**How To Install and Use Docker on Ubuntu 18.04**

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**Introduction**

[Docker](https://www.docker.com/) is an application that simplifies the process of managing application processes in *containers*. Containers let you run your applications in resource-isolated processes. They’re similar to virtual machines, but containers are more portable, more resource-friendly, and more dependent on the host operating system.

For a detailed introduction to the different components of a Docker container, check out [The Docker Ecosystem: An Introduction to Common Components](https://www.digitalocean.com/community/tutorials/the-docker-ecosystem-an-introduction-to-common-components).

In this tutorial, you’ll install and use Docker Community Edition (CE) on Ubuntu 18.04. You’ll install Docker itself, work with containers and images, and push an image to a Docker Repository.

**Prerequisites**

To follow this tutorial, you will need the following:

* One Ubuntu 18.04 server set up by following [the Ubuntu 18.04 initial server setup guide](https://www.digitalocean.com/community/tutorials/initial-server-setup-with-ubuntu-18-04), including a sudo non-root user and a firewall.
* An account on [Docker Hub](https://hub.docker.com/) if you wish to create your own images and push them to Docker Hub, as shown in Steps 7 and 8.

**Step 1 — Installing Docker**

The Docker installation package available in the official Ubuntu repository may not be the latest version. To ensure we get the latest version, we’ll install Docker from the official Docker repository. To do that, we’ll add a new package source, add the GPG key from Docker to ensure the downloads are valid, and then install the package.

First, update your existing list of packages:

* sudo apt update

Next, install a few prerequisite packages which let apt use packages over HTTPS:

* sudo apt install apt-transport-https ca-certificates curl software-properties-common

Then add the GPG key for the official Docker repository to your system:

* curl -fsSL https://download.docker.com/linux/ubuntu/gpg | sudo apt-key add -

Add the Docker repository to APT sources:

* sudo add-apt-repository "deb [arch=amd64] https://download.docker.com/linux/ubuntu bionic stable"

Next, update the package database with the Docker packages from the newly added repo:

* sudo apt update

Make sure you are about to install from the Docker repo instead of the default Ubuntu repo:

* apt-cache policy docker-ce

You’ll see output like this, although the version number for Docker may be different:

Output of apt-cache policy docker-ce

docker-ce:

Installed: (none)

Candidate: 18.03.1~ce~3-0~ubuntu

Version table:

18.03.1~ce~3-0~ubuntu 500

500 https://download.docker.com/linux/ubuntu bionic/stable amd64 Packages

Notice that docker-ce is not installed, but the candidate for installation is from the Docker repository for Ubuntu 18.04 (bionic).

Finally, install Docker:

* sudo apt install docker-ce

Docker should now be installed, the daemon started, and the process enabled to start on boot. Check that it’s running:

* sudo systemctl status docker

The output should be similar to the following, showing that the service is active and running:

Output

● docker.service - Docker Application Container Engine

Loaded: loaded (/lib/systemd/system/docker.service; enabled; vendor preset: enabled)

Active: active (running) since Thu 2018-07-05 15:08:39 UTC; 2min 55s ago

Docs: https://docs.docker.com

Main PID: 10096 (dockerd)

Tasks: 16

CGroup: /system.slice/docker.service

├─10096 /usr/bin/dockerd -H fd://

└─10113 docker-containerd --config /var/run/docker/containerd/containerd.toml

Installing Docker now gives you not just the Docker service (daemon) but also the docker command line utility, or the Docker client. We’ll explore how to use the docker command later in this tutorial.

**Step 2 — Executing the Docker Command Without Sudo (Optional)**

By default, the docker command can only be run the **root** user or by a user in the **docker** group, which is automatically created during Docker’s installation process. If you attempt to run the docker command without prefixing it with sudo or without being in the **docker** group, you’ll get an output like this:

Output

docker: Cannot connect to the Docker daemon. Is the docker daemon running on this host?.

See 'docker run --help'.

If you want to avoid typing sudo whenever you run the docker command, add your username to the docker group:

* sudo usermod -aG docker ${USER}

To apply the new group membership, log out of the server and back in, or type the following:

* su - ${USER}

You will be prompted to enter your user’s password to continue.

Confirm that your user is now added to the **docker** group by typing:

* id -nG

Output

sammy sudo docker

If you need to add a user to the docker group that you’re not logged in as, declare that username explicitly using:

* sudo usermod -aG docker username

The rest of this article assumes you are running the docker command as a user in the **docker** group. If you choose not to, please prepend the commands with sudo.

Let’s explore the docker command next.

**Step 3 — Using the Docker Command**

Using docker consists of passing it a chain of options and commands followed by arguments. The syntax takes this form:

* docker [option] [command] [arguments]

To view all available subcommands, type:

* docker

As of Docker 18, the complete list of available subcommands includes:

Output

attach Attach local standard input, output, and error streams to a running container

build Build an image from a Dockerfile

commit Create a new image from a container's changes

cp Copy files/folders between a container and the local filesystem

create Create a new container

diff Inspect changes to files or directories on a container's filesystem

events Get real time events from the server

exec Run a command in a running container

export Export a container's filesystem as a tar archive

history Show the history of an image

images List images

import Import the contents from a tarball to create a filesystem image

info Display system-wide information

inspect Return low-level information on Docker objects

kill Kill one or more running containers

load Load an image from a tar archive or STDIN

login Log in to a Docker registry

logout Log out from a Docker registry

logs Fetch the logs of a container

pause Pause all processes within one or more containers

port List port mappings or a specific mapping for the container

ps List containers

pull Pull an image or a repository from a registry

push Push an image or a repository to a registry

rename Rename a container

restart Restart one or more containers

rm Remove one or more containers

rmi Remove one or more images

run Run a command in a new container

save Save one or more images to a tar archive (streamed to STDOUT by default)

search Search the Docker Hub for images

start Start one or more stopped containers

stats Display a live stream of container(s) resource usage statistics

stop Stop one or more running containers

tag Create a tag TARGET\_IMAGE that refers to SOURCE\_IMAGE

top Display the running processes of a container

unpause Unpause all processes within one or more containers

update Update configuration of one or more containers

version Show the Docker version information

wait Block until one or more containers stop, then print their exit codes

To view the options available to a specific command, type:

* docker docker-subcommand --help

To view system-wide information about Docker, use:

* docker info

Let’s explore some of these commands. We’ll start by working with images.

**Step 4 — Working with Docker Images**

Docker containers are built from Docker images. By default, Docker pulls these images from [Docker Hub](https://hub.docker.com/), a Docker registry managed by Docker, the company behind the Docker project. Anyone can host their Docker images on Docker Hub, so most applications and Linux distributions you’ll need will have images hosted there.

To check whether you can access and download images from Docker Hub, type:

* docker run hello-world

The output will indicate that Docker in working correctly:

Output

Unable to find image 'hello-world:latest' locally

latest: Pulling from library/hello-world

9bb5a5d4561a: Pull complete

Digest: sha256:3e1764d0f546ceac4565547df2ac4907fe46f007ea229fd7ef2718514bcec35d

Status: Downloaded newer image for hello-world:latest

Hello from Docker!

This message shows that your installation appears to be working correctly.

...

Docker was initially unable to find the hello-world image locally, so it downloaded the image from Docker Hub, which is the default repository. Once the image downloaded, Docker created a container from the image and the application within the container executed, displaying the message.

You can search for images available on Docker Hub by using the docker command with the search subcommand. For example, to search for the Ubuntu image, type:

* docker search ubuntu

The script will crawl Docker Hub and return a listing of all images whose name match the search string. In this case, the output will be similar to this:

Output

NAME DESCRIPTION STARS OFFICIAL AUTOMATED

ubuntu Ubuntu is a Debian-based Linux operating sys… 7917 [OK]

dorowu/ubuntu-desktop-lxde-vnc Ubuntu with openssh-server and NoVNC 193 [OK]

rastasheep/ubuntu-sshd Dockerized SSH service, built on top of offi… 156 [OK]

ansible/ubuntu14.04-ansible Ubuntu 14.04 LTS with ansible 93 [OK]

ubuntu-upstart Upstart is an event-based replacement for th… 87 [OK]

neurodebian NeuroDebian provides neuroscience research s… 50 [OK]

ubuntu-debootstrap debootstrap --variant=minbase --components=m… 38 [OK]

1and1internet/ubuntu-16-nginx-php-phpmyadmin-mysql-5 ubuntu-16-nginx-php-phpmyadmin-mysql-5 36 [OK]

nuagebec/ubuntu Simple always updated Ubuntu docker images w… 23 [OK]

tutum/ubuntu Simple Ubuntu docker images with SSH access 18

i386/ubuntu Ubuntu is a Debian-based Linux operating sys… 13

ppc64le/ubuntu Ubuntu is a Debian-based Linux operating sys… 12

1and1internet/ubuntu-16-apache-php-7.0 ubuntu-16-apache-php-7.0 10 [OK]

1and1internet/ubuntu-16-nginx-php-phpmyadmin-mariadb-10 ubuntu-16-nginx-php-phpmyadmin-mariadb-10 6 [OK]

eclipse/ubuntu\_jdk8 Ubuntu, JDK8, Maven 3, git, curl, nmap, mc, … 6 [OK]

codenvy/ubuntu\_jdk8 Ubuntu, JDK8, Maven 3, git, curl, nmap, mc, … 4 [OK]

darksheer/ubuntu Base Ubuntu Image -- Updated hourly 4 [OK]

1and1internet/ubuntu-16-apache ubuntu-16-apache 3 [OK]

1and1internet/ubuntu-16-nginx-php-5.6-wordpress-4 ubuntu-16-nginx-php-5.6-wordpress-4 3 [OK]

1and1internet/ubuntu-16-sshd ubuntu-16-sshd 1 [OK]

pivotaldata/ubuntu A quick freshening-up of the base Ubuntu doc… 1

1and1internet/ubuntu-16-healthcheck ubuntu-16-healthcheck 0 [OK]

pivotaldata/ubuntu-gpdb-dev Ubuntu images for GPDB development 0

smartentry/ubuntu ubuntu with smartentry 0 [OK]

ossobv/ubuntu

...

In the **OFFICIAL** column, **OK** indicates an image built and supported by the company behind the project. Once you’ve identified the image that you would like to use, you can download it to your computer using the pull subcommand.

Execute the following command to download the official ubuntu image to your computer:

* docker pull ubuntu

You’ll see the following output:

Output

Using default tag: latest

latest: Pulling from library/ubuntu

6b98dfc16071: Pull complete

4001a1209541: Pull complete

6319fc68c576: Pull complete

b24603670dc3: Pull complete

97f170c87c6f: Pull complete

Digest: sha256:5f4bdc3467537cbbe563e80db2c3ec95d548a9145d64453b06939c4592d67b6d

Status: Downloaded newer image for ubuntu:latest

After an image has been downloaded, you can then run a container using the downloaded image with the run subcommand. As you saw with the hello-world example, if an image has not been downloaded when docker is executed with the run subcommand, the Docker client will first download the image, then run a container using it.

To see the images that have been downloaded to your computer, type:

* docker images

The output should look similar to the following:

Output

REPOSITORY TAG IMAGE ID CREATED SIZE

ubuntu latest 113a43faa138 4 weeks ago 81.2MB

hello-world latest e38bc07ac18e 2 months ago 1.85kB

As you’ll see later in this tutorial, images that you use to run containers can be modified and used to generate new images, which may then be uploaded (*pushed* is the technical term) to Docker Hub or other Docker registries.

Let’s look at how to run containers in more detail.

**Step 5 — Running a Docker Container**

The hello-world container you ran in the previous step is an example of a container that runs and exits after emitting a test message. Containers can be much more useful than that, and they can be interactive. After all, they are similar to virtual machines, only more resource-friendly.

As an example, let’s run a container using the latest image of Ubuntu. The combination of the **-i** and **-t** switches gives you interactive shell access into the container:

* docker run -it ubuntu

Your command prompt should change to reflect the fact that you’re now working inside the container and should take this form:

Output

root@d9b100f2f636:/#

Note the container id in the command prompt. In this example, it is d9b100f2f636. You’ll need that container ID later to identify the container when you want to remove it.

Now you can run any command inside the container. For example, let’s update the package database inside the container. You don’t need to prefix any command with sudo, because you’re operating inside the container as the **root** user:

* apt update

Then install any application in it. Let’s install Node.js:

* apt install nodejs

This installs Node.js in the container from the official Ubuntu repository. When the installation finishes, verify that Node.js is installed:

* node -v

You’ll see the version number displayed in your terminal:

Output

v8.10.0

Any changes you make inside the container only apply to that container.

To exit the container, type exit at the prompt.

Let’s look at managing the containers on our system next.

**Step 6 — Managing Docker Containers**

After using Docker for a while, you’ll have many active (running) and inactive containers on your computer. To view the **active ones**, use:

* docker ps

You will see output similar to the following:

Output

CONTAINER ID IMAGE COMMAND CREATED

In this tutorial, you started two containers; one from the hello-world image and another from the ubuntu image. Both containers are no longer running, but they still exist on your system.

To view all containers — active and inactive, run docker ps with the -a switch:

* docker ps -a

You’ll see output similar to this:

d9b100f2f636 ubuntu "/bin/bash" About an hour ago Exited (0) 8 minutes ago sharp\_volhard

01c950718166 hello-world "/hello" About an hour ago Exited (0) About an hour ago festive\_williams

To view the latest container you created, pass it the -l switch:

* docker ps -l
* CONTAINER ID IMAGE COMMAND CREATED STATUS PORTS NAMES
* d9b100f2f636 ubuntu "/bin/bash" About an hour ago Exited (0) 10 minutes ago sharp\_volhard

To start a stopped container, use docker start, followed by the container ID or the container’s name. Let’s start the Ubuntu-based container with the ID of d9b100f2f636:

* docker start d9b100f2f636

The container will start, and you can use docker ps to see its status:

CONTAINER ID IMAGE COMMAND CREATED STATUS PORTS NAMES

d9b100f2f636 ubuntu "/bin/bash" About an hour ago Up 8 seconds sharp\_volhard

To stop a running container, use docker stop, followed by the container ID or name. This time, we’ll use the name that Docker assigned the container, which is sharp\_volhard:

* docker stop sharp\_volhard

Once you’ve decided you no longer need a container anymore, remove it with the docker rm command, again using either the container ID or the name. Use the docker ps -a command to find the container ID or name for the container associated with the hello-world image and remove it.

* docker rm festive\_williams

You can start a new container and give it a name using the --name switch. You can also use the --rm switch to create a container that removes itself when it’s stopped. See the docker run help command for more information on these options and others.

Containers can be turned into images which you can use to build new containers. Let’s look at how that works.

**Step 7 — Committing Changes in a Container to a Docker Image**

When you start up a Docker image, you can create, modify, and delete files just like you can with a virtual machine. The changes that you make will only apply to that container. You can start and stop it, but once you destroy it with the docker rm command, the changes will be lost for good.

This section shows you how to save the state of a container as a new Docker image.

After installing Node.js inside the Ubuntu container, you now have a container running off an image, but the container is different from the image you used to create it. But you might want to reuse this Node.js container as the basis for new images later.

Then commit the changes to a new Docker image instance using the following command.

* docker commit -m "What you did to the image" -a "Author Name" container\_id repository/new\_image\_name

The **-m** switch is for the commit message that helps you and others know what changes you made, while **-a** is used to specify the author. The container\_id is the one you noted earlier in the tutorial when you started the interactive Docker session. Unless you created additional repositories on Docker Hub, the repository is usually your Docker Hub username.

For example, for the user **sammy**, with the container ID of d9b100f2f636, the command would be:

* docker commit -m "added Node.js" -a "sammy" d9b100f2f636 sammy/ubuntu-nodejs

When you *commit* an image, the new image is saved locally on your computer. Later in this tutorial, you’ll learn how to push an image to a Docker registry like Docker Hub so others can access it.

Listing the Docker images again will show the new image, as well as the old one that it was derived from:

* docker images

You’ll see output like this:

Output

REPOSITORY TAG IMAGE ID CREATED SIZE

sammy/ubuntu-nodejs latest 7c1f35226ca6 7 seconds ago 179MB

ubuntu latest 113a43faa138 4 weeks ago 81.2MB

hello-world latest e38bc07ac18e 2 months ago 1.85kB

In this example, ubuntu-nodejs is the new image, which was derived from the existing ubuntu image from Docker Hub. The size difference reflects the changes that were made. And in this example, the change was that NodeJS was installed. So next time you need to run a container using Ubuntu with NodeJS pre-installed, you can just use the new image.

You can also build Images from a Dockerfile, which lets you automate the installation of software in a new image. However, that’s outside the scope of this tutorial.

Now let’s share the new image with others so they can create containers from it.

**Step 8 — Pushing Docker Images to a Docker Repository**

The next logical step after creating a new image from an existing image is to share it with a select few of your friends, the whole world on Docker Hub, or other Docker registry that you have access to. To push an image to Docker Hub or any other Docker registry, you must have an account there.

This section shows you how to push a Docker image to Docker Hub. To learn how to create your own private Docker registry, check out [How To Set Up a Private Docker Registry on Ubuntu 14.04](https://www.digitalocean.com/community/tutorials/how-to-set-up-a-private-docker-registry-on-ubuntu-14-04).

To push your image, first log into Docker Hub.

* docker login -u docker-registry-username

You’ll be prompted to authenticate using your Docker Hub password. If you specified the correct password, authentication should succeed.

**Note:** If your Docker registry username is different from the local username you used to create the image, you will have to tag your image with your registry username. For the example given in the last step, you would type:

* docker tag sammy/ubuntu-nodejs docker-registry-username/ubuntu-nodejs

Then you may push your own image using:

* docker push docker-registry-username/docker-image-name

To push the ubuntu-nodejs image to the **sammy** repository, the command would be:

* docker push sammy/ubuntu-nodejs

The process may take some time to complete as it uploads the images, but when completed, the output will look like this:

Output

The push refers to a repository [docker.io/sammy/ubuntu-nodejs]

e3fbbfb44187: Pushed

5f70bf18a086: Pushed

a3b5c80a4eba: Pushed

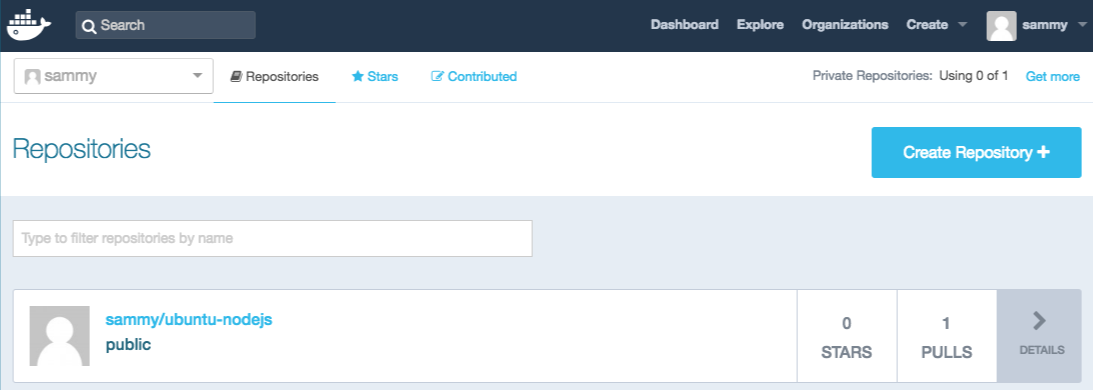
7f18b442972b: Pushed

3ce512daaf78: Pushed

7aae4540b42d: Pushed

...

After pushing an image to a registry, it should be listed on your account’s dashboard, like that show in the image below.



If a push attempt results in an error of this sort, then you likely did not log in:

Output

The push refers to a repository [docker.io/sammy/ubuntu-nodejs]

e3fbbfb44187: Preparing

5f70bf18a086: Preparing

a3b5c80a4eba: Preparing

7f18b442972b: Preparing

3ce512daaf78: Preparing

7aae4540b42d: Waiting

unauthorized: authentication required

Log in with docker login and repeat the push attempt. Then verify that it exists on your Docker Hub repository page.

You can now use docker pull sammy/ubuntu-nodejs to pull the image to a new machine and use it to run a new container.