

# How to reset lost root password on Ubuntu 16.04 Xenial Xerus Linux

Contents[\[Hide\]](#)

- [Reboot to Grub Menu](#)
- [Edit Grub Menu](#)
- [Alter boot menu](#)
- [Resetting root's password](#)
- [Reboot System](#)
- [Troubleshooting](#)

This guide will provide you with an information on how to reset lost root ( administrator ) password on Ubuntu 16.04. This guide assumes that you have the actual physical access to your Ubuntu 16.04 Linux box.

## 1. Reboot to Grub Menu

In the first step you need to reboot your Ubuntu 16.04 Linux box to Grub's menu. If the Ubuntu 16.04 is the only installation available keep pressing SHIFT after you start your computer until GRUB's menu appears:

```
GNU GRUB  version 2.02~beta2-36ubuntu3
```

```
*Ubuntu
Advanced options for Ubuntu
Memory test (memtest86+)
Memory test (memtest86+, serial console 115200)
```

Use the ↑ and ↓ keys to select which entry is highlighted.  
Press enter to boot the selected OS, `e' to edit the commands  
before booting or `c' for a command-line.

## 2. Edit Grub Menu

Once you reboot to Grub menu, select the first menu item or the menu item you normally use to boot your Ubuntu system and press **e** to edit:

```
GNU GRUB  version 2.02~beta2-36ubuntu3

setparams 'Ubuntu'
    recordfail
    load_video
    gfxmode $linux_gfx_mode
    insmod gzio
    if [ x$grub_platform = xxen ]; then insmod xzio; insmod lzopio; \
fi
    insmod part_msdos
    insmod ext2
    set root='hd0,msdos1'
    if [ x$feature_platform_search_hint = xy ]; then
        search --no-floppy --fs-uuid --set=root --hint-bios=hd0,msdos1\
--hint-efi=hd0,msdos1 --hint-baremetal=ahci0,msdos1  43ad24d3-ec5b-44ee\
-a099-a88eb9520989
    fi
    linux $linux $linux_gfx_mode ${root} ${kernel} ${init}
    boot
```

Minimum Emacs-like screen editing is supported. TAB lists completions. Press Ctrl-x or F10 to boot, Ctrl-c or F2 for a command-line or ESC to discard edits and return to the GRUB menu.

### 3. Alter boot menu

Once in the Grub's boot menu edit mode use navigation arrows to locate a line starting with `linux` and edit it to include read-write mode `rw` and `init=/bin/bash`. For example

FROM:

```
linux      /boot/vmlinuz-4-4.0-22-generic root=UUID=43ad24d3-e\
c5b-44ee-a099-a88eb9520989 ro  quiet splash $vt_handoff
```

CHANGE TO:

```
linux      /boot/vmlinuz-4-4.0-22-generic root=UUID=43ad24d3-e\
c5b-44ee-a099-a88eb9520989 rw init=/bin/bash
```



```
GNU GRUB  version 2.02~beta2-36ubuntu3

insmod part_msdos
insmod ext2
set root='hd0,msdos1'
if [ x$feature_platform_search_hint = xy ]; then
  search --no-floppy --fs-uuid --set=root --hint-bios=hd0,msdos1\
--hint-efi=hd0,msdos1 --hint-baremetal=ahci0,msdos1 43ad24d3-ec5b-44ee\
-a099-a88eb9520989
else
  search --no-floppy --fs-uuid --set=root 43ad24d3-ec5b-44ee-a09\
9-a88eb9520989
fi
linux      /boot/vmlinuz-4.4.0-22-generic root=UUID=43ad24d3-e\
c5b-44ee-a099-a88eb9520989 rw init=/bin/bash_
initrd     /boot/initrd.img-4.4.0-22-generic

Minimum Emacs-like screen editing is supported. TAB lists
completions. Press Ctrl-x or F10 to boot, Ctrl-c or F2 for a
command-line or ESC to discard edits and return to the GRUB
menu.
```

Once ready press CTRL+x or F10 to boot.

## 4. Reseting root's password

If all went well you should now see root shell command line and your root partition should be mounted with read/write flags. To confirm run:

```
root@(none):/# mount | grep -w /
```

```
root@(none):/# mount | grep -w /  
/dev/sda1 on / type ext4 (rw,relatime,data=ordered)  
root@(none):/# _
```

Now we are ready to reset root's password. To do so, simply run `passwd` command with no arguments. When prompted enter your new root password:

```
root@(none):/# passwd
```

```
root@(none):/# mount | grep -w /  
/dev/sda1 on / type ext4 (rw,relatime,data=ordered)  
root@(none):/# passwd  
Enter new UNIX password:  
Retype new UNIX password:  
passwd: password updated successfully  
root@(none):/# _
```

All done. Your root's password is now reset.

## 5. Reboot System

Reboot your system using the following command:

```
root@(none):/# exec /sbin/init
```

## 6. Troubleshooting

```
Enter new UNIX password:  
Retype new UNIX password:  
passwd: Authentication token manipulation error  
passwd: password unchanged
```

Your root partition is mounted read-only. Try:

```
# mount -o remount,rw /
```

to resolve this issue.

---

```
[ end Kernel panic - not syncing: Attempted to kill init! exit code=0x0007f00
```

Make sure that you removed `splash` boot option when editing grub's menu item.

---

When trying to reboot with `reboot` command I get:

```
Failed to connect to bus: No such file or directory  
Failed to talk to init daemon.
```

Ignore, and reboot with:

```
# exec /sbin/init
```