### Strategies For Securing a Linux System

Donald Buchan <u>malak@malak.ca</u>

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#### Overview

- Use a router
- All users should have their own account
- Manage Passwords
- Control Access to Your Desktop
- Perform Updates Regularly
- Install Software From Repositories
- Activate Your Firewall and Tune Appropriately
- Turn Off Unneeded Services
- Limit SSH Access to only the users you allow, and exclude the root user
- Install DenyHosts
- Other Strategies
  - Install SELinux and Operate it in enforcing mode
  - Use NoScript
  - Encrypt your filesystem
  - Remove accumulated junk
  - Don't automount devices
  - Close root sessions at the command line
- -Protect your system's physical integrity

# Why should you protect your system?

## Why should you protect your linux system?

- Crackers want to compromise your system to do nefarious things, or just for the challenge;
- You don't want your system to be used for illicit or illegal activities (spam, porn, or financial or identity theft);
- A compromised Linux system is worth more than a compromised Windows system.

## Why should you protect your linux system?

- You have personal files to protect it's no one's business but yours that you like wine, nature walks, or Barbie dolls unless, of course, you wish to share that information!
- Simply put, it's your computer, to be used for your purposes as you see fit.



### Why should you protect your linux system?

The approach to take must be multi-faceted with different approaches which may or may not overlap. Some ways are automatic settings in your computer, some are habits you should adopt.

Remember: You have to win every day, but a cracker only has to win ONCE!

### A System Under Attack

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File Edit View Terminal Tabs
                             Help
```

\*J Justify

GNU nano 2.0.6 File: secure Apr 26 13:54:26 malak sshd[23323]; pam unix(sshd:auth); check pass; user unknown Apr 26 13:54:26 malak sshd[23323]: pam unix(sshd:auth): authentication failure; logname= uid=0 euid=0 tty=ssh ruser= rhost=202.105.49.16 Apr 26 13:54:26 malak sshd[23323]: pam succeed if(sshd:auth): error retrieving information about user tomcat Apr 26 13:54:27 malak sshd[23320]: Failed password for invalid user root from 202.105.49.16 port 43998 ssh2 Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23323]: Failed password for invalid user tomcat from 202.105.49.16 port 42446 ssh2 Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23322]: Received disconnect from 202.105.49.16: 11: Bve Bve Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23321]: Invalid user cady from 202.105.49.16 Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23325]: input userauth request: invalid user cady Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23321]: pam unix(sshd:auth): check pass; user unknown Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23321]: pam unix(sshd:auth): authentication failure; logname= uid=0 euid=0 tty=ssh ruser= rhost=202.105.49.16 Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23321]: pam succeed if(sshd:auth): error retrieving information about user cady Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23324]: Received disconnect from 202.105.49.16: 11: Bye Bye Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23326]: Invalid user marine from 202.105.49.16 Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23327]: input userauth request: invalid user marine Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23326]: pam unix(sshd:auth): check pass; user unknown Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23326]: pam unix(sshd:auth): authentication failure; logname= uid=0 euid=0 tty=ssh ruser= rhost=202.105.49.16 Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23326]: pam succeed if(sshd:auth): error retrieving information about user marine Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23325]: Connection closed by 202.105.49.16 Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23321]: Failed password for invalid user cady from 202.105.49.16 port 42434 ssh2 Apr 26 13:54:31 malak sshd[23328]: User root from 202.105.49.16 not allowed because not listed in AllowUsers Apr 26 13:54:31 malak sshd[23329]: input userauth request: invalid user root Apr 26 13:54:31 malak sshd[23328]: pam unix(sshd:auth): authentication failure; logname= uid=0 euid=0 tty=ssh ruser= rhost=202.105.49.16 user=\$ Apr 26 13:54:31 malak sshd[23326]: Failed password for invalid user marine from 202.105.49.16 port 45914 ssh2 Apr 26 13:54:32 malak sshd[23327]: Received disconnect from 202.105.49.16: 11: Bye Bye Apr 26 13:54:33 malak sshd[23328]: Failed password for invalid user root from 202.105.49.16 port 49276 ssh2 Apr 26 13:54:33 malak sshd[23329]: Received disconnect from 202.105.49.16: 11: Bye Bye Apr 26 13:54:36 malak sshd[23330]: Invalid user global from 202.105.49.16 Apr 26 13:54:36 malak sshd[23331]: input userauth request: invalid user global Apr 26 13:54:36 malak sshd[23330]: pam unix(sshd:auth): check pass; user unknown Apr 26 13:54:36 malak sshd[23330]: pam unix(sshd:auth): authentication failure; logname= uid=0 euid=0 tty=ssh ruser= rhost=202.105.49.16 Apr 26 13:54:36 malak sshd[23330]: pam succeed if(sshd:auth): error retrieving information about user global Apr 26 13:54:37 malak sshd[23332]: User root from 202.105.49.16 not allowed because not listed in AllowUsers Apr 26 13:54:37 malak sshd[23333]: input userauth request: invalid user root Apr 26 13:54:37 malak sshd[23332]: pam unix(sshd:auth): authentication failure; logname= uid=0 euid=0 tty=ssh ruser= rhost=202.105.49.16 user=\$ Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23330]: Failed password for invalid user global from 202.105.49.16 port 49425 ssh2 Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23334]: Invalid user marine from 202.105.49.16 Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23335]: input userauth request: invalid user marine Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23331]: Received disconnect from 202.105.49.16: 11: Bye Bye Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23334]: pam unix(sshd:auth): check pass; user unknown Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23334]: pam\_unix(sshd:auth): authentication failure; logname= uid=0 euid=0 tty=ssh ruser= rhost=202.105.49.16 Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23334]: pam succeed if(sshd:auth): error retrieving information about user marine Apr 26 13:54:39 malak sshd[23332]: Failed password for invalid user root from 202.105.49.16 port 53047 ssh2 Apr 26 13:54:39 malak sshd[23333]: Received disconnect from 202.105.49.16: 11: Bye Bye ^G Get Help ^X Exit Read File Prev Page Cur Pos WriteOut Cut Text

Next Page

**^U** UnCut Text

To Spell

Where Is

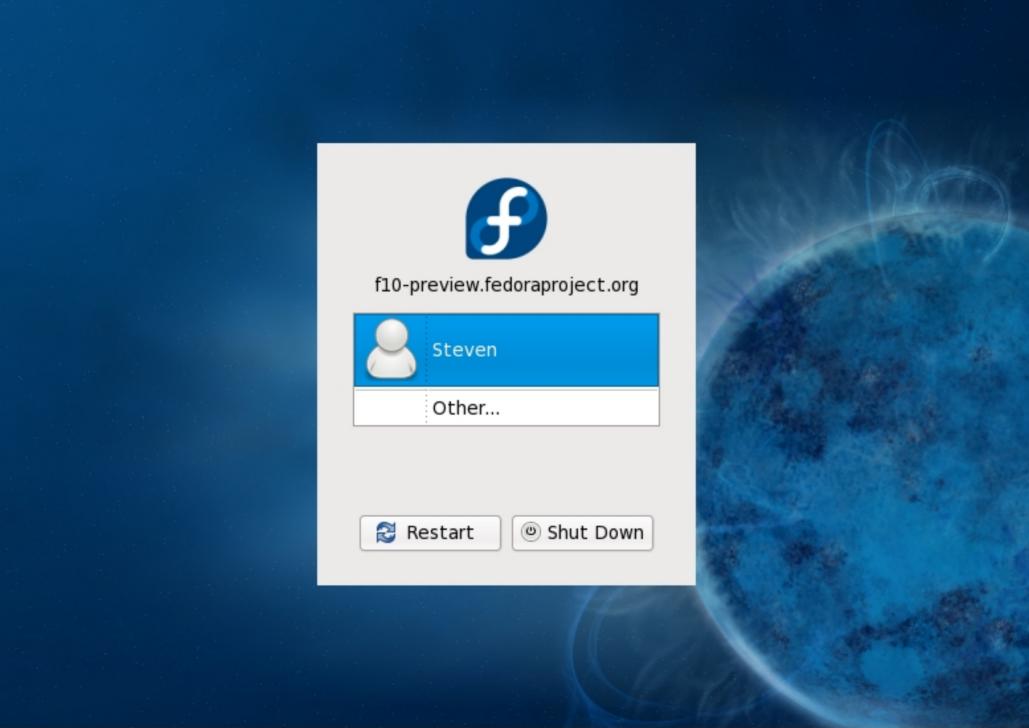
### Use A Router

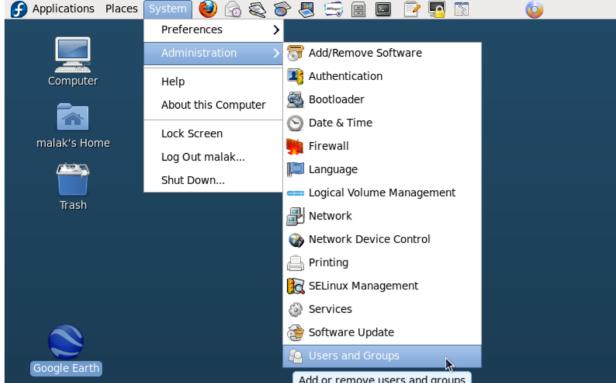
#### Use A Router



- Connect your computer(s) to a router, and the router to your modem.
- NAT service will block *unexpected* packets (scripts, scanning, crackers, login requests to various servers, etc.) from outside sources but not from within the network it creates!

## All Users Should Have Their Own Account





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Sun Jan 16, 22:21

### All Users Should Have Their Own Account



- System | Administration | Users and Groups
- All users have their own unique account(s) with a password, however they log in: ssh, ftp, vnc, and particularly the desktop each user's data will be safe from other users and intruders

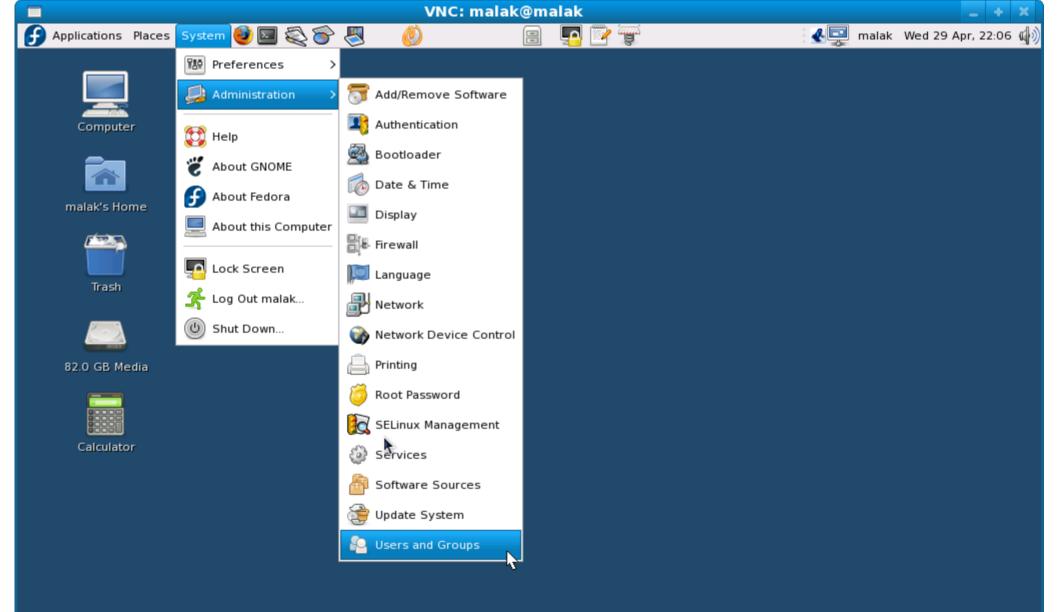
### Manage Passwords

#### Manage Passwords

- In order to reduce the success of dictionary attacks, enforce passwords that:
  - Are at least 8 characters long
    - 1gp-w+ii instead of pwd
  - Have CAPITAL letters, small letters, digits, and special characters, such as:
    - °!"#\$%?&\*()\_+=<>/^,
    - 1234567890
      - 1Gp-W+ii instead of password

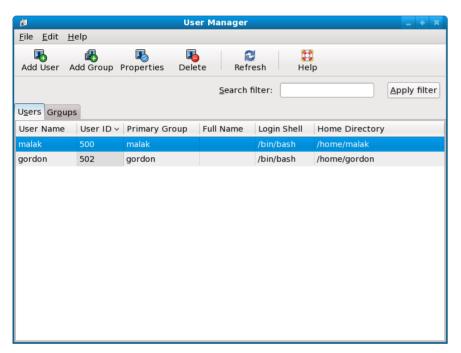
#### Managing Passwords

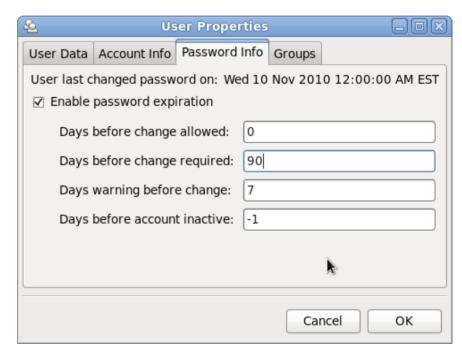
- That are easy to remember but hard to guess, such as the initials to a memorable phrase
  - 1Gp-W+ii --> "(<u>1</u> <u>G</u>ood <u>P</u>ass<u>W</u>ord <u>I</u>s <u>I</u>mportant)"
- Give the root an unique password useful if your account is compromised and the attacker knows your password (see SSH access)





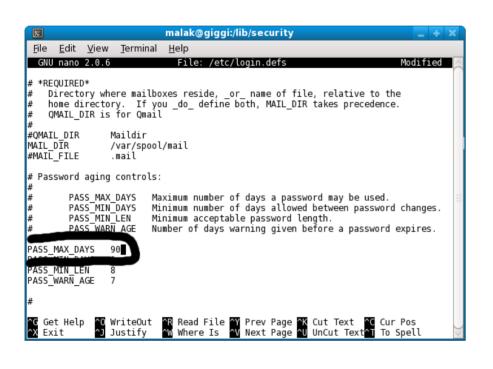
#### Password Expiration





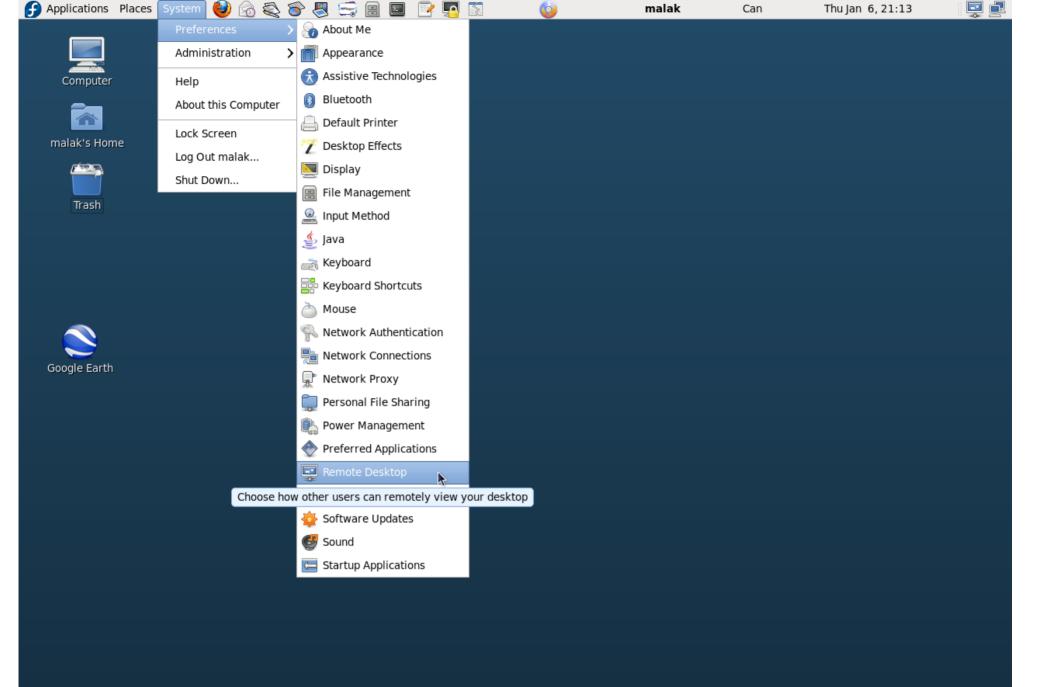
- Sytem Administration Users and Groups, choose user, Password Info tab
- Enforce password expiration, such as every 90 days

#### Password Expiration

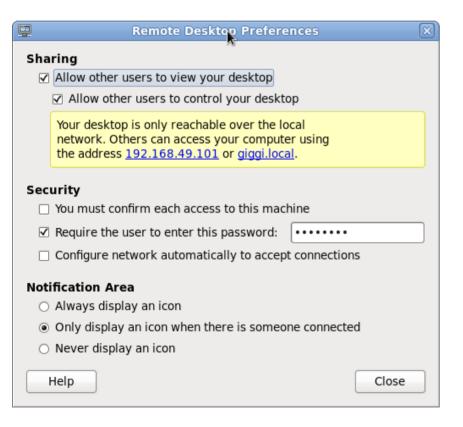


At the command line and as root, in /etc/login.defs, modify the following line:
 "PASS\_MAX\_DAYS" to a number such as 90 days (3 months)

# Control Access To Your Desktop



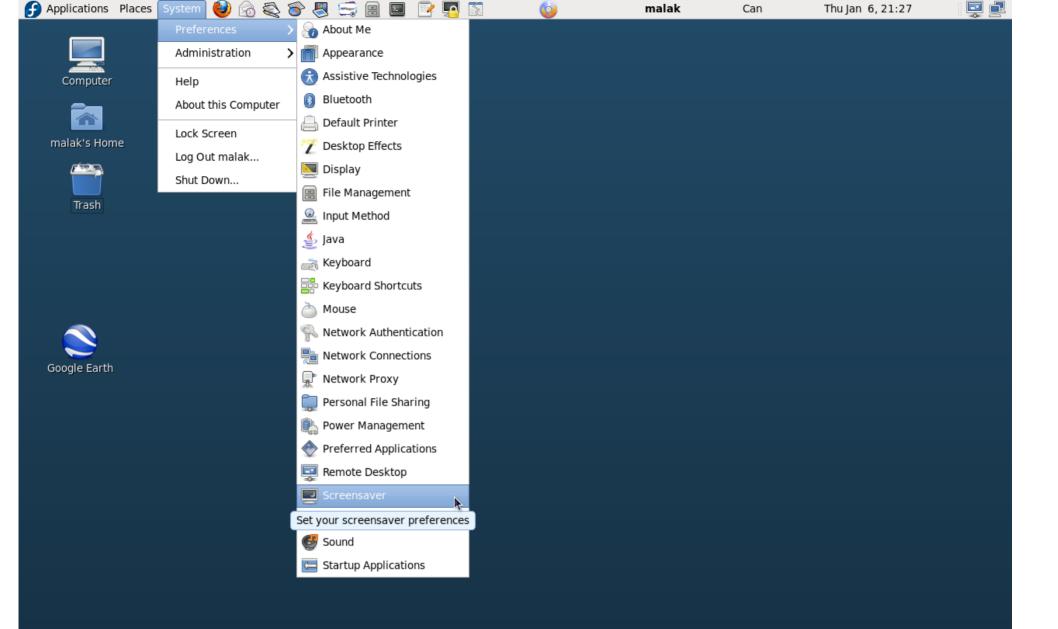
## Control Remote Access To Your Desktop



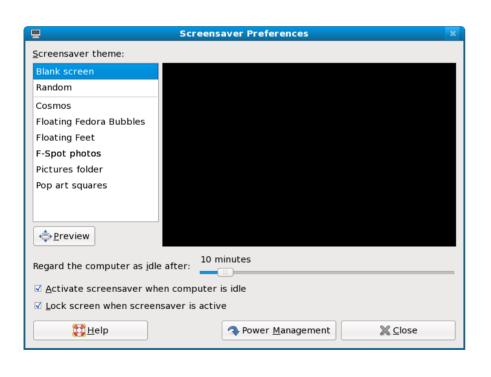
- Remote desktop control: System | Preferences | Remote Desktop
- A system with no logged in desktop users will not allow VNC access
- Note the various options, such as connection confirmation
- In enabling VNC access, you may be broadcasting its availability on Wi-Fi

## Control Remote Access To Your Desktop

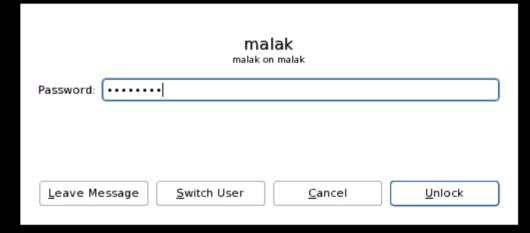
- The screensaver should require a password in order to unlock the screen
  - System | Preferences | Screensaver
- This provides a certain amount of protection if you leave your computer for a few minutes (but wait for the end of this presentation!)



#### Automatic Screen Lock



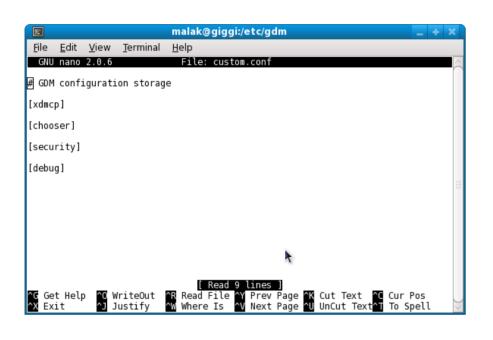
- To automatically lock the screen using the screensaver:
  - System | Screensaver
- Click on "Activate Screen Saver when ..." and "Lock Screen when ...", and set the delay



#### Remove Automatic Login

• Removing automatic logins provides a small amount amount of protection if you leave your computer for a few minutes (and someone reboots it) or someone steals it (but wait for the end of this presentation!)

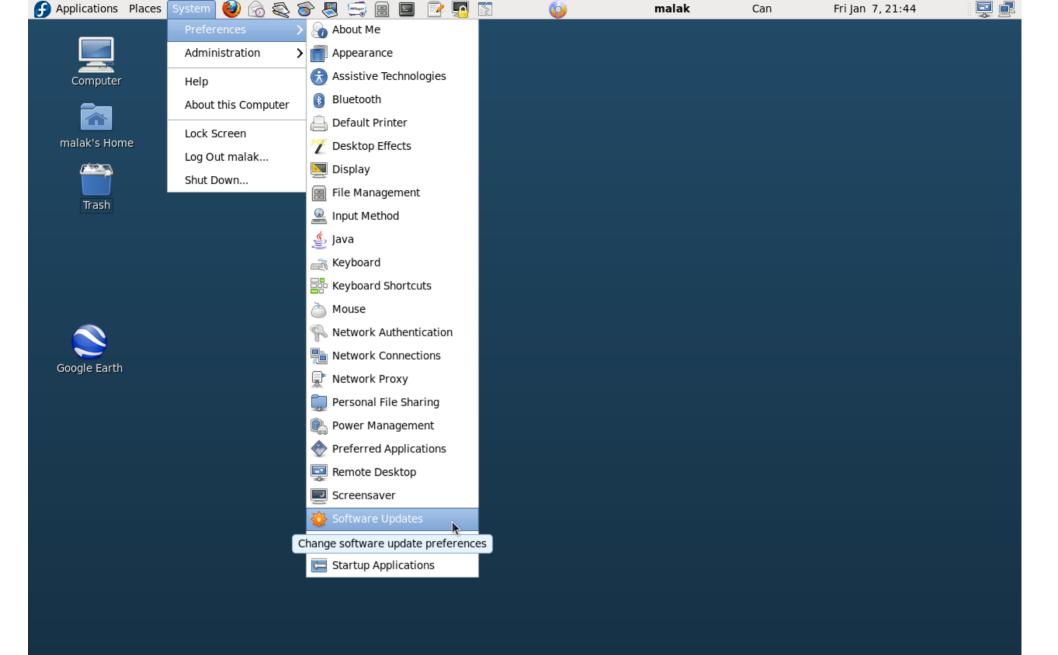
#### Remove Automatic Login



At the command line and as root, modify
 /etc/gdm/custom.conf and remove all lines that say
 "AutomaticLogin" and
 "AutomaticLoginEnable"

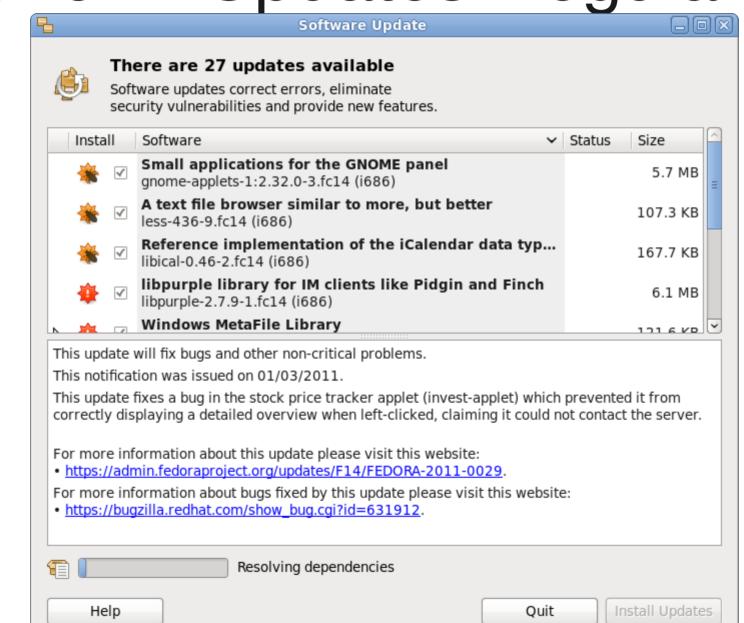
- Updates normally include:
  - Security patches
  - Software updates with new functions, abilities, improvements, etc.
  - The removal or replacement of packages considered obsolete or inferior to new packages
  - The installation of new software likely to be useful
  - Dependencies

- Updates are prepared by either volunteers, paid staff, or both, who work to maintain the distribution up to date, and secure, and make sure that the updates are functional, won't break your system, are complete, and appropriate.
- Updates should normally be done automatically, unless you like to keep close control.





- Unless you like to manually control updates, normally your computer should perform them automatically
- System | Preferences |
   Software Updates



## Perform Updates Regularly



- Automatic updates:
  - as root, set up a cron job (see screenshot)
- Manual updates, at the command line:
  - as root, "yum update"
  - Remember to do so regularly!

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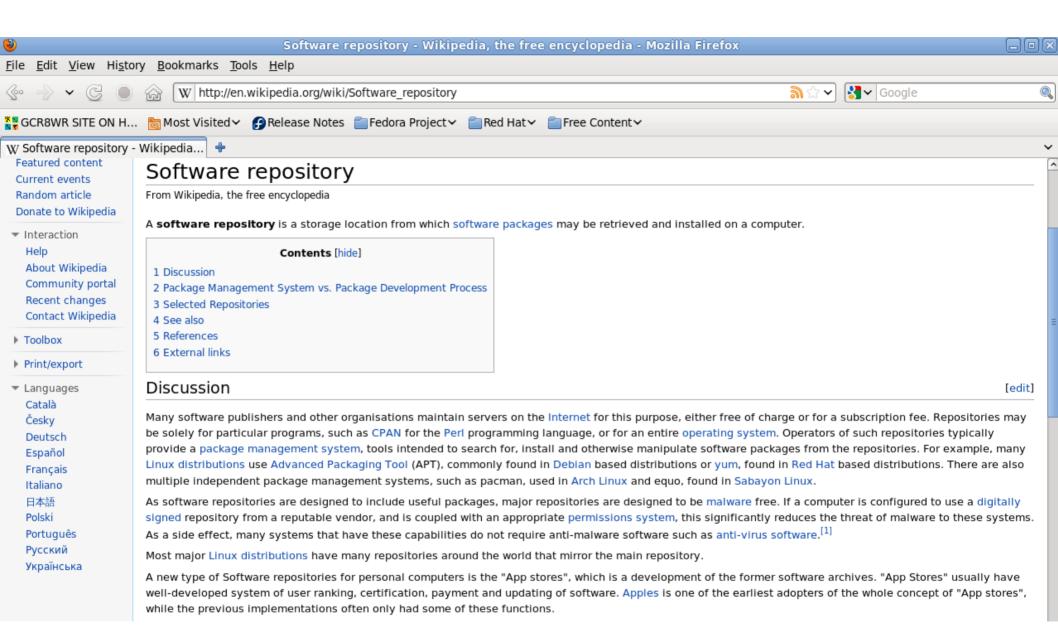
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libmodplug	i386	1:0.8.7-1.fc9	updates-newkey	171 k						
totem	i386	2.23.2-16.fc9	updates-newkey	2.4 M						
totem-gstreamer	i386	2.23.2-16.fc9	updates-newkey	69 k						
totem-mozplugin	i386	2.23.2-16.fc9	updates-newkey	273 k						
totem-nautilus	i386	2.23.2-16.fc9	updates-newkey	36 k						
totem-xine	i386	2.23.2-16.fc9	updates-newkey	52 k						
vlgothic-fonts	noarch	20090422-1.fc9	updates-newkey	2.3 M						
vlgothic-fonts-common	noarch	20090422-1.fc9	updates-newkey	15 k						
vlgothic-p-fonts	noarch	20090422-1.fc9	updates-newkey	2.4 M						
xulrunner	i386	1.9.0.10-1.fc9	updates-newkey	9.0 M						
yelp	i386	2.22.1-12.fc9	updates-newkey	874 k						
Transaction Summary				======			::			
<pre>Install 0 Package(s)</pre>										
Update 16 Package(s)										
Remove 0 Package(s)										
Total download size: 30 M Is this ok [y/N]: y										
	Downloading Packages:									
(1/16): vlgothic-fonts-common-20090422-1.fc9.noarch.rpm   15 kB 00:										
(2/16): gnome-python2-gtkhtml2-2.19.1-27.fc9.i386.rpm   19 kB 00										
(3/16): totem-nautilus-2.23.2-16.fc9.i386.rpm   36 kB 00 (4/16): gnome-python2-extras-2.19.1-27.fc9.i386.rpm   51 kB 00										
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(6/16): gnome-python2-libegg-2.19.1-27.fc9.i386.rpm   57 kB										
(7/16): totem-gstreamer-2.23.2-16.fc9.i386.rpm 69 kB 00:06										
(8/16): libcurl-7.19.4-4.fc9.i386.rpm (1%) 57% [====================================										

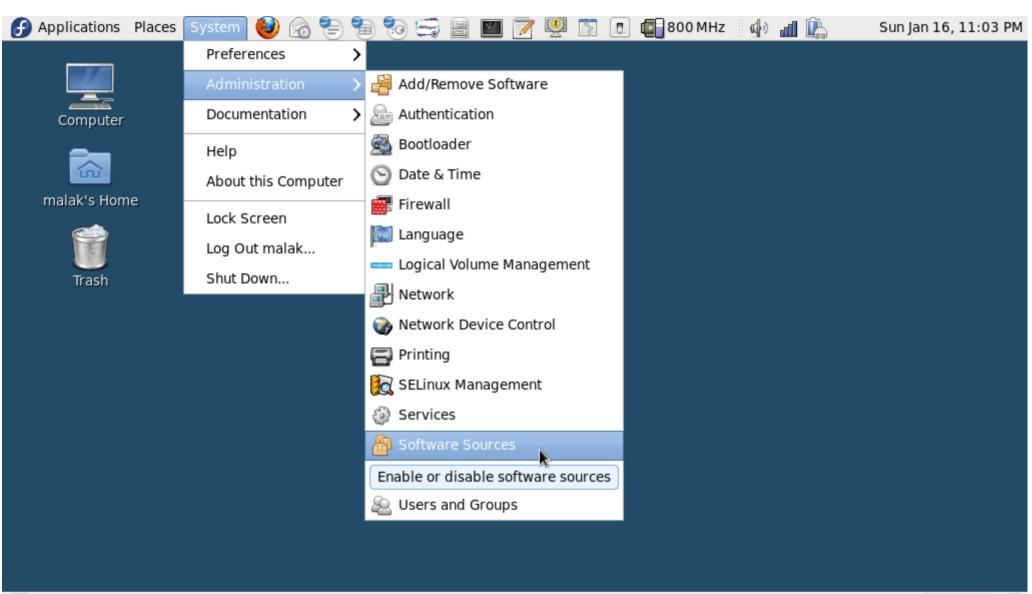
- In Windows, software is downloaded from anywhere and is installed directly; it is a complete package with all the necessary parts.
- In Windows, aside from the "Windows" part, you are responsible for keeping track of all the installed software, the availability of updates and security patches, and to install them. (Some stand-alone software have automatic update options, however they only apply to that piece of software.)

- In Linux, software is normally installed using a **package manager** that coordinates software installation, including dependencies, as well as versions, updates, and security patches.
- Essentially, *ALL* software installed from your package manager the "Linux part", fonts, the desktop, or applications will be updated and have security patches applied through the repositories soon after they're available.

• As such, normally when you're installing software and you can install either from a repository or elsewhere, it's preferred to install from the repositories.

• Some software you'll install on your system won't be in the repositories: However, the important part is to choose a system that has the software you need in its repositories, OR to tolerate the occasional piece of software from "off the homestead" sources while keeping unsupported software to a minimum.





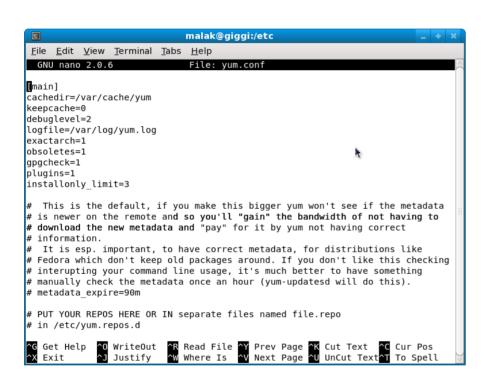






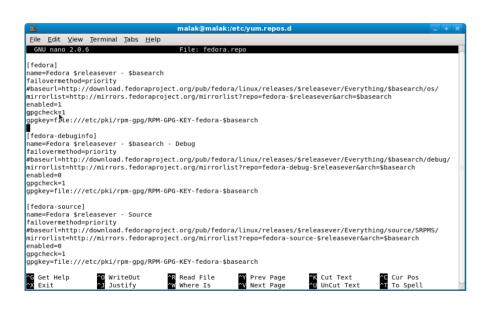
System |
 Administration |
 Software Sources

#### **Repository Files**



- You can add repository information, normally found on the repository's webpage, to /etc/yum.conf
- Some repositories' web pages have automatic installation links to add the repository to your system, which will add the necessary information to your system

#### **Repository Files**

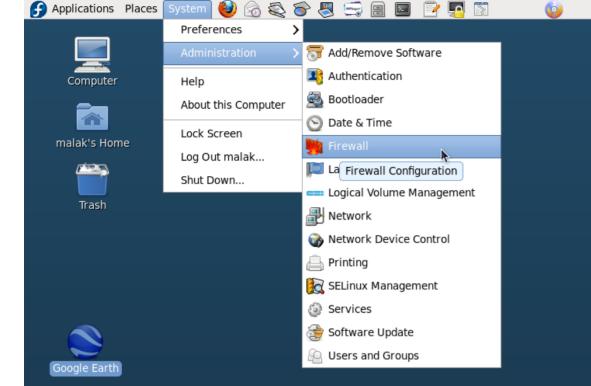


- You can also have separate repository files in /etc/yum/repo.d which are named file.repo, where file normally represents the repository's name
  - Normally the text to cut & paste can be found on the repository's web page

## Activate Your Firewall and Tune Appropriately

## Activate Your Firewall and Tune Appropriately

• Firewalls basically act as a traffic cops, and enforce rules for what type of network traffic is allowed into and out of your computer

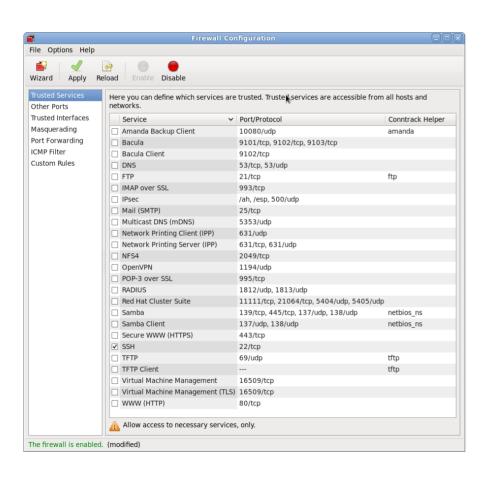


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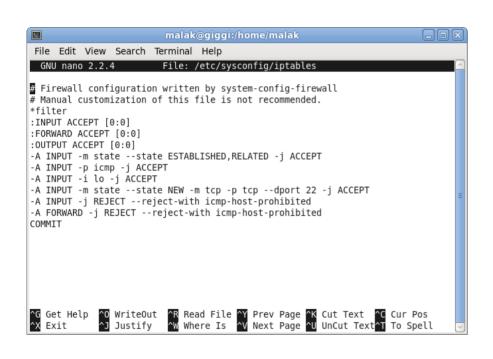
Sat Jan 15, 21:51

## Activate Your Firewall and Tune Appropriately



- System I
   Administration I
   Firewall
- Check the services for which you'll allow network traffic, leave those you won't allow unchecked
- Other configurations can be set

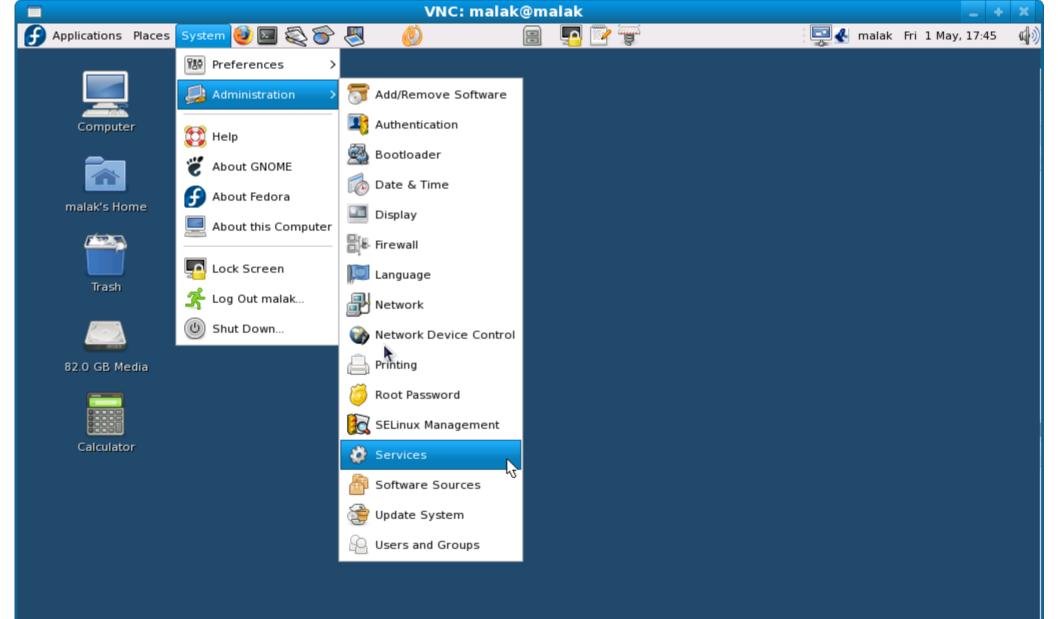
## Activate Your Firewall and Tune Appropriately



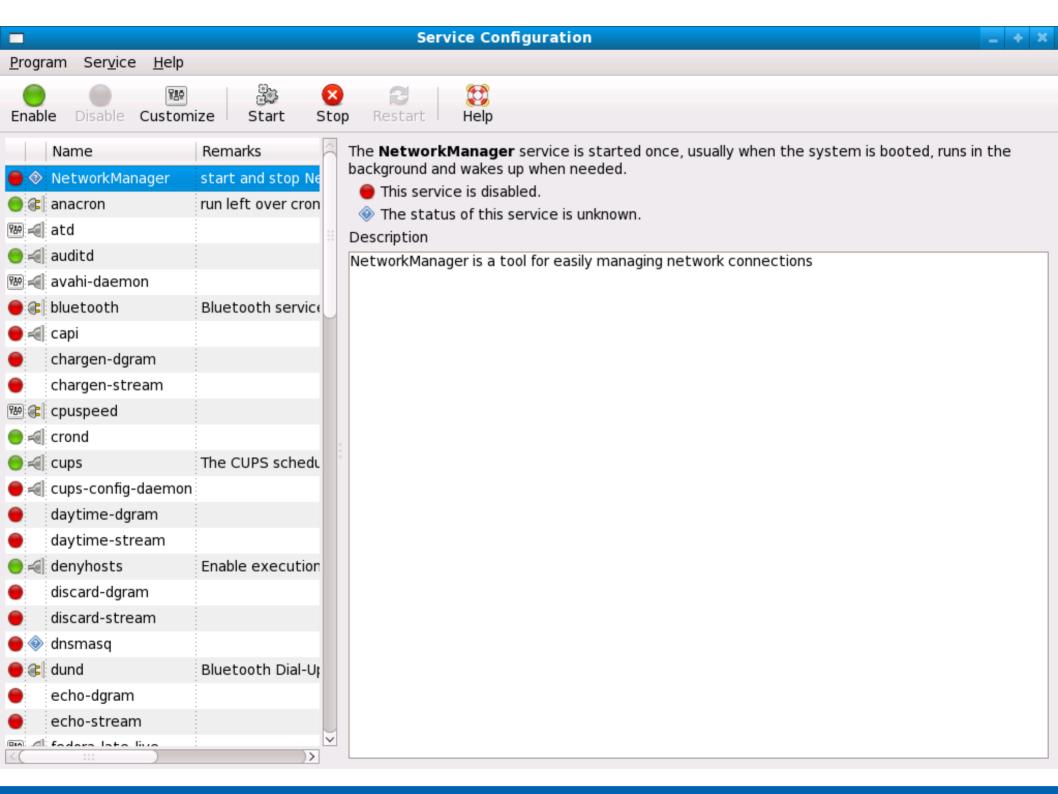
- At the command line and as root, edit the /etc/sysconfig/iptables file
- Manual customization
   of the file is not
   recommended

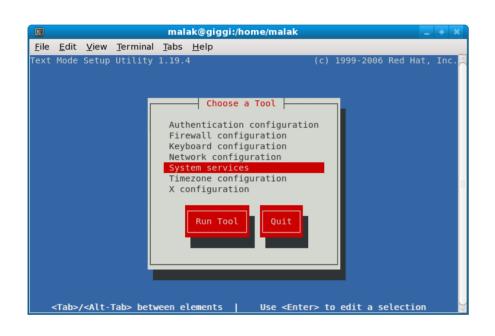
- If you don't access your computer remotely by certain services, the ones you don't need should be turned off so as to limit them as intrusion vectors by crackers
- System IAdministration IServices

- ftp
- sshd
- vnc
- httpd
- sendmail
- netconsole









• At the command line and as root, enter the setup command, and you'll see this menu; choose "System services"



- In the service list, select the targeted services (up/down keys) and activate/deactivate (space key)
- Changes take effect at next boot-up

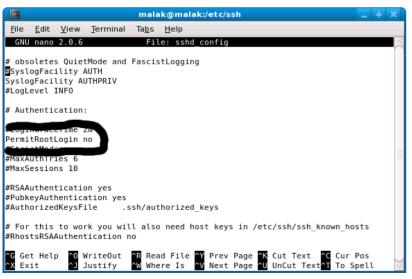
# Limit SSH Access To Only The Users You Allow, And Exclude The root User

## Limit SSH Access To Only The Users You Trust, And Exclude The root User

- SSH access should only be for those users you trust with a command line, and who have reason to have it
- Given the power of root, it should not be allowed direct SSH access; further, if root has an unique password, a cracker would have to figure out:
  - A valid SSH account;
  - Its password;
  - Then the root account password.

## Limit SSH Access To Only The Users You Trust, And Exclude





- At the command line and as root, open /etc/ssh/sshd\_config, and add a line with AllowUsers followed by the users you allow, separated by spaces
  - Edit the line *PermitRootLogin* so that "no" is entered, and delete the "#" at the beginning of the line; *particularly useful if the root* password is unique
  - Be sure that there isn't a "#" at the beginning of the lines, or the condition will be ignored

```
<u>File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help</u>
```

```
GNU nano 2.0.6
                                                    File: secure
Apr 26 13:54:26 malak sshd[23323]: pam unix(sshd:auth): check pass; user unknown
Apr 26 13:54:26 malak sshd[23323]: pam unix(sshd:auth): authentication failure; logname= uid=0 euid=0 tty=ssh ruser= rhost=202.105.49.16
Apr 26 13:54:26 malak sshd[23323]: pam succeed if(sshd:auth): error retrieving information about user tomcat
Apr 26 13:54:27 malak sshd[23320]: Failed password for invalid user root from 202.105.49.16 port 43998 ssh2
Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23323]: Failed password for invalid user tomcat from 202.105.49.16 port 42446 ssh2
Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23322]: Received disconnect from 202.105.49.16: 11: Bye Bye
Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23321]: Invalid user cady from 202.105.49.16
Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23325]: input userauth request: invalid user cady
Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23321]: pam unix(sshd:auth): check pass; user unknown
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Apr 26 13:54:28 malak sshd[23324]: Received disconnect from 202.105.49.16: 11: Bye Bye
Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23326]: Invalid user marine from 202.105.49.16
Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23327]: input userauth request: invalid user marine
Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23326]: pam unix(sshd:auth): check pass; user unknown
Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23326]: pam unix(sshd:auth): authentication failure; logname= uid=0 euid=0 tty=ssh ruser= rhost=202.105.49.16
Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23326]: pam succeed if(sshd:auth): error retrieving information about user marine
Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23325]: Connection closed by 202.105.49.16
Apr 26 13:54:30 malak sshd[23321]
Apr 26 13:54:31 malak sshd[23328
                                  User root from 202.105.49.16 not allowed because not listed in AllowUsers
Apr 26 13:54:31 malak sshd[23329]
Apr 26 13:54:31 malak sshd[23328]: pam unix(sshd:auth): authentication failure; logname= uid=0 euid=0 tty=ssh ruser= rhost=202.105.49.16 user=$
Apr 26 13:54:31 malak sshd[23326]: Failed password for invalid user marine from 202.105.49.16 port 45914 ssh2
Apr 26 13:54:32 malak sshd[23327]: Received disconnect from 202.105.49.16: 11: Bye Bye
Apr 26 13:54:33 malak sshd[23328]: Failed password for invalid user root from 202.105.49.16 port 49276 ssh2
Apr 26 13:54:33 malak sshd[23329]: Received disconnect from 202.105.49.16: 11: Bye Bye
Apr 26 13:54:36 malak sshd[23330]: Invalid user global from 202.105.49.16
Apr 26 13:54:36 malak sshd[23331]: input userauth request: invalid user global
Apr 26 13:54:36 malak sshd[23330]: pam unix(sshd:auth): check pass; user unknown
Apr 26 13:54:36 malak sshd[23330]: pam unix(sshd:auth): authentication failure; logname= uid=0 euid=0 tty=ssh ruser= rhost=202.105.49.16
Apr 26 13:54:36 malak sshd[23330]: pam succeed if(sshd:auth): error retrieving information about user global
Apr 26 13:54:37 malak sshd[23332]: User root from 202.105.49.16 not allowed because not listed in AllowUsers
Apr 26 13:54:37 malak sshd[23333]: input userauth request: invalid user root
Apr 26 13:54:37 malak sshd[23332]: pam unix(sshd:auth): authentication failure; logname= uid=0 euid=0 tty=ssh ruser= rhost=202.105.49.16 user=$
Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23330]: Failed password for invalid user global from 202.105.49.16 port 49425 ssh2
Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23334]: Invalid user marine from 202.105.49.16
Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23335]: input userauth request: invalid user marine
Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23331]: Received disconnect from 202.105.49.16: 11: Bye Bye
Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23334]: pam unix(sshd:auth): check pass; user unknown
Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23334]: pam unix(sshd:auth): authentication failure; logname= uid=0 euid=0 tty=ssh ruser= rhost=202.105.49.16
Apr 26 13:54:38 malak sshd[23334]: pam succeed if(sshd:auth): error retrieving information about user marine
Apr 26 13:54:39 malak sshd[23332]: Failed password for invalid user root from 202.105.49.16 port 53047 ssh2
Apr 26 13:54:39 malak sshd[23333]: Received disconnect from 202.105.49.16: 11: Bye Bye
^G Get Help
^X Exit
                                                                                                                           Cur Pos
                          WriteOut
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                                                                           Prev Page
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                          Justify
                                                   Where Is
                                                                           Next Page
                                                                                                   UnCut Text
                                                                                                                           To Spell
```

## Install denyhosts

#### Install denyhosts

- denyhosts is a Python script that analyses sshd logs to determine which IP addresses have repeated login failures.
- After (or even during) a repeated attack against an sshd server, it will add the IP address in question to the /etc/hosts.deny file, causing the system to refuse future connection requests from that IP address.
- denyhosts only modifies /etc/hosts.deny for sshd, but entries in the file can work for other services as well

Read File

Where Is

Prev Page

Next Page

Cut Text

UnCut Text

Cur Pos

To Spell

Σ

**^G** Get Help

^X Exit

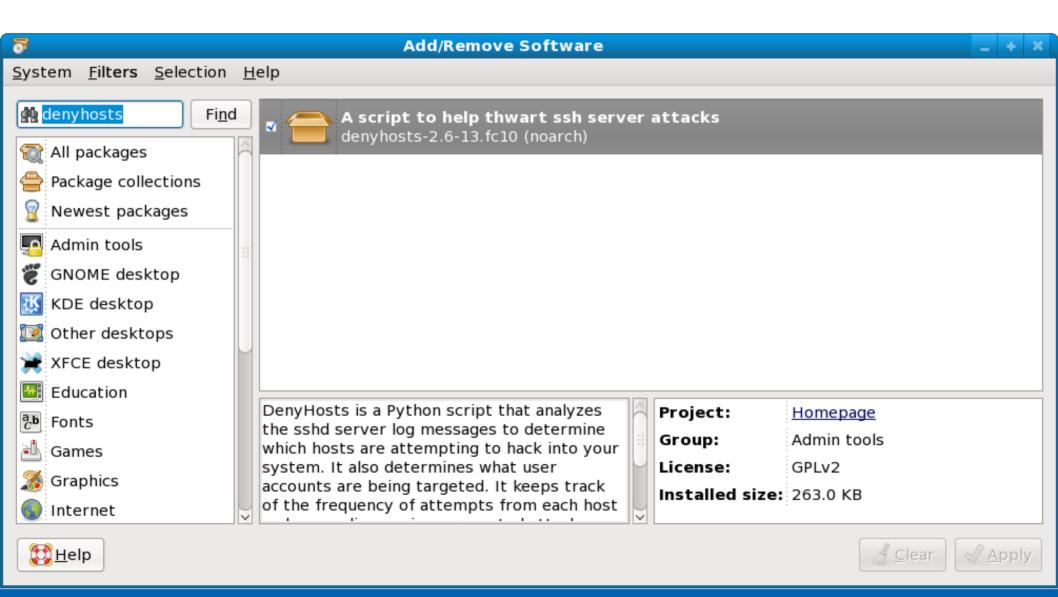
WriteOut

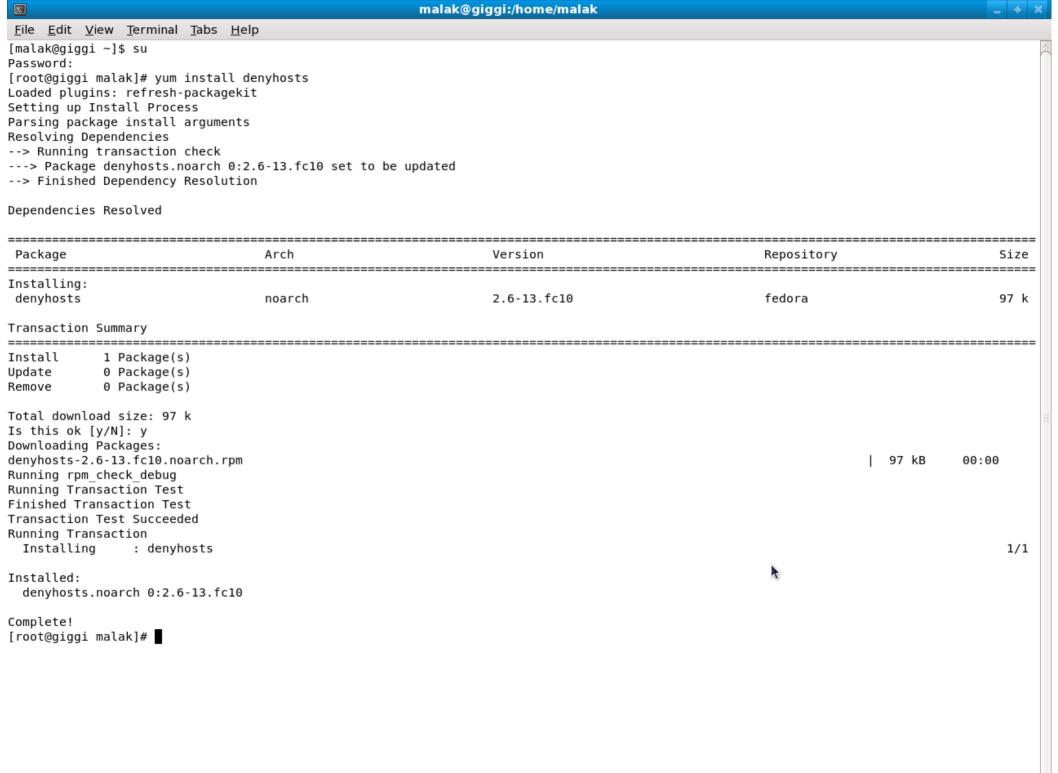
Justify

### Install denyhosts

- System | Administration | Add / Remove Software
- Enter denyhosts into the search line
- Select the software & click on "apply"
- At the command line and as root, "yum install denyhosts"

## Install denyhosts





## Other Strategies

#### Other Strategies

- Install SELinux and Operate it in enforcing mode
- Use *NoScript* -- firefox plugin which manages javascript, java, flash and other plugins
- Encrypt your filesystem (such as with *TrueCrypt*);
- Remove junk that accumulates over time (*BleachBit* has a wide variety of "cleaners" for all sorts of junk that accumulates)
- Don't automount devices (important for last strategy)
- Close root terminals when you're finished (important for last strategy)

## Protect Your Computer's Physical Integrity

## Protect Your Computer's Physical Integrity

- Whether you're a beginner or an expert, there's always someone out there who knows more than you on a given subject ... give them physical access to your computer, and they could do all sorts of harm, and/or steal personal information, and/or erase your data, and/or install malware, etc. ...
- Sounds too simple to be useful?

## They could insert one of these into your computer ...



#### Or one of these ...



Or since we're on the subject, why not a hard drive, either a portable USB unit or a traditional hard drive ...





### Protect Your Computer!

• It's pretty easy to turn off or unplug a computer and insert a LiveCD or LiveUSB key, or a USB hard drive, or, if you have time, a traditional hard drive; then it's easy to access your personal files or install malware ...

... and it's GAME OVER!

# Summary

#### Summary

- Use a router
- All users should have their own account
- Manage Passwords
- Control Access to Your Desktop
- Perform Updates Regularly
- Install Software From Repositories
- Activate Your Firewall and Tune Appropriately
- Turn Off Unneeded Services
- Limit SSH Access to only the users you allow, and exclude the root user
- Install DenyHosts
- Other Strategies
  - Install SELinux and Operate it in enforcing mode
  - Use NoScript
  - Encrypt your filesystem
  - Remove accumulated junk
  - Don't automount devices
  - Close root sessions at the command line
- -Protect your system's physical integrity

#### Please note:

- This presentation was composed on Fedora 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14 systems.
- If you really wanna know, I'm an environmental field techie who happens to like Linux.

## Thank You!

## **Questions and Comments**