NAME

deletemail – remove old mail from server

SYNOPSIS

deletemail [**–nqsuv**[**v**]] [**–f** *file*]

deletemail –h | **–V**

DESCRIPTION

deletemail is a non-interactive tool for deleting mail which is older than a configurable number of days from one or more IMAP mailboxes. By default, mail which is not marked as seen on the server will not be deleted. Currently, the IMAP4 and IMAP4rev1 protocols are supported, optionally using SSL/TLS for secure IMAP connections.

OPTIONS

–f *file*   Use *file* instead of *$HOME*/*.deletemailrc* for configuration.

–h   Print a short description of all available options and exit.

–n   Mark messages as deleted on the server, but don't expunge them (that is, omit the IMAP CLOSE command). This might be useful in order to test whether or not everything works as expected. However, please note that the "deleted" flags will *not* be revoked by **deletemail**, so these messages might be expunged by another IMAP client accessing the mailbox.

–q   Quiet output, only error messages are printed.

–s   Don't use unique message IDs in IMAP commands. By default, **deletemail** will use UIDs when issuing IMAP SEARCH or STORE commands, since UIDs are safer in case multiple IMAP clients are accessing the mailbox at the same time. However, there are IMAP servers which seem to have problems using UIDs. Thus, if you encounter strange behaviour (like the server unexpectedly closing the connection), this option might be helpful.

–u   Delete any message which is older than the configured number of days, no matter whether or not the message is marked as seen.

–V   Print version information and exit.

–v[**v**]   If the **–v** option is used, all commands sent to the server and all server responses will be printed to the standard error stream. If **–v** is specified twice, (quite a lot of) additional debug output will be produced.

CONFIGURATION FILE

By default, the configuration file *$HOME*/*.deletemailrc* will be read. Each IMAP account on which **deletemail** should operate is configured by using the keyword *ACCOUNT*, followed by *variable: value* pairs specifying the account settings; one *variable: value* pair per line. Apart from that, the keyword *GLOBAL*, followed by *variable: value* pairs may optionally be used for specifying default settings. If *GLOBAL* is used, it must be declared prior to any *ACCOUNT* settings. The default settings will only take effect if they are not specified for a given *ACCOUNT*.

Configuration values may include all ASCII characters. Empty lines and the rest of a line after a "#" will be ignored. Whitespace and "#" must be escaped using a backslash if the value is not quoted with single or double quotes. If the value is quoted, the quote sign must be escaped using a backslash. A literal backslash must always be escaped using another backslash. If the last character of a configuration line is a backslash, the following line will be appended prior to parsing.

Required Configuration Variables

The following configuration variables *must* be set, either by specifying default settings using the keyword *GLOBAL* and/or by specifying them for each *ACCOUNT*.

days: <integer>

The number of days that messages should stay on the server. Messages which are not older than specified here will not be deleted.

host: <string>
>   The IMAP server name or IP address.

pass: <string>
>   The password for authentication on the server.

user: <string>
>   The username for authentication on the server.

Optional Configuration Variables
>   The following configuration variables *may* be set, either by specifying default settings using the keyword *GLOBAL* and/or by specifying them for one or more *ACCOUNT*s.

expunge: yes | no
>   If set to *no*, messages will still be marked as deleted on the server, but they won't be expunged by **deletemail**. However, these messages might be expunged by another IMAP client accessing the mailbox. This variable will be overridden by the **-n** command line switch. Default: *yes*.

folder: <string> [string...]
>   The mailbox name. Multiple folders may be specified using a space delimited list. Default: *INBOX*.

port: <integer>
>   The server port number. Default: *993* for SSL connections, *143* otherwise.

ssl: yes | no | starttls
>   Specifies usage of SSL/TLS for secure IMAP connections. If set to *yes*, SSL on connect will be used; if set to *starttls*, the TLS connection will be initiated using STARTTLS. In both cases, **deletemail** will exit with an error prior to sending any login information if the server doesn't support the respective mechanism. Default: *no*. This variable is only available if **deletemail** was built with SSL support.

unseen: yes | no
>   If set to *yes*, any message that is older than the configured number of days will be deleted, no matter whether or not the message is marked as seen. If set to *no*, messages which are not marked as seen will never be deleted. This variable will be overridden by the **-u** command line switch. Default: *no*.

use_uid: yes | no
>   If set to *no*, **deletemail** won't use unique message IDs when talking to the IMAP server. See the **-s** command line switch (which will override the *use_uid* setting) for implications. Default: *yes*.

RETURN VALUE
>   Upon successful completion, **deletemail** returns 0. If any sort of error is encountered, **deletemail** returns a value other than 0.

EXAMPLES
>   Configure **deletemail** via the file *$HOME/.deletemailrc*, which could look like this:

```
ACCOUNT # Toms INBOX on the ISPs IMAP server
 host: imap.provider.com
 user: tom
 pass: h0lyPa55
 days: 7  # delete mail if it's older than a week
 ssl: yes # use SSL for secure IMAP connections
```

>   Test your configuration by creating verbose output and not expunging deleted messages on the server:

```
deletemail -nv
```

>   Run deletemail once an hour (at twenty past) by using a **crontab**(5) entry like the

following:

        20 * * * * /usr/local/bin/deletemail -q

ENVIRONMENT

HOME

If the configuration file is not specified on the command line, *$HOME/.deletemailrc* will be used.

FILES

$HOME/.deletemailrc default configuration file

CAVEATS

For SSL connections, **deletemail** currently does *not* support any mechanism to prevent "man in the middle" attacks. Future releases will probably provide certificate and key fingerprint checking.

Apart from that, on systems that lack a useable random device (like */dev/urandom*), **deletemail** will try to collect some random data for seeding OpenSSLs PRNG on it's own. However, this is insecure. Please consider installing an entropy gathering daemon like EGD or PRNGD if your system doesn't provide a useable random device (the output of **deletemail -vv** will tell you whether or not that's the case). See the OpenSSL manual page **RAND_egd**(3) for information on where to get and how to install an entropy gathering daemon so that OpenSSL will use it automatically.

BUGS

The mailbox name may *not* include non-ASCII characters, since they won't be encoded according to the IMAP standard when talking to the server. IPv6 is not supported.

I'm sure there are more bugs, please let me know if you find them.

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SEE ALSO

fetchmail(1), **crontab**(1), **crontab**(5), **cron**(8), **ssl**(3), **crypto**(3)