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setting timezone from terminal

there has been a few questions about this topic and i know the answer this could help others and maybe someone could help me out if what i want to do is possible

i want to change the timezone of the system clock from the terminal this can be done with

tzselect "which opens a gui in terminal" or sudo cp /usr/share/zoneinfo/Europe/London /etc/localtime "which will set to gmt"

but is there a way to set time zone with just the offset ie.-1 or +5 etc?

i need to do this as im writing an application to adjust timeoffset or report logs and the only info i have is the user ip which i can use a webapp to locate location of ip but then i need to set offset which would be easy IF i could just get offset of location but if i need to find zone and city it would be a real pain if anyone knows the answer to how to set system clock with +/-hour would be great its hard to find info with ubuntu forums being down

timezone

asked Jul 22 '13 at 20:22

 user2155009
151 ● 1 ● 2 ● 3

Please help us to pick up the accepted answer. I think @Mitch's answer is the best
askubuntu.com/a/323163/22308 – Nam G VU Oct 10 '14 at 5:27

6 Answers

To change time zone from terminal, just press `Ctrl + Alt + T` on your keyboard to open Terminal. When it opens, run the command(s) below:

```
sudo dpkg-reconfigure tzdata
```

Once open, just follow the screens to change the time zone.

answered Jul 22 '13 at 22:02

 Mitch ♦
49.1k ● 9 ● 91 ● 143

1 This is the easiest, most painless method. – Thomas W. Jul 22 '13 at 22:19

5 this wont work as i need to altr timezone from a program without user input i need a command i can feed into terminal not gui solution thanks for reply – user2155009 Jul 23 '13 at 11:45

You can also use the new `timedatectl` to set the time in 14.04.

```
sudo timedatectl set-timezone America/New_York
```

edited May 6 at 1:53

answered Sep 15 '14 at 15:43

 Collin Anderson
350 ● 2 ● 7

+1, love this tool, but no need for sudo - it works without it – Serg May 6 at 2:08

How do you install it on ubuntu? – Lex Podgorny May 25 at 4:09

You can use the GMT±x files in `/usr/share/zoneinfo/Etc`.

```
sudo ln -s /usr/share/zoneinfo/Etc/GMT$offset /etc/localtime
```

answered Jul 22 '13 at 20:43

 **minitech**
308 ● 1 ● 12

thanks allot for reply im getting an error ln: failed to create symbolic link `/etc/localtime': File exists obviously im not sure what im doing do you know of good tutorial for this or even some key words i can google thanks am i using command correctly? im using sudo ln /usr/share/zoneinfo/Etc/GMT\$+1 /etc/localtime to set clock to +1gmt – [user2155009](#) Jul 22 '13 at 21:18

6 minitech forgot the force flag I guess so -> sudo ln -sf – [Tele](#) Oct 28 '13 at 17:11

I realize this thread is a bit dated, but I was looking for a better solution because I needed to automatically set the timezone in a VM after a user downloads it from our website and deploys it. Here's what I ended up with:

```
echo "Setting TimeZone..."
export tz=`wget -q0 - http://geoip.ubuntu.com/lookup | sed -n -e 's/.*<TimeZone>\
(.*)<\Timezone>.*\1/p'` && timedatectl set-timezone $tz
export tz=`timedatectl status| grep Timezone | awk '{print $2}'`
echo "TimeZone set to $tz"
```

This will query geoip.ubuntu.com from the server once it is started on the new network (my script checks for connectivity first course) and then set the server's timezone based on the response.

The "wget -q0 -" tells wget to output only the results to stdout which is then piped to the \$tz variable.

Hope it helps someone!

answered Dec 25 '14 at 3:22

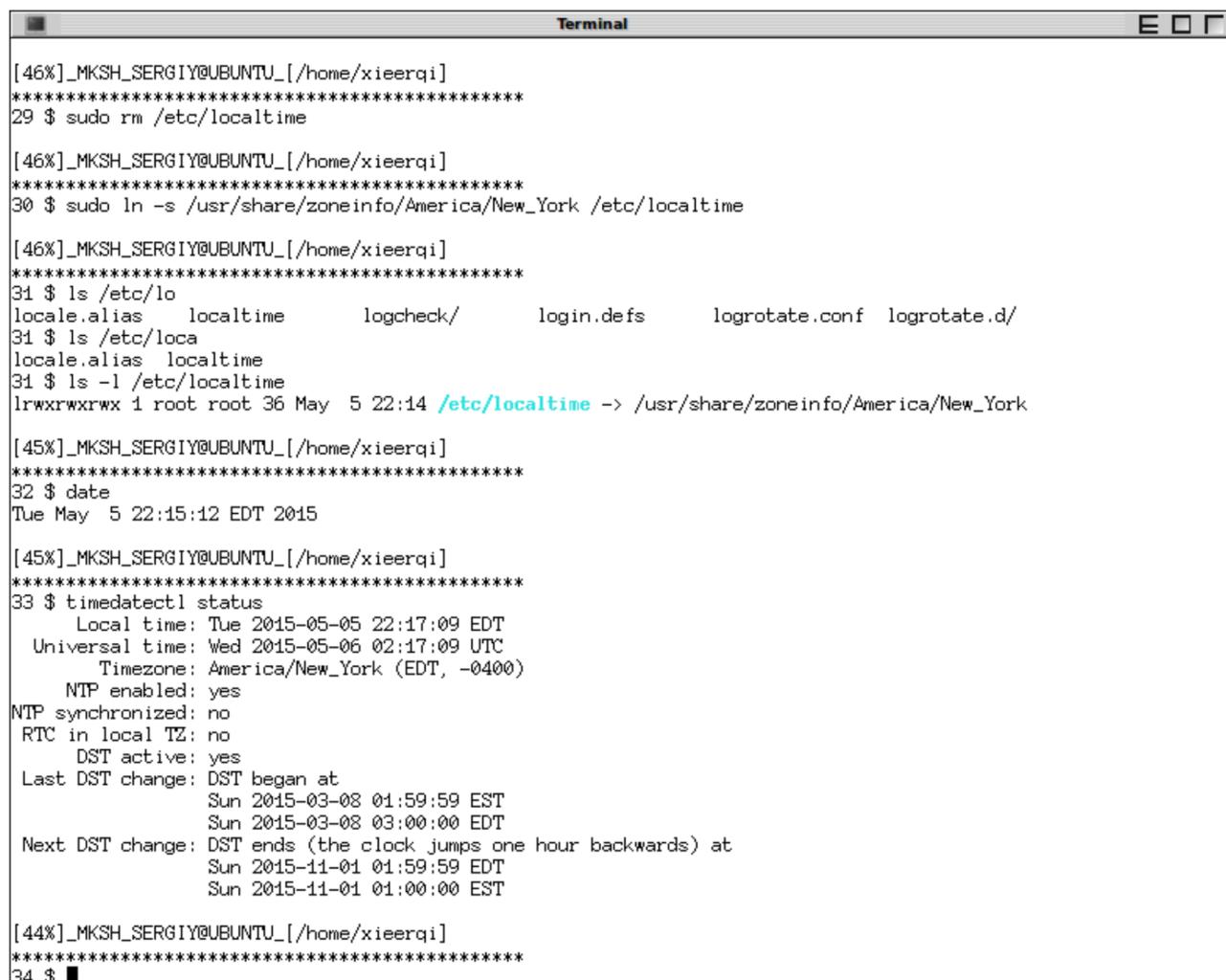
 **Clayton Dukes**
145 ● 4

TL;DR `/etc/localtime` is a symbolic link that points to a file in `/usr/share/zoneinfo/Continent/City`. By altering where it points you can alter your timezone.

In order to change timezone, remove the `/etc/localtime` and assign symbolic link to your desired city. For instance, `ls -l /etc/localtime` reports that this file points to `/usr/share/zoneinfo/America/Denver`. To change it to New York, I do

1. `sudo rm /etc/localtime`
2. `sudo ln -s /usr/share/zoneinfo/America/New_York /etc/localtime`
3. Wait a minute for my clock to get updated

The screenshot below shows the steps and confirmation from `timedatectl`



```
Terminal
[46%]_MKSH_SERGIY@UBUNTU_ [~/home/xieerqi]
*****
29 $ sudo rm /etc/localtime

[46%]_MKSH_SERGIY@UBUNTU_ [~/home/xieerqi]
*****
30 $ sudo ln -s /usr/share/zoneinfo/America/New_York /etc/localtime

[46%]_MKSH_SERGIY@UBUNTU_ [~/home/xieerqi]
*****
31 $ ls /etc/lo
locale.alias  localtime      logcheck/      login.defs     logrotate.conf logrotate.d/
31 $ ls /etc/loca
locale.alias  localtime
31 $ ls -l /etc/localtime
lrwxrwxrwx 1 root root 36 May  5 22:14 /etc/localtime -> /usr/share/zoneinfo/America/New_York

[45%]_MKSH_SERGIY@UBUNTU_ [~/home/xieerqi]
*****
32 $ date
Tue May  5 22:15:12 EDT 2015

[45%]_MKSH_SERGIY@UBUNTU_ [~/home/xieerqi]
*****
33 $ timedatectl status
   Local time: Tue 2015-05-05 22:17:09 EDT
   Universal time: Wed 2015-05-06 02:17:09 UTC
   Timezone: America/New_York (EDT, -0400)
   NTP enabled: yes
NTP synchronized: no
   RTC in local TZ: no
   DST active: yes
Last DST change: DST began at
                  Sun 2015-03-08 01:59:59 EST
                  Sun 2015-03-08 03:00:00 EDT
Next DST change: DST ends (the clock jumps one hour backwards) at
                  Sun 2015-11-01 01:59:59 EDT
                  Sun 2015-11-01 01:00:00 EST

[44%]_MKSH_SERGIY@UBUNTU_ [~/home/xieerqi]
*****
34 $
```

answered May 6 at 2:21



Serg

6,113 ● 2 ● 8 ● 28

The easy way to update the timezone is to use `sudo dpkg-reconfigure tzdata`. But this isn't so easily scripted.

If you want to set the timezone explicitly via a script (e.g. for setting up a VM), here's a recipe:

Set a variable for the timezone you want, e.g. one of

```
tz=Europe/London
tz=America/Anchorage
tz=Etc/GMT+6
```

Valid values are the directories and filenames under `/usr/share/zoneinfo`.

Then simply

```
sudo cp -vf /usr/share/zoneinfo/$tz /etc/localtime
echo $tz | sudo tee /etc/timezone
```

Note that both `/etc/localtime` and `/etc/timezone` must be consistent.

Probably now reboot to get all your services updated too (e.g. cron).

answered May 13 at 18:13



Rick-777

152 ● 6
