

Use 'maybe' to See What a Command or Script Will Do, Without Running It

Last updated August 14, 2017 By [Munif Tanjim \(https://itsfoss.com/author/munif/\)](https://itsfoss.com/author/munif/)



Have you ever worried about what the script or command you are going to run is gonna do to your filesystem? Don't worry, ***maybe*** is here to help you with that. Specially, if you are new to Linux, you are going to like it.

maybe tells you what a script or command does without actually running it

maybe (<https://github.com/p-e-w/maybe>) is a small tool that allows you to run a command to see what it does to your filesystem without actually letting it do anything. It will show you a list of operations that was supposed to be performed by that command and then you can decide whether you want to permit those operations or not.

```
[root@localhost ~]# maybe python common.py
maybe has prevented python common.py from performing 28 file system operations:
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/shlex.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/shlex.pyc
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/contextlib.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/contextlib.pyc
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/StringIO.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/StringIO.pyc
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/ctypes/__init__.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/ctypes/__init__.pyc
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/ctypes/_endian.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/ctypes/_endian.pyc
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/ctypes/util.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/ctypes/util.pyc
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/tempfile.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/tempfile.pyc
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/io.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/io.pyc
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/random.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/random.pyc
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/hashlib.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/hashlib.pyc
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/socket.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/socket.pyc
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/curses/__init__.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/curses/__init__.pyc
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/curses/wrapper.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/curses/wrapper.pyc
delete /usr/lib/python2.7/platform.pyc
create file /usr/lib/python2.7/platform.pyc
Do you want to rerun python common.py and permit these operations? [y/N]
```

maybe In Action

maybe is written in python. It uses the [python-pttrace](https://github.com/haypo/python-pttrace) (<https://github.com/haypo/python-pttrace>) library to run the commands under the control of `ptrace`. In layman's terms, when *maybe* is used to run a command, it makes that command believe that it is doing what it is trying to do, while in actuality, all of its operations are blocked and intercepted by *maybe* and then logged.

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read

(<https://itsfoss.com/shellcheck-bugs-shell/>)

Is *maybe* Completely Safe?

The developer of *maybe*, [Philipp Emanuel Weidmann \(https://github.com/p-e-w\)](https://github.com/p-e-w), doesn't claim that it is completely safe to run anything with *maybe*. In fact, he claims very little. In his words,

Currently, maybe is best thought of as an (alpha-quality) "what exactly will this command I typed myself do?" tool.

So, you should never use *maybe* to run untrusted code on your primary

Installation on Ubuntu

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For installing *maybe*, you will need a [Python environment set up](https://itsfoss.com/python-setup-linux/) (<https://itsfoss.com/python-setup-linux/>) on your system with the `pip` command available.

Now, for installing *maybe*, use the following command:

```
pip install maybe
```

That's all. You should be ready to use *maybe*.

So, what do you think about *maybe*? Let us know!



About Munif Tanjim

Studying Electronics & Telecommunication Engineering. Love Open Source and use Ubuntu as the primary OS. Technologies aside, a TV Series freak and sometimes try to do some creative writing.

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2:29 am August 15, 2017 (<https://itsfoss.com/maybe-command-tool/#comment-283110>)

Yochanan

“ *Is maybe Completely Safe?*

Maybe.



+4

Reply

12:18 am August 17, 2017 (<https://itsfoss.com/maybe-command-tool/#comment-283144>)

pavlos

try 'maybe maybe' to see what it does ...

**Reply**

9:00 pm August 18, 2017 (<https://itsfoss.com/maybe-command-tool/#comment-283196>)

Avinash Pandey

This is what happens:

Error: No command given.

Usage: /usr/bin/maybe COMMAND [ARGUMENT]...

maybe has not detected any file system operations from maybe.

**Reply**

11:49 am August 15, 2017 (<https://itsfoss.com/maybe-command-tool/#comment-283116>)

Abhishek Prakash

LOL

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