

Ubuntu Apt and Snap Commands Cheat Sheet

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Full guide with explanations: www.ubuntufree.com/apt-snap-commands-in-ubuntu-with-examples/

Updated for Ubuntu 26.04 LTS (2026)

Apt and snap are the two package tools you use most on Ubuntu 26.04 LTS and Ubuntu 26.10. Apt installs .deb packages from the Ubuntu archive, while snap installs sandboxed apps from the Snap Store that update themselves in the background. This guide covers the everyday commands for both, with copy-ready examples and a free cheat sheet.

Apt basics: update, upgrade and install

apt is the friendly front end to the Ubuntu package system. You will still see apt-get in older guides. It works the same way and is the better choice inside scripts because its output format stays stable.

1. Update package lists

Downloads the latest package indexes from the sources in /etc/apt/sources.list.d/ubuntu.sources. Run it before any install or upgrade.

```
sudo apt update
```

2. List available upgrades

Shows which installed packages have a newer version waiting, without changing anything.

```
apt list --upgradable
```

3. Upgrade installed packages

Installs newer versions of everything you already have. It never removes packages.

```
sudo apt upgrade
```

Add -y to skip the confirmation prompt in scripts.

4. Full upgrade

Like upgrade, but allowed to install or remove packages when dependencies change. Use it for large updates and new kernels.

```
sudo apt full-upgrade
```

5. Install packages

Installs one or more packages plus their dependencies from the Ubuntu archive.

```
sudo apt install htop  
sudo apt install curl git
```

6. Install a local .deb file

The ./ prefix tells apt it is a file, so missing dependencies are still pulled from the archive.

```
sudo apt install ./package.deb
```

Prefer this over dpkg -i, which does not resolve dependencies.

7. Remove a package

Uninstalls the package but keeps its system-wide configuration files.

```
sudo apt remove htop
```

8. Purge a package and its config

Removes the package and its configuration in /etc. Your personal files in ~ are not touched.

```
sudo apt purge htop
```

9. Remove unused dependencies

Clears libraries and old kernels that nothing needs anymore.

```
sudo apt autoremove
```

10. Clean the download cache

Deletes downloaded .deb files from /var/cache/apt/archives. autoclean only removes versions that can no longer be downloaded.

```
sudo apt clean  
sudo apt autoclean
```

Search and inspect packages

Check what a package is and where it comes from before you install it. These commands are read-only, so they do not need sudo.

11. Search for a package

Searches package names and descriptions.

```
apt search ripgrep
```

Pipe through grep or use apt list `"*name*"` for shorter output.

12. Show package details

Prints the version, size, dependencies and description.

```
apt show ripgrep
```

13. Check versions and origin

Shows the installed version, the candidate version and which repository each comes from. On Ubuntu the firefox deb is a transitional package that installs the snap.

```
apt policy firefox
```

14. List installed packages

Lists everything installed. Filter the long list with grep.

```
apt list --installed | grep -i python3
```

15. Find which package owns a file

dpkg -S searches installed packages for a path. dpkg -L lists every file a package installed.

```
dpkg -S /usr/bin/curl  
dpkg -L curl
```

16. Hold a package at its version

Stops apt from upgrading a package until you release it.

```
sudo apt-mark hold linux-generic  
apt-mark showhold  
sudo apt-mark unhold linux-generic
```

Repositories and PPAs

Ubuntu 26.04 stores its sources in the deb822 format in /etc/apt/sources.list.d/ubuntu.sources. Only add third-party sources you trust, because they can replace system packages.

17. Add a PPA

Adds a Launchpad PPA and its signing key, then refreshes the package lists.

```
sudo add-apt-repository ppa:git-core/ppa  
sudo apt update
```

18. Remove a PPA

Removes the source again. Run sudo apt update afterwards.

```
sudo add-apt-repository --remove ppa:git-core/ppa
```

19. Modernize old source files

Apt 3 can convert leftover one-line .list files into the deb822 .sources format.

```
sudo apt modernize-sources
```

Snap basics: find, install and update

Snaps are self-contained packages from the Snap Store. snapd is preinstalled, and Firefox, Thunderbird and the App Center are snaps on a default Ubuntu desktop.

20. Find a snap

Searches the Snap Store by name and description.

```
snap find vlc
```

22. Install a snap

Installs from the latest/stable channel by default.

```
sudo snap install vlc
```

24. List installed snaps

Shows version, revision, tracking channel and publisher for each snap.

```
snap list
```

26. Switch a snap to another channel

Moves a snap to a different channel, for example to test a beta, and back again.

```
sudo snap refresh firefox --  
channel=latest/beta  
sudo snap refresh firefox --  
channel=latest/stable
```

28. Revert to the previous revision

Rolls a snap back to the revision it had before the last refresh.

```
sudo snap revert firefox
```

30. Keep fewer old revisions

snapd keeps older revisions for rollback. Lower the number kept to save disk space (minimum 2).

```
snap list --all  
sudo snap set system refresh.retain=2
```

21. Show snap details and channels

Lists the publisher, description and every channel with its version.

```
snap info vlc
```

23. Install a classic snap

Classic snaps run without the sandbox. Code editors and SDKs often need this.

```
sudo snap install code --classic
```

25. Refresh snaps now

Updates all snaps immediately. --list only shows pending updates.

```
sudo snap refresh  
snap refresh --list
```

27. Hold automatic refreshes

Pauses updates for one snap for a set time, or until you release the hold.

```
sudo snap refresh --hold=72h firefox  
sudo snap refresh --unhold firefox
```

29. Remove a snap

Uninstalls the snap. snapd keeps an automatic snapshot of its data unless you add --purge.

```
sudo snap remove vlc  
sudo snap remove --purge vlc
```

31. Check snap permissions

Shows which interfaces (camera, home, network and so on) a snap is connected to.

```
snap connections firefox
```

Apt vs snap quick reference

Task	Apt	Snap
Refresh / update	sudo apt update && sudo apt upgrade	sudo snap refresh

Task	Apt	Snap
Search	apt search name	snap find name
Details	apt show name	snap info name
Install	sudo apt install name	sudo snap install name
Remove	sudo apt remove name	sudo snap remove name
List installed	apt list --installed	snap list
Pause updates	sudo apt-mark hold name	sudo snap refresh --hold name
Roll back	sudo apt install name=version	sudo snap revert name

Tips and best practices

Use apt for system tools, libraries and server software that should follow the Ubuntu release. Use snaps for desktop apps and tools where you want the newest upstream version, or where the deb is only a wrapper for the snap, as with Firefox.

Do not mix sources for the same app without a reason. Installing both the snap and a PPA build of one program can leave two copies with separate settings.