## 

## **Prometheus Installation Steps on Ubuntu 16.04**

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## **Step 1 — Creating Service Users**

For security purposes, we’ll begin by creating two new user accounts, **prometheus** and **node\_exporter**. We’ll use these accounts throughout the tutorial to isolate the ownership on Prometheus’ core files and directories.

Create these two users, and use the --no-create-home and --shell /bin/false options so that these users can’t log into the server.

sudo useradd --no-create-home --shell /bin/false prometheus

sudo useradd --no-create-home --shell /bin/false node\_exporter

Before we download the Prometheus binaries, create the necessary directories for storing Prometheus’ files and data. Following standard Linux conventions, we’ll create a directory in /etc for Prometheus’ configuration files and a directory in /var/lib for its data.

sudo mkdir /etc/prometheus

sudo mkdir /var/lib/prometheus

Now, set the user and group ownership on the new directories to the **prometheus** user.

sudo chown prometheus:prometheus /etc/prometheus

sudo chown prometheus:prometheus /var/lib/prometheus

With our users and directories in place, we can now download Prometheus and then create the minimal configuration file to run Prometheus for the first time.

## **Step 2 — Downloading Prometheus**

First, download and unpack the current stable version of Prometheus into your home directory. You can find the latest binaries along with their checksums on the [Prometheus download pa](https://prometheus.io/download/)

curl -LO https://github.com/prometheus/prometheus/releases/download/v2.0.0/prometheus-2.0.0.linux-amd64.tar.gz

Next, use the sha256sum command to generate a checksum of the downloaded file:

sha256sum prometheus-2.0.0.linux-amd64.tar.gz

Compare the output from this command with the checksum on the Prometheus download page to ensure that your file is both genuine and not corrupted.

Output

e12917b25b32980daee0e9cf879d9ec197e2893924bd1574604eb0f550034d46 prometheus-2.0.0.linux-amd64.tar.gz

If the checksums don’t match, remove the downloaded file and repeat the preceding steps to re-download the file.

Now, unpack the downloaded archive.

tar xvf prometheus-2.0.0.linux-amd64.tar.gz

This will create a directory called prometheus-2.0.0.linux-amd64 containing two binary files (prometheus and promtool), consoles and console\_libraries directories containing the web interface files, a license, a notice, and several example files.

Copy the two binaries to the /usr/local/bin directory.

sudo cp prometheus-2.0.0.linux-amd64/prometheus /usr/local/bin/

sudo cp prometheus-2.0.0.linux-amd64/promtool /usr/local/bin/

Set the user and group ownership on the binaries to the **prometheus** user created in Step 1.

sudo chown prometheus:prometheus /usr/local/bin/prometheus

sudo chown prometheus:prometheus /usr/local/bin/promtool

Copy the consoles and console\_libraries directories to /etc/prometheus.

sudo cp -r prometheus-2.0.0.linux-amd64/consoles /etc/prometheus

sudo cp -r prometheus-2.0.0.linux-amd64/console\_libraries /etc/prometheus

Set the user and group ownership on the directories to the **prometheus** user. Using the -R flag will ensure that ownership is set on the files inside the directory as well.

sudo chown -R prometheus:prometheus /etc/prometheus/consoles

sudo chown -R prometheus:prometheus /etc/prometheus/console\_libraries

Lastly, remove the leftover files from your home directory as they are no longer needed.

rm -rf prometheus-2.0.0.linux-amd64.tar.gz prometheus-2.0.0.linux-amd64

Now that Prometheus is installed, we’ll create its configuration and service files in preparation of its first run.

## **Step 3 — Configuring Prometheus**

In the /etc/prometheus directory, use nano or your favorite text editor to create a configuration file named prometheus.yml. For now, this file will contain just enough information to run Prometheus for the first time.

sudo nano /etc/prometheus/prometheus.yml

**Warning:** Prometheus’ configuration file uses the [YAML format](http://www.yaml.org/start.html), which strictly forbids tabs and requires two spaces for indentation. Prometheus will fail to start if the configuration file is incorrectly formatted.

In the global settings, define the default interval for scraping metrics. Note that Prometheus will apply these settings to every exporter unless an individual exporter’s own settings override the globals.

Prometheus config file part 1 - /etc/prometheus/prometheus.yml

global:

scrape\_interval: 15s

This scrape\_interval value tells Prometheus to collect metrics from its exporters every 15 seconds, which is long enough for most exporters.

Now, add Prometheus itself to the list of exporters to scrape from with the following scrape\_configs directive:

Prometheus config file part 2 - /etc/prometheus/prometheus.yml

...

scrape\_configs:

- job\_name: 'prometheus'

scrape\_interval: 5s

static\_configs:

- targets: ['localhost:9090']

Prometheus uses the job\_name to label exporters in queries and on graphs, so be sure to pick something descriptive here.

And, as Prometheus exports important data about itself that you can use for monitoring performance and debugging, we’ve overridden the global scrape\_interval directive from 15 seconds to 5 seconds for more frequent updates.

Lastly, Prometheus uses the static\_configs and targets directives to determine where exporters are running. Since this particular exporter is running on the same server as Prometheus itself, we can use localhost instead of an IP address along with the default port, 9090.

Your configuration file should now look like this:

Prometheus config file - /etc/prometheus/prometheus.yml

global:

scrape\_interval: 15s

scrape\_configs:

- job\_name: 'prometheus'

scrape\_interval: 5s

static\_configs:

- targets: ['localhost:9090']

Save the file and exit your text editor.

Now, set the user and group ownership on the configuration file to the **prometheus** user created in Step 1.

sudo chown prometheus:prometheus /etc/prometheus/prometheus.yml

With the configuration complete, we’re ready to test Prometheus by running it for the first time.

## **Step 4 — Running Prometheus**

Start up Prometheus as the **prometheus** user, providing the path to both the configuration file and the data directory.

sudo -u prometheus /usr/local/bin/prometheus \

--config.file /etc/prometheus/prometheus.yml \

--storage.tsdb.path /var/lib/prometheus/ \

--web.console.templates=/etc/prometheus/consoles \

--web.console.libraries=/etc/prometheus/console\_libraries

The output contains information about Prometheus’ loading progress, configuration file, and related services. It also confirms that Prometheus is listening on port 9090.

Output

level=info ts=2017-11-17T18:37:27.474530094Z caller=main.go:215 msg="Starting Prometheus" version="(version=2.0.0, branch=HEAD, re

vision=0a74f98628a0463dddc90528220c94de5032d1a0)"

level=info ts=2017-11-17T18:37:27.474758404Z caller=main.go:216 build\_context="(go=go1.9.2, user=root@615b82cb36b6, date=20171108-

07:11:59)"

level=info ts=2017-11-17T18:37:27.474883982Z caller=main.go:217 host\_details="(Linux 4.4.0-98-generic #121-Ubuntu SMP Tue Oct 10 1

4:24:03 UTC 2017 x86\_64 prometheus-update (none))"

level=info ts=2017-11-17T18:37:27.483661837Z caller=web.go:380 component=web msg="Start listening for connections" address=0.0.0.0

:9090

level=info ts=2017-11-17T18:37:27.489730138Z caller=main.go:314 msg="Starting TSDB"

level=info ts=2017-11-17T18:37:27.516050288Z caller=targetmanager.go:71 component="target manager" msg="Starting target manager...

"

level=info ts=2017-11-17T18:37:27.537629169Z caller=main.go:326 msg="TSDB started"

level=info ts=2017-11-17T18:37:27.537896721Z caller=main.go:394 msg="Loading configuration file" filename=/etc/prometheus/promethe

us.yml

level=info ts=2017-11-17T18:37:27.53890004Z caller=main.go:371 msg="Server is ready to receive requests."

If you get an error message, double-check that you’ve used YAML syntax in your configuration file and then follow the on-screen instructions to resolve the problem.

Now, halt Prometheus by pressing CTRL+C, and then open a new systemd service file.

sudo nano /etc/systemd/system/prometheus.service

The service file tells systemd to run Prometheus as the **prometheus** user, with the configuration file located in the /etc/prometheus/prometheus.yml directory and to store its data in the /var/lib/prometheus directory. (The details of systemd service files are beyond the scope of this tutorial, but you can learn more at [Understanding Systemd Units and Unit Files](https://www.digitalocean.com/community/tutorials/understanding-systemd-units-and-unit-files#where-are-systemd-unit-files-found).)

Copy the following content into the file:

Prometheus service file - /etc/systemd/system/prometheus.service

[Unit]

Description=Prometheus

Wants=network-online.target

After=network-online.target

[Service]

User=prometheus

Group=prometheus

Type=simple

ExecStart=/usr/local/bin/prometheus \

--config.file /etc/prometheus/prometheus.yml \

--storage.tsdb.path /var/lib/prometheus/ \

--web.console.templates=/etc/prometheus/consoles \

--web.console.libraries=/etc/prometheus/console\_libraries

[Install]

WantedBy=multi-user.target

Finally, save the file and close your text editor.

To use the newly created service, reload systemd.

sudo systemctl daemon-reload

You can now start Prometheus using the following command:

sudo systemctl start prometheus

To make sure Prometheus is running, check the service’s status.

sudo systemctl status prometheus

The output tells you Prometheus’ status, main process identifier (PID), memory use, and more.

If the service’s status isn’t active, follow the on-screen instructions and re-trace the preceding steps to resolve the problem before continuing the tutorial.

Output

● prometheus.service - Prometheus

Loaded: loaded (/etc/systemd/system/prometheus.service; disabled; vendor preset: enabled)

Active: active (running) since Fri 2017-07-21 11:40:40 UTC; 3s ago

Main PID: 2104 (prometheus)

Tasks: 7

Memory: 13.8M

CPU: 470ms

CGroup: /system.slice/prometheus.service

...

When you’re ready to move on, press Q to quit the status command.

Lastly, enable the service to start on boot.

sudo systemctl enable prometheus

Now that Prometheus is up and running, we can install an additional exporter to generate metrics about our server’s resources.

## **Step 5 — Downloading Node Exporter**

To expand Prometheus beyond metrics about itself only, we’ll install an additional exporter called Node Exporter. Node Exporter provides detailed information about the system, including CPU, disk, and memory usage.

First, download the current stable version of Node Exporter into your home directory. You can find the latest binaries along with their checksums on [Prometheus’ download page](https://prometheus.io/download/).

cd ~

curl -LO https://github.com/prometheus/node\_exporter/releases/download/v0.15.1/node\_exporter-0.15.1.linux-amd64.tar.gz

Use the sha256sum command to generate a checksum of the downloaded file:

sha256sum node\_exporter-0.15.1.linux-amd64.tar.gz

Verify the downloaded file’s integrity by comparing its checksum with the one on the download page.

Output

7ffb3773abb71dd2b2119c5f6a7a0dbca0cff34b24b2ced9e01d9897df61a127 node\_exporter-0.15.1.linux-amd64.tar.gz

If the checksums don’t match, remove the downloaded file and repeat the preceding steps.

Now, unpack the downloaded archive.

tar xvf node\_exporter-0.15.1.linux-amd64.tar.gz

This will create a directory called node\_exporter-0.15.1.linux-amd64 containing a binary file named node\_exporter, a license, and a notice.

Copy the binary to the /usr/local/bin directory and set the user and group ownership to the **node\_exporter** user that you created in Step 1.

sudo cp node\_exporter-0.15.1.linux-amd64/node\_exporter /usr/local/bin

sudo chown node\_exporter:node\_exporter /usr/local/bin/node\_exporter

Lastly, remove the leftover files from your home directory as they are no longer needed.

rm -rf node\_exporter-0.15.1.linux-amd64.tar.gz node\_exporter-0.15.1.linux-amd64

Now that you’ve installed Node Exporter, let’s test it out by running it before creating a service file for it so that it starts on boot.

## **Step 6 — Running Node Exporter**

The steps for running Node Exporter are similar to those for running Prometheus itself. Start by creating the Systemd service file for Node Exporter.

sudo nano /etc/systemd/system/node\_exporter.service

This service file tells your system to run Node Exporter as the **node\_exporter** user with the default set of collectors enabled.

Copy the following content into the service file:

Node Exporter service file - /etc/systemd/system/node\_exporter.service

[Unit]

Description=Node Exporter

Wants=network-online.target

After=network-online.target

[Service]

User=node\_exporter

Group=node\_exporter

Type=simple

ExecStart=/usr/local/bin/node\_exporter

[Install]

WantedBy=multi-user.target

Collectors define which metrics Node Exporter will generate. You can see Node Exporter’s complete list of collectors — including which are enabled by default and which are deprecated — in the [Node Exporter README file](https://github.com/prometheus/node_exporter/blob/master/README.md#enabled-by-default).

If you ever need to override the default list of collectors, you can use the --collectors.enabled flag, like:

Node Exporter service file part - /etc/systemd/system/node\_exporter.service

...

ExecStart=/usr/local/bin/node\_exporter --collectors.enabled meminfo,loadavg,filesystem

...

The preceding example would tell Node Exporter to generate metrics using only the meminfo, loadavg, and filesystem collectors. You can limit the collectors to however few or many you need, but note that there are no blank spaces before or after the commas.

Save the file and close your text editor.

Finally, reload systemd to use the newly created service.

sudo systemctl daemon-reload

You can now run Node Exporter using the following command:

sudo systemctl start node\_exporter

Verify that Node Exporter’s running correctly with the status command.

sudo systemctl status node\_exporter

Like before, this output tells you Node Exporter’s status, main process identifier (PID), memory usage, and more.

If the service’s status isn’t active, follow the on-screen messages and re-trace the preceding steps to resolve the problem before continuing.

Output

● node\_exporter.service - Node Exporter

Loaded: loaded (/etc/systemd/system/node\_exporter.service; disabled; vendor preset: enabled)

Active: active (running) since Fri 2017-07-21 11:44:46 UTC; 5s ago

Main PID: 2161 (node\_exporter)

Tasks: 3

Memory: 1.4M

CPU: 11ms

CGroup: /system.slice/node\_exporter.service

Lastly, enable Node Exporter to start on boot.

sudo systemctl enable node\_exporter

With Node Exporter fully configured and running as expected, we’ll tell Prometheus to start scraping the new metrics.

## **Step 7 — Configuring Prometheus to Scrape Node Exporter**

Because Prometheus only scrapes exporters which are defined in the scrape\_configs portion of its configuration file, we’ll need to add an entry for Node Exporter, just like we did for Prometheus itself.

Open the configuration file.

sudo nano /etc/prometheus/prometheus.yml

At the end of the scrape\_configs block, add a new entry called node\_exporter.

Prometheus config file part 1 - /etc/prometheus/prometheus.yml

...

- job\_name: 'node\_exporter'

scrape\_interval: 5s

static\_configs:

- targets: ['localhost:9100']

Because this exporter is also running on the same server as Prometheus itself, we can use localhost instead of an IP address again along with Node Exporter’s default port, 9100.

Your whole configuration file should look like this:

Prometheus config file - /etc/prometheus/prometheus.yml

global:

scrape\_interval: 15s

scrape\_configs:

- job\_name: 'prometheus'

scrape\_interval: 5s

static\_configs:

- targets: ['localhost:9090']

- job\_name: 'node\_exporter'

scrape\_interval: 5s

static\_configs:

- targets: ['localhost:9100']

Save the file and exit your text editor when you’re ready to continue.

Finally, restart Prometheus to put the changes into effect.

sudo systemctl restart prometheus

Once again, verify that everything is running correctly with the status command.

sudo systemctl status prometheus

If the service’s status isn’t set to active, follow the on screen instructions and re-trace your previous steps before moving on.

Output

● prometheus.service - Prometheus

Loaded: loaded (/etc/systemd/system/prometheus.service; disabled; vendor preset: enabled)

Active: active (running) since Fri 2017-07-21 11:46:39 UTC; 6s ago

Main PID: 2219 (prometheus)

Tasks: 6

Memory: 19.9M

CPU: 433ms

CGroup: /system.slice/prometheus.service

Step 9 — Testing Prometheus

Prometheus provides a basic web interface for monitoring the status of itself and its exporters, executing queries, and generating graphs. But, due to the interface’s simplicity, the Prometheus team recommends installing and using Grafana for anything more complicated than testing and debugging.

In this tutorial, we’ll use the built-in web interface to ensure that Prometheus and Node Exporter are up and running, and we’ll also take a look at simple queries and graphs.

To begin, point your web browser to http://your\_server\_ip.

In the HTTP authentication dialogue box, enter the username and password you chose in Step 8.

Prometheus Authentication

Once logged in, you’ll see the Expression Browser, where you can execute and visualize custom queries.

Prometheus Dashboard Welcome

Before executing any expressions, verify the status of both Prometheus and Node Explorer by clicking first on the Status menu at the top of the screen and then on the Targets menu option. As we have configured Prometheus to scrape both itself and Node Exporter, you should see both targets listed in the UP state.

Prometheus Dashboard Targets

If either exporter is missing or displays an error message, check the service’s status with the following commands:

sudo systemctl status prometheus

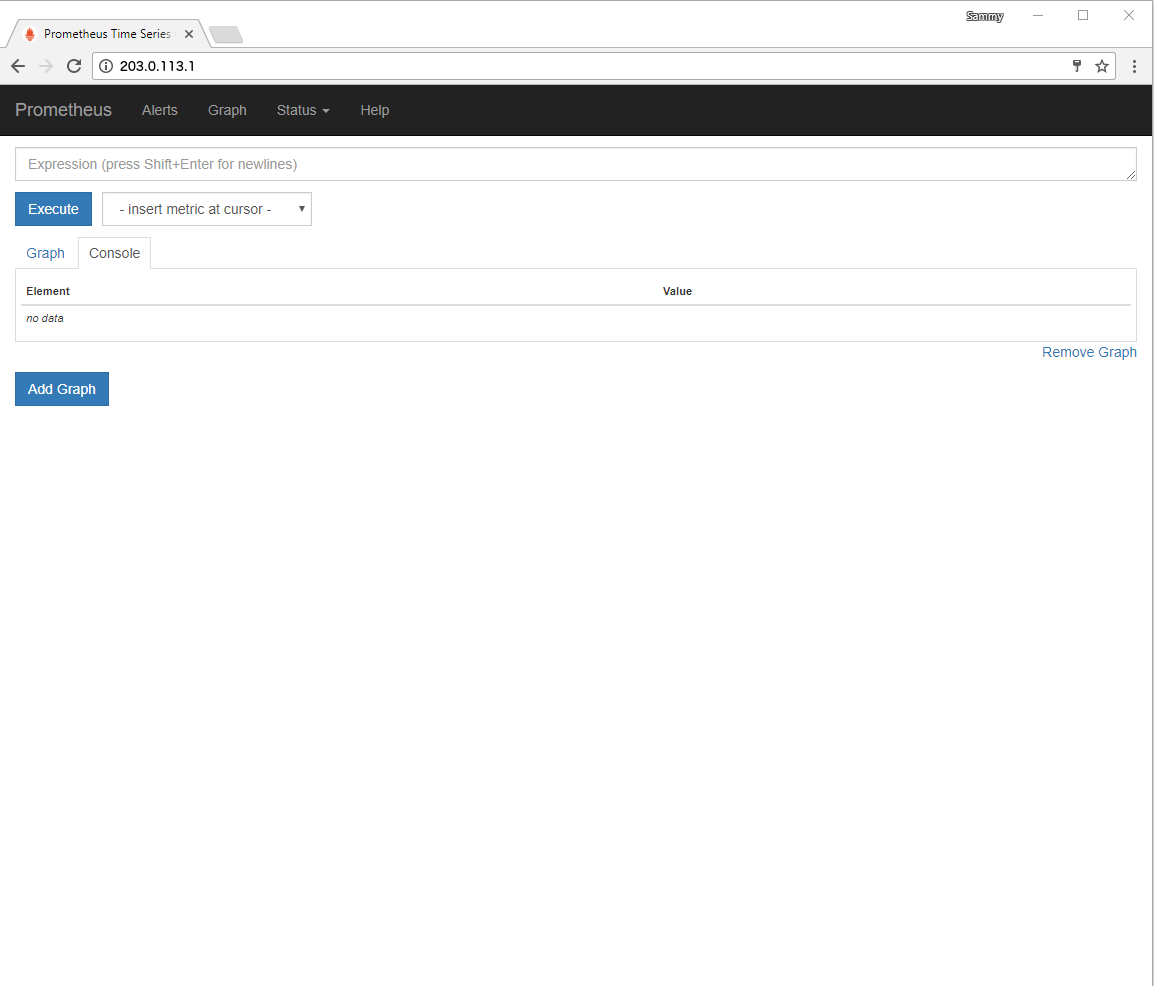
sudo systemctl status node\_exporter

The output for both services should report a status of Active: active (running). If a service either isn’t active at all or is active but still not working correctly, follow the on-screen instructions and re-trace the previous steps before continuing.

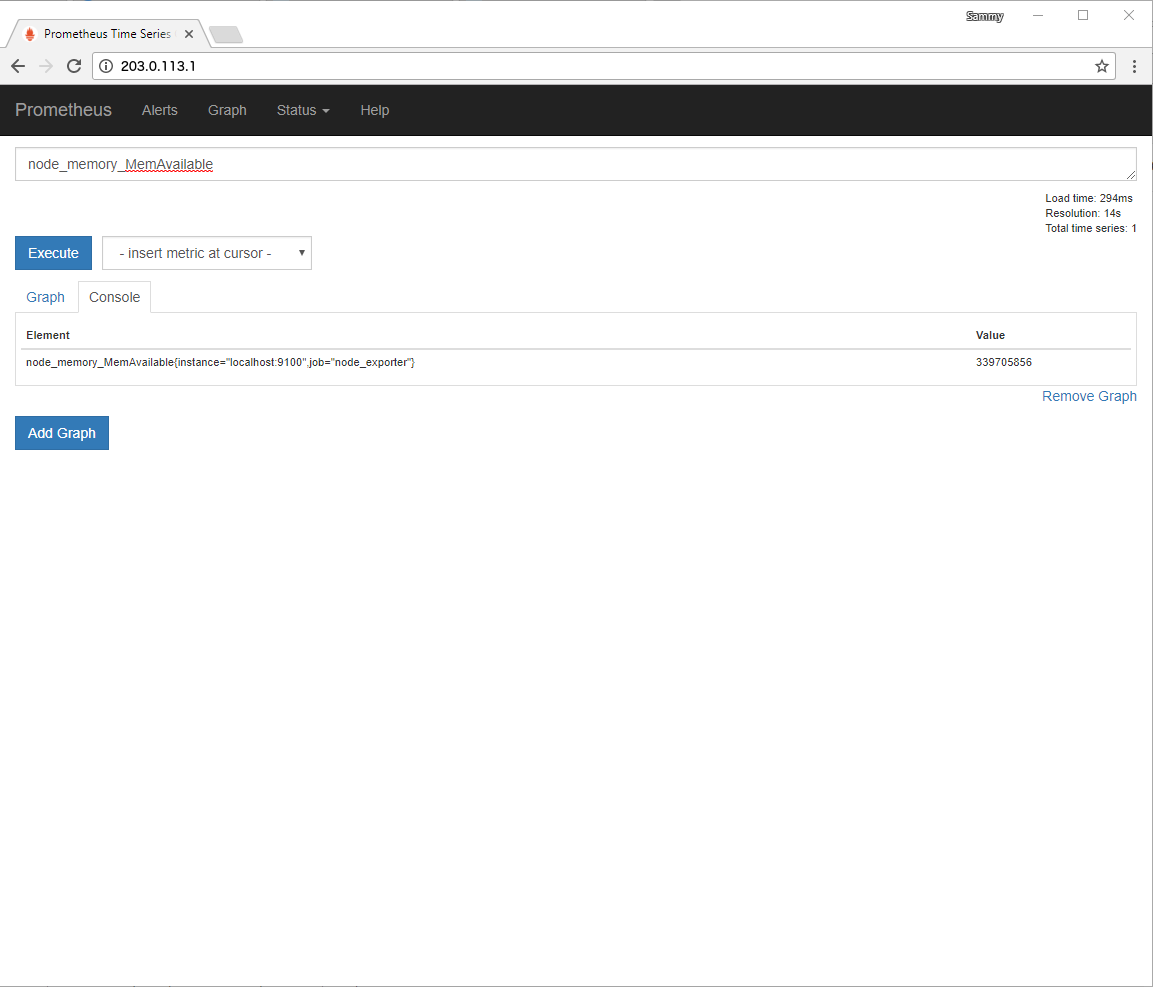
Next, to make sure that the exporters are working correctly, we’ll execute a few expressions against Node Exporter.

First, click on the Graph menu at the top of the screen to return to the Expression Browser.

Prometheus Dashboard Graph

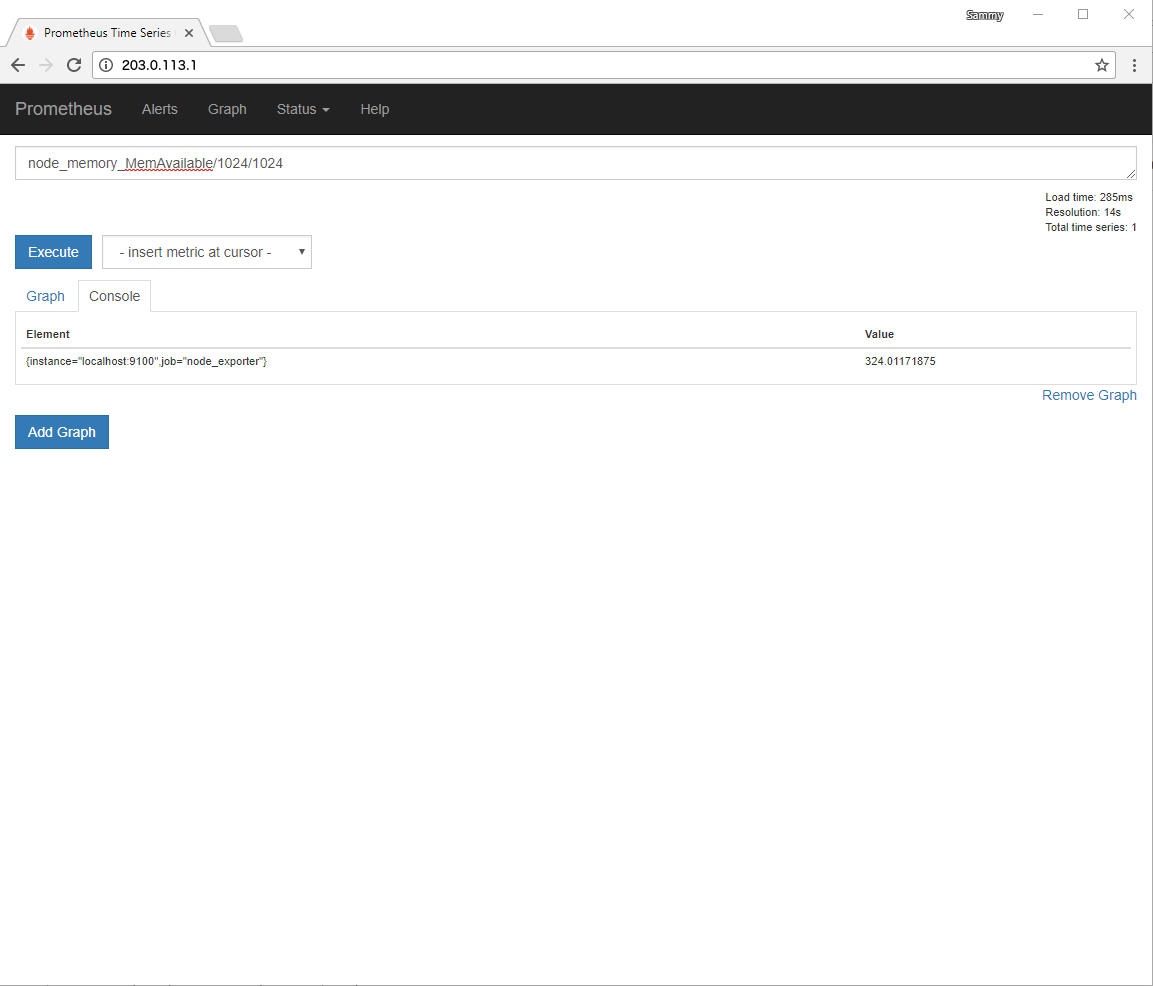


In the **Expression** field, type node\_memory\_MemAvailable and press the **Execute** button to update the **Console** tab with the amount of memory your server has.



By default, Node Exporter reports this amount in bytes. To convert to megabytes, we’ll use math operators to divide by 1024 twice.

In the **Expression** field, enter node\_memory\_MemAvailable/1024/1024 and then press the **Execute** button.



The **Console** tab will now display the results in megabytes.

If you want to verify the results, execute the free command from your terminal. (The -h flag tells free to report back in a human-readable format, giving us the amount in megabytes.)

free -h

This output contains details about memory usage, including available memory displayed in the **available** column.

Output

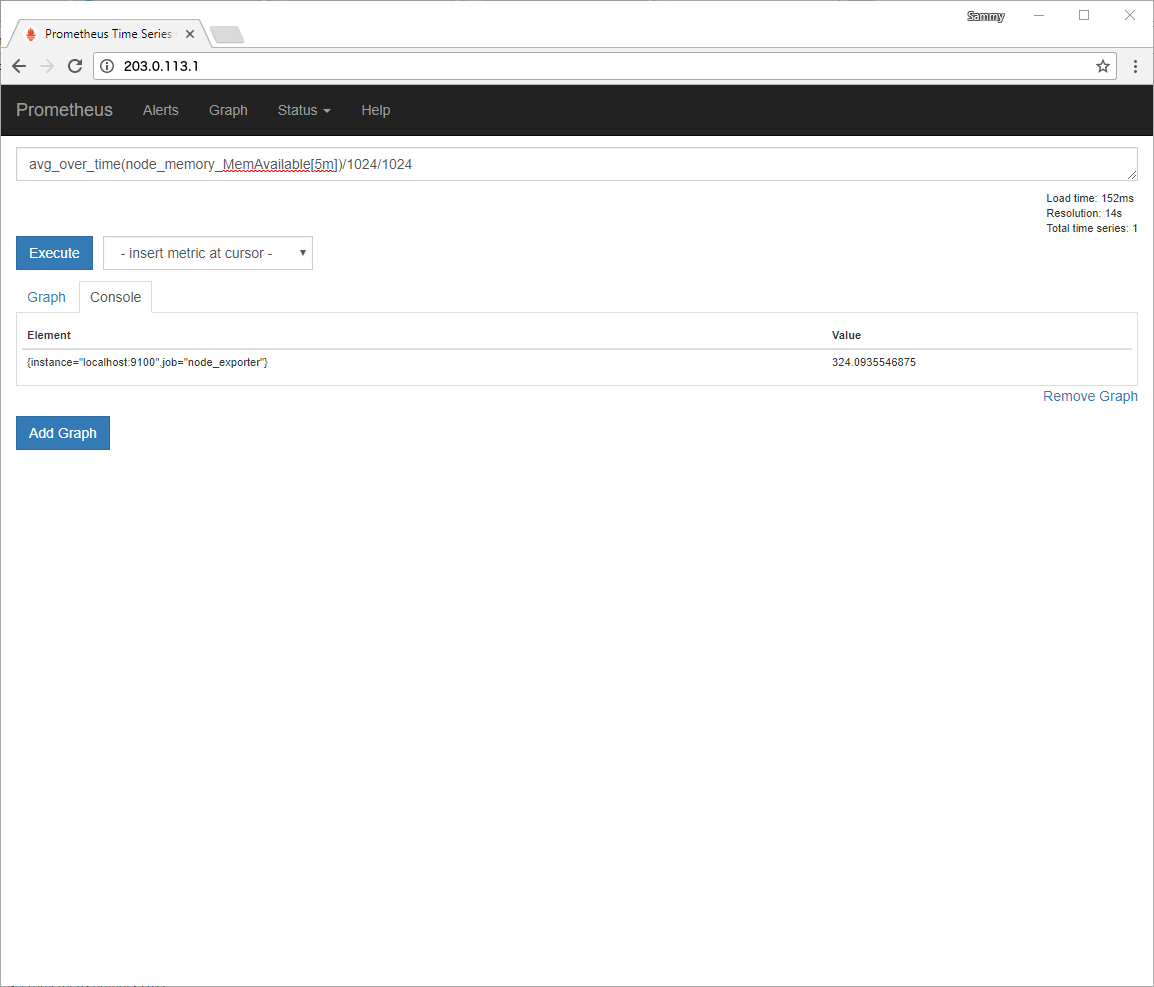
total used free shared buff/cache available

Mem: 488M 144M 17M 3.7M 326M 324M

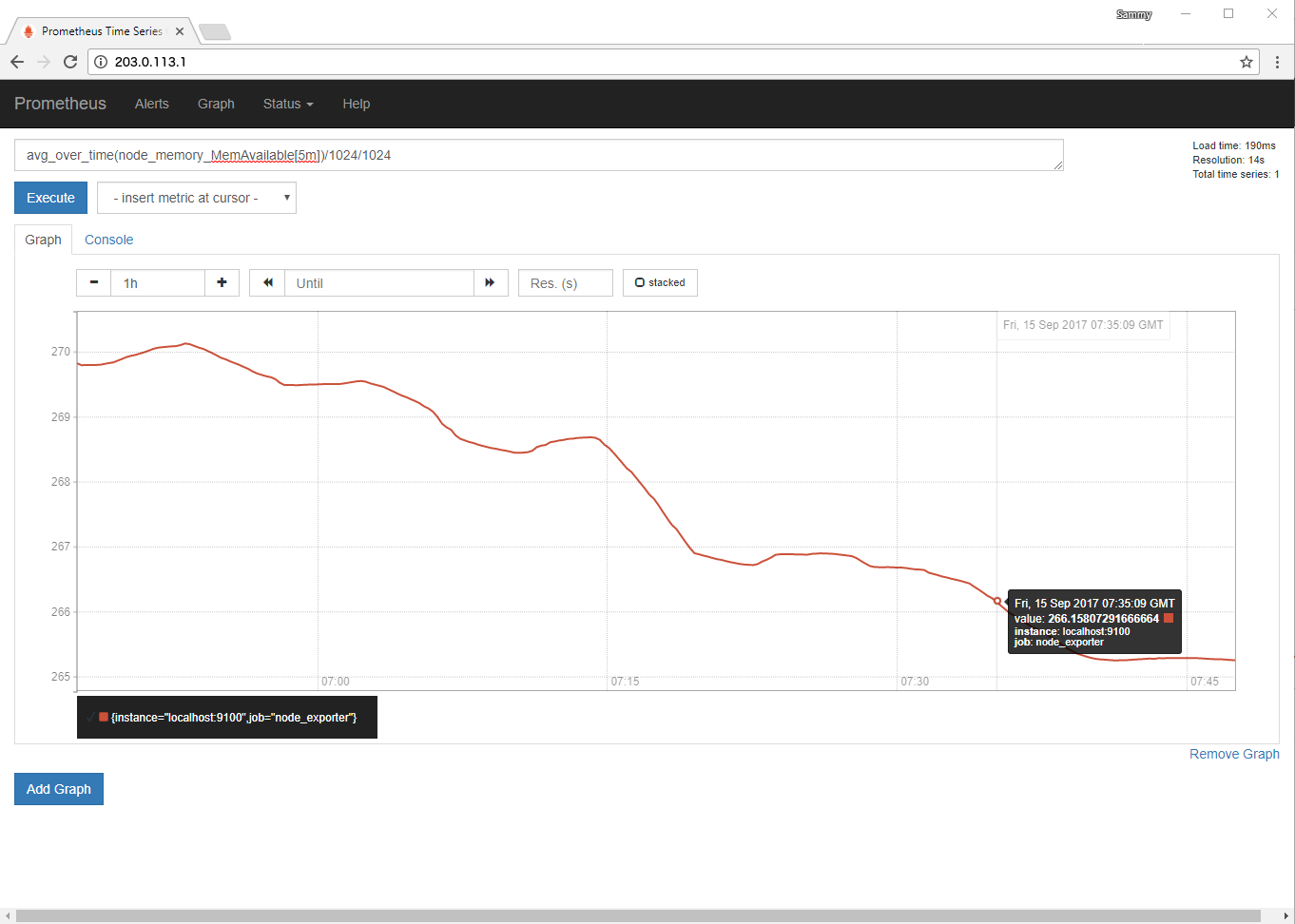
Swap: 0B 0B 0B

In addition to basic operators, the Prometheus query language also provides many functions for aggregating results.

In the **Expression** field, type avg\_over\_time(node\_memory\_MemAvailable[5m])/1024/1024 and click on the **Execute** button. The result will be the average available memory over the last 5 minutes in megabytes.



Now, click on the **Graph** tab to display the executed expression as a graph instead of as text.



Finally, while still on this tab, hover your mouse over the graph for additional details about any specific point along the graph’s X and Y axes.

If you’d like to learn more about creating expressions in Prometheus’ built-in web interface, see the [Querying Prometheus](https://prometheus.io/docs/querying/basics/) portion of the official documentation