

Setting up VNC on Ubuntu with Resumable Sessions

Info gleaned from the following thread: <http://ubuntuforums.org/showthread.php?t=122402>

1. Enable XDMCP:

Use the System/Admin/Login Window, make go to the Remote tab and set it to “same as local” then use the Configure XDMCP button to uncheck Honour Indirect Requests,

On General Tab uncheck the Disable Multiple Logins, then do the following:

Code:

```
sudo gedit /etc/gdm/gdm.conf
```

then find this rule:

```
# The greeter for xdmcp logins, usually you want a less graphically intensive  
# greeter here so it's better to leave this with gdmlogin  
# RemoteGreeter=/usr/lib/gdm/gdmlogin
```

remove the '#' in the last line so there should be:

```
# The greeter for xdmcp logins, usually you want a less graphically intensive  
# greeter here so it's better to leave this with gdmlogin  
RemoteGreeter=/usr/lib/gdm/gdmlogin
```

Then look for the following piece of text in /etc/gdm/gdm.conf

Code:

```
[xdmcp]  
# Distributions: Ship with this off. It is never a safe thing to leave out  
on  
# the net. Setting up /etc/hosts.allow and /etc/hosts.deny to only allow  
local  
# access is another alternative but not the safest. Firewalling port 177 is  
# the safest if you wish to have xdmcp on. Read the manual for more notes  
on  
# the security of XDMCP.  
Enable=false
```

Change the Enable=false to Enable=true

You'll need to restart to make sure that this stuff takes, so a reboot when all is said and done is a good idea.

2. Install required packages (vncserver and xinetd)

Note: Before doing the next step, you need to make sure the extra repositories (e.g. universe) are enabled: http://easylinux.info/wiki/Ubuntu_da...a_repositories

Code:

```
sudo apt-get install vnc4server xinetd
```

3. Set the VNC passwd

Code:

```
sudo vncpasswd /root/.vncpasswd
```

4. Add vnc service to xinetd:

Code:

```
sudo gedit /etc/xinetd.d/Xvnc
```

Enter this into the new file:

Code:

```
service Xvnc
{
    type = UNLISTED
    disable = no
    socket_type = stream
    protocol = tcp
    wait = yes
    user = root
    server = /usr/bin/Xvnc
    server_args = -inetd :1 -query localhost -geometry 1024x768 -depth 16 -
once -fp /usr/share/X11/fonts/misc -DisconnectClients=0 -NeverShared
passwordFile=/root/.vncpasswd -extension XFIXES
    port = 5901
}
```

5. Restart xinetd (usually there is no need to reboot, but occasionally it might be required)

Code:

HTML Code:

```
sudo /etc/init.d/xinetd stop
sudo killall Xvnc
sudo /etc/init.d/xinetd start
```

6. That's it! To test that this is working first try to connect from the same machine (the machine we just set up the VNC server on):

Code:

```
vncviewer localhost:1
```

You should be prompted for the VNC password, and then see the GDM login screen where you can login and start a new X session. If that works, you can now go ahead and try to connect from remote machine using your favorite VNC client (remember to first close the local vncviewer we started above). Remember to use the VNC server machine's domain name or IP address, followed by :1 (e.g. 192.168.0.100:1). If connecting locally as shown above works, but connecting remotely fails, then this means you have a problem with a firewall which is blocking some ports. See the notes below about how to deal with that.

Note about ports: The VNC server set up as shown uses TCP port 5901. If you are using firewall software (e.g. firestarter) on that machine, you need to allow incoming connections on this port. If you are using a router which assigns your machine a private address (e.g. 192.168.0.100) which is not accessible from the internet, then you need to forward TCP port 5901 from the router to this machine.

Note about security: This setup allows any user to start an X-session remotely by logging in using his regular password (after starting the VNC connection using the VNC password), so if the user disconnects without logging out, any other user which knows the VNC password can connect afterwards and resume the same session that the first user started. So if you do not want to log out before disconnecting, it's advisable to at least lock your VNC X-session screen. Also note that while a remote user is connected thru VNC, no other connection will be accepted. An idle VNC client will be disconnected after one hour, but this can be changed by using the "-IdleTimeout" option in the server_args line in /etc/xinetd.d/Xvnc. For example, you can add "-IdleTimeout 300" to change it to 5 minutes.

NOTE: If you get the infamous grey checkerboard screen and X-cursor when you connect with the viewer, then you probably didn't perform step 1 above, Enable XDMCP, properly!

Viewing the Physical Display (:0) Remotely

Ok, to resume a session you started on your physical display (display :0) all you really need is to turn on Ubuntu's remote desktop feature using the Remote Desktop Preferences dialog box accessible from System->Preferences->Remote Desktop menu item. Just check the first two options there (allow other users to view your desktop and allow other users to control your desktop) and set the password in the bottom of the dialog box (check the Require password option), and you're done !

The above uses the built in VNC capability that Ubuntu comes installed with, but the drawback is that it's a little slow, and you need to enable it for each user which wants to allow his desktop to be view or controlled remotely. Also this doesn't allow remote VNC clients to log in to GDM, only to view a GDM session that was started by someone actually using the physical display. So if currently no one is logged in, a remote user cannot connect to display :0 and start a new session.

But don't worry - there is a better way which allows you to view the physical display remotely and also log-in to a new session from GDM (using a remote VNC client) ! And it works faster (as fast as the regular VNC server), and works for all users. Here's how to do that :

1. Install x11vnc package

Code:

```
sudo apt-get install x11vnc
```

2. Add x11vnc service to xinetd:

Code:

```
sudo gedit /etc/xinetd.d/x11vnc
```

Enter this into the new file:

Code:

```
service x11vnc
{
    port                = 5900
    type                = UNLISTED
    socket_type         = stream
    protocol            = tcp
    wait                = no
    user                = root
    server              = /usr/bin/x11vnc
    server_args         = -inetd -o /var/log/x11vnc.log -display :0
    -auth /var/lib/gdm/:0.Xauth -many -bg -rfbauth /root/.vncpasswd
    disable             = no
}
```

3. Restart xinetd (usually there is no need to reboot, but occasionally it might be required)

Code:

```
sudo /etc/init.d/xinetd stop
sudo killall Xvnc
sudo killall x11vnc
sudo /etc/init.d/xinetd start
```

4. From a remote machine use your VNC client to connect to display :0

Code:

```
vncviewer vnchost:0
```

Note that after logging from GDM and also after logging out from the X-session back and going back to GDM, the VNC client gets disconnected for some reason. So you just need to re-connect and you will get back into the session you logged into. When logging out, the disconnect happens when gnome asks you to confirm your intention to log out, so it's best to turn off the log-out confirmation dialog box by going to System->Preferences->Sessions and un-checking the "ask on logout" option.