

# Creating User Accounts in Linux Mint: A Step-by-Step Walkthrough

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## In brief

Linux Mint is a popular operating system known for its user-friendly interface and stability. One of the essential tasks for any Linux user is managing user accounts.

Linux Mint is a popular operating system known for its user-friendly interface and stability. One of the essential tasks for any Linux user is managing user accounts. This article will walk you through the process of creating and managing user accounts in Linux Mint, covering both command-line and graphical methods.

## Understanding User Types in Linux Mint

Before we dive into creating user accounts, it's helpful to understand the different types of users in Linux Mint:

1. **Root User:** This is the most powerful user account, with unlimited access to all system resources and settings.
2. **Regular User:** These are standard accounts for everyday use, with limited system-wide permissions.
3. **Sudo User:** A regular user with additional privileges to perform administrative tasks without using the root account directly.
4. **Service Accounts:** Special accounts used by the system to run specific services or applications.

## Creating a Regular User Account

Let's start by creating a regular user account. We'll explore both the command-line and graphical methods.

### Using the Command Line

1. Open the terminal by pressing `Ctrl + Alt + T`.
2. Type the following command, replacing "username" with your desired username: `'sudo adduser username'`
3. Enter your current user password when prompted.
4. Follow the on-screen instructions to set a password and provide additional information for the new user.
5. To verify the new user's creation, you can use the following command: `'groups username'` This will show you which groups the new user belongs to.

### Using the Graphical Interface

If you prefer using a graphical interface, follow these steps:

1. Click on the Linux Mint start menu and search for "Users and Groups".
2. Select "Users and Groups" from the search results.
3. Enter your administrator password when prompted.

4. In the Users and Groups window, click the "Add" button.
5. Fill in the required information:
  - Full Name
  - Username
  - Account Type (leave as "Standard" for a regular user)
6. Click "Add" to create the user.
7. Select the new user from the list on the left.
8. Click "No password set" to set a password for the new user. Remember to use a strong password that's at least eight characters long.

## Creating a Sudo User

A sudo user has elevated privileges, allowing them to perform administrative tasks. Here's how to create one:

### Using the Command Line

1. First, create a regular user as described above.
2. To grant sudo privileges to the user, use the following command: `'sudo usermod -aG sudo username'` Replace "username" with the actual username.
3. Verify the user's group membership with: `'groups username'` You should see "sudo" listed among the groups.

### Using the Graphical Interface

1. Follow the steps to create a regular user using the graphical interface.
2. In the Users and Groups window, select the user you want to grant sudo privileges to.
3. Change the "Account Type" from "Standard" to "Administrator".
4. Click "Change" to apply the new settings.

## Testing Sudo Privileges

To ensure the new sudo user can perform administrative tasks:

1. Switch to the new user account: `'su - username'`
2. Try running a command with sudo, such as: `'sudo apt update'`
3. Enter the user's password when prompted.

If successful, the command will run without any permission errors.

## Managing User Groups

Groups in Linux help organize users and control access to resources. Here's how to manage them:

### Adding a User to a Group

1. To add a user to an existing group, use: `'sudo usermod -aG groupname username'` Replace "groupname" with the desired group and "username" with the user's name.
2. Verify the change with: `'groups username'`

### Creating a New Group

1. To create a new group, use: `'sudo groupadd groupname'` Replace "groupname" with your desired group name.

2. Add users to the new group using the method described above.

## Customizing User Accounts

### Setting a Profile Picture

Using the graphical interface:

1. In the Users and Groups window, select the user.
2. Click on the placeholder image next to the user's name.
3. Choose from the provided symbols or click "Browse for Pictures" to use a custom image.

### Changing User Settings

You can modify various user settings through the Users and Groups interface:

1. Language preferences
2. Password settings
3. Login options
4. Account type

Simply select the user and look for these options in the right-hand panel.

## Best Practices for User Management

1. Use strong, unique passwords for each account.
2. Regularly review user accounts and remove any that are no longer needed.
3. Limit the number of users with sudo privileges.
4. Use groups to manage permissions efficiently.
5. Educate users about security best practices.

## Troubleshooting Common Issues

### User Can't Log In

1. Verify the username and password are correct.
2. Check if the account is locked: `'sudo passwd -S username'` If locked, unlock it with: `'sudo passwd -u username'`

### Sudo User Can't Use Sudo

1. Ensure the user is in the sudo group: `'groups username'`
2. If not, add them: `'sudo usermod -aG sudo username'`
3. Check the sudoers file for any configuration issues: `'sudo visudo'` Look for a line like: `'%sudo ALL=(ALL:ALL) ALL'` This line grants sudo privileges to members of the sudo group.

## Advanced User Management

For more advanced user management tasks, consider exploring these topics:

1. User quotas: Limiting disk space usage for each user.
2. Access Control Lists (ACLs): Fine-grained control over file and directory permissions.
3. PAM (Pluggable Authentication Modules): Customizing authentication methods.
4. LDAP integration: Centralizing user management across multiple systems.

## Conclusion

Managing user accounts in Linux Mint is a fundamental skill for system administration. Whether you prefer the command line or graphical interface, you now have the knowledge to create, modify, and manage user accounts effectively. Remember to follow best practices for security and regularly review your user management policies to keep your system secure and well-organized.

By mastering these skills, you'll be better equipped to manage your Linux Mint system, whether it's for personal use or in a professional environment. As you become more comfortable with these concepts, you can explore more advanced user management techniques to further enhance your system's security and efficiency.