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r/debian



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abceleung

Is it possible to create root user ONLY during installation?

I want to create a Debian VM that run a single service, so I have no need for a non-root user. But the Debian netinstaller blocks me if I submit an empty non-root user name.

I know I can create the non-root user then delete it after installation, but maybe there is a way to bypass this during installation?



0



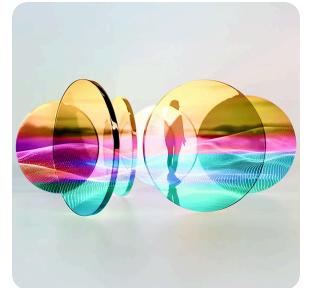
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**kai_ekael** • 10mo ago

1. Expert mode.
2. You are an expert.



5



Reply

**DrRomeoChaire** • 10mo ago

Maybe a [Debian cloud image](#) would be a better option? There are [versions for qemu/kvm](#) that can be persuaded to run in other VM environments.

A cloud image is a minimal Linux VM image that can be customized. I've used them extensively with OpenStack in the past, but also with kvm.



4



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In theory you should create a non-root user anyway, so you have a user you can log in as, since many/most Linux services don't by default allow direct logging in as root, even on headless, eg with SSH.

If you're going to be directly accessing a root terminal without needing to go over a network then I guess you won't need any non-root user. I just think it doesn't really take anything away by creating one anyway even if not using it.

It's possible that putting the installer in expert mode may allow you to skip this but I don't know, and I'd suspect not.

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abceleung OP • 10mo ago

It is indeed possible to create root user only in the expert mode (I just tried). Thanks for the hint!

4 [Reply](#) ...

+ 1 more reply



krav_mark • 10mo ago

Please don't tell me you are going to allow to login as root over ssh and run your application as root also.

5 [Reply](#) ...



Feeeweegege • 10mo ago • Edited 10mo ago

The former is fine if you use public keys and completely disallow remote password-based authentication though, which you should be doing anyway. Otherwise, you'd be logging into your 2nd account with your public key, and then entering your password again anyway during escalation, undermining some of the advantages of using public keys.

Running services as root is not a good idea though, I agree. Keep things separate. Don't log in as root when unnecessary.

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ScratchHistorical507 • 10mo ago

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login as root isn't an issue. Obviously you should prohibit password logins. And the rest is controlled by the applications themselves - at least the ones in the Debian repos.

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**michaelpaoli** • 10mo ago

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run a single service, so I have no need for a non-root

Sorry, wrong. This isn't Microsoft DOS. It's multiuser multitasking/processing operating system. There are various users for good reasons, e.g. to drop privilege and prevent misbehavior of, e.g. a server process which ought be quite limited in what it does, from entirely destroying the site - or worse.

See also: [Least Privilege Principle](#)

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**Netizen_Kain** • 10mo ago

You should not be running applications as root.

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**ScratchHistorical507** • 10mo ago

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The applications where this is true will set up their users themselves during installation. At least when they come from Debians repo. So this argument is quite irrelevant. Also, most applications written first and foremost for Linux will warn the user - if not prevent it altogether - when it's actually not a good idea to run it as root.

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Create user with "root" permissions

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 r/ObsidianMD • 1 mo. ago

does anyone knows the fix for this



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 r/linuxquestions • 1 yr. ago

Can't log into normal user, only root

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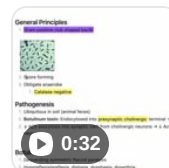
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 r/ObsidianMD • 23 days ago

Is there any way to prevent this from happening?



45 upvotes · 35 comments

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0:50

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