

# The Beginners' Guide to Bug Management

Soumyadip Modak  
Debian-In and Ubuntu-In  
[soumyadip.modak@gmail.com](mailto:soumyadip.modak@gmail.com)



# Software Bug

As Wikipedia defines it:

A software bug (or just "bug") is an error, flaw, mistake, failure, or fault in a computer program that prevents it from behaving as intended (e.g., producing an incorrect result).



# Bugs in Debian and Ubuntu

No software is free of bugs. Not even distributions based on the GNU/Linux kernel. But to improve the quality and stability of Free and Open Source Software, please report any bugs that you find



# When to file a bug

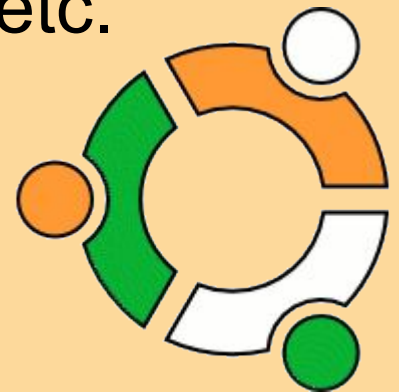
- You can repeat the problem, i.e. it is not a random occurring, and you can replicate the problem step-by-step
- You have asked around on various forums regarding the software (IRC, mailing-lists, online forums) and are convinced it is not a feature



# When not to file a bug

- Something doesn't work the way you want it to, but others are convinced that it is correct nevertheless
- You have a great development idea which will radically change the way the application works
- You need software support commercially
- You wish the developers added some feature

In these cases, you might try talking out your point-of-view with others via IRC, mailing-list, etc.



# The Debian BTS

or what to do when bad things happen:

1. `sudo apt-get install reportbug`
2. `reportbug -help` (*or* `man reportbug`)
3. `reportbug <packagename>`



# How does it work?

**reportbug** asks you a few questions, opens up a text editor for you to add the description of the bug that you are filing, and then mails the result to the Debian/Ubuntu bug server using the system's SMTP server (like sendmail, Postfix, etc.)



# Hold on a second...

But I don't have an SMTP server installed !!! So  
how do I submit bugs?



# One way...

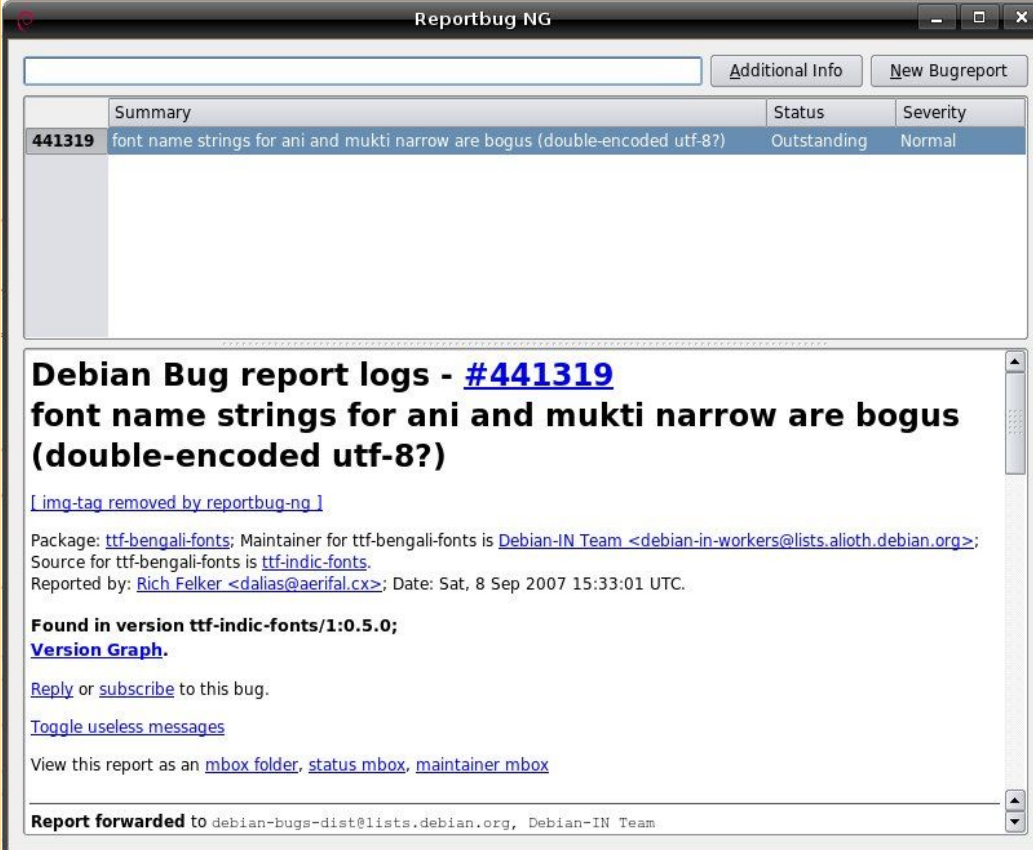
If there is no SMTP server installed, the reportbug application will inform you where it has stored the bug report (usually under /tmp). Open this file in your favourite editor, copy the bug report and paste it into a new mail message to:

[submit@bugs.debian.org](mailto:submit@bugs.debian.org)



# The other way...

is to use **reportbug-ng**



Reportbug NG

Additional Info New Bugreport

Summary	Status	Severity
<b>441319</b> font name strings for ani and mukti narrow are bogus (double-encoded utf-8?)	Outstanding	Normal

**Debian Bug report logs - #441319**  
**font name strings for ani and mukti narrow are bogus (double-encoded utf-8?)**

[img-tag removed by reportbug-ng]

Package: [ttf-bengali-fonts](#); Maintainer for ttf-bengali-fonts is [Debian-IN Team <debian-in-workers@lists.alioth.debian.org>](#);  
Source for ttf-bengali-fonts is [ttf-indic-fonts](#).  
Reported by: [Rich Felker <dalias@aerifal.cx>](#); Date: Sat, 8 Sep 2007 15:33:01 UTC.

**Found in version ttf-indic-fonts/1:0.5.0;**  
[Version Graph](#).

[Reply](#) or [subscribe](#) to this bug.  
[Toggle useless messages](#)

View this report as an [mbox folder](#), [status mbox](#), [maintainer mbox](#)

**Report forwarded** to [debian-bugs-dist@lists.debian.org](#), Debian-IN Team



# Basic etiquette

Before you file a bug, please have a look at the Debian/Ubuntu Bug Tracking System to check whether a similar bug already been filed. If so, do not file a new bug, but add a comment to the existing one. Maybe the existing one might already have been solved, or some advice might be given to work around the problem



# How do I do that??

From the command line, use `querybts`. **man querybts** gives you all the latest news, views and gossip.

If you're using `reportbug-ng`, you'll find that you have to search for a package, and it always shows you a list of existing bugs. Please have a look.



# Malone


The help menu in applications in Ubuntu has a menu item named: Report a Bug... which takes a person to the Malone portal on Launchpad.net at:

**<https://bugs.launchpad.net>**



# File a bug in Malone

Your location: [Home](#) Logged in as [Soumyadip Modak](#) - [Log Out](#)

[Help](#)  **Malone: the Launchpad bug tracker**

[Overview](#) [Code](#) **[Bugs](#)** [Blueprints](#) [Translations](#) [Answers](#)

**Actions**  
> [CVE tracker](#)

## Report a bug

Where did you find the bug?:

**Distribution**

**Package**

**Project**

**Select a Package**

Please describe the bug in a few words, for example, "weather"

**Summary:**

This guided form will try to help you find out whether your bug has already been reported

[Terms of Use](#) | [Help improve Launchpad](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Documentation](#) Id 5111

# Bug Triaging

Bug Triaging is the process of replicating a new incoming bug, replicating it, assessing the severity of the problem, and classifying it accordingly for attention.



# Triaging via E-mail

Usually bug triaging in Debian is performed via E-mail. Sending an email to **<bugnumber>@bugs.debian.org** will be sent to the maintainers of the package. Also E-mails can be sent to **control@bugs.debian.org** to help triage bugs and pass vital information to developers and maintainers



# Mail [control@bugs.debian.org](mailto:control@bugs.debian.org) and ...

**Confirm** a bug, if you can **reproduce** it:

```
found <bugnumber> <versionnumber>  
tags <bugnumber> +confirmed
```

If you **cannot reproduce** a bug and believe it to be **solved** for the latest version of the package, **close** the bug by e-mailing `<bugnumber>-done@ bugs.debian.org`

**Reassign** a bug:

```
reassign <bugnumber> <correct package>
```



# Mail `control@bugs.debian.org` and ... (cont.)

## Reassign bugs:

```
reassign <bugnumber> <correct package>
```

## Merge bugs:

```
merge <bugnumber for one of the bugs>  
<bugnumber for the other bug>
```

## Forward reports **upstream**:

```
forwarded <bugnumber> <URL of the bug in  
upstream's bugtracker>
```



# Questions?



# URLs

<http://wiki.debian.org/BugTriage>

<http://wiki.debian.org/DebianBugTag>

<http://help.ubuntu.com/community/ReportingBugs>

<https://wiki.ubuntu.com/HelpingWithBugs>

<https://wiki.ubuntu.com/BugSquad>

<https://wiki.ubuntu.com/Bugs/HowToTriage>



**Thanks**