

# How to Protect the Linux Server From an Accidental Reboot?

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As a Sysadmin, accessing a Linux server is a normal daily activity. But sometimes we accidentally make mistakes rebooting or shutting down the production server, causing the server to be inaccessible. Therefore, we need a tool to confirm if someone reboots or shuts down a Linux server.

## Problem


How to protect the Linux server from an accidental reboot or shutdown?

## Solution

In the Debian/Ubuntu distribution, the molly-guard tool can be used to protect the Linux server from an accidental reboot or shutdown. Use the two commands below to install molly-guard:

```
sudo apt update
sudo apt-get install molly-guard
```

After that, try to reboot the server, and there should be a notification like the image below:

```
sysadmin@ubuntu2404:~$ sudo reboot
W: molly-guard: SSH session detected!
Please type in hostname of the machine to reboot: | 
```

A notification appears when trying to reboot the server

Someone who wants to reboot the server must write the server's hostname. If the nameserver does not match the hostname on the server, the reboot process will not be

continued, but if it matches the hostname on the server, the reboot process will be continued.

```
sysadmin@ubuntu2404:~$ sudo reboot
W: molly-guard: SSH session detected!
Please type in hostname of the machine to reboot: ubuntu2403
Good thing I asked; I won't reboot ubuntu2404 ...
W: aborting reboot due to 30-query-hostname exiting with code 1.
sysadmin@ubuntu2404:~$
sysadmin@ubuntu2404:~$
sysadmin@ubuntu2404:~$ sudo reboot
W: molly-guard: SSH session detected!
Please type in hostname of the machine to reboot: ubuntu2404

Broadcast message from root@ubuntu2404 on pts/1 (Mon 2025-03-17 15:20:46 UTC):

The system will reboot now!

sysadmin@ubuntu2404:~$
```

Try to reboot the server

This is very useful if the sysadmin accidentally types the reboot command on the server. However, this tool not only protects the server from the reboot command, but also other commands such as the **poweroff**, **shutdown**, **coldreboot**, **pm-hibernate**, **pm-suspend**, and **pm-suspend-hybrid** commands.

```
sysadmin@ubuntu2404:~$ sudo poweroff
W: molly-guard: SSH session detected!
Please type in hostname of the machine to poweroff: ^Z
[3]+ Stopped sudo poweroff
sysadmin@ubuntu2404:~$
sysadmin@ubuntu2404:~$ sudo shutdown -h now
W: molly-guard: SSH session detected!
Please type in hostname of the machine to shutdown: ^Z
[4]+ Stopped sudo shutdown -h now
sysadmin@ubuntu2404:~$
sysadmin@ubuntu2404:~$
sysadmin@ubuntu2404:~$ sudo halt
W: molly-guard: SSH session detected!
Please type in hostname of the machine to halt: ^Z
[5]+ Stopped sudo halt
sysadmin@ubuntu2404:~$
```

Try to turn off the server

## Note

Keep in mind that this molly-guard tool can only work in the Debian/Ubuntu distribution and its derivatives, and this tool only works on SSH connections. If you access the Linux server without an SSH connection, for example, by directly connecting the keyboard to the Linux server, this tool will not work, so if you run the reboot command, the Linux server will immediately reboot.

## References

[manpages.ubuntu.com](http://manpages.ubuntu.com)

[launchpad.net](http://launchpad.net)

[techbits.io](http://techbits.io)