

Soapbox!

We recommend installing Soapbox on a **dedicated VPS (virtual private server) running Ubuntu 22.04 LTS**. You should get your VPS up and running before starting this guide.

make sure to be the root user

```
sudo su
```

System setup

Before installing Soapbox, we have to prepare the system.

Install updates

Usually a fresh VPS already has outdated software, so run the following commands to update it:

```
apt update
```

```
apt upgrade
```

When prompted ([Y/n]) type Y and hit Enter.

Install system dependencies

Soapbox relies on some additional system software in order to function. Install them with the following command:

```
apt install git curl build-essential postgresql postgresql-contrib cmake libmagic-dev imagemagick ffmpeg  
libimage-exiftool-perl nginx certbot unzip libssl-dev automake autoconf libncurses5-dev fasttext
```

Create the Pleroma user

For security reasons, it's best to run Rebased as a separate user with limited access.

We'll create this user and call it pleroma:

```
useradd -r -s /bin/false -m -d /var/lib/pleroma -U pleroma
```

Install Rebased

It's time to install Rebased, the backend for Soapbox. Let's get things up and running.

Downloading the source code

Download the Rebased source code with git:

```
git clone https://gitlab.com/soapbox-pub/rebased /opt/pleroma
```

```
chown -R pleroma:pleroma /opt/pleroma
```

Enter the source code directory, and become the pleroma user:

```
cd /opt/pleroma
```

```
sudo -Hu pleroma bash
```

(You should be the pleroma user in /opt/pleroma for the remainder of this section.)

Install Elixir

Rebased uses the Elixir programming language (based on Erlang). It's important we use a specific version of Erlang (24), so we'll use the asdf version manager to install it.

Install asdf:

```
git clone https://github.com/asdf-vm/asdf.git ~/.asdf --branch v0.10.0
```

```
echo ". $HOME/.asdf/asdf.sh" >> ~/.bashrc
```

```
echo ". $HOME/.asdf/completions/asdf.bash" >> ~/.bashrc
```

```
exec bash
```

```
asdf plugin-add erlang
```

```
asdf plugin-add elixir
```

Finally, install Erlang/Elixir:

```
asdf install
```

(This will take about 15 minutes. ☹)

Compiling Rebased

Install basic Elixir tools for compilation:

```
mix local.hex --force
```

```
mix local.rebar --force
```

Fetch Elixir dependencies:

```
mix deps.get
```

Finally, compile Soapbox:

```
MIX_ENV=prod mix compile
```

(This will take about 10 minutes. ☹)

Generate the configuration

It's time to preconfigure our instance. The following command will set up some basics such as your domain name:

```
MIX_ENV=prod mix pleroma.instance gen
```

If you're happy with it, rename the generated file so it gets loaded at runtime:

```
mv config/generated_config.exs config/prod.secret.exs
```

Provision the database

The previous section also created a file called `config/setup_db.psql`, which you can use to create the database.

Exit back to the root user (for the remainder of this document):

```
exit
```

Execute the SQL file as the postgres user:

```
sudo -Hu postgres psql -f config/setup_db.psql
```

Now run the database migration as the pleroma user:

```
sudo -Hu pleroma bash -i -c 'MIX_ENV=prod mix ecto.migrate'
```

Start Rebased

Copy the systemd service and start Soapbox:

```
cp /opt/pleroma/installation/pleroma.service /etc/systemd/system/pleroma.service
```

```
systemctl enable --now pleroma.service
```

If you've made it this far, congrats! You're very close to being done. Your Rebased server is running, and you just need to make it accessible to the outside world.

Getting online

The last step is to make your server accessible to the outside world. We'll achieve that by installing Nginx and enabling HTTPS support.

HTTPS

We'll use certbot to get an SSL certificate.

First, shut off Nginx:

```
systemctl stop nginx
```

Now you can get the certificate:

```
mkdir -p /var/lib/letsencrypt/
```

```
certbot certonly --email your@emailaddress -d yourdomain --standalone
```

Replace your@emailaddress and yourdomain with real values.

Nginx

Copy the example nginx configuration and activate it:

```
cp /opt/pleroma/installation/pleroma.nginx /etc/nginx/sites-available/pleroma.nginx
```

```
ln -s /etc/nginx/sites-available/pleroma.nginx /etc/nginx/sites-enabled/pleroma.nginx
```

You must edit this file:

```
nano /etc/nginx/sites-enabled/pleroma.nginx
```

Change all occurrences of example.tld with your site's domain name. Use Ctrl+X, Y, Enter to save.

Finally, enable and start nginx:

```
systemctl enable --now nginx.service
```

☑️ Congrats, you're done! Check your site in a browser and it should be online.

Install Soapbox

It's finally time to install Soapbox itself! First, get the latest build.

```
curl -O https://dl.soapbox.pub/main/soapbox.zip
```

Next, unzip it.

```
busybox unzip soapbox.zip -o -d /opt/pleroma/instance/static
```

Refresh your website. That's it!

Post-istallation

Below are some additional steps you can take after you've finished installation.

Create your first user

If your instance is up and running, you can create your first user with administrative rights with the following task:

```
cd /opt/pleroma
```

```
sudo -Hu pleroma bash -i -c 'MIX_ENV=prod mix pleroma.user new username your@emailaddress --admin'
```

Renewing SSL

If you need to renew the certificate in the future, uncomment the relevant location block in the nginx config and run:

```
certbot certonly --email your@emailaddress -d yourdomain --webroot -w /var/lib/letsencrypt/
```

Upgrading

To upgrade Rebased (the backend), shell into your server and issue the following commands.

```
sudo -Hu pleroma bash
```

```
cd /opt/pleroma
```

```
git pull origin main
```

```
asdf install
```

```
mix deps.get
```

```
MIX_ENV=prod mix ecto.migrate
```

```
exit
```

```
systemctl restart pleroma
```

To upgrade Soapbox (frontend), shell into your server and re-run the install commands.

```
curl -O https://dl.soapbox.pub/main/soapbox.zip
```

```
busybox unzip soapbox.zip -o -d /opt/pleroma/instance/static
```

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