<http://www.havetheknowhow.com/Configure-the-server/Install-VNC.html>

# Administer Ubuntu Server 12.04 using VNC

Once you've installed Ubuntu Server you will need a mechanism to be able to administer it. One way is to [**Install Putty**](http://www.havetheknowhow.com/Configure-the-server/Install-Putty.html). Putty gives you a "Command Line" interface. Many people actually install Ubuntu Desktop instead of installing Ubuntu Server since the desktop version of Ubuntu has the GUI built in. VNC provides a "virtual desktop" so it is more lightweight than a full blown desktop installation.

To perform the installation of VNC you can either type the following commands from a Putty session or, type:

**sudo apt-get update**

## Install the Gnome components: for our virtual desktop

***sudo apt-get install gnome-core***

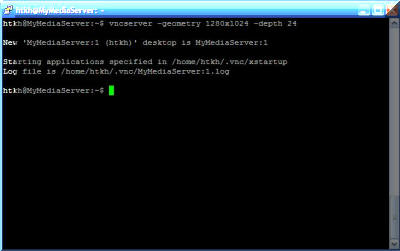
## Install a Virtual Desktop using VNC

**sudo apt-get install vnc4server**

This will install VNC Server which is required for running the virtual desktop on the server. Next type:

**vncserver**

You'll then be prompted to create and verify a new password. Once you've entered it you'll see the following:



We now need to kill the session we just created and make a tweak to the startup script for VNCServer to make it work properly. If we don't perform this step then all we will see is a grey cross-hatched screen with an "X" cursor and/or a grey screen with a Terminal Session. Why we just created a session and then killed it before actually using it? Creating the session for the first time automatically generates the file we now need to edit:

**vncserver -kill :1**

Now type the following command to open up the file we need to edit:

**vim .vnc/xstartup**

Modify this file depend on the version of Ubuntu we're using so make sure you follow the correct section:

## Ubuntu 10.04 & 10.10

remove the **# before two lines:*unset SESSION\_MANAGER* and *exec sh /etc/X11/xinit/xinitrc***

Change the **xterm -geometry** line as below and once you've made these changes the file should look like this:

Change the file as above but note the last two lines are different in these versions of Ubuntu:

*#!/bin/sh  
  
# Uncomment the following two lines for normal desktop:  
unset SESSION\_MANAGER  
exec sh /etc/X11/xinit/xinitrc  
  
[ -x /etc/vnc/xstartup ] && exec /etc/vnc/xstartup  
[ -r $HOME/.Xresources ] && xrdb $HOME/.Xresources  
xsetroot -solid grey  
vncconfig -iconic &  
x-terminal-emulator -geometry 1280x1024+10+10 -ls -title "$VNCDESKTOP Desktop" &  
x-window-manager &*

## Ubuntu 12.04LTS

Change the file so it looks like this:

*#!/bin/sh  
  
# Uncomment the following two lines for normal desktop:  
unset SESSION\_MANAGER  
#exec /etc/X11/xinit/xinitrc  
gnome-session --session=gnome-classic &  
  
[ -x /etc/vnc/xstartup ] && exec /etc/vnc/xstartup  
[ -r $HOME/.Xresources ] && xrdb $HOME/.Xresources  
xsetroot -solid grey  
vncconfig -iconic &  
#x-terminal-emulator -geometry 1280x1024+10+10 -ls -title "$VNCDESKTOP Desktop" &  
#x-window-manager &*

Unmasked the **unset SESSION\_MANAGER** line, added the **gnome-session --session=gnome-classic &**lineand masked the last two lines out.

Next type the following command to create the VNC Session once more:

**vncserver -geometry 1280x1024**

where **1280x1024** is the resolution of your **DESKTOP COMPUTER**. It has nothing to do with the resolution of the server. This command will create a new VNC session on your server. Note: For versions of Ubuntu prior to 12.04LTS add a **-depth 24** argument: **vncserver -geometry 1280x1024 -depth 24.**

Next, download and install **[TightVNC](http://www.tightvnc.com/download.html" \t "_blank)** onto your desktop computer.



## How to prevent Gnome starting on the server on boot

On Ubuntu versions 10.10, 11.04, 11.10 & 12.04 LTS gnome is automatically started on boot once the above instructions have been followed. So, if you connect a monitor to your server you will see the GUI sitting there waiting for you to log in. You can prevent this happening by carrying out the following tweak:

So, issue the following command to open up the relevant script:

**sudo vim /etc/init/gdm.conf**

You want to mask out the few lines which start the service ie.**start on ((filesystem....** so the first few lines of the script should look like this once you've edited it:

*# gdm - GNOME Display Manager  
#  
# The display manager service manages the X servers running on the  
# system, providing login and auto-login services  
  
description "GNOME Display Manager"  
author "William Jon McCann <mccann@jhu.edu>"  
  
#start on ((filesystem  
# and runlevel [!06]  
# and started dbus  
# and (drm-device-added card0 PRIMARY\_DEVICE\_FOR\_DISPLAY=1  
# or stopped udev-fallback-graphics))  
# or runlevel PREVLEVEL=S)  
  
stop on runlevel [016]  
  
emits login-session-start*

Save your changes then reboot the server and that log-in screen should no longer appear.

<http://www.havetheknowhow.com/Configure-the-server/Run-VNC-on-boot.html>

# Ubuntu Server: How to run VNC on startup

We can make sure VNC is launched at boot time by either launching a Putty session and re-typeing the **vncserver -geometry 1280x1024 -depth 24** command after each reboot of the server or we can get the server to issue this command automatically at boot time.

## Add VNC to rc.local

Perhaps the simplest way of ensuring the VNC session is re-created on boot is to add the "vncserver -geom....." command to a file called rc.local. Simply type the following commands to do this:

**sudo vim /etc/rc.local**

Above the line which reads "exit 0" and type the following command:

**/usr/bin/vncserver -geometry 1280x1024 -depth 24**

## Write a script to launch VNC

An alternative (some say "better") way is to create a small script. I personally put all my scripts in a directory below my "Home" folder in a folder called **MyScripts**.

**mkdir ~/MyScripts**

**cd /home/xxxx/ MyScripts**

**vim StartVNC.sh**

Edit StartVNC.sh:

*#!/bin/sh  
echo "JOB RUN AT $(date)"  
echo "============================"  
echo ""  
/usr/bin/vncserver -geometry 1280x1024 -depth 24*

***NOTE: change the****1280x1024****to match the screen resolution of your Desktop computer and omit the "-depth 24" argument*if you're using 12.04LTS**

Mind to change the mode in StartVNC.sh:

**chmod a+x StartVNC.sh**

Test the script by typing the following above the command ‘exit 0’ in /etc/rc.local.

**./StartVNC.sh**

Once the script has been created we can ensure it gets run in a few different ways; one way is to add the script to one of the "runlevels" within the Ubuntu boot sequence.