

How To Run Mixmaster Under Linux

Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/comp.os.linux.misc/2005-10/0639.html>

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This is an attempt to tell newbies how to get started using Mixmaster under Linux so that they can use the remailer system.

I wanted to put this together because documentation understandable by the average user seems to be lacking.

I hope to provide enough information to get people to the point of sending simple messages through the remailers.

Please chime in with corrections, additions, etc.

Any examples of command line usage would be most welcome.

I assume you have some version of linux installed and know how to use the package manager to add programs.

You will need to install:

Mixmaster

Postfix [SEE (1) IN THE NOTES SECTION]

To make things as 'gui' as possible, I strongly recommend you also install:

Ncurses

webmin for postfix

Mixmaster

I think I took the defaults for this and didn't have a problem.

I think it asks you if you want to install ncurses while you are at it. Say yes, since ncurses will give you a simple gui when you want to send a message.

Postfix

This is a mail server which Mixmaster will automatically use for smtp purposes. Take the defaults when setting this up. The one exception is when it asks for the internet hostname of the mail system. Use a fully-qualified domain name. You can get one from places like dyndns.org or yi.org, which point to your ip.

Webmin for Postfix

This provides a gui for configuring Postfix. The only thing I had to do was get into general options and change the internet hostname of the mail system to a fully-qualified name, because I had taken the non-fully-qualified default when setting up postfix.

By the way, it isn't obvious how to get into Webmin, so here is how: open your browser and type localhost:10000. It will ask you for the root id and password, and will probably re-direct you to another local url. Remember the new url and use it the next time.

One more thing about Postfix. It is apparently a simplified version of Sendmail, which is what mixmaster **really** requires; but it has been jiggered so that mixmaster thinks it is sendmail. I tried installing sendmail, but got loads of messages about things being screwed up. Stick with Postfix.

TO RUN MIXMASTER USING THE COMMAND LINE

Here are a couple of command line examples. Since you can do a lot more with the command line than the elementary gui, it's probably worth while learning this.

You should change these to fit your wishes and copy and paste them into a terminal session (Linux has sophisticated scripting, but I don't know how to use it. If you do, let us know – as long as your explanation is simple, clear, and sufficient).

The easiest way to send a message using the command line is to create the message in a file and then specify the file in the command line. This allows you to put any headers you want in the message.

Here is an example of sending a mixmaster message to usenet. It has a subject and a 'from' header (in the file containing the body of the message). If you want the 'from' header to show up, you need to use, as the last remailer, one that supports that. Hastio, Frell, Thrasher and Eelbash are several that do.

For easier understanding, the parameters are displayed vertically, with a comment.

```
mixmaster
-c 1 send 1 copy of the msg
-p send it to usenet – the headers: Newsgroups:,
  From:, etc. will be in the file.

-l thrasher use this remailer
<tmp/info.txt the file containing the message
```

Here it is, spread out:

```
mixmaster -c 1 -p -l thrasher <tmp/info.txt
```

N.B. after you run this command, type in: `mixmaster -S`
That will send the message from the pool. If you don't type in:
`mixmaster -S`, the message will not be sent.

Here is what the file, `info.txt`, might look like. Note the
skipped line after the last header. That is essential.

```
Newsgroups: alt.test  
Subject: some test subject  
From: joe blow <joeblow@somewhere.com>
```

```
start of message  
second line of message
```

Here's a variation of the above, using 4 copies and 4 remailers.

```
mixmaster mixmaster -c 4 -p -l *,*,*,thrasher <tmp/info.txt
```

TO RUN MIXMASTER USING THE NCURSES GUI

Open a terminal screen and type: `mixmaster` (if that doesn't work,
type `Mixmaster`. This is Linux.)
That will bring up the simple gui screen.

Enter `m` or `p` for mail or post to usenet.
Enter the email address(es) or newsgroup(s) you want to send to.
Enter the Subject

That will bring up another screen with the defaults for remailers,
and for copies of the message. It should quickly become clear how
to manage those two.

One thing to keep in mind is that you need to specify at least one
random remailer (by using an asterisk) if you are sending more
than one copy of the message.

If you have the message in a file, enter `f` then the name of the file.

If you want to type in the message, or edit the existing file,
enter `e` and you will be put into a terrible editor called `vi`.
SEE (2) IN THE NOTES SECTION, for how to switch to a better editor.
If you can't switch, then read on.

If you are stuck with `vi`, type in your message.

Now get a load of this: to save and get out of the message, you have to:

1. Press the 'insert' key
2. enter a colon followed by wq

Amazing, but that's how vi works, and doing that will get you back to the previous gui.

Enter m to send the message to the spool file.

That brings up another gui screen. At this point you will probably want to enter s to send the message from the spool, and then q to quit mixmaster.

If you have postfix properly installed, the message should be on its way, nicely encrypted.

You will need regularly to update your stats, so SEE (3) IN THE NOTES SECTION.

You now know everything I do about running mixmaster. That's not much, but at least you can encrypt mail and usenet posts.

Maybe somebody could also provide us with some more command line examples, so that we have a better idea of how to use the command line with mixmaster. It would make learning mixmaster a lot easier if we had examples to play around with, rather than coding the command line statements from scratch.

The gui is so elementary, that it looks like command line is the way to go, once you have familiarized yourself with the utility.

***** NOTES *****

(1) SHOULD YOU USE POSTFIX TO SEND MAIL FROM MIXMASTER?

You can make a few changes in one of the config files and use your isp's smtp server.

I actually prefer postfix because it set up and ran without a hitch.

However, if you have a problem with it, or prefer to use the kind of smtp you are used to, read on.

Basically you put these in your mix.cfg file and comment out (with a #) or remove the SENDMAIL option, like this.

```
#SENDMAIL /usr/lib/sendmail -t
```

```
SMTPRELAY smtp.example.net  
SMTPUSERNAME foo  
SMTPPASSWORD bar  
HELONAME example.net  
ENVFROM mix-bou...@example.net
```

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The SMTPRELAY option makes mixmaster deliver to that smtp server instead of sendmail. SMTPUSERNAME and SMTPPASSWORD are options you use if your smtp server requires authentication. HELONAME is the host name that is given. ENVFROM is who it will say the mail is from to the smtp server.

In order to edit mix.cfg, you need to open a terminal and type:

```
kdesu konqueror /var/lib/mixmaster.
```

Enter your root password when prompted and konqueror should open and put you into /var/lib/mixmaster.

Open Mix.

Open mix.cfg.

Make the changes.

(2) HOW TO GET MIXMASTER TO USE A BETTER EDITOR THAN VI

My version of linux came with Kate and Kwrite, among other editors. I use Kwrite. To see if you have Kwrite installed, open a terminal and type /usr/bin/kwrite. If the editor opens, it's installed.

Assuming it is installed, go to your /home/user/ folder.

Whatever editor you are using to look at the /home/user folder should have a VIEW option on the toolbar. Get into that and click on 'view hidden files'.

You should then see a file called .bash_profile. Open it.

Somewhere in there are a bunch of lines beginning with 'export'.

Insert a line among them and type: export EDITOR="/usr/bin/kwrite"

Reboot the computer.

Run mixmaster again, using its gui, and when you choose 'e' to edit / create the file, you will find that you are editing with kwrite rather than vi.

(3) HOW TO UPDATE YOUR STATS AND KEYS

Open a terminal and type: kdesu konqueror /var/lib/mixmaster

It will ask for your password. type it in.

Then it should open the Konqueror file browser and put you into /var/lib/mixmaster.

Open Mix

Open update.conf and you will see something like this:

```
# Configfile for mixmaster-update (from the mixmaster package)
# see mixmaster-update(1) for documentation
```

```
SOURCE amessage
```

```
# PROXY http http://proxy.example.com:3128/
```

```
# PROXY ftp http://proxy.example.com:3128/
```

DESTINATION /var/lib/mixmaster/stats

All you need to do is choose the source. I use amessage, but use whatever you like best.

Get out of that and back to the terminal.

Type in: `kdesu mixmaster-update`

Enter the password.

`mixmaster-update` should now run and get the latest stats from amessage and update `/var/lib/mixmaster/stats`.

One thing I don't see getting updated or have even found, is `type2.list`. I have no idea why that is not being updated

I'm sure there is a cron job of some kind that can be run to do the stats update periodically and automatically. Anybody want to chime in with the info?