



## How to setup FTP server on ubuntu 14.04 ( VSFTPD )

FTP is used to transfer files from one host to another over TCP network. This article explains how to setup FTP server on ubuntu 14.04 .

There are 3 popular FTP server packages available PureFTPD, VsFTPD and ProFTPD. Here i've used VsFTPD which is lightweight and less Vulnerability.

### Setup FTP server on Ubuntu 14.04

**Step 1 »** Update repositories .

```
krizna@leela:~$ sudo apt-get update
```

**Step 2 »** Install VsFTPD package using the below command.

```
krizna@leela:~$ sudo apt-get install vsftpd
```

**Step 3 »** After installation open `/etc/vsftpd.conf` file and make changes as follows. Uncomment the below lines (line no:29 and 33).

```
write_enable=YES
local_umask=022
```

» Uncomment the below line (line no: 120 ) to prevent access to the other folders outside the Home directory.

```
chroot_local_user=YES
```

and add the following line at the end.

```
allow_writeable_chroot=YES
```

» Add the following lines to enable passive mode.

```
pasv_enable=Yes
pasv_min_port=40000
pasv_max_port=40100
```

**Step 4 »** Restart vsftpd service using the below command.

```
krizna@leela:~$ sudo service vsftpd restart
```

**Step 5 »** Now ftp server will listen on port 21. Create user with the below command. Use `/usr/sbin/nologin` shell to prevent access to the bash shell for the ftp users .

```
krizna@leela:~$ sudo useradd -m john -s /usr/sbin/nologin
krizna@leela:~$ sudo passwd john
```

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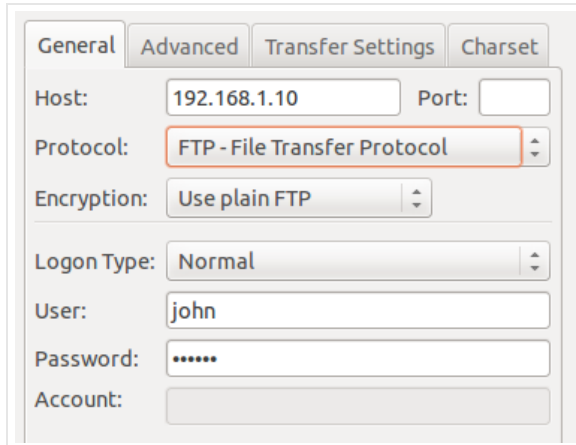


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**Step 6 »** Allow login access for nologin shell . Open `/etc/shells` and add the following line at the end.

```
/usr/sbin/nologin
```

Now try to connect this ftp server with the username on port 21 using [winscp](#) or [filezilla](#) client and make sure that user cannot access the other folders outside the home directory.

A screenshot of the WinSCP General tab settings. The Host is set to 192.168.1.10, Port is empty. Protocol is set to FTP - File Transfer Protocol. Encryption is set to Use plain FTP. Logon Type is set to Normal. User is set to john, Password is masked with dots, and Account is empty.

Please note using ftp on port 21 is a big security risk . it's highly recommended to use SFTP. Please continue for SFTP configuration

## Secure FTP ( SFTP )

SFTP is called as “Secure FTP” which generally use SSH File Transfer Protocol . so we need openssh-server package installed , Issue the below command if it's not already installed.

```
krizna@leela:~$ sudo apt-get install openssh-server
```

**Step 7 »** Create a new group `ftppass` for FTP users.

```
krizna@leela:~$ sudo groupadd ftpaccess
```

**Step 8 »** Now make changes in this `/etc/ssh/sshd_config` file.

» Find and comment the below line

```
Subsystem sftp /usr/lib/openssh/sftp-server
```

and Add these lines at the end of the file.

```
Subsystem sftp internal-sftp
Match group ftpaccess
ChrootDirectory %h
X11Forwarding no
AllowTcpForwarding no
ForceCommand internal-sftp
```

**Step 9 »** Restart sshd service.

```
krizna@leela:~$ sudo service ssh restart
```

**Step 10 »** The below steps must be followed while creating Users for sftp access.

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Create user **john** with **ftpaccess** group and **/usr/bin/nologin** shell.

```
krizna@leela:~$ sudo useradd -m john -g ftpaccess -s /usr/sbin/nologin
krizna@leela:~$ sudo passwd john
```

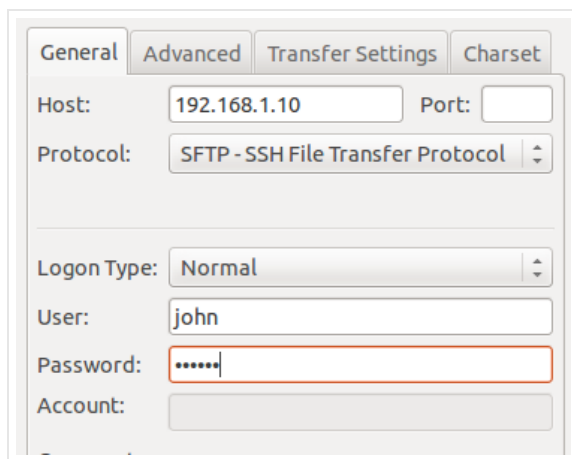
Change ownership for the home directory.

```
krizna@leela:~$ sudo chown root /home/john
```

Create a folder inside home directory for writing and change ownership of that folder.

```
krizna@leela:~$ sudo mkdir /home/john/www
krizna@leela:~$ sudo chown john:ftpaccess /home/john/www
```

Now try to connect server using SFTP ( port : 22 ) and make sure Users can upload files to **www** directory and cannot access other folders outside home directory.



If you want use both FTP and SFTP together, please perform above steps ( Step 10 ) while creating users . For existing users, move them to **ftpaccess** group and create folder structure and ownership changes as below.

```
krizna@leela:~$ sudo usermod john -g ftpaccess -s /usr/sbin/nologin
krizna@leela:~$ sudo chown root /home/john
krizna@leela:~$ sudo mkdir /home/john/www
krizna@leela:~$ sudo chown john:ftpaccess /home/john/www
```

Now john can able to upload files to **www** folder using FTP as well as SFTP.

Also see :

- » [Setup FTP server on centos 7](#)
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All the best.

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- [http://www.vladimirkolic.info/ Vladimir Kolic](http://www.vladimirkolic.info/)

Good one! Thanks to you created SFTP. Thank mate.

- [ovicostea](#)

Thank you for this information. Very useful.

- [Eduardo D Jr Barrete](#)

hi how to config instead in the home/ it should be in /var/www directly after sftp login

thanks

- [krizna](#)

Use -d while creating usernames

```
sudo useradd -m -d /var/www/john john -g ftpaccess -s /usr/sbin/nologin
```

- [Aasim Mistry](#)

Hi, I have tried with a particular folder so on login the user is directly going to that folder but the user can go back to the root and go into any other folder and add delete files so the whole purpose of limited access to a particular folder is defeated. Any inputs will be highly appreciated

- [Phil](#)

Hi, I'm getting a '553 Could not create file' response. I'm using port 21 (for now). Any thoughts? Thanks

- [Phil](#)

Delete also fails (550 Delete operation failed). Guessing permissions?

- [Jim](#)

Hi, looks like the default config has changed since this was written, I don't see the

usePAM line, there's pam\_service and some rsa info

- *Shahar*

Everything is working correctly!

Thanks for this guide!

However I suggest that you add a tiny commend on SFTP,

\*\* If you already created the user john and the group ftpaccess you just simply have to put john inside ftpaccess

```
sudo usermod -g ftpaccess john
```

All the best

- *Waqas Jamal*

I tried to follow this step by step on my AWS Ubuntu instance. But it didnt work. And now I am unable to login into my instance using my key pair. Any ideas? I tried to debug it using key pair permission issue but nothing worked so far

- *Jordan Baczuk*

Make sure you enable the ports on the instance security group settings (21) and (40000-41000).

- *Jordan Baczuk*

It won't work if your max port is lower than your min port. Change the passive ports in vsftpd.conf to:

```
pasv_max_port=40000  
pasv_min_port=40100
```

- <http://www.krizna.com> *krizna*

Thanks jordan

- *Dave Jennings*

Really helpful tutorial, cheers.

One thing that bugged me after following your guide was that the Message of the Day was missing after SSHing onto my servers. This is due to commenting out the "UsePAM yes" within /etc/ssh/sshd\_config.

You can't uncomment this as it is, as the config file will error and SSH won't start. This option has to come before the Subsystem definition, so at Step 8, if you move the suggested changes to the bottom of the file and leave UsePAM as it is, things will work as expected and you'll still get the MOTD displaying.

I was setting this up on an AWS EC2 instance, so I had to add the following 2 lines to /etc/vsftpd.conf at Step 3.

```
pasv_address=[public DNS from the EC2 instance]  
pasv_addr_resolve=Yes
```

- *Nicolas Challeil*

the Step-8-at-the-bottom was very useful, thanks 😊

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