

# How to schedule crontab in Unix Operating Systems

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## How to schedule crontab in Unix Operating Systems.

If you need to run some script at a specific time in a Unix box and wish to do so without manually executing it you could leverage on a program called cron. Through cron you can schedule a script to be executed at any specific time you wish. However the lowest value of time that can be scheduled is minute.

Crontab - Crontab is where you configure what interval and which script to execute.

To see crontab entry.

```
[root@myserver]# crontab -l
```

To edit crontab entry.

```
[root@myserver]# crontab -e
```

### How to schedule cron to execute a script.

You have to edit the crontab to the below format in order for cron to execute your script at your desired time.

```
* * * * * /root/script.sh
| | | |
| | | |
| | | | ____ day of week (0 - 6) (0 to 6 are Sun to Sat)
| | | | ____ month (1 - 12)
| | | | ____ day of month (1 - 31)
| | | | ____ hour (0 - 23)
| | | | ____ min (0 - 59)
```

## Examples.

To execute script /root/script.sh every Saturday 1am.

```
0 1 * * 5 /root/script.sh
```

To execute script /root/script.sh on every weekdays at 2am.

```
0 2 * * 1-5 /root/script.sh
```

To execute script /root/script.sh every 15min daily.

```
0,15,30,45 * * * * /root/script.sh
```

To execute script /root/script.sh every 15min daily and output the output of /root/script.sh to /root/script\_output.txt.

```
0,15,30,45 * * * * /root/script.sh >> /root/script_output.txt 2>&1
```

\*Note: 2>&1 means standard error, STDERR (2) store to standard output, STDOUT (1). & in front of 1 (STDOUT) means

the standard output is stored to the file stated which in this case is /root/script\_output.txt.

To execute script /root/script.sh every 15min daily and tell it not to show any output.

```
0,15,30,45 * * * * /root/script.sh >> /dev/null 2>&1
```

\*Note: /dev/null is commonly referred to black hole where everything directed to it is discarded.

## Default location of crontab for all users in most Unix operating system.

The default location where crontab is stored is at /var/spool/cron\*

For Linux it is at /var/spool/cron/

For Solaris, AIX and HP-UX it is at /var/spool/cron/crontabs/

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