

Solve ALSA audio and mic issues on Lenovo Thinkpads on Debian and Ubuntu Linux

Author : admin

Since I've blogged about my recent skype issues. I've played a lot with **pulseaudio**, **alsa**, **alsa-oss** to experimented a lot until I figured out why Skype was failing to properly delivery sound and record via my embedded laptop mic.

Anyways, while researching on the cause of my **Thinkpad r61 mic issues**, I've red a bunch of blog posts by people experiencing microphone oddities with **Lenovo Thinkpads**

Throughout the search I come across one very good article, which explained that in many cases the Thinkpad sound problems are caused by the **snd-hda-intel** alsa kernel module. *snd-hda-intel* fails to automatically set proper sb model type argument during Linux install when the soundcard is initialized with some argument like **options snd-hda-intel model=auto**

Hence, the suggested fix which should resolve this on many Thinkpad notebooks is up to passing the right module argument:

To fix its neccessery to edit **/etc/modprobe.d/alsa-base.conf** .

```
debian:~# vim /etc/modprobe.d/alsa-base.conf
```

Find the line in the file starting with:

options snd-hda-intel model=

and substitute with:

options snd-hda-intel model=thinkpad

Finally a restart of Advaned Linux Sound Architecture (alsa) is required:

```
debian:~# /etc/init.d/alsa restart
```

...

At most cases just restarting the alsa via its init script is not enough, since the *ssnd-hda-intel* kernel module is already in use by some program or something, so its best to do a reboot to make sure the module is loaded with the new *model=thinkpad* argument.

My exact laptop sound card model is:

```
debian:~# lspci |grep -i audio
```

00:1b.0 Audio device: Intel Corporation 82801H (ICH8 Family) HD Audio Controller (rev 03)

After changing the module and using alsamixer and aumix to make sure mic is unmuted and its volume is high enough, mic sound rec works fine.