25 Host is up (0.11s latency).

Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.28 Host is up (0.73s latency).

Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.7 Host is up.

Nmap done: 256 IP addresses (8 hosts up) scanned in 9.18 seconds
```

Do you notice how it discovered 8 devices, whilst the previous ARP scan discovered 9?

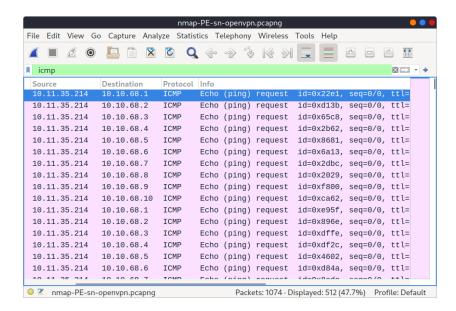


Figure 2: Wireshark capture of Echo Request packets, a network different from the aforementioned by the way.

2.2.II Timestamp Scan (-PP)

Because ICMP echo requests tend to be blocked, you might also consider ICMP Timestamp (ICMP Type 13) to tell if a system is online.

We got "9 hosts up" once again!

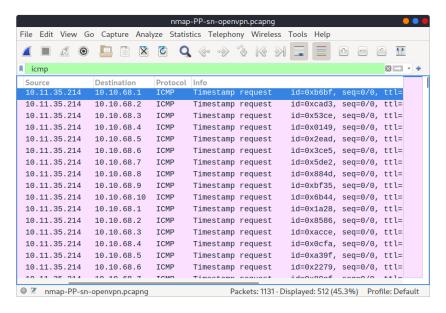


Figure 3: Wireshark capture of Timestamp Request packets.

2.2.III Address Mask Scan (-PM)

Similarly, Nmap uses address mask queries (ICMP Type 17) and checks whether it gets an address mask reply (ICMP Type 18).

```
## Starting Nmap -sn -PM 192.168.100.7/24

Starting Nmap 7.95 ( https://nmap.org ) at 2025-03-29 03:53 +03  
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.1  
Host is up (0.042s latency).  
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.12  
Host is up (0.21s latency).  
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.13  
Host is up (0.21s latency).  
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.15  
Host is up (0.10s latency).  
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.16  
Host is up (0.19s latency).  
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.25  
Host is up (0.071s latency).  
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.28  
Host is up (1.5s latency).  
Nmap scan report for 192.168.100.7  
Host is up.
Nmap done: 256 IP addresses (8 hosts up) scanned in 9.39 seconds
```

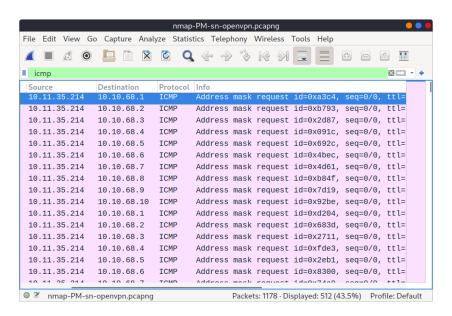


Figure 4: Wireshark capture of Address Mask Request packets.

Bonus: if you were to NOT specify one of the techniques above, just used **nmap** -sn with no other flags, Nmap's default behaviour would be to reverse-DNS online hosts. And to skip that, you can use -n flag.

2.3 TCP/UDP Host Discovery

${\bf 2.3.I\quad TCP\ SYN\ Scan\ (-PS)}$

Nmap will send TCP SYN packets and won't complete the TCP 3-way handshake even if the port is open, as shown in the figure below the terminal's output.

```
**TCP SYN Scan (-PS)

**sudo nmap -PS -sn 10.10.68.220/24

Starting Nmap 7.92 ( https://nmap.org ) at 2021-09-02 13:45 EEST

Nmap scan report for 10.10.68.52

Host is up (0.10s latency).

Nmap scan report for 10.10.68.121

Host is up (0.16s latency).

Nmap scan report for 10.10.68.125

Host is up (0.089s latency).

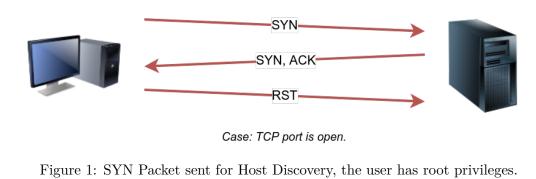
Nmap scan report for 10.10.68.134

Host is up (0.13s latency).

Nmap scan report for 10.10.68.220

Host is up (0.11s latency).

Nmap done: 256 IP addresses (5 hosts up) scanned in 17.38 seconds
```



nmap -PS -sn TARGET