



Configure local UNIX users and groups

ONTAP 9

NetApp

January 23, 2026

This PDF was generated from <https://docs.netapp.com/us-en/ontap/nfs-config/configure-local-unix-users-groups-concept.html> on January 23, 2026. Always check docs.netapp.com for the latest.

Table of Contents

Configure local UNIX users and groups	1
Learn about local UNIX users and groups for ONTAP NFS SVMs	1
Create local UNIX users on ONTAP NFS SVMs	1
Load local UNIX user lists on ONTAP NFS SVMs	1
Create local UNIX groups on ONTAP NFS SVMs	2
Add users to local UNIX group on ONTAP NFS SVMs	3
Load local UNIX groups from URLs on ONTAP NFS SVMs	3

Configure local UNIX users and groups

Learn about local UNIX users and groups for ONTAP NFS SVMs

You can use local UNIX users and groups on the SVM for authentication and name mappings. You can create UNIX users and groups manually, or you can load a file containing UNIX users or groups from a uniform resource identifier (URI).

There is a default maximum limit of 32,768 local UNIX user groups and group members combined in the cluster. The cluster administrator can modify this limit.

Create local UNIX users on ONTAP NFS SVMs

You can use the `vserver services name-service unix-user create` command to create local UNIX users. A local UNIX user is a UNIX user you create on the SVM as a UNIX name services option to be used in the processing of name mappings.

Step

1. Create a local UNIX user:

```
vserver services name-service unix-user create -vserver vserver_name -user user_name -id integer -primary-gid integer -full-name full_name
```

`-user user_name` specifies the user name. The length of the user name must be 64 characters or fewer.

`-id integer` specifies the user ID that you assign.

`-primary-gid integer` specifies the primary group ID. This adds the user to the primary group. After creating the user, you can manually add the user to any desired additional group.

Example

The following command creates a local UNIX user named `johnm` (full name "John Miller") on the SVM named `vs1`. The user has the ID 123 and the primary group ID 100.

```
node::> vserver services name-service unix-user create -vserver vs1 -user johnm -id 123 -primary-gid 100 -full-name "John Miller"
```

Load local UNIX user lists on ONTAP NFS SVMs

As an alternative to manually creating individual local UNIX users in SVMs, you can simplify the task by loading a list of local UNIX users into SVMs from a uniform resource identifier (URI) (`vserver services name-service unix-user load-from-uri`).

Steps

1. Create a file containing the list of local UNIX users you want to load.

The file must contain user information in the UNIX /etc/passwd format:

user_name: password: user_ID: group_ID: full_name

The command discards the value of the *password* field and the values of the fields after the *full_name* field (*home_directory* and *shell*).

The maximum supported file size is 2.5 MB.

2. Verify that the list does not contain any duplicate information.

If the list contains duplicate entries, loading the list fails with an error message.

3. Copy the file to a server.

The server must be reachable by the storage system over HTTP, HTTPS, FTP, or FTPS.

4. Determine what the URI for the file is.

The URI is the address you provide to the storage system to indicate where the file is located.

5. Load the file containing the list of local UNIX users into SVMs from the URI:

```
vserver services name-service unix-user load-from-uri -vserver vserver_name  
-uri {ftp|http|ftps|https}://uri -overwrite {true|false}
```

-overwrite {true|false} specifies whether to overwrite entries. The default is *false*.

Example

The following command loads a list of local UNIX users from the URI `ftp://ftp.example.com/passwd` into the SVM named `vs1`. Existing users on the SVM are not overwritten by information from the URI.

```
node::> vserver services name-service unix-user load-from-uri -vserver vs1  
-uri ftp://ftp.example.com/passwd -overwrite false
```

Create local UNIX groups on ONTAP NFS SVMs

You can use the `vserver services name-service unix-group create` command to create UNIX groups that are local to the SVM. Local UNIX groups are used with local UNIX users.

Step

1. Create a local UNIX group:

```
vserver services name-service unix-group create -vserver vserver_name -name  
group_name -id integer
```

-name group_name specifies the group name. The length of the group name must be 64 characters or

fewer.

`-id integer` specifies the group ID that you assign.

Example

The following command creates a local group named eng on the SVM named vs1. The group has the ID 101.

```
vs1::> vserver services name-service unix-group create -vserver vs1 -name eng -id 101
```

Add users to local UNIX group on ONTAP NFS SVMs

You can use the `vserver services name-service unix-group adduser` command to add a user to a supplemental UNIX group that is local to the SVM.

Step

1. Add a user to a local UNIX group:

```
vserver services name-service unix-group adduser -vserver vserver_name -name group_name -username user_name
```

`-name group_name` specifies the name of the UNIX group to add the user to in addition to the user's primary group.

Example

The following command adds a user named max to a local UNIX group named eng on the SVM named vs1:

```
vs1::> vserver services name-service unix-group adduser -vserver vs1 -name eng -username max
```

Load local UNIX groups from URIs on ONTAP NFS SVMs

As an alternative to manually creating individual local UNIX groups, you can load a list of local UNIX groups into SVMs from a uniform resource identifier (URI) by using the `vserver services name-service unix-group load-from-uri` command.

Steps

1. Create a file containing the list of local UNIX groups you want to load.

The file must contain group information in the UNIX `/etc/group` format:

`group_name: password: group_ID: comma_separated_list_of_users`

The command discards the value of the `password` field.

The maximum supported file size is 1 MB.

The maximum length of each line in the group file is 32,768 characters.

2. Verify that the list does not contain any duplicate information.

The list must not contain duplicate entries, or else loading the list fails. If there are entries already present in the SVM, you must either set the `-overwrite` parameter to `true` to overwrite all existing entries with the new file, or ensure that the new file does not contain any entries that duplicate existing entries.

3. Copy the file to a server.

The server must be reachable by the storage system over HTTP, HTTPS, FTP, or FTPS.

4. Determine what the URI for the file is.

The URI is the address you provide to the storage system to indicate where the file is located.

5. Load the file containing the list of local UNIX groups into the SVM from the URI:

```
vserver services name-service unix-group load-from-uri -vserver vserver_name  
-uri {ftp|http|ftps|https}://uri -overwrite {true|false}
```

`-overwrite {true|false}` specifies whether to overwrite entries. The default is `false`. If you specify this parameter as `true`, ONTAP replaces the entire existing local UNIX group database of the specified SVM with the entries from the file you are loading.

Example

The following command loads a list of local UNIX groups from the URI `ftp://ftp.example.com/group` into the SVM named `vs1`. Existing groups on the SVM are not overwritten by information from the URI.

```
vs1::> vserver services name-service unix-group load-from-uri -vserver vs1  
-uri ftp://ftp.example.com/group -overwrite false
```

Copyright information

Copyright © 2026 NetApp, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Printed in the U.S. No part of this document covered by copyright may be reproduced in any form or by any means—graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, or storage in an electronic retrieval system—without prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Software derived from copyrighted NetApp material is subject to the following license and disclaimer:

THIS SOFTWARE IS PROVIDED BY NETAPP “AS IS” AND WITHOUT ANY EXPRESS OR IMPLIED WARRANTIES, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, WHICH ARE HEREBY DISCLAIMED. IN NO EVENT SHALL NETAPP BE LIABLE FOR ANY DIRECT, INDIRECT, INCIDENTAL, SPECIAL, EXEMPLARY, OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, PROCUREMENT OF SUBSTITUTE GOODS OR SERVICES; LOSS OF USE, DATA, OR PROFITS; OR BUSINESS INTERRUPTION) HOWEVER CAUSED AND ON ANY THEORY OF LIABILITY, WHETHER IN CONTRACT, STRICT LIABILITY, OR TORT (INCLUDING NEGLIGENCE OR OTHERWISE) ARISING IN ANY WAY OUT OF THE USE OF THIS SOFTWARE, EVEN IF ADVISED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

NetApp reserves the right to change any products described herein at any time, and without notice. NetApp assumes no responsibility or liability arising from the use of products described herein, except as expressly agreed to in writing by NetApp. The use or purchase of this product does not convey a license under any patent rights, trademark rights, or any other intellectual property rights of NetApp.

The product described in this manual may be protected by one or more U.S. patents, foreign patents, or pending applications.

LIMITED RIGHTS LEGEND: Use, duplication, or disclosure by the government is subject to restrictions as set forth in subparagraph (b)(3) of the Rights in Technical Data -Noncommercial Items at DFARS 252.227-7013 (FEB 2014) and FAR 52.227-19 (DEC 2007).

Data contained herein pertains to a commercial product and/or commercial service (as defined in FAR 2.101) and is proprietary to NetApp, Inc. All NetApp technical data and computer software provided under this Agreement is commercial in nature and developed solely at private expense. The U.S. Government has a non-exclusive, non-transferrable, nonsublicensable, worldwide, limited irrevocable license to use the Data only in connection with and in support of the U.S. Government contract under which the Data was delivered. Except as provided herein, the Data may not be used, disclosed, reproduced, modified, performed, or displayed without the prior written approval of NetApp, Inc. United States Government license rights for the Department of Defense are limited to those rights identified in DFARS clause 252.227-7015(b) (FEB 2014).

Trademark information

NETAPP, the NETAPP logo, and the marks listed at <http://www.netapp.com/TM> are trademarks of NetApp, Inc. Other company and product names may be trademarks of their respective owners.