

How to enable UserDir /home/*/public_html on Debian GNU / Linux 6.0.5 (Squeeze)

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By default UserDir module is not enabled on Debian. The original [documentation related to UserDir is found on Apache's main website here](#).

On Debian by default the module userdir is installed in directory `/usr/lib/apache2/modules/`, e.g.:

```
debian:~# ls -al /usr/lib/apache2/modules/*userdir*  
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 9696 Apr 1 09:40 /usr/lib/apache2/modules/mod_userdir.so
```

It is installed as external module (not compiled in Apache) - btw something interesting for many might be to see which modules are compiled as static modules default in Apache by issuing:

```
debian:~# /usr/sbin/apache2 -l  
Compiled in modules:  
core.c  
mod_log_config.c  
mod_logio.c  
prefork.c  
http_core.c  
mod_so.c
```

In Debian Apache is configured to use Debian's standard directory locations and use Debian's config, structure and how to generally manage it, hence in order to add (load) **mod_userdir** to Apache it is necessary to exec **a2enmod** perl script:

```
debian:~# a2enmod userdir  
Enabling module userdir.
```

Run `'/etc/init.d/apache2 restart'` to activate new configuration!

Another way, which I personally prefer is to create directly symlinks loading the module:

```
debian:~# ln -sf /etc/apache2/mods-available/userdir.load /etc/apache2/mods-enabled/userdir.load
debian:~# ln -sf /etc/apache2/mods-available/userdir.conf /etc/apache2/mods-enabled/userdir.conf
```

Next restart Apache server to load the it as suggested by *a2enmod*:

```
debian:~# /etc/init.d/apache2 restart
Restarting web server: apache2 ... waiting .
```

If you want to Allow */home/*users** to be able to use **.htaccess**, php or simply install CMS systems or alike it is good idea to also *change default AllowOverride settings for public_html* for that edit **/etc/apache2/mods-enabled/userdir.conf** and change:

```
AllowOverride FileInfo AuthConfig Limit Indexes
```

```
....
```

to:

```
# AllowOverride FileInfo AuthConfig Limit Indexes
```

```
AllowOverride all
```

```
...
```

If you do so don't forget to once again restart apache with */etc/init.d/apache2 restart*.

One more thing is to **enable PHP for /home/*/public_html**, to do so edit **/etc/apache2/mods-enabled/php5.conf** and comment out:

```
php_admin_value engine Off
```

```
#
```

```
#
```

```
# php_admin_value engine Off
```

```
#
```

```
#
```

#

Thanks to [Activating userdir on Debian server blog](#) for pointing out how to enable php for userdirs :)

Another alternative way to enable userdirs is to directly create symlinks for each user public_html directory but I guess this is not a best practice, anyways if you prefer to use this instead of using *mod_userdir* do it with:

```
ln -sf '/var/www/~username' /home/username/public_html
ln -sf '/var/www/~username1' /home/username1/public_html
...
```

If you prefer to do symbolic links to public_html for all user homes, you can do it directly in a quick for bash loop by issuing:

```
for i in /home/*; do
f=$(echo $i | sed -e "s#/home/##g");
ln -sf "/var/www/~$f" /home/"$f"/public_html;
done
```