

POLITECNICO DI TORINO

TSR/CNTS, PRL, PAR

# Introduction to lab assignments with GNS3

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User guide and helpful tips

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# 1 Requirements

GNS3 is a network emulator that emulates a complex network actually running the operating system of real network devices to accurately reproduce the behavior of network nodes. As a consequence, it is also a valuable tool to experiment with and learn from the behavior of such devices. In order to facilitate the deployment of the software, we provide a pre-installed virtual machine (VM) that can be either directly executed in your VM manager, or converted and transferred on an USB stick in order to create a bootable disk with the pre-installed software.

Particularly, the VM for the networking labs @ Politecnico di Torino requires the Virtual Box software running on your PC. This software is available for most operating systems; downloading instructions are available at <https://www.virtualbox.org/wiki/Downloads>.

Additional tools can be used to convert the VM in another format, e.g., for Linux KVM or to make it an ISO-bootable image.

## 2 Access to GNS3

GNS3 is pre-installed on the PC in LADISPE. In order to access it:

1. Access to the PC using Windows (s<studentID>@polito.it your password)
2. Launch VirtualBox and run the PAR\_VM virtual machine
3. The VM is based on an Ubuntu 16.04; the login username is **gns3** and the password is **courseVM**

Note that all the files that you may save in the virtual machine will be deleted at shutdown.

In case you want to work on the lab experience not in LADISPE, you can use a similar network emulator with a web-based interface that is called Dyn@NG. Instructions on how to access it can be found at [http://netgroup.polito.it/images/Didattica/CNTS-TSR\\_slide/Dynng-Tutorial.pdf](http://netgroup.polito.it/images/Didattica/CNTS-TSR_slide/Dynng-Tutorial.pdf)

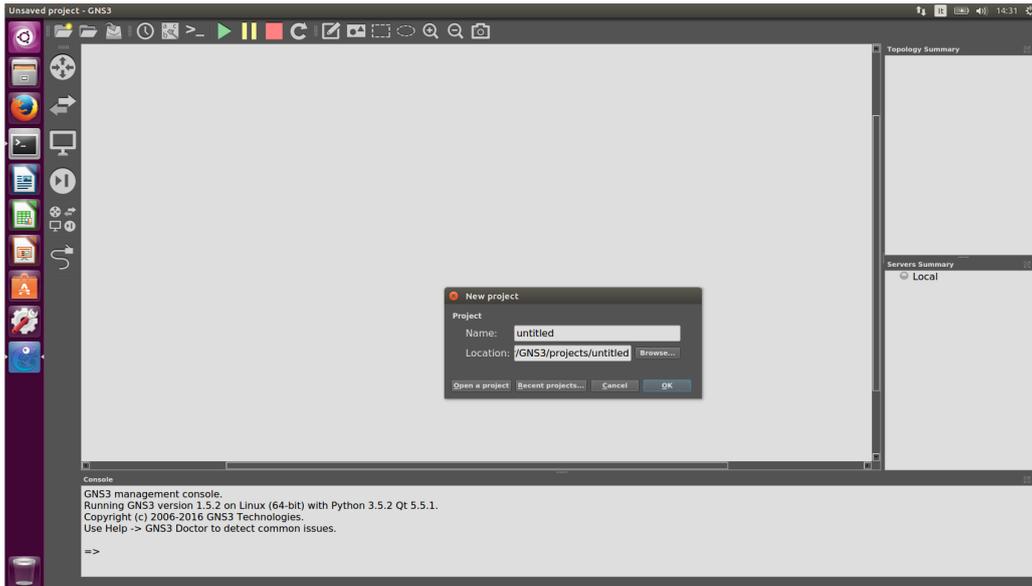


Figure 1: Main GNS3 window when opening an existing project or creating a new one.

### 3 Using GNS3

1. Start the VM and wait until the main Ubuntu screen appears.
2. Open the terminal  and type `gns3`.
3. From the new window you can either create a new project or open an existing one, as shown in Figure 1. GNS3 projects are used to define different network topologies, so if it its the first time you execute the VM, you should create a new project.
4. The  icon allows to browse all the available routers. However, please note that all the exercises will require only:
  - a Cisco 2691 router, when an L3 device is needed<sup>1</sup>;
  - the Ethernet switch that emulates a LAN.

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<sup>1</sup>Note that any other router model will not work because the corresponding IOS image has not been saved in the VM.

## 4 Simulate your first topology

Now we can try to create a simple network topology with two routers directly connected through a link, as depicted in the Figure. First of all we need to create our topology. Go to the Device Library and drag and drop the *Cisco 2691* router to the network window. After inserting the routers we need to create a link that connects the two devices together. To do this select the  button and select the first router as the source device and a pop-up appears like the one depicted on the Figure with the list of the network devices.

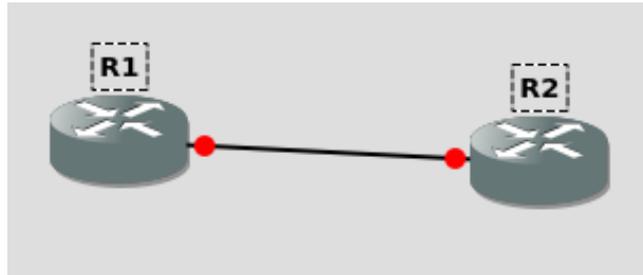


Figure 2: Our first network topology

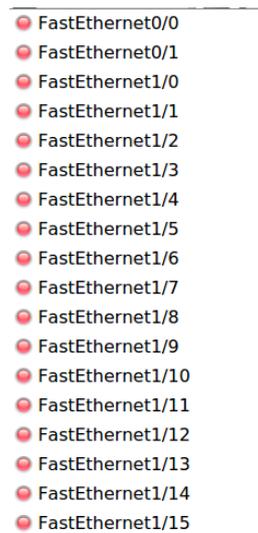


Figure 3: Router Link Form

Select a network adapter from the menu option (e.g., *FastEthernet0/0*). The red icon indicates that the interface is not used, while the green icon indicates that the interface is in use. After the interface selection, click on the second device to connect and follow the same operation.

Now that the two routers are connected they will be linked and we just need to activate the virtual machines associated to the routers, which translates into the “start topology” command. Routers can be configured through the “console” only when they are active, i.e., their associated virtual machine is up and running.

For starting the topology (which is required in order to enable the console), we can press  button.

GNS3 uses different icons to show the status of the router. For instance, a router that is switched off is shown with a red icon, while an active router is shown with the green icon. When the router is active, we can open the associated console window and configure the device with a double click on the icon.

To configure our topology, open the console of the **router R1** and press the Enter key on your keyboard a couple of times; this is a known problem, as sometimes the router prompt does not appear if you do not press **Enter**. If everything is ok, after some seconds you should see the following prompt on the console:

```
R1#
```

You will configure the machines manually. You need now to:

- Enter in *privileged-mode* of the router using the command `enable`;
- Enter in *configuration mode* using the command `configure terminal`<sup>2</sup>.
- Use `exit` to exit the configuration mode once done changing the configuration.

Now we need to select the interface we want to configure. To do that we need to use the command `interface FastEthernet x/y` where “x” is the number of the slot you chose before, and “y” is the number of the interface (within that slot) you used. You can also use the shortcut “`in fa x/y`”. For instance, as we choose the slot 0 and interface 0, we write the command `interface FastEthernet 0/0`. This takes us to the *interface configuration mode*. Now we will configure the IP address with the following commands:

Command	Description
<code>ip address 192.168.0.1 255.255.255.0</code>	Configure the IP address 192.168.0.1/24 on the selected interface. This address will become immediately active.
<code>no shutdown</code>	Turn on the interface. Some interfaces of the router are turned off by default, hence it is always better to type this command although this may not be always needed.
<code>end</code>	Exit from the interface configuration mode.

Obviously, a similar configuration must be repeated on the second router. On the console of R1 you can apply do the same commands, just changing the IP address into 192.168.0.2.

Here a brief summary of all the commands you typed in order to configure the address on the router, where the last digit of the IP address (written as “z”) will be the actual IP address of the router:

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<sup>2</sup>Notice that you can also use shortcuts such “`ena`” and “`conf t`” for those commands.

```
enable
configure terminal
  interface FastEthernet0/0
    ip address 192.168.0.Z 255.255.255.0
    no shutdown
  end
```

You have now configured the interfaces on the link.

## 4.1 Verify that the network operates correctly

Now that you finished your configuration you can use the `ping` command in order to generate a stream of 5 ICMP Echo Request and ICMP Echo Reply to verify that the network topology works and that routers can exchange traffic between them. Open the console of the router **R1**. Assuming that the configuration of the router is the one suggested in previous section, you just need to use the command below to ping the router **R2**.

```
ping 192.168.0.2
```

You should see a similar text appearing on each console:

```
Router# ping 192.168.0.2
Sending 5, 100-byte ICMP Echos to 192.168.0.2, timeout is 2 seconds:
.!!!!
Success rate is 80 percent (4/5), round-trip min/avg/max = 4/4/20 ms
Router#
```

Please note that Cisco routers tend to miss the first reply to the `ping` command, while the remaining four are received correctly. A missing answer is shown with the dot sign “.”, while a successful answer is shown with the exclamation mark (“!”). Therefore, if you type the `ping` command for the first time and the first (or, in some cases, the first two) answers are missing, nothing is wrong on your side. Vice versa, if all the five answers are negative, something is wrong in your configuration.

## 4.2 Navigating Cisco Router Command Line Interface

This section contains a few tips that can help using the Command Line Interface (CLI) of Cisco routers.

The CLI offers a help function. By typing `?` at any point, the router will show all possible options. If `?` is typed on an empty line, all accepted commands in the current mode are shown. If `?` is typed after the name of a command (or a command and one or more of its parameters), the next accepted parameter or keyword is shown.

Typing the Tab key after partially typing a command or keyword completes it. For example, if tab is pressed after typing `sho` the router will complete the keyword into `show`. Also, commands do not need to be typed completely, as long as they are unambiguous. For example, typing `conf term` is equivalent to typing `configure terminal`.

One important command that enables visualizing useful information is `show`. Use

```
show ?
```

to get a list of all possible information that can be shown by the router.

For example,

```
show interface FastEthernet0/0
```

visualizes the status and configuration of that particular interface.

```
show running configuration
```

visualizes the current router configuration.

Remember that the current configuration must be saved in order to make it persistent across reboots of the router. In order to achieve that use the command

```
write terminal
```

### 4.3 Make your first capture

Now we can try to capture the traffic generated by the `ping` command.

Right click on the link and select from which interface you start the capture and press *ok*. This will start capturing the traffic generated on that link opening a new Wireshark window.

Now come back to the router R1 and type again the `ping` command as we saw before.

On the Wireshark window you will see the stream of packet generated between the two routers, i.e., most likely 5 ICMP Echo Requests and 5 ICMP Echo Replies. Some additional traffic may be present, which is generated by some protocols active on the router and that are used to exchange some data on the network. For instance, the Cisco Discovery Protocol (CDP) is active by default on a Cisco device and it is used to discovery the capabilities (e.g., installed hardware, software version, etc.) of the devices present on the network.