

Linux Screen

Apr 2020

Overview

When using Linux via SSH, if you get disconnected then you cannot rejoin that session. So if you were doing something like downloading a large file, then you can not reconnect to see the progress (the download would have stopped anyway once you disconnected).

This guide is based around [CentOS7](#) (or RedHat).

Screen is a 'Terminal Multiplexer' which means you can start **Screen** and then open terminal windows. These windows will stay open if you disconnect and you can reconnect with them when you next join.

Check for Screen

Sounds great, do I have **Screen**?

From a terminal in Linux, enter the following:

```
screen --version
```

If you see a version number in the format **Screen version 4.01.00devel (GNU) 2-May-06**, you are good to go, check out the section Using Screen. if you see the message **screen: command not found** then you will need to install **screen**.

Installing Screen

To install screen, open a terminal window and use the following command:

```
sudo yum install screen -y
```

You will see something very similar to the following:

```
sudo yum install screen -y
Loaded plugins: fastestmirror
Determining fastest mirrors
epel/x86_64/metalink
| 8.3 kB 00:00:00
* base: centos.mirroring.pulsant.co.uk
* epel: ftp.nluug.nl
* extras: mirror.mhd.uk.as44574.net
* updates: mirror.vorboss.net
base
| 3.6 kB 00:00:00
epel
| 4.7 kB 00:00:00
extras
| 2.9 kB 00:00:00
updates
| 2.9 kB 00:00:00
(1/7): base/7/x86_64/group_gz
| 153 kB 00:00:00
(2/7): extras/7/x86_64/primary_db
| 190 kB 00:00:00
(3/7): updates/7/x86_64/primary_db
```

```
| 120 kB  00:00:00
(4/7): epel/x86_64/updateinfo
| 1.0 MB  00:00:00
(5/7): epel/x86_64/group_gz
| 95 kB  00:00:00
(6/7): base/7/x86_64/primary_db
| 6.1 MB  00:00:01
(7/7): epel/x86_64/primary_db
| 6.8 MB  00:00:02
Resolving Dependencies
--> Running transaction check
--> Package screen.x86_64 0:4.1.0-0.25.20120314git3c2946.el7 will be installed
--> Finished Dependency Resolution

Dependencies Resolved

=====
=====
Package Arch Version
Repository Size
=====
=====
Installing:
screen x86_64 4.1.0-0.25.20120314git3c2946.el7
base 552 k
Transaction Summary
=====
=====
Install 1 Package

Total download size: 552 k
Installed size: 914 k
Downloading packages:
screen-4.1.0-0.25.20120314git3c2946.el7.x86_64.rpm
| 552 kB  00:00:00
Running transaction check
Running transaction test
Transaction test succeeded
Running transaction
  Installing : screen-4.1.0-0.25.20120314git3c2946.el7.x86_64
1/1
  Verifying  : screen-4.1.0-0.25.20120314git3c2946.el7.x86_64
1/1

Installed:
screen.x86_64 0:4.1.0-0.25.20120314git3c2946.el7

Complete!
```

Using Screen

To start **screen**, simply use:

```
screen
```

You can check what screen commands are available by: Press **CTRL+a** (let go of all keys) then hit **?**

Screen key bindings, page 1 of 1.							
Command key: ^A Literal ^A: a							
break	^B b	flow	^F f	lockscreen	^X x	pow_break	B screen
^C c	width	W					
clear	C	focus	^I	log	H	pow_detach	D select

```

'      windows      ^W w
colon  :      hardcopy h      login      L      prev      ^H ^P p ^? silence
_      wrap      ^R r
copy   ^[ [      help      ?      meta      a      quit      \      split
S      writebuf  >
detach ^D d      history   { }      monitor   M      readbuf   <      suspend
^Z z   xoff      ^S s
digraph ^V      info      i      next      ^@ ^N sp n redisplay ^L l      time
^T t   xon      ^Q q
displays *      kill      K k      number     N      remove    X      title
A      dumptermcap .      lastmsg    ^M m      only      Q      removebuf =      vbell
^G
fit     F      license   ,      other     ^A      reset     Z      version
v

^]  paste .
"   windowlist -b
-   select -
0   select 0
1   select 1
2   select 2
3   select 3
4   select 4
5   select 5
6   select 6
7   select 7
8   select 8
9   select 9
I   login on
O   login off
]   paste .
|   split -v
:kB: focus prev

```

Starting a “Named Session”

You can name your screen sessions, which makes it easier to find the one you were in, you can do this using the following syntax:

```
screen -S session_name
```

For example **screen -S Orca**

You will not see a lot happen, but a new window has opened and you are in a new session.

When you start a new screen session, it creates a single window with a shell in it.

You can have multiple windows inside a Screen session.

To create a new window with shell, type **Ctrl+a** then **c**, the first available number from the range 0...9 will be assigned to it.

Below are some most common commands for managing Linux Screen Windows:

```

Ctrl+a c Create a new window (with shell)
Ctrl+a " List all window
Ctrl+a 0 Switch to window 0 (by number )
Ctrl+a A Rename the current window
Ctrl+a S Split current region horizontally into two regions
Ctrl+a | Split current region vertically into two regions
Ctrl+a tab Switch the input focus to the next region
Ctrl+a Ctrl+a Toggle between the current and previous region
Ctrl+a Q Close all regions but the current one
Ctrl+a X Close the current region

```

Detach from Linux Screen Session

You can detach from the screen session at any time by typing:

```
Ctrl+a d
```

The program running in the screen session will continue to run after you detach from the session.

Reattach to a Linux Screen

To resume your screen session use the following command: (and this is the whole point of this article :)

```
screen -r
```

In case you have multiple screen sessions running on your machine, you will need to append the screen session ID after the r switch.

To find the session ID list the current running screen sessions with:

```
screen -ls
```

Output is: (your session numbers/names will differ)

```
There are screens on:
  10835.pts-0.linuxize-desktop  (Detached)
  10366.pts-0.linuxize-desktop  (Detached)
2 Sockets in /run/screens/S-linuxize.
```

number will differ)

From:
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Last update: **2023/03/09 22:35**

