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TUTORIALS

How to Configure SMTP Server on Linux

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SMTP is the protocol used for mailing. The SMTP server can be configured by installing Postfix on Linux systems. Postfix is a popular mail transfer agent that effectively manages the sending and receiving of emails on the server.

The main objective of this post is to guide you about the configuration of SMTP servers on Linux-based systems including Ubuntu 24.04.

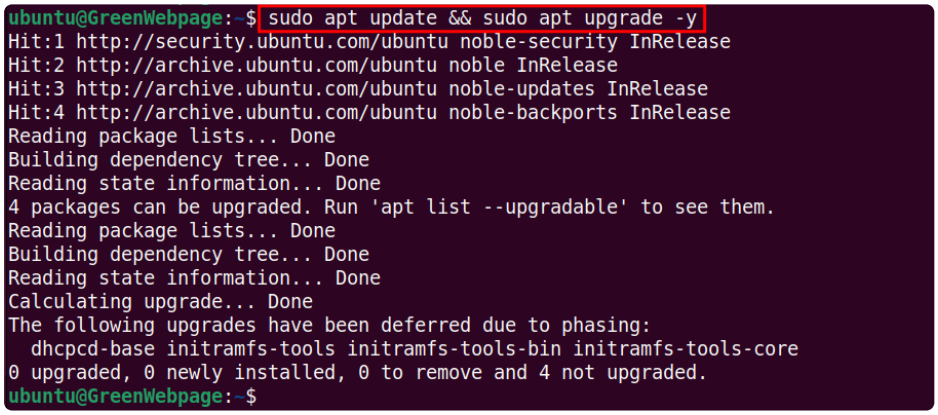
server on Linux?

For configuration of the SMTP server on your Linux-based systems, follow these instructions.

Step 1: Update Your System Packages

It is a necessary step for Linux users to make sure that all the system files are updated:

```
sudo apt update && sudo apt upgrade -y
```



If needed, the above command will install any available updates for the installed packages.

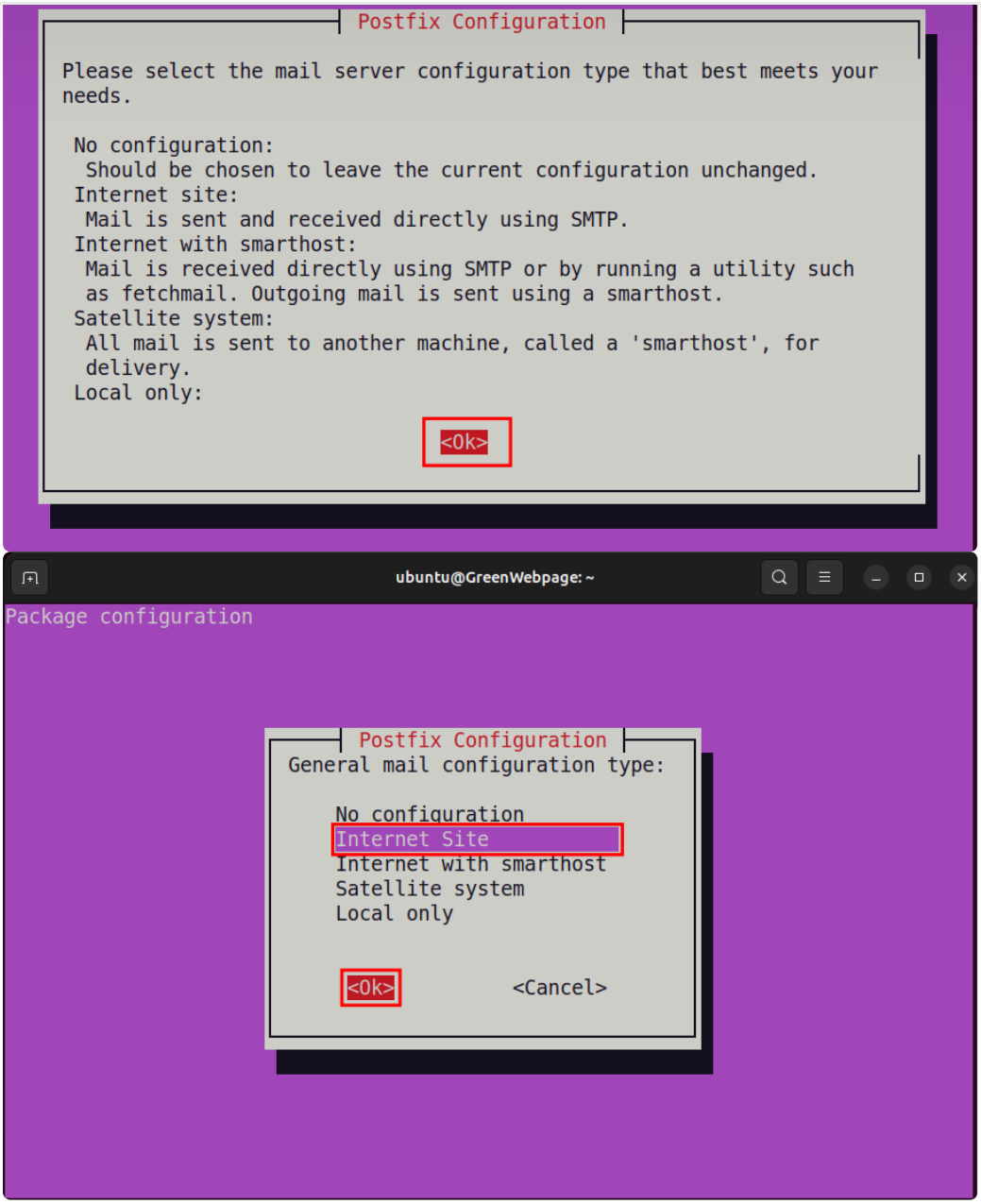
Step 2: Install Postfix

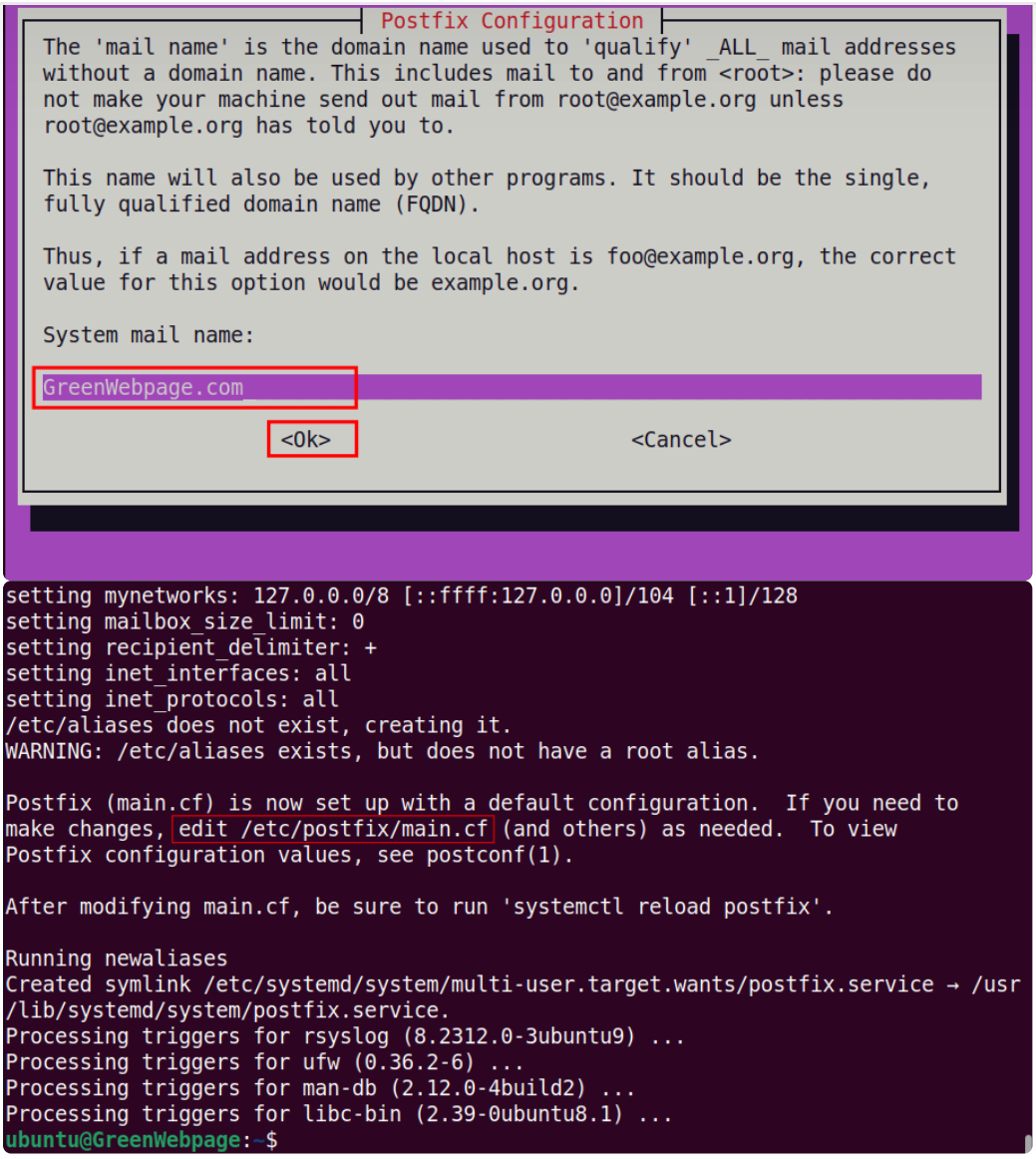
After installing the available updates, you can configure the SMTP server by setting up the Postfix on your Linux-based system:

```
sudo apt install postfix -y
```

```
Building dependency tree... Done
Reading state information... Done
The following additional packages will be installed:
  libnsl2
Suggested packages:
  mail-reader postfix-cdb postfix-doc postfix-ldap postfix-lmdb
  postfix-mta-sts-resolver postfix-mysql postfix-pcre postfix-pgsql
  postfix-sqlite procmail sasl2-bin | dovecot-common
The following NEW packages will be installed:
  libnsl2 postfix
0 upgraded, 2 newly installed, 0 to remove and 4 not upgraded.
Need to get 1,296 kB of archives.
After this operation, 4,321 kB of additional disk space will be used.
Get:1 http://archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu noble/main amd64 libnsl2 amd64 1.3.0-3build
3 [41.4 kB]
Get:2 http://archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu noble/main amd64 postfix amd64 3.8.6-1build
2 [1,254 kB]
Fetched 1,296 kB in 50s (25.7 kB/s)
Preconfiguring packages ...
Selecting previously unselected package libnsl2:amd64.
(Reading database ... 148112 files and directories currently installed.)
```

While setting up the Postfix package, you will be prompted with a few questions. Respond to them accordingly:


Postfix Configuration
Please select the mail server configuration type that best meets your needs.
No configuration:
Should be chosen to leave the current configuration unchanged.
Internet site:
Mail is sent and received directly using SMTP.
Internet with smarthost:
Mail is received directly using SMTP or by running a utility such as fetchmail. Outgoing mail is sent using a smarthost.
Satellite system:
All mail is sent to another machine, called a 'smarthost', for delivery.
Local only:
<Ok>
ubuntu@GreenWebpage: ~
Package configuration
Postfix Configuration
General mail configuration type:
No configuration
Internet Site
Internet with smarthost
Satellite system
Local only
<Ok>
<Cancel>



Installing Postfix on a Linux server is essential for setting up a reliable and secure SMTP server.

You can further edit the “/etc/postfix/main.cf” file according to your needs.

Step 3: Backup Postfix Configuration

Before making changes to the main configuration file of Postfix, it is better to create a backup of the Postfix main configuration file:

```
sudo cp /etc/postfix/main.cf /etc/postfix/main.cf.backup
```

The above command created a backup copy of the main configuration file. Now, you can safely edit the file.

Step 4: Edit the Postfix Configuration

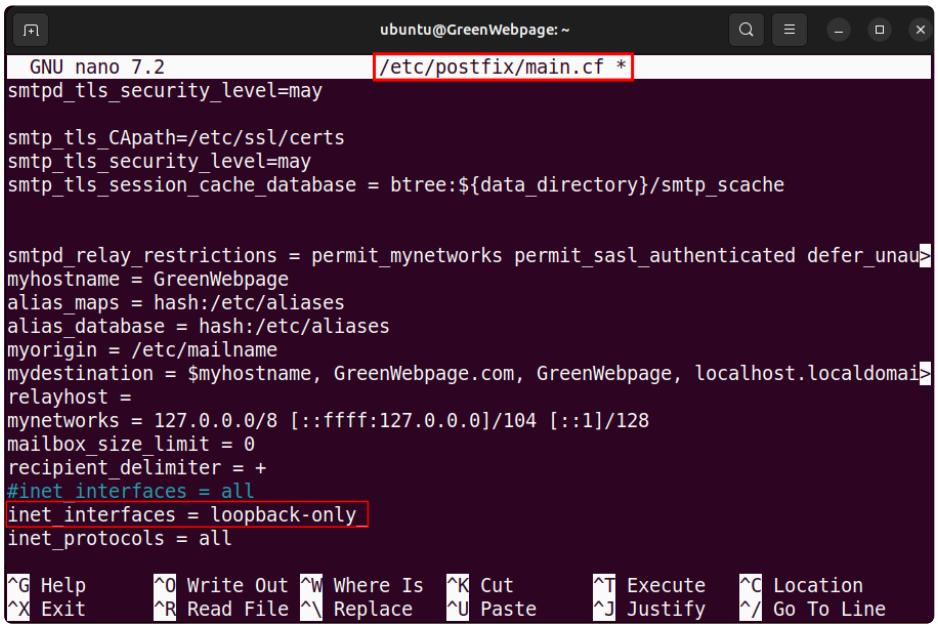
Let's make some necessary changes in the main Postfix configuration file. Run the command to open the file:

```
sudo nano /etc/postfix/main.cf
```

```
ubuntu@GreenWebpage:~$ sudo nano /etc/postfix/main.cf
ubuntu@GreenWebpage:~$
```

In the Postfix configuration file, locate the "inet_interfaces" parameter and update it with the following option:

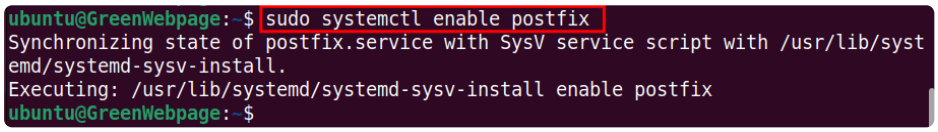
```
inet_interfaces = loopback-only
```



Step 5: Enable Postfix

Use this command to automatically start the Postfix service when the system reboots:

```
sudo systemctl enable postfix
```

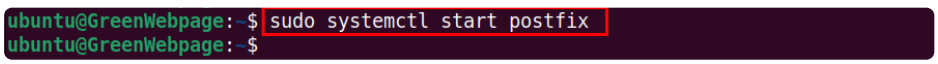


If you see the above message “enable postfix”, it means that the Postfix is now enabled on your Linux system.

Step 6: Start Postfix

Execute the provided command to start the Postfix service immediately, without rebooting the system:

```
sudo systemctl start postfix
```

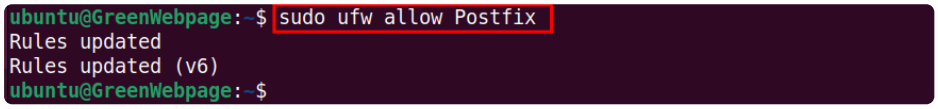


After executing this command, you don’t need to reboot your system to apply the changes to the Postfix.

Step 7: Allow Postfix Firewall

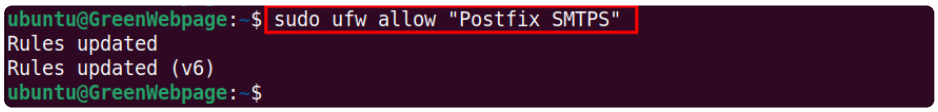
This command will allow Postfix:

```
sudo ufw allow Postfix
```



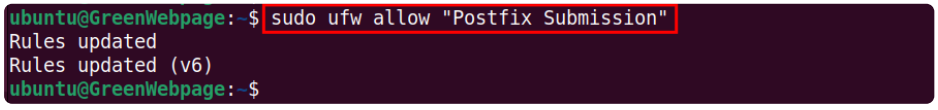
You can utilize this command to allow Postfix SMTPS on your Linux system:

```
sudo ufw allow "Postfix SMTPS"
```



Run the command to allow Postfix to accept incoming email submissions from clients:

```
sudo ufw allow "Postfix Submission"
```



Step 8: Restart Postfix

Your Linux machine now needs to restart the Postfix service for the changes to take effect:

```
sudo systemctl restart postfix.service
```



After executing the command, if you see no output on your screen, it indicates that the Postfix service has started successfully.

Step 9: Test SMTP Server on Your Linux

Let's test the Postfix SMTP server using the following commands:

```
telnet localhost 25

EHLO localhost
MAIL FROM:you@example.com
RCPT TO:recipient@example.com
DATA
Subject: Test Email

This is a Test email for Postfix.
.
QUIT
```

```
220 GreenWebpage ESMTP Postfix (Ubuntu)
EHLO localhost
250-GreenWebpage
250-PIPELINING
250-SIZE 10240000
250-VRFY
250-ETRN
250-STARTTLS
250-ENHANCEDSTATUSCODES
250-8BITMIME
250-DSN
250-SMTPUTF8
250 CHUNKING
MAIL FROM:zahidamin.a2z@gmail.com
250 2.1.0 Ok
RCPT TO:zahidamin.a2z@gmail.com
250 2.1.5 Ok
DATA
354 End data with <CR><LF>.<CR><LF>
Subject: Test Email

This is Test email for Postfix.
.
250 2.0.0 Ok: queued as B48831603BB

500 5.5.2 Error: bad syntax
QUIT
221 2.0.0 Bye
Connection closed by foreign host.
ubuntu@GreenWebpage:~$
```

When you run the above commands and observe the same output as mentioned above, it indicates that the SMTP server has been successfully configured on the Linux system.

Conclusion

SMTP server can be configured by setting up the Postfix on your Linux-based system. To install Postfix, use the command “sudo apt install postfix -y” and do some necessary edits in the “/etc/postfix/main.cf” configuration file. You can test the SMTP server by using the command “telnet localhost 25” on your Linux machine (i.e. Ubuntu 24.04).

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