

# Simple AOLserver Install Guide

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A simple AOLserver installation guide. My development box is a marvelous Debian GNU/Linux system, so if this doesn't work on a platform other than GNU/Linux, it's probably due to some specific thing.

This is the April 2001 revision of the documentation.

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Getting the best web/application  
server up and running

# 1. Getting the best web/application server up and running

## 1.1. What you need

- GCC (GNU Compiler Collection)
- GMake (GNU Make - Default in GNU/Linux)
- Development libraries including glibc and libpthread
- GNU tar and Gzip

## 1.2. Downloading and UN-tarring

Create a user and group for AOLserver, such as nsadmin. In GNU/Linux you would do:

```
addgroup nsadmin  
adduser -g nsadmin nsadmin
```

Get the AOLserver source (not the binaries, unless you know what you're doing) distribution from <http://www.aolserver.com/download>.

Untar it at some temporary directory such as /usr/local/src with the following command:

```
tar xzvf aolserver3_0.tar.gz
```

## 1.3. Building and Installing

cd into the newly created directory (aolserver3\_0 for AOLserver 3.0) and do a:

```
make (or gmake if you are not using GNU/Linux)
```

Once the compilation process is over, it's time to install AOLserver. Choose a directory to install AOLserver at, such as /home/aolserver. Then do a:

```
make install INST=/home/aolserver
```

Now change the ownership of the directory where you installed AOLserver with:

```
chown -R nsadmin:nsadmin /home/aolserver
```

## 1.4. Testing and Configuring

AOLserver comes with two nsd (the main AOLserver daemon) files: nsd76 and nsd8x. nsd76 uses Tcl 7.6, which is an AOLserver-hacked Tcl version highly optimized for multithreading and performance. nsd8x uses Tcl 8.3 which offers some nice extra features, namely better regular expressions, byte code compiler and other things. As of AOLserver 3.3 (which corrected a memory leak on nsd8x), nsd76 is officially being deprecated. Simply make a symbolic link to the file of your choice (nsd - nsd76 or nsd - nsd8x).

To do a quick-test on your AOLserver installation, CD into the AOLserver directory and (as the AOLserver user - e.g. nsadmin) do a:

```
./bin/nsd -kt nsd.tcl
```

Then with your browser, go to yourdomain.com:8000 and you should see AOLserver's default page.

Find AOLserver's PID (ps aux | grep nsd) and kill it (kill -9 pid). You can then use [our nsd.tcl](#) to configure your AOLserver. More information on the nsd.tcl config file can be found in doc/config.txt in the AOLserver source tree.

## 1.5. Setting it to be restarted

AOLserver must be started as root so it can use the privileged ports 80 and 443. You need to pass the user and group to which it will switch right after starting.

The most common way to have AOLserver restarted even if the computer needs to be rebooted is by including it in your */etc/inittab* file. Include a line like this in your */etc/inittab*:

```
as:2345:respawn:/home/aolserver/bin/nsd -it /home/aolserver/nsd.tcl -u nsadmin -g nsadmin
```

As of OpenACS 3.2.2, if you need to you can restart AOLserver right from the OpenACS admin pages. To restart it from the command line use the -k flag to nsd (e.g. /home/aolserver/bin/nsd -kt /home/aolserver/nsd.tcl -u nsadmin -g nsadmin).

## 1.6. Securing Your Installation

It is safer to run AOLserver in a chrooted environment. I am not including instructions here for simplicity's sake. Follow these links to learn how to do it.

<http://aolserver.com/docs/admin/sec-ch2.htm#8685>

<http://www.arsdigita.com/doc/security>

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