

**NAME**

`/etc/network/interfaces` - network interface configuration for `ifup` and `ifdown`

**DESCRIPTION**

`/etc/network/interfaces` contains network interface configuration information for the [ifup\(8\)](#) and [ifdown\(8\)](#) commands. This is where you configure how your system is connected to the network.

Lines starting with `#` are ignored. Note that end-of-line comments are NOT supported, comments must be on a line of their own.

A line may be extended across multiple lines by making the last character a backslash.

The file consists of zero or more `iface`, `mapping`, `auto`, `allow-`, `source` and `source-directory` stanzas. Here is an example.

```
auto eth0
allow-hotplug eth1

source interfaces.d/machine-dependent

source-directory interfaces.d

mapping eth0
script /usr/local/sbin/map-scheme
map HOME eth0-home
map WORK eth0-work

iface eth0-home inet static
address 192.168.1.1
netmask 255.255.255.0
up flush-mail

iface eth0-work inet dhcp

iface eth1 inet dhcp
```

Lines beginning with the word `auto` are used to identify the physical interfaces to be brought up when `ifup` is run with the `-a` option. (This option is used by the system boot scripts.) Physical interface names should follow the word `auto` on the same line. There can be multiple `auto` stanzas. `ifup` brings the named interfaces up in the order listed.

Lines beginning with `allow-` are used to identify interfaces that should be brought up automatically by various subsystems. This may be done using a command such as `ifup --allow=hotplug eth0 eth1`, which will only bring up `eth0` or `eth1` if it is listed in an `allow-hotplug` line. Note that `allow-auto` and `auto` are synonyms.

Lines beginning with `source` are used to include stanzas from other files, so configuration can be split into many files. The word `source` is followed by the path of file to be sourced. Shell wildcards can be used. (See [wordexp\(3\)](#) for details.)

Similarly, `source-directory` keyword is used to source multiple files at once, without specifying them individually or using shell globs. Additionally, when `source-directory` is used, names of the files are checked to match the following regular expression: `^[a-zA-Z0-9_-]+`. In other words, the names must consist entirely of ASCII upper- and lower-case letters, ASCII digits, ASCII underscores, and ASCII minus-hyphens. In the directory path, shell wildcards may be used as well.

When sourcing files or directories, if a path doesn't have a leading slash, it's considered relative to the directory containing the file in which the keyword is placed. In the example above, if the file is located at `/etc/network/interfaces`, paths to the included files are understood to be under `/etc/network`.

Currently, `source-directory` isn't supported by `network-manager` and `guessnet`.

By default, on a freshly installed Debian system, the `interfaces` file includes a line to source files in the `/etc/network/interfaces.d` directory.

Stanzas beginning with the word `mapping` are used to determine how a logical interface name is chosen for a physical interface that is to be brought up. The first line of a mapping stanza consists of the word mapping followed by a pattern in shell glob syntax. Each mapping stanza must contain a **script** definition. The named script is run with the physical interface name as its argument and with the contents of all following map lines (**without** the leading map) in the stanza provided to it on its standard input. The script must print a string on its standard output before exiting. See `/usr/share/doc/ifupdown/examples` for examples of what the script must print.

Mapping a name consists of searching the remaining mapping patterns and running the script corresponding to the first match; the script outputs the name to which the original is mapped.

**ifup** is normally given a physical interface name as its first non-option argument. **ifup** also uses this name as the initial logical name for the interface unless it is accompanied by a suffix of the form `=LOGICAL`, in which case `ifup` chooses `LOGICAL` as the initial logical name for the interface. It then maps this name, possibly more than once according to successive mapping specifications, until no further mappings are possible. If the resulting name is the name of some defined logical interface then **ifup** attempts to bring up the physical interface as that logical interface. Otherwise **ifup** exits with an error.

Stanzas defining logical interfaces start with a line consisting of the word `iface` followed by the name of the logical interface. In simple configurations without mapping stanzas this name should simply be the name of the physical interface to which it is to be applied. (The default mapping script is, in effect, the **echo** command.) The interface name is followed by the name of the address family that the interface uses. This will be `inet` for TCP/IP networking, but there is also some support for IPX networking (`ipx`), and IPv6 networking (`inet6`). Following that is the name of the method used to configure the interface.

Additional options can be given on subsequent lines in the stanza. Which options are available depends on the family and method, as described below. Additional options can be made available by other Debian packages. For example, the `wireless-tools` package makes available a number of options prefixed with `wireless-` which can be used to configure the interface using `iwconfig(8)` (See [wireless\(7\)](#) for details.)

Options are usually indented for clarity (as in the example above) but are not required to be.

## VLAN AND BRIDGE INTERFACES

To ease the configuration of VLAN interfaces, interfaces having `.` (full stop character) in the name are configured as 802.1q tagged virtual LAN interface. For example, interface `eth0.1` is a virtual interface having `eth0` as physical link, with VLAN ID 1.

For compatibility with `bridge-utils` package, if `bridge_ports` option is specified, VLAN interface configuration is **not** performed.

## IFACE OPTIONS

The following command options are available for every family and method. Each of these options can be given multiple times in a single stanza, in which case the commands are executed in the order in which they appear in the stanza. (You can ensure a command never fails by suffixing them with `|| true`.)

### **pre-up** *command*

Run *command* before bringing the interface up. If this command fails then **ifup** aborts, refraining from marking the interface as configured, prints an error message, and exits with status 0. This behavior may change in the future.

### **up** *command*

### **post-up** *command*

Run *command* after bringing the interface up. If this command fails then **ifup** aborts, refraining from marking the interface as configured (even though it has really been configured), prints an error message, and exits with status 0. This behavior may change in the future.

**down** *command*

**pre-down** *command*

Run *command* before taking the interface down. If this command fails then **ifdown** aborts, marks the interface as deconfigured (even though it has not really been deconfigured), and exits with status 0. This behavior may change in the future.

**post-down** *command*

Run *command* after taking the interface down. If this command fails then **ifdown** aborts, marks the interface as deconfigured, and exits with status 0. This behavior may change in the future.

There exists for each of the above mentioned options a directory */etc/network/if-<option>.d/* the scripts in which are run (with no arguments) using [run-parts\(8\)](#) after the option itself has been processed. Please note that as **post-up** and **pre-down** are aliases, no files in the corresponding directories are processed. Please use *if-up.d* and *if-down.d* directories instead.

All of these commands have access to the following environment variables.

**IFACE**

physical name of the interface being processed

**LOGICAL**

logical name of the interface being processed

**ADDRFAM**

address family of the interface

**METHOD**

method of the interface (e.g., *static*)

**MODE**

*start* if run from *ifup*, *stop* if run from *ifdown*

**PHASE**

as per **MODE**, but with finer granularity, distinguishing the *pre-up*, *post-up*, *pre-down* and *post-down* phases.

**VERBOSITY**

indicates whether **--verbose** was used; set to 1 if so, 0 if not.

**PATH**

the command search path: */usr/local/sbin:/usr/local/bin:/usr/sbin:/usr/bin:/sbin:/bin*

Additionally, all options given in an interface definition stanza are exported to the environment in upper case with **IF\_** prepended and with hyphens converted to underscores and non-alphanumeric characters discarded.

When *ifdown* is being called with the **--all** option, before doing anything to interfaces, it calls all the hook scripts (*pre-up* or *down*) with **IFACE** set to **--all**, **LOGICAL** set to the current value of **--allow** parameter (or **auto** if it's not set), **ADDRFAM=meta** and **METHOD=none**. After all the interfaces have been brought up or taken down, the appropriate scripts (*up* or *post-down*) are executed.

## INET ADDRESS FAMILY

This section documents the methods available in the inet address family.

### The loopback Method

This method may be used to define the IPv4 loopback interface.

#### Options

(No options)

**The static Method**

This method may be used to define Ethernet interfaces with statically allocated IPv4 addresses.

**Options**

- address** *address*  
Address (dotted quad/netmask) **required**
- netmask** *mask*  
Netmask (dotted quad or CIDR)
- broadcast** *broadcast\_address*  
Broadcast address (dotted quad, + or -). Default value: +
- metric** *metric*  
Routing metric for default gateway (integer)
- gateway** *address*  
Default gateway (dotted quad)
- pointopoint** *address*  
Address of other end point (dotted quad). Note the spelling of point-to.
- hwaddress** *address*  
Link local address.
- mtu** *size*  
MTU size
- scope** Address validity scope. Possible values: global, link, host

**The manual Method**

This method may be used to define interfaces for which no configuration is done by default. Such interfaces can be configured manually by means of **up** and **down** commands or `/etc/network/if-*.d` scripts.

**Options**

(No options)

**The dhcp Method**

This method may be used to obtain an address via DHCP with any of the tools: dhclient, pump, udhcp, dhcpcd. (They have been listed in their order of precedence.) If you have a complicated DHCP setup you should note that some of these clients use their own configuration files and do not obtain their configuration information via **ifup**.

**Options**

- hostname** *hostname*  
Hostname to be requested (pump, dhcpcd, udhcp)
- metric** *metric*  
Metric for added routes (dhclient)
- leasehours** *leasehours*  
Preferred lease time in hours (pump)
- leasetime** *leasetime*  
Preferred lease time in seconds (dhcpcd)
- vendor** *vendor*  
Vendor class identifier (dhcpcd)
- client** *client*  
Client identifier (dhcpcd)

**hwaddress** *address*  
Hardware address.

### The bootp Method

This method may be used to obtain an address via bootp.

#### Options

**bootfile** *file*  
Tell the server to use *file* as the bootfile.

**server** *address*  
Use the IP address *address* to communicate with the server.

**hwaddr** *addr*  
Use *addr* as the hardware address instead of whatever it really is.

### The tunnel Method

This method is used to create GRE or IPIP tunnels. You need to have the **ip** binary from the **iproute** package. For GRE tunnels, you will need to load the `ip_gre` module and the `ipip` module for IPIP tunnels.

#### Options

**address** *address*  
Local address (dotted quad) **required**

**mode** *type*  
Tunnel type (either GRE or IPIP) **required**

**endpoint** *address*  
Address of other tunnel endpoint **required**

**dstaddr** *address*  
Remote address (remote address inside tunnel)

**local** *address*  
Address of the local endpoint

**gateway** *address*  
Default gateway

**ttl** *time*  
TTL setting

**mtu** *size*  
MTU size

### The ppp Method

This method uses `pon/poff` to configure a PPP interface. See those commands for details.

#### Options

**provider** *name*  
Use *name* as the provider (from `/etc/ppp/peers`).

**unit** *number*  
Use *number* as the ppp unit number.

**options** *string*  
Pass *string* as additional options to `pon`.

### The wvdial Method

This method uses `wvdial` to configure a PPP interface. See that command for more details.

#### Options

**provider** *name*

Use *name* as the provider (from `/etc/wvdial.conf`).

**The ipv4ll Method**

This method uses `avahi-autoipd` to configure an interface with an IPv4 Link-Layer address (169.254.0.0/16 family). This method is also known as APIPA or IPAC, and often colloquially referred to as Zeroconf address.

**Options**

(No options)

**IPX ADDRESS FAMILY**

This section documents the methods available in the ipx address family.

**The static Method**

This method may be used to setup an IPX interface. It requires the `ipx_interface` command.

**Options****frame** *type*

*type* of Ethernet frames to use (e.g. **802.2**)

**netnum** *id*

Network number

**The dynamic Method**

This method may be used to setup an IPX interface dynamically.

**Options****frame** *type*

*type* of Ethernet frames to use (e.g. **802.2**)

**INET6 ADDRESS FAMILY**

This section documents the methods available in the inet6 address family.

**The auto Method**

This method may be used to define interfaces with automatically assigned IPv6 addresses. Using this method on its own doesn't mean that RDNSS options will be applied, too. To make this happen, `rdnssd` daemon must be installed, properly configured and running. If stateless DHCPv6 support is turned on, then additional network configuration parameters such as DNS and NTP servers will be retrieved from a DHCP server. Please note that on ifdown, the lease is not currently released (a known bug).

**Options****privext** *int*

Privacy extensions (RFC4941) (0=off, 1=assign, 2=prefer)

**accept\_ra** *int*

Accept router advertisements (0=off, 1=on, 2=on+forwarding). Default value: 2

**dhcp** *int*

Use stateless DHCPv6 (0=off, 1=on)

**The loopback Method**

This method may be used to define the IPv6 loopback interface.

**Options**

(No options)

**The static Method**

This method may be used to define interfaces with statically assigned IPv6 addresses. By default, stateless autoconfiguration is disabled for this interface.

**Options**

**address** *address*  
Address (colon delimited/netmask) **required**

**netmask** *mask*  
Netmask (number of bits, eg 64)

**gateway** *address*  
Default gateway (colon delimited)

**media** *type*  
Medium type, driver dependent

**hwaddress** *address*  
Hardware address

**mtu** *size*  
MTU size

**accept\_ra** *int*  
Accept router advertisements (0=off, 1=on, 2=on+forwarding)

**autoconf** *int*  
Perform stateless autoconfiguration (0=off, 1=on). Default value: 0

**privext** *int*  
Privacy extensions (RFC3041) (0=off, 1=assign, 2=prefer)

**scope** Address validity scope. Possible values: global, site, link, host

**preferred-lifetime** *int*  
Time that address remains preferred

**dad-attempts**  
Number of attempts to settle DAD (0 to disable). Default value: 60

**dad-interval**  
DAD state polling interval in seconds. Default value: 0.1

#### The manual Method

This method may be used to define interfaces for which no configuration is done by default. Such interfaces can be configured manually by means of **up** and **down** commands or `/etc/network/if-*.d` scripts.

#### Options

(No options)

#### The dhcp Method

This method may be used to obtain network interface configuration via stateful DHCPv6 with `dhclient`. In stateful DHCPv6, the DHCP server is responsible for assigning addresses to clients.

#### Options

**hwaddress** *address*  
Hardware address

**accept\_ra** *int*  
Accept router advertisements (0=off, 1=on, 2=on+forwarding). Default value: 1

**autoconf** *int*  
Perform stateless autoconfiguration (0=off, 1=on)

#### The v4tunnel Method

This method may be used to setup an IPv6-over-IPv4 tunnel. It requires the **ip** command from the `iproute` package.

#### Options

**address** *address*  
Address (colon delimited) **required**

**netmask** *mask*  
Netmask (number of bits, eg 64)

**endpoint** *address*  
Address of other tunnel endpoint (IPv4 dotted quad) **required**

**local** *address*  
Address of the local endpoint (IPv4 dotted quad)

**gateway** *address*  
Default gateway (colon delimited)

**ttl** *time*  
TTL setting

**mtu** *size*  
MTU size

**preferred-lifetime** *int*  
Time that address remains preferred

#### The 6to4 Method

This method may be used to setup an 6to4 tunnel. It requires the **ip** command from the **iproute** package.

#### Options

**local** *address*  
Address of the local endpoint (IPv4 dotted quad) **required**

**ttl** *time*  
TTL setting

**mtu** *size*  
MTU size

**preferred-lifetime** *int*  
Time that address remains preferred

### CAN ADDRESS FAMILY

This section documents the methods available in the can address family.

#### The static Method

This method may be used to setup an Controller Area Network (CAN) interface. It requires the the **ip** command from the **iproute** package.

#### Options

**bitrate** *bitrate*  
bitrate (1..1000000) **required**

**samplepoint** *samplepoint*  
sample point (0.000..0.999)

**loopback** *loopback*  
loop back CAN Messages (on|off)

**listenonly** *listenonly*  
listen only mode (on|off)

**triple** *triple*  
activate triple sampling (on|off)

- oneshot** *oneshot*  
one shot mode (on|off)
- berr** *berr*  
activate berr reporting (on|off)

### KNOWN BUGS/LIMITATIONS

The **ifup** and **ifdown** programs work with so-called physical interface names. These names are assigned to hardware by the kernel. Unfortunately it can happen that the kernel assigns different physical interface names to the same hardware at different times; for example, what was called eth0 last time you booted is now called eth1 and vice versa. This creates a problem if you want to configure the interfaces appropriately. A way to deal with this problem is to use mapping scripts that choose logical interface names according to the properties of the interface hardware. See the **get-mac-address.sh** script in the examples directory for an example of such a mapping script. See also Debian bug #101728.

### AUTHOR

The ifupdown suite was written by Anthony Towns <aj@azure.humbug.org.au>. This manpage was contributed by Joey Hess <joey@kitenet.net>.

### SEE ALSO

[ifup\(8\)](#), [ip\(8\)](#), [ifconfig\(8\)](#), [run-parts\(8\)](#), [resolvconf\(8\)](#).

For advice on configuring this package read the **Network Configuration** chapter of the *Debian Reference* manual, available at <http://www.debian.org/doc/manuals/debian-reference/ch05.en.html> or in the **debian-reference-en** package.

Examples of how to set up interfaces can be found in `/usr/share/doc/ifupdown/examples/network-interfaces.gz`.