



Nessus Command Line Reference Guide

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Welcome to the Tenable Nessus and Tenable Nessus Agent Command Line Reference Guide

This document describes command line interface commands for Tenable Nessus and Tenable Nessus Agent.

Prerequisites, deployment options, and a walk-through of an installation are described in this document. A basic understanding of Unix and vulnerability scanning is assumed.



Nessus Manager, Professional, and Expert

As a user with administrator privileges, you can do certain actions in Tenable Nessus Manager, Tenable Nessus Professional, and Nessus Expert via the command line. You can manage user accounts, modify advanced settings, manage digital certificates, report bugs, update software and plugins, and view license information.

This command is called **nessuscli** and is available on all supported Tenable Nessus versions.

Note that the majority of the examples show usage for Nessus Manager and Nessus Professional. The examples for Nessus Agents are specified in the [Nessus Agents](#) section.

Nessus Command Line Tool

The following table provides instructions for running the Nessus command line tool **nessuscli** on all supported platforms. The basic usage for all operating systems are listed below:

Operating System	Command
Linux	# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli <cmd> <arg1> <arg2>
FreeBSD	# /usr/local/nessus/sbin/nessuscli <cmd> <arg1> <arg2>
macOS	# /Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli <cmd> <arg1> <arg2>
Windows	C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe <cmd> <arg1> <arg2>

Note: If you installed Tenable Nessus in a different location, update your path accordingly.

Command syntax

- **# nessuscli** – This documentation sometimes uses the shorthand **# nessuscli** (instead of the full path to the **nessuscli** tool for the operating system) to represent general usage across different operating systems. However, for your commands to work, you must include the full path for your operating system, as shown above.



For each command, the documentation contains a quick reference section with the full command for each operating system. You can copy and paste these commands directly into the command line terminal.

- **<cmd>** – The command. Do not include the brackets (<>).
- **<arg 1> <arg 2>** – The arguments for the command, if applicable. Do not include the brackets (<>).



Help Commands

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

You can get help to see available commands on the `nessuscli` tool, as well as get help for a specific command.

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To get help for the `nessuscli` tool, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli help
```

The help output may vary, depending on your Nessus license.

The following is example output for Tenable Nessus Manager help:

```
Usage: nessuscli command [options]
Usage: nessuscli command help

Bug Reporting Commands:
- bug-report-generator
- bug-report-generator --quiet [--full] [--scrub]

User Commands:
- rmuser [username]
- chpasswd [username]
- adduser [username]
- lsuser

Manager Commands:
- manager download-core
- manager generate-plugins

Fetch Commands:
- fetch --register <serial>
```



- fetch --register-offline [<file.rc>]
- fetch --check
- fetch --code-in-use
- fetch --challenge
- fetch --security-center

Fix Commands:

- fix [--secure] --list
- fix [--secure] --set <name=value>
- fix [--secure] --get <name>
- fix [--secure] --delete <name>
- fix --list-interfaces
- fix --reset

Certificate Commands:

- mkcert-client
- mkcert [-q]

Software Update Commands:

- update
- update --all
- update --plugins-only
- update <plugin archive>

Help for a specific command

To get help for the usage of a specific command, use the following command :

```
# nessuscli <cmd> help
```

For example, to get help for the usage of the `bug-report-generator` command, type:

```
# nessuscli bug-report-generator help
```

```
Usage: nessuscli bug-report-generator
```

```
Usage: nessuscli bug-report-generator --quiet [--full] [--scrub]
```

Generate an archive of system diagnostics.

Running without arguments will prompt for values.



```
--quiet: run the bug report generator without prompting user for feedback  
--scrub: when in quiet mode, bug report generator will sanitize the last two octets of  
the IPv4 address  
--full: when in quiet mode, bug report generator will collect extra data
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli help
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli help
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe help
```



Fix Commands

You can use the `nessuscli fix` command to change Nessus settings from the command line. This includes managing advanced settings, resetting registration information, and listing network interfaces on the system.

For more information, see the following:

[Reset Registration and Erase Settings](#)

[Perform a Full Reset](#)

[View the Current Network Interfaces](#)

[Manage Advanced Settings](#)

[Configure Proxy Settings](#)

[Fix Agent Settings](#)



Reset Registration and Erase Settings

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

You can reset registration information for Tenable Nessus, which erases all settings and unregisters Tenable Nessus.

Note: Performing `nessuscli fix --reset` does not reset the managed function.

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

Before you begin:

Stop the `nessusd` service, as described in [Start or Stop Nessus](#) in the *Tenable Nessus User Guide*.

For example (Linux):

```
# /sbin/service nessusd stop
```

To reset registration information:

Type the following command:

```
# nessuscli fix --reset
```

You are prompted to confirm the action.

To confirm, enter `y`, as shown in the following example output:

```
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --reset
Resetting Nessus configuration will permanently erase all your settings and cause
Nessus to become unregistered.
Do you want to proceed? (y/n) [n]: y
Successfully reset Nessus configuration.
```



Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --reset
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fix --reset
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe fix --reset
```



Perform a Full Reset

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

Performing a full reset deletes all scans, scan data, policies, users and user settings, preferences and settings, registration information, and the master password.

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

Before you begin:

Stop the `nessusd` service, as described in [Start or Stop Nessus](#) in the *Tenable Nessus User Guide*.

For example (Linux):

```
# /sbin/service nessusd stop
```

Full Reset

Caution: This action cannot be undone. Contact Tenable Support before performing a full reset to ensure your situation warrants a full reset.

Type the following command:

```
# nessuscli fix --reset-all
```

You are prompted to confirm the action.

To confirm, read the warning message, then enter **y**, as shown in the following example output:

```
# /sbin/service nessusd stop
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --reset-all
WARNING: This option will reset Nessus to a fresh state, permanently erasing the
following:
* All scans, scan data, and policies
* All users and any user settings
```



```
* All preferences and settings
* Registration information (Nessus will become unregistered)
* Master password for this Nessus installation, if there is one
Are you sure you want to proceed? (y/n) [n]: y
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --reset-all
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fix --reset-all
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe fix --reset-all
```



View the Current Network Interfaces

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To view current IPv4 and IPv6 interfaces, use the following command:

```
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --list-interfaces
```

The following is example output:

```
Adapter# 0
  Name..... lo
  Real name ..... lo
  IP address ..... 127.0.0.1
  Network ..... 127.0.0.0
  Netmask ..... 255.0.0.0
Adapter# 1
  Name..... eth1
  Real name ..... eth1
  IP address ..... 192.0.2.243
  Network ..... 192.0.2.0
  Netmask ..... 255.255.252.0
Adapter# 0
  Name..... lo
  Real name ..... lo
  IPv6 address ... ::1
  IPv6 network ... ::1
  IPv6 netmask ... ffff:ffff:ffff:ffff:ffff:ffff:ffff:ffff
Adapter# 1
  Name..... eth1
  Real name ..... eth1
  IPv6 address ... fe80::250:56ff:fe10:76d
  IPv6 network ... fe80::
  IPv6 netmask ... ffff:ffff:ffff:ffff::
```



Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --list-interfaces
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fix --list-interfaces
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe fix --list-interfaces
```




Manage Advanced Settings

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

The `nessuscli fix` command has a series of options to manage the advanced settings on your Nessus scanner.

For information on what advanced settings are configurable in your version of Nessus, see [Advanced Settings](#) in the *Nessus User Guide*.

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To view all advanced settings:

To view all advanced settings, including those you have not set, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli fix --show
```

If you have not set an advanced setting, the default value is listed in the output.

To view a list of currently set advanced settings:

To list all advanced settings that you have set, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli fix --list
```

The following is example output:

```
# nessuscli fix --list
qdb_mem_usage: low
report_crashes: yes
stop_scan_on_disconnect: no
reduce_connections_on_congestion: no
global.max_web_users: 1024
global.max_scans: 0
nasl_log_type: normal
```



```
nasl_no_signature_check: no
disable_xmlrpc: no
disable_ntp: yes
ssl_cipher_list: strong
xmlrpc_idle_session_timeout: 30
xmlrpc_listen_port: 8834
listen_port: 1241
listen_address: 0.0.0.0
slice_network_addresses: no
silent_dependencies: yes
auto_enable_dependencies: yes
safe_checks: yes
plugins_timeout: 320
non_simult_ports: 139, 445, 3389
checks_read_timeout: 5
allow_post_scan_editing: yes
optimize_test: yes
port_range: default
cgi_path: /cgi-bin:/scripts
rules: /Library/Nessus/run/etc/nessus/nessusd.rules
dumpfile: /Library/Nessus/run/var/nessus/logs/nessusd.dump
log_whole_attack: no
www_logfile: /Library/Nessus/run/var/nessus/logs/www_server.log
logfile: /Library/Nessus/run/var/nessus/logs/nessusd.messages
throttle_scan: yes
max_checks: 5
global.max_hosts: 2180
max_hosts: 100
auto_update_delay: 24
auto_update: yes
```

To see the current value for an advanced setting:

```
# nessuscli fix --get <setting>
```

For example:

```
# nessuscli fix --get max_hosts
The current value for 'max_hosts' is '100'.
```



To set a specific value for an advanced setting:

```
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --set <setting>=<value>
```

Example:

```
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --set max_hosts=200  
Successfully set 'max_hosts' to '200'.
```

To delete your value from an advanced setting:

```
# nessuscli fix --delete <setting>
```

Example:

```
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --delete max_hosts  
Successfully deleted 'max_hosts'.
```

Secure Settings

You can use the `--secure` flag to manage encrypted advanced settings, which contain information about registration. Tenable does not recommend changing undocumented `--secure` settings as it may result in an unsupported configuration.

For the following commands, you can use the `--secure` flag:

```
# nessuscli fix --secure --list  
# nessuscli fix --secure --fix --set <setting name=value>  
# nessuscli fix --secure --get <setting>  
# nessuscli fix --secure --delete <setting>
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

```
nessuscli fix --show
```



Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --show
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fix --show
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe fix --show
```

nessuscli fix --list

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --list
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fix --list
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe fix --list
```

nessuscli fix --get <setting>

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --get <setting>
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fix --get <setting>
```



Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe fix --get <setting>
```

nessuscli fix --set <setting>=<value>

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --set <setting>=<value>
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fix --set <setting>=<value>
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe --set <setting>=<value>
```

nessuscli fix --delete <setting>

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --delete <setting>
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fix --delete <setting>
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe fix --delete <setting>
```



Configure Proxy Settings

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

You can use the `nessuscli fix` command to use a proxy for plugin updates, as many companies maintain a proxy for security and logging.

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To set the proxy settings, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli fix --secure --set <setting>=<value>
```

Replace the setting and value with any of the following:

Do not include the brackets (< >).

- `proxy=<IP address or hostname>`
- `proxy_port=<port>`
- `proxy_username=<user>`
- `proxy_password=<password>`

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fix --set <setting>=<value>
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fix --set <setting>=<value>
```



Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe --set <setting>=<value>
```



Fix Agent Settings

The following settings describe `nessuscli fix` commands that relate to Tenable Nessus Agent.

Command	Description
<pre># nessuscli fix --set update_host- name="<value>"</pre>	<p>Updates agent hostnames automatically in Tenable Vulnerability Management or Tenable Nessus Manager 7.1.1 or later. The <code>update_hostname</code> parameter can be set to <code>yes</code> or <code>no</code>. By default, this preference is disabled.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px;"><p>Note: Restart the agent service for the change to take effect in Tenable Nessus Manager.</p></div>
<pre># nessuscli fix --set track_unique_agent- s="<value>"</pre>	<p>Tracks unique agent assets by MAC address to prevent duplicates and outdated agents from appearing in Nessus Manager if a system is reinstalled.</p> <p>The <code>track_unique_agent</code> parameter is available in Nessus 7.1.1 and can be set to <code>yes</code> or <code>no</code>. By default, this preference is enabled.</p>
<pre># nessuscli fix --set max_retries="<value>"</pre>	<p>Sets the maximum number of times an agent should retry in the event of a failure when executing the <code>agent link</code>, <code>agent status</code>, and <code>agent unlink</code> commands.</p>
<pre>nessuscli fix -- secure --list</pre>	<p>Displays a list of agent settings and their values.</p>



Certificate Commands

The `nessuscli mkcert` commands offer the ability to create Nessus-supported self-signed digital certificates from the command line.

For more information, see the following:

[Create a Nessus Server Digital Certificate](#)

[Create a Nessus Client-Side Digital Certificate](#)



Create a Nessus Server Digital Certificate

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

You can create a Nessus-supported self-signed server certificate from the command line.

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To create a Nessus server digital certificate, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli mkcert
```

Read and follow the prompts. Prompt default responses are in brackets. The following is example output:

```
-----  
Creation of the Nessus SSL Certificate  
-----
```

```
This script will now ask you for information to create the SSL certificate  
for Nessus. Note that this information will *NOT* be sent to anybody  
(everything stays local), but anyone with the ability to connect to  
your Nessus daemon will be able to retrieve this information.
```

```
CA certificate life time in days [1460]: 1460  
Server certificate life time in days [365]: 365  
Your two letter country code [US]: US  
Your state or province name [NY]: MD  
Your city [New York]: Columbia  
Your organization [Nessus Users United]: Tenable Network Security  
This host name [localhost]: nessus-server
```

```
--- Confirmation ---
```

```
CA certificate life time in days: 1460  
Server certificate life time in days: 365  
Country: US
```



```
State or province: MD
City: Columbia
Organization: Tenable Network Security
This host name: nessus-server
Is this ok? (y/n) [n]: y

Congratulations. Your server certificate was properly created.

The following files were created :
Certification authority :
Certificate = /opt/nessus/com/nessus/CA/cacert.pem
Private key = /opt/nessus/var/nessus/CA/cakey.pem
Nessus Server :
Certificate = /opt/nessus/com/nessus/CA/servercert.pem
Private key = /opt/nessus/var/nessus/CA/serverkey.pem
```

For more details on configuring Nessus with custom SSL certificates, see the [Nessus User Guide](#).

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli mkcert
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli mkcert
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe mkcert
```



Create a Nessus Client-Side Digital Certificate

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

You can create a Nessus client-side digital certificate from the command line.

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

Note: If the user already has credentials, such as a password, this script will overwrite any previous credentials. Also, updating the password of the account will remove the client certificate for authentication.

To create a Nessus client digital certificate, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli mkcert-client
```

Read and follow the prompts. Prompt default responses are in brackets. The following is example output:

```
-----  
Creation of the Nessus SSL Client Certificates  
-----  
  
This script will now ask you for information to create SSL client certificates.  
  
Nessus username for user: admin  
admin already exists. Do you want to overwrite their credentials? (y/n) [n]: y  
Client certificate life time in days [365]:  
Two letter country code [US]: US  
State or province name [NY]: MD  
City [New York]: Columbia  
Organization [Nessus Users United]: Tenable Network Security  
Organizational unit [nessus-users]: nessus-admins  
Email [none@none.com]: nessus-admin@example.org  
  
--- Confirmation ---  
Username: admin
```



```
Client certificate life time in days: 365
Country: US
State or province: MD
City: Columbia
Organization: Tenable Network Security
Organizational unit: nessus-admins
Email: nessus-admin@example.org
Is this ok? (y/n) [n]: y

Congratulations. Your client certificate was properly created.

The following files were created :
Nessus Client :
Certificate = /Library/Nessus/run/var/nessus/tmp/cert_admin.pem
Private key = /Library/Nessus/run/var/nessus/tmp/key_admin.pem

The certificate was successfully set for admin.

Create another cert? (y/n) [y]: n
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli mkcert-client
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli mkcert-client
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe mkcert-client
```



User Management Commands

You can manage Nessus users from the command line.

For more information, see the following:

[List Users](#)

[Change a User's Password](#)

[Add a User](#)

[Remove a User](#)



List Users

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To list Nessus users, run the following command:

```
# nessuscli lsuser
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli lsuser
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli lsuser
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe lsuser
```



Change a User's Password

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To change a Nessus user's password, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli chpasswd <username>
```

Where *<username>* is the username for which you want to change the password. Do not include the brackets (< >).

Follow and respond to the prompts. In the **Login to change** field, enter the username, and then enter the new password when prompted. The password does not appear on the screen as you type.

The following is example output for Linux:

```
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli chpasswd auditor
Login to change: auditor
New password:
New password (again):
Password changed for auditor
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli chpasswd <username>
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli chpasswd <username>
```




Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe chpasswd <username>
```



Add a User

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To add a new Nessus user, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli adduser
```

When you add a user, you will be prompted for the username, password, administrative rights, and rules. Nessus rules limit a user's scanning range.

When running `nessuscli adduser` on Nessus Professional, you will be prompted for the user to have Administrator privileges. On Nessus Manager, you will be prompted for the user to have System Administrator privileges. If you wish to set another user type in Tenable Nessus Manager, you must use the user interface instead.

Note: You cannot have multiple user accounts in Tenable Nessus Professional.

Follow the prompts. The following is example output for Linux:

```
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli adduser
Login: nessususer
Login password:
Login password (again):
Do you want this user to be a Nessus 'system administrator' user (can upload plugins,
etc.)? (y/n) [n]: y
```

When you are adding a new user, Nessus will prompt you for User Rules. Nessus has a rules system that allows you to restrict the hosts and ports that can be scanned as well as the plugins that can be used in scans. Administrators can set the rules on a per-user basis.

After you set the username, password, and administrator privileges, you will be prompted for setting any Nessus rules:



User rules

nessusd has a rules system which allows you to restrict the hosts that nessususer has the right to test. For instance, you may want him to be able to scan his own host only.

Please see the [Nessus Command Line Reference](#) for the rules syntax

Enter the rules for this user, and enter a BLANK LINE once you are done : (the user can have an empty rules set)

```
Login      : nessususer
Password   : *****
This user will have 'system administrator' privileges within the Nessus server
Is that ok? (y/n) [n]: y
User added
```

To set the default, use the word `default`.

To accept to test anything by default:

```
default accept
```

Note: A blank rule set also allows the user to test anything.

For more information on rule syntax, see [Network and Port Rules](#) and [Plugin Rules](#).

After you put in the desired rules, you will be prompted to confirm your new user setup:

```
Login      : nessususer
Password   : *****
This user will have 'system administrator' privileges within the Nessus server
Is that ok? (y/n) [n]: y
User added
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:



```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli adduser
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli adduser
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe adduser
```



Remove a User

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To remove a Nessus user, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli rmuser
```

Follow the prompts. The following is example output:

```
Login to remove: auditor
User removed
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli rmuser
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli adduser
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe adduser
```



Update Commands

The `nessuscli` commands offer the ability to update Nessus and Nessus plugins. By default, update settings are determined by the software update options selected through the Nessus user interface.

For more information, see the following:

[Update Tenable Nessus](#)

[Force the Plugin and Core Components Update](#)

[Update the Plugins Only](#)

[Update a Specific Plugin Archive](#)

[Network and Port Rules](#)

[Plugin Rules](#)



Update Tenable Nessus

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To run update according to the setting in the Tenable Nessus user interface, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli update
```

In the following example, the update options are configured to update both the Tenable Nessus software and the plugins:

```
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli update

----- Fetching the newest updates from nessus.org -----

Nessus Plugins: Complete

Nessus Core Components: Complete

* Nessus Plugins are now up-to-date and the changes will be automatically processed by Nessus.
* Nessus Core Components are now up-to-date and the changes will be automatically processed by Nessus.
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli update
```



macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli update
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe update
```




Force the Plugin and Core Components Update

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

If you want to update all Tenable Nessus core components, you can override your update settings by using `nessuscli update` with the `--all` option.

```
# nessuscli update --all
```

The following is example output for Linux:

```
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli update --all

----- Fetching the newest updates from nessus.org -----

Nessus Plugins: Complete

Nessus Core Components: Complete

* Nessus Plugins are now up-to-date and the changes will be automatically processed by Nessus.
* Nessus Core Components are now up-to-date and the changes will be automatically processed by Nessus.
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli update --all
```

macOS:



```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli update --all
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe update --all
```



Update the Plugins Only

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

If you want to update plugins, you can override your update settings by using `nessuscli update` with the `--plugins-only` option:

```
# nessuscli update --plugins-only
```

The following is example output for Linux:

```
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli update --plugins-only

----- Fetching the newest updates from nessus.org -----

Nessus Plugins: Complete

* Nessus Plugins are now up-to-date and the changes will be automatically processed by
Nessus.
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli update --plugins-only
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli update --plugins-only
```



Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe update --plugins-only
```



Update a Specific Plugin Archive

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

If you want to supply a plugin archive (e.g., for offline updates or supplying custom plugins), add the file name after the update command:

```
# nessuscli update examplefilename.tar.gz  
  
* Update successful. The changes will be automatically processed by Nessus.
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli update examplefilename.tar.gz
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli update examplefilename.tar.gz
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe update examplefilename.tar.gz
```



Network and Port Rules

Use the following syntax to configure Nessus network scanning rules:

```
accept|reject address/netmask:ports
```

The address/netmask is in CIDR notation.

For example, based on the following rule, you cannot scan any IP address in the /24 (standard class C) network:

```
reject 10.42.123.0/24
```

Similarly, based on the following rule, you can scan any IP address in the /8 (standard class A) network:

```
accept 10.1.1.0/8
```

Also, you can define ports or a port range to be allowed or denied certain ports. For example, to forbid connecting to port 80 for 10.0.0.1, enter the following rule:

```
reject 10.0.0.1:80
```

Similarly to allow connecting to ports 8000 - 10000 for any host in the 192.168.0.0/24 subnet, enter the following rule:

```
accept 192.168.0.0/24:8000-10000
```



Plugin Rules

In addition to setting network scanning limitations, you can also allow or deny the use of certain plugin IDs.

To deny a plugin from being run, use the following syntax:

```
plugin-reject 10335
```

To allow a plugin to run, use the following syntax:

```
plugin-accept 10000-40000
```



Fetch Commands

You can use fetch commands to manage Nessus registration from the command line.

For online registration the commands include registering the scanner, confirming that Nessus has a valid registration code, and registering with Tenable Security Center. For offline registration, the commands include registering the scanner and providing the challenge code. The `nessuscli` commands can also check that Nessus is properly configured with a valid registration code and can display the current activation code in use.

For more information, see the following:

[Register a Scanner Online](#)

[Register a Scanner with Tenable Security Center](#)

[Register a Scanner Offline](#)

[Confirm Nessus Registration Codes](#)



Register a Scanner Online

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To register a Nessus scanner online, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli fetch --register <Activation Code>
```

You must use a unique activation code. If the registration code is already in use, the following is displayed:

```
Nessus Plugins Error: The provided Activation Code (XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-XXXX) has already been used
```

Register without downloading plugin or core updates

To register Tenable Nessus online but not perform any updates, use the following command:

```
nessuscli fetch --register-only <Activation Code>
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fetch --register
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fetch --register
```



Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe fetch --register
```



Register a Scanner with Tenable Security Center

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To register a Nessus scanner with Tenable Security Center, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli fetch --security-center
```

Caution: *Do not use this command if you do not want to switch your Nessus instance to Tenable.sc. This command irreversibly changes the Nessus scanner or Manager to a Tenable.sc-managed scanner, resulting in a number of user interface changes (for example, the site logo will change, and you'll no longer have access to the **Sensors** page).*

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fetch --security-center
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fetch --security-center
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe fetch --security-center
```



Register a Scanner Offline

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

You can register Tenable Nessus offline using the command line interface.

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To register Tenable Nessus offline, first obtain the challenge code for Tenable Nessus using the following command:

```
# nessuscli fetch --challenge
```

The following is example output in Linux:

```
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fetch --challenge
Challenge code: aaaaaa11b2222cc33d44e5f6666a777b8cc99999
You can copy the challenge code above and paste it alongside your
Activation Code at:
https://plugins.nessus.org/v2/offline.php
```

Once you have obtained your challenge code, go to the [offline activation website](#) to enter your activation code and the challenge code:

Tenable Network Security

plugins.nessus.org/v2/offline.php

Reader

tenable®
network security

Products Try Buy Partners Support Company

Type 'nessuscli fetch --challenge' on your nessusd server and type in the result :

Enter your activation code :

Submit

Once registered, you will receive the URL to copy and paste the license into your browser, and download the plugins and a link to download the `nessus.license` file. You can also scroll to the bottom of the screen to download the license instead of cutting and pasting it.

Tenable Network Security

plugins.nessus.org/v2/offline.php

tenable network security

Products Try Buy Partners Support Company

Thank you. You can now obtain the newest Nessus plugins at :
<http://plugins.nessus.org/v2/nessus.php?f=all-2.0.tar.gz&u=97d0e48e33ee5822f650f6d25fdb219&p=6a608028b:>

You can copy the following license and paste it into the Nessus console to proceed:

```
-----BEGIN TENABLE LICENSE-----
YStHdXYwVTJIemxpVlNKb
...
wifQ==
-----END TENABLE LICENSE-----
```

After you register your scanner as an offline scanner, register a Nessus scanner offline using the following command:



```
# nessuscli fetch --register-offline <license.file>
```

The following is example output in Linux:

```
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fetch --register-offline nessus.license  
Nessus has been registered properly - thank you.
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fetch --register-offline <license.file>
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fetch --register-offline <license.file>
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli fetch --register-offline <license.file>
```



Confirm Nessus Registration Codes

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To confirm that the Nessus scanner is registered properly, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli fetch --check
```

To display that the Nessus scanner activation code, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli fetch --code-in-use
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

nessuscli fetch --check

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fetch --check
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fetch --check
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe fetch --check
```

nessuscli fetch --code-in-use



Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli fetch --code-in-use
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli fetch --code-in-use
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe fetch --code-in-use
```



Bug Reporting Commands

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

You can create a bug report that can be sent to Tenable to help diagnose issues.

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To create the bug report archive, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli bug-report-generator
```

By default, the script runs in interactive mode.

The following is example output in Linux:

```
# /opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli bug-report-generator
This script will gather some information about your local system in order to help us
diagnose the problems you are encountering.

This program does not send any data over the network, but simply creates an archive
which contains useful information for the Nessus team to diagnose any problem you may
be encountering.

This script can run in two modes:

If you run in "full" mode, this script will gather information you may deem
to be sensitive (such as IP addresses, the list of running processes and your
system log files). This information allows Tenable to better qualify your problem

If you do not run in "full" mode, this script will gather less information
Note that even in normal mode, depending on how you perform scanning some "sensitive"
information may be contained in the resulting archive. Feel free to inspect it before
sending it to Tenable.

Run in "full" mode? (y/n) [n]: n
```



Would you like to scrub the first two digits of any IPv4 address seen in the log files?
This may take several minutes.

Sanitize IPv4 subnets? (y/n) [n]: y

Bug report file name? [/opt/nessus/var/nessus/logs/nessus-bug-report-archive.tar.gz]:
~/nessus-bug-report-archive.tar.gz

```
-> Copying /etc/redhat-release...
-> Copying /etc/SuSE-release...
-> Copying /etc/debian_version...
-> Running uname -a...
-> Running /opt/nessus/sbin/nessusd -d...
-> Running ldd /opt/nessus/sbin/nessusd...
-> Running dmesg...
-> Running tail -n 10000 /opt/nessus/var/nessus/logs/nessusd.messages...
-> Running tail -n 10000 /opt/nessus/var/nessus/logs/nessusd.dump...
-> Copying /opt/nessus/var/nessus/uuid...
-> Running bash -c cd /opt/nessus/var/nessus/logs;ls | grep -v nessusd.messages | grep
-v nessusd.dump | grep -v www_server.log | grep -v nessus-bug-report-archive | xargs
cat...
-> Running killall -USR2 nessusd...
-> Running bash -c cd /opt/nessus/var/nessus/logs;ls | grep -v nessusd.messages | grep
-v nessusd.dump | grep -v www_server.log | grep -v nessus-bug-report-archive | xargs
cat...
-> Running nessuscli fix --list...
-> Running uptime...
-> Running ls -l /opt/nessus/lib/nessus/plugins...
-> Copying /opt/nessus/lib/nessus/plugins/plugin_feed_info.inc...
-> Running bash -c ps auxwww | grep nessus...
-> Running netstat -i...
-> Running netstat -rn...
-> Running arp -an...
-> Running df -h...
-> Running ls -l /opt/nessus/var/nessus...
-> Running cat /proc/cpuinfo...
-> Running sysctl hw.model...
-> Running free...
-> Running nessuscli fix --list-interfaces...
-> Running bash -c ls -l /opt/nessus/var/nessus/.../.....
```



```
-> Running du -shk /opt/nessus/var/nessus/../../.....  
-> Collecting script environment information...
```

Thank you! Now please send the file /root/nessus-bug-report-archive.tar.gz to:

- bug-reports@nessus.org (if you are not a direct feed customer)

or

- Tenable Support (if you are a direct feed customer)

You can also add the following options:

--quiet: run the bug report generator without prompting user for feedback.

--scrub: when in quiet mode, bug report generator sanitizes the last two octets of the IPv4 address.

--full: when in quiet mode, bug report generator collects extra data.

Note: Using **--full** or **--scrub** is dependent on using **--quiet** first. If the **--quiet** option is not used, the bug report generator ignores anything else and runs in full mode.

Note: Even in normal mode, the script may pick up sensitive information, depending on how your scans are configured.

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus/sbin/nessuscli bug-report-generator [--quiet] [--scrub] [--full]
```

macOS:

```
/Library/Nessus/run/sbin/nessuscli bug-report-generator [--quiet] [--scrub] [--full]
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe bug-report-generator [--quiet] [--scrub] [--full]
```



Nessus Agent

As an administrator user, you can manage certain settings for Tenable Nessus Agent via the command line.

Tenable Nessus Agent has its own `nessuscli` tool.

Tenable Nessus Agent Command Line Tool

For Nessus Agent, use the following command syntax for your operating system.

Operating System	Command
Linux	<code># /opt/nessus_agent/sbin/nessuscli <cmd> <arg1> <arg2></code>
macOS	<code># /Library/NessusAgent/run/sbin/nessuscli <cmd> <arg1> <arg2></code>
Windows	<code>C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus Agent\nessuscli.exe <cmd> <arg1> <arg2></code>

Command syntax

- **# `nessuscli`** – This documentation sometimes uses the shorthand `# nessuscli` (instead of the full path to the `nessuscli` tool for the operating system) to represent general usage across different operating systems. However, for your commands to work, you must include the full path for your operating system, as shown above.

For each command, the documentation contains a quick reference section with the full command for each operating system. You can copy and paste these commands directly into the command line terminal.

- **<cmd>** – The command. Do not include the brackets (<>).
- **<arg 1> <arg 2>** – The arguments for the command, if applicable. Do not include the brackets (<>).

For more information, see the following:

[Help Commands](#)

[Local Agents Commands](#)



[Bug Report Generator Commands](#)



Help Commands

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

You can get help to see available commands on the `nessuscli` tool, as well as get help for a specific command.

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To display the command line usage for the Agent `nessuscli` tool, type the following:

```
# nessuscli help
```

The output will display as follows:

```
Usage: nessuscli command [options]
Usage: nessuscli command help

Fix Commands:
- fix [--secure] --list
- fix [--secure] --set <name=value>
- fix [--secure] --get <name>
- fix [--secure] --delete <name>
- fix --list-interfaces
- fix --reset

Local Agent Commands:
- agent link --key=<key> [--name=<name>] [--groups=<group1,group2,...>] [--ca-path=<ca_
file_name>] [host] [proxy]
- agent unlink
- agent status

Bug Reporting Commands:
- bug-report-generator
- bug-report-generator --quiet [--full] [--scrub]
```



Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus_agent/sbin/nessuscli help
```

macOS:

```
/Library/NessusAgent/run/sbin/nessuscli help
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus\nessuscli.exe help
```




Local Agents Commands

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

You can link agents, unlink agents, and get a report on the status of the agent.

Link and Unlink the Nessus Agent

The `nessuscli agent link` command links the agent to Tenable Nessus Manager, using the manager linking key.

```
# nessuscli agent link --  
key=00b5a8fec9f3a21fa1cff66ce99c6324adf324226948c6f1516eb9f9433b964744
```

Required arguments:

- `--key=<key>`
- `--host=<host>`
- `--port=<port>`

Optional arguments:

- `--name=<name>`
- `--groups=<group1,group2,...>`
- `--ca-path=<ca_file_name>`
- `--offline-install`
- `--proxy-host=<host>`
- `--proxy-port=<port>`
- `--proxy-username=<username>`
- `--proxy-password=<password>`



```
--proxy-agent=<agent>
```

Success or failure messages

Once the agent is successfully linked, you will see the following output:

```
# nessuscli agent link --  
key=00b5a8fec9f3a21fa1cff66ce99c6324adf324226948c6f1516eb9f9433b964744 --groups=  
Workstation --host=ndev3 --port=8834  
Agent successfully linked
```

If there were issues connecting the Agent to the Manager, you will see a **Failed to link the agent** message.

```
# nessuscli agent link --  
key=00abd4c487c472edb77cea8a14bb8c603a88203a2e6bf1f6df46159b5ad5ef18df --  
name=Workstation --groups=Accounting --host=192.0.2.252 --port=8834  
Failed to link the agent:
```

Check the Nessus Agent Status

The Nessus agent status will show you if an agent is linked, and how many jobs are pending if it is linked.

```
# nessuscli agent status  
Agent linked  
0 jobs pending
```

If the Nessus agent is not linked, the status will show that it is not linked to any servers.

```
# nessuscli agent status  
Agent not linked to a server
```

If the Nessus Agent is linked, the status will show the IP address of the connected server and port:

```
# nessuscli agent status  
Agent is linked to 192.0.2.184:8834  
0 jobs pending
```



Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus_agent/sbin/nessuscli agent link
```

macOS:

```
/Library/NessusAgent/run/sbin/nessuscli agent link
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus Agent\nessuscli.exe agent link
```



Link Windows Agents During Installation

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

Usage

Nessus Agents can be deployed and linked on Windows through the `msiexec` command. See example below:

```
# msiexec /i NessusAgent-versionnumber.msi NESSUS_GROUPS="Remote Agent Group 1"NESSUS_SERVER="192.0.2.34:8834" NESSUS_KEY=00a0927cb3df64d466ccd7ccbcc2d63fea1ea91f5ea5ebe22390a4d69caa6c6acf /qn
```

The following are available linking parameters:

Parameter	Description
NESSUS_OFFLINE_INSTALL	You can install the Tenable Nessus Agent on a system even if it is offline. Add the command line option <code>NESSUS_OFFLINE_INSTALL="yes"</code> to the command line input. The Tenable Nessus Agent will periodically attempt to link itself to either Tenable Vulnerability Management or Tenable Nessus Manager. If the agent cannot connect to the controller then it retries every hour, and if the agent can connect to the controller but the link fails then it retries every 24 hours.
ADDLOCAL=ALL	Install the Tenable Nessus Agent System Tray Application .
ADDLOCAL=ALL	Install the Tenable Nessus Agent system tray application, as described in Configure and View the System Tray Application in the <i>Tenable Nessus Agent Deployment and User Guide</i> .
NESSUS_PLUGINS_FILEPATH-	Install a full plugins set before linking to reduce the



<code>= "C:\path\to\plugins_set.tgz"</code>	<p>bandwidth impact during a mass installation. Add the command line option <code>NESSUS_PLUGINS_FILEPATH="C:\path\to\plugins_set.tgz"</code> where <code>plugins_set.tgz</code> is a recent plugins set tarball less than five days old. A stale plugins set older than five days will force a full plugins download to occur. You can download a recent plugins set from the Tenable downloads page.</p>
<code>NESSUS_GROUPS</code>	<p>Specify existing agent group or groups where you want to add the agent. If you do not specify an agent group during the install process, you can add your linked agent to an agent group later in Tenable Nessus Manager or Tenable Vulnerability Management.</p> <div data-bbox="756 909 1479 1024" style="border: 1px solid #0070C0; padding: 5px;"><p>Note: The agent group name is case-sensitive and must match exactly.</p></div> <div data-bbox="756 1045 1479 1381" style="border: 1px solid #0070C0; padding: 5px;"><p>Note: Quotation marks (") are necessary when listing multiple groups, or one group with spaces in its name. For example:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• GroupName• "Group Name"• "Group, Another Group"</div>
<code>NESSUS_PROCESS_PRIORITY</code>	<p>Determine the priority of the agent relative to the priority of other tasks running on the system. For valid values and more information on how the setting works, see Agent CPU Resource Control Agent CPU Resource Control in the <i>Tenable Nessus Agent Deployment and User Guide</i>.</p>
<code>NESSUS_NAME</code>	<p>Specify the name for your agent. If you do not specify a name for your agent, the name defaults to the</p>



	name of the computer where you are installing the agent.
NESSUS_CA_PATH	Specify a custom CA certificate to use to validate the manager's server certificate.
NESSUS_PROXY_SERVER	Specify the hostname or IP address of your proxy server.
NESSUS_PROXY_USERNAME	Specify the name of a user account that has permissions to access and use the proxy server.
NESSUS_PROXY_PASSWORD	Specify the password of the user account that you specified as the username.
NESSUS_PROXY_AGENT	Specify the user agent name, if your proxy requires a preset user agent.

For more information on installing Tenable Nessus Agents on Windows, see [Install a Nessus Agent on Windows](#) in the *Nessus user guide*.



Bug Report Generator Commands

Required User Role: User with administrator privileges

You can create a bug report that can be sent to Tenable to help diagnose issues.

To see and copy the full command for your specific operating system, see the [Command Quick Reference](#).

Usage

To create the bug report archive, use the following command:

```
# nessuscli bug-report-generator
```

Command Quick Reference

For the full command for your operating system, see the following:

Linux:

```
/opt/nessus_agent/sbin/nessuscli bug-report-generator
```

macOS:

```
/Library/NessusAgent/run/sbin/nessuscli bug-report-generator
```

Windows:

```
C:\Program Files\Tenable\Nessus Agent\nessuscli.exe bug-report-generator
```