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Thread: [WSL 2 CHEAT SHEET WINDOWS 11](#)

Clumsy - August 9, 2026, 4:01 am

? WSL 2 CHEAT SHEET — WINDOWS 11

? INSTALLATION & SETUP

```
Code wsl --install          # Install WSL with default Ubuntu
wsl --install -d Debian     # Install specific distro
wsl --install -d kali-linux # Install Kali Linux
wsl --list --online         # Show available distros
wsl --set-default-version 2 # Set WSL 2 as default
wsl --set-version <distro> 2 # Convert distro to WSL 2
```

? LIST & MANAGE DISTROS

```
Code wsl -l -v             # List installed distros with version
wsl -l -o                  # List available distros from store
wsl -l --running           # Show only running distros
wsl --set-default <distro> # Set default distro
wsl --status               # Show WSL status
```

? START / STOP / EXECUTE

```
Code wsl                  # Start default distro
wsl -d Debian             # Start specific distro
wsl -d Debian -u root     # Start as root
wsl --shutdown            # Shut down ALL WSL instances
wsl -t Debian             # Terminate specific distro
wsl --export Debian C:\backup.tar # Export distro to tar file
wsl --import NewDistro C:\WSL\New C:\backup.tar # Import distro from tar
```

? WINDOWS -> WSL FILE ACCESS

```
Code explorer.exe .       # Open current WSL dir in Windows Explorer
cd /mnt/c/Users/<user>/Desktop # Access Windows Desktop
cd /mnt/c/                 # Access C: drive
cd /mnt/d/                 # Access D: drive
ls -la /mnt/               # List all mounted Windows drives
wsl --mount <disk>         # Mount external drive
wsl --unmount <disk>       # Unmount drive
```

? WSL CONFIGURATION

File: %UserProfile%\wslconfig

Code [wsl2]

memory=8GB

processors=4

localhostForwarding=true

nestedVirtualization=true

kernelCommandLine=vsyscall=emulate

swap=4GB

swapFile=C:\\temp\\wsl-swap.vhdxApply changes: Code wsl --shutdown then restart

? WSL VS WINDOWS INTEGRATION

```

Code wsl --exec <command>          # Run command without shell
wsl ls -la                        # Run command directly
powershell.exe -c "Get-Date"      # Run PowerShell from WSL
cmd.exe /c dir                    # Run CMD from WSL
notepad.exe file.txt              # Open file in Windows Notepad
code .                            # Open VS Code in current dir
? NETWORK & PORTS
Code ip addr show                  # Show WSL IP address
cat /etc/resolv.conf              # Show DNS config
wsl --exec bash -c "ip route get 1" # Get WSL's Windows host IP
ssh user@localhost -p 2222        # SSH into WSL from Windows
socat TCP-LISTEN:80,fork TCP:localhost:8080 # Port forwarding
? UNINSTALL / REMOVE
Code wsl --unregister Debian      # Remove distro (deletes all data)
dism.exe /online /disable-feature /featurename:Microsoft-Windows-Subsystem-Linux # Completely
remove WSL
dism.exe /online /enable-feature /featurename:Microsoft-Windows-Subsystem-Linux /all
/norestart # Re-enable WSL
? DOCKER IN WSL
Code docker ps -a                 # List containers
docker images                     # List images
docker run -it --rm ubuntu bash   # Run test container
docker system prune -a            # Clean up
sudo service docker start         # Start Docker daemon
? QUICK CLEANUP
Code wsl --shutdown
wsl --export Debian C:\backup\Debian_$(date +%Y%m%d).tar
wsl --unregister Debian
? COMMON WORKFLOWS
Code # Open WSL in VS Code
code .

# Transfer files between WSL and Windows
cp file.txt /mnt/c/Users/WindowsUser/Desktop/

# Access WSL files from Windows Explorer
\\wsl$\\Debian

# SSH into WSL from Windows
ssh -p 22 user@127.0.0.1

# Open GUI app from WSL (if X server running)
DISPLAY=:0 firefox &
? TROUBLESHOOTING
Code # DNS not working
sudo bash -c 'echo "nameserver 8.8.8.8" > /etc/resolv.conf'

# WSL not starting
net stop LxssManager && net start LxssManager

# WSL is slow
# Check antivirus exclusions, ensure WSL 2

```

Cannot access internet
sudo dhclient

Systemd not working
Need WSL 2 + systemd=true in /etc/wsl.conf
? WSL.CONF (per distro)
File: /etc/wsl.conf
Code [user]
default=root

[interop]
enabled=true
appendWindowsPath=true

[network]
generateResolvConf=false

[boot]
systemd=true

[automount]
enabled=true
options=metadata,umask=22,fmask=11

? PRO TIP: Add Code alias wsl="wsl -d Debian" to your PowerShell profile for quick access.

????????????????????????????????????
? USE RESPONSIBLY — NIGHTFALL-X OMEGA
????????????????????????????????????

? PROPER MYBB HACKFORUMS STYLE NOW! ?

Terry A. Davis - August 9, 2026, 11:52 pm

Fact: You can launch any Windows EXE from WSL if it's in your Windows PATH, you just need to be explicit with the .exe extension.

I think you can also do X server stuff on Windows through WSL (Though been a hot minute since I've done this) just need Xorg and a DM installed.

Clumsy - August 14, 2026, 11:21 pm

(Aug 9, 2026 11:52 PM)Terry A. Davis Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Fact: You can launch any Windows EXE from WSL if it's in your Windows PATH, you just need to be explicit with the .exe extension.

I think you can also do X server stuff on Windows through WSL (Though been a hot minute since I've done this) just need Xorg and a DM installed.

This is very true thank you for pointing that out :)