

How to fix unfixable broken package dependencies on Debian GNU / Linux - Fix package mismatch

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I just tried to upgrade my Debian Wheezy 7 to the latest stable Debian Stretch 9 by not thinking too much and just changing the word **wheezy** with **stretch** in `/etc/apt/sources.list` so onwards on it looked like so:

```
cat /etc/apt/sources.list
```

```
deb http://ftp.bg.debian.org/debian/ stretch main contrib non-free  
deb-src http://ftp.bg.debian.org/debian/ stretch main
```

```
deb http://security.debian.org/ stretch/updates main  
deb-src http://security.debian.org/ stretch/updates main
```

```
# stretch-updates, previously known as 'volatile'  
##deb http://deb.debian.org/debian/ stretch-updates main  
deb-src http://deb.debian.org/debian/ stretch-updates main
```

I also make sure all the defined **Google Chrome / Opera / Skype** and **Squeeze Backports** repositories existent in **/etc/apt/sources.list.d** directory files which in my case were like so;

```
root@noah:/etc/apt/sources.list.d# ls
google-chrome.list  opera-stable.list  squeeze-backports.list
opera.list          skype-stable.list
```

were commented out because they were producing extra apt update errors ...

And afterwards ran as usual:

```
apt-get update
apt-get --yes upgrade
```

The upgrade command executed fine and a lot of packages got downloaded and reinstalled without much issue, so I thought everything would be fine and just proceeded with the attempt to finalize the distribution major release 7 to major release 9 by running:

```
apt-get --yes dist-upgrade
```

But guess what now I got some dependency errors with cron and other installed packages that depend on package versions that are not going to be installed as the apt-get tool informed me.

I tried to out-smart the dpkg dependency system and removed all the packages reporting to have a missing dependencies with a short for bash loop after duming all the problematic packages showing dependency issues with commands such as:

```
apt-get -f dist-upgrade >> out.txt  
for i in $(cat out.txt); awk '{ print $1 }' >> to_delete.txt; done
```

Before proceeding further I had to manually edit few lines in a text editor to remove some of the junk left from apt-get too.

So i was brave and just removed the dependency missing packages with following other for loop:

```
for i in $(cat to_delete.txt); do dpkg -r --force-all $i; done
```

Now I was hoping that rerunning:

```
apt-get autoremove  
  
dpkg --configure -a  
  
apt-get update -f  
apt-get dist-upgrade -f
```

would no longer complain and I would just install the removed packages in another for shell loop once

every other packages gets installed.

But guess what I was wrong ... the system entered into another bunch of dependency terribly issues and messed up so badly that there were at least 50 packages reporting to have a missing / broken or uninstallable deb version dependency ...

I got totally Angry, I knew already from experience that just trying to jump over while skipping a major release e.g. upgrade Debian 7 to Debian 9, instead of first upgrading to Debian 8 Linux and then upgrading Debian 8 to Debian 9 have always produced the same mess but I was lame and stupid again to f**k it up and I was out of mind swearing (a truly bad habit I'm not proud of) ...

So as the notebook with Linux so far was perfectly working with Debian 7 and had a tons of old installed software and I was in a state where if I restart the system it was very likely my Thinkpad r61 laptop won't boot at all, I googled around to find a solution unfortunately without any luck, so finally I used the good old and tested method to DO IT MYSELF and Find the Fix without Uncle Google's help and by God's grace I did, after experimenting a while with the **aptitude package / install / remove update** tool without much success, finally I find the solution to the totally messed up Debian package dependencies and it all came to a simply reverting back my **/etc/apt/source.list** to look like following:

```
# deb cdrom:[Debian GNU/Linux 7.0.0 _Wheezy_ - Official amd64 CD Binary-1  
20130504-14:44]/ wheezy main
```

```
##deb cdrom:[Debian GNU/Linux 7.0.0 _Wheezy_ - Official amd64 CD Binary-1  
20130504-14:44]/ wheezy main
```

```
deb http://ftp.bg.debian.org/debian/ wheezy main contrib non-free  
deb-src http://ftp.bg.debian.org/debian/ wheezy main
```

```
deb http://security.debian.org/ wheezy/updates main  
deb-src http://security.debian.org/ wheezy/updates main
```

```
# wheezy-updates, previously known as 'volatile'  
##deb http://deb.debian.org/debian/ wheezy-updates main  
deb-src http://deb.debian.org/debian/ wheezy-updates main  
##deb http://www.deb-multimedia.org wheezy main non-free  
#deb http://ftp.debian.org/debian/ wheezy-backports main  
###deb http://ftp.debian.org/debian/ wheezy-backports main contrib non-free  
##deb http://dl.google.com/linux/chrome/deb/ wheezy main  
#deb http://ftp2.de.debian.org/debian-volatile wheezy/volatile main  
###deb http://www.deb-multimedia.org wheezy main non-free
```

run of the following two dependency fix commands !!!!

```
aptitude upgrade --full-resolver
```

```
...
```

```
aptitude full-upgrade --full-resolver
```

```
...
```

After a while a Debian LinuxOS system downgrade was initiated and the missing packages were found, downloaded from the correct wheezy repositories and all broken and missing dependencies packages were fixed !!! **HOORAY IT WORKS AGAIN!!**