

How to Display the Timestamp in the History Command?

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Displaying the timestamp in the history command is very useful for various purposes. However, in general, Linux systems do not display a timestamp when you run the history command

Problem

How to display the timestamp in the history command?

Solution

If you type the history command on your Linux server, by default, you will find that there is no timestamp, as in the image below:

```
[root@RockyLinux9 ~]# history
```

```
1  yum update -y
2  reboot
3  cat /etc/*release
4  poweroff
5  ip a
6  nmtui
7  yum install net-tools
8  nmtui
9  mntui
10 nmtui
11 ip a
12 nmtui
13 ip a
14 nmtui
15 ip a
16 reboot
17 ip a
18 useradd sysadmin
19 passwd sysadmin
20 poweroff
21 ls
22 top
23 uptime
24 history
```

```
[root@RockyLinux9 ~]#
```



The history command

So that your Linux server can display timestamps in the history command, type the command below:

```
echo 'export HISTTIMEFORMAT="%F %T "' >> ~/.bashrc
source ~/.bashrc
```

```
[root@RockyLinux9 ~]# history
 1 2025-01-17 03:10:45 yum update -y
 2 2025-01-17 03:10:45 reboot
 3 2025-01-17 03:10:45 cat /etc/*release
 4 2025-01-17 03:10:45 poweroff
 5 2025-01-17 03:10:45 ip a
 6 2025-01-17 03:10:45 ntmui
 7 2025-01-17 03:10:45 yum install net-tools
 8 2025-01-17 03:10:45 ntmui
 9 2025-01-17 03:10:45 mntui
10 2025-01-17 03:10:45 nmtui
11 2025-01-17 03:10:45 ip a
12 2025-01-17 03:10:45 nmtui
13 2025-01-17 03:10:45 ip a
14 2025-01-17 03:10:45 nmtui
15 2025-01-17 03:10:45 ip a
16 2025-01-17 03:10:45 reboot
17 2025-01-17 03:10:45 ip a
18 2025-01-17 03:10:45 useradd sysadmin
19 2025-01-17 03:10:45 passwd sysadmin
20 2025-01-17 03:10:45 poweroff
21 2025-01-17 03:10:48 ls
22 2025-01-17 03:10:52 top
23 2025-01-17 03:11:00 uptime
24 2025-01-17 03:11:48 history
25 2025-01-17 03:13:11 echo 'export HISTTIMEFORMAT="%F %T "' >> ~/.bashrc
26 2025-01-17 03:13:22 source ~/.bashrc
27 2025-01-17 03:13:26 history
[root@RockyLinux9 ~]#
```

The history command with a timestamp

The image above shows that the timestamp is already visible when you type the history command. Linux commands executed for a long time will display the same timestamp (look at the image above in the red box). However, if you run another Linux command, the timestamp displayed will be the same as when you executed the Linux command (look at the image above in the green box).

Note

By default, you have to run the commands above on each user to display the timestamps in the history command. But I think it's very tiring to do that. So, if you want to

display a timestamp in the history command for each Linux user, copy the command below:

```
sudo vi /etc/profile.d/history-timestamp.sh
```

After that, copy the script below into the file:

```
export HISTTIMEFORMAT="%F %T "
```

and then run the below script:

```
sudo chmod 644 /etc/profile.d/history-timestamp.sh
```

The history command in the new user's shell will display timestamps automatically if there is a new user on your Linux server.

References

cyberciti.biz
stackoverflow.com
tecmint.com
linuxhandbook.com