

Reset Your Forgotten Ubuntu Password in 2 Minutes or Less

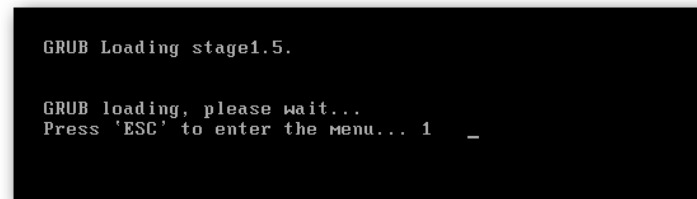
If you've ever forgotten your password, you aren't alone... it's probably one of the most common tech support problems I've encountered over the years. Luckily if you are using Ubuntu they made it incredibly easy to reset your password.



All it takes is adjusting the boot parameters slightly and typing a command or two, but we'll walk you through it.

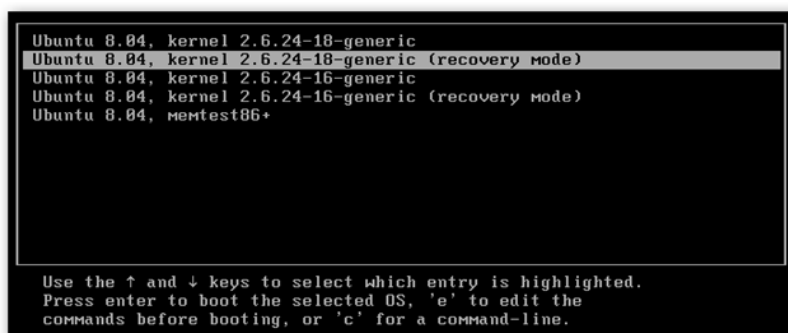
Reset Your Ubuntu Password

Reboot your computer, and then as soon as you see the GRUB Loading screen, make sure to hit the ESC key so that you can get to the menu.

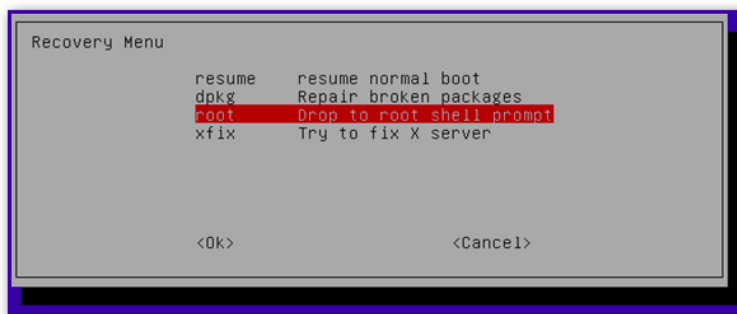


Root Shell – Easy Method

If you have the option, you can choose the “recovery mode” item on the menu, usually found right below your default kernel option.



Then choose “Drop to root shell prompt” from this menu.

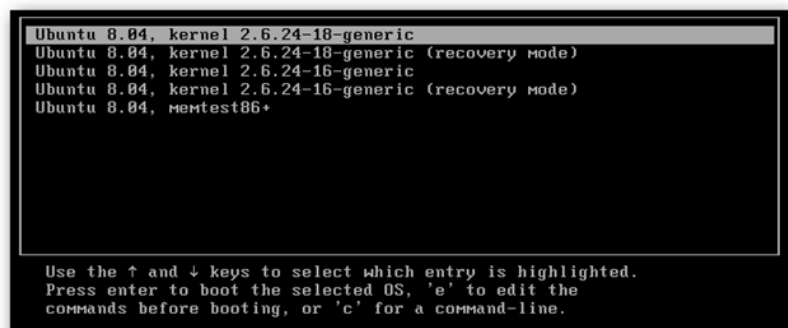


This should give you a root shell prompt.

Alternate Root Shell Method

If you don't have the recovery mode option, this is the alternate way to manually edit the grub options to allow for a root shell.

First you'll want to make sure to choose the regular boot kernel that you use (typically just the default one), and then use the “e” key to choose to edit that boot option.



Now just hit the down arrow key over to the “kernel” option, and then use the “e” key to switch to edit mode for the kernel option.

```
root (hd0,0)
kernel /boot/vmlinuz-2.6.24-18-generic root=UUID=4a1616dc-0706-4121-
initrd /boot/initrd.img-2.6.24-18-generic
quiet

Use the ↑ and ↓ keys to select which entry is highlighted.
Press 'b' to boot, 'e' to edit the selected command in the
boot sequence, 'c' for a command-line, 'o' to open a new line
after ('O' for before) the selected line, 'd' to remove the
selected line, or escape to go back to the main menu.
```

You'll first be presented with a screen that looks very similar to this one:

```
[ Minimal BASH-like line editing is supported. For
the first word, TAB lists possible command
completions. Anywhere else TAB lists the possible
completions of a device/filename. ESC at any time
exits. ]

<c-0706-4121-8d1f-020699bdc4d9 ro quiet splash_
```

You'll want to remove the "ro quiet splash" part with the backspace key, and then add this onto the end:

```
rw init=/bin/bash
```

```
[ Minimal BASH-like line editing is supported. For
the first word, TAB lists possible command
completions. Anywhere else TAB lists the possible
completions of a device/filename. ESC at any time
exits. ]

<c-0706-4121-8d1f-020699bdc4d9 rw init=/bin/bash_
```

Once you hit enter after adjusting the kernel line, you'll need to use the B key to choose to boot with that option.

```
root (hd0,0)
kernel /boot/vmlinuz-2.6.24-18-generic root=UUID=4a1616dc-0706-4121-
initrd /boot/initrd.img-2.6.24-18-generic
quiet

Use the ↑ and ↓ keys to select which entry is highlighted.
Press 'b' to boot, 'e' to edit the selected command in the
boot sequence, 'c' for a command-line, 'o' to open a new line
after ('O' for before) the selected line, 'd' to remove the
selected line, or escape to go back to the main menu.
```

At this point the system should boot up very quickly to a command prompt.

Changing the Actual Password

You can use the following command to reset your password:

```
passwd <username>
```

For example my username being *geek* I used this command:

```
passwd geek
```

```
Begin: Running kjournal starting. Commit interval 5 seconds
[ 320.512683] EXT3 FS on sda1, internal journal
[ 320.513051] EXT3-fs: recovery complete.
[ 320.513149] EXT3-fs: mounted filesystem with ordered data mode.
Begin: Running /scripts/local-bottom ...
Done.
Begin: Running /scripts/init-bottom ...
Done.
root@(none):/# passwd geek
Enter new UNIX password:
Retype new UNIX password:
passwd: password updated successfully
root@(none):/# sync
root@(none):/# reboot -f_
```

After changing your password, use the following commands to reboot your system. (The sync command makes sure to write out data to the disk before rebooting)

```
sync
reboot -f
```

I found that the `-f` parameter was necessary to get the reboot command to work for some reason. You could always hardware reset instead, but make sure to use the sync command first.

And now you should be able to login without any issues.

JOIN THE DISCUSSION

Lowell Heddings, better known online as the How-To Geek, spends all his free time bringing you fresh geekery on a daily basis. You can follow him on Google+ if you'd like.

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