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How to set Debian to automatically update time and date?

I have an old computer and BIOS counts the time slower than real ;)

So, how can I set my OS to update the time automatically using the internet?

If it updated the time only during booting, it would be enough.

linux debian time

edited Aug 14 '11 at 18:16



slhck

146k 43 390 431

asked Aug 14 '11 at 18:12



kravemir

1,224 5 17 33

4 Answers

You can set the time during system boot actually, and from the [Debian Documentation](#) they even specify it for use on hardware that doesn't keep track of time properly. I recommend using NTP though. You can set it up to connect to an NTP server. First install NTP though, using

```
$ sudo apt-get install ntp
```

Once it's installed, navigate to `/etc/ntp.conf` which you can edit using your favourite text edit. Say, `gedit` or `nano`.

```
$ sudo nano /etc/ntp.conf
```

I'm not sure if it needs `sudo`, but you can use it anyway.

You need to know an NTP server to set this. Modify your file to be like so:

```
logfile /var/log/xntpd
driftfile /var/lib/ntp/ntp.drift
statsdir /var/log/ntpstats/

statistics loopstats peerstats clockstats
filegen loopstats file loopstats type day enable
filegen peerstats file peerstats type day enable
filegen clockstats file clockstats type day enable

server ntp.somedomain.something
server ntp.something.else
```

Replace the `somedomain.something` and `something.else` with NTP servers. You can find some hfrom the [NTP server home](#).

answered Aug 14 '11 at 18:35



Simon Sheehan

7,357 11 40 67

If you have `systemd` in [version](#) greater than 213 (check: `systemd --version`), you don't have to install `ntp` package to synchronize system time.

`systemd` provides `systemd-timesyncd` daemon which implements [SNTP](#) (Simple NTP) client.

To start and enable [SNTP](#) synchronization:

```
timedatectl set-ntp true
```


To show current settings of the system clock and [RTC](#):

```
timedatectl status
```


Configuration of `systemd-timesyncd` daemon is in `/etc/systemd/timesyncd.conf` file. You can provide your NTP servers there. By default all servers are commented out and NTP servers are [obtained](#) from `systemd-networkd.service(8)` configuration or via DHCP.

If you have installed *Windows* alongside *Linux*, you may struggle with dual-boot system time [issues](#). The reason is simple: Windows keeps hardware clock in local time and Linux in UTC time (`timedatectl set-local-rtc 1` may be helpful but [is not](#) recommended; you'd better [change Windows](#) time settings to force keeping hardware clock in UTC).

edited Mar 20 '17 at 10:17

 Community 1


answered May 13 '15 at 14:33

 [patryk.beza](#)
577 1 9 24

1 awesome answer for those using Debian 8. Thank you! – [Eric Sebasta](#) Jul 10 '15 at 12:18

Install `ntp` and made it run on runlevels 2,3,5. Then it will pull the date and time from well-known sources and will adjust your system gradually.

answered Aug 14 '11 at 18:26

 [grs](#)
862 8 14

Ntp seems to be what i'm searching. But how can i set to runlevels 2,3,5 without gui tool? – [kravemir](#) Aug 14 '11 at 18:31

```
sudo apt-get install ntp
sudo systemctl restart ntp
sudo systemctl enable ntp
```

That's it. Just run `$ date` to see if it works.

answered Jul 3 '17 at 18:49

 [reversiblean](#)
111 5