How do I install Debathena via PXE?

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Context

The PXE installation method is a good choice if you do not currently have a version of Debian or Ubuntu installed on your computer and your computer is directly connected to MITnet. Please note the PXE **may not** be enabled on all campus networks.



You are strongly encouraged to install Debathena using the install script if at all possible (see How do I install Debathena on my personal computer?).

Answer

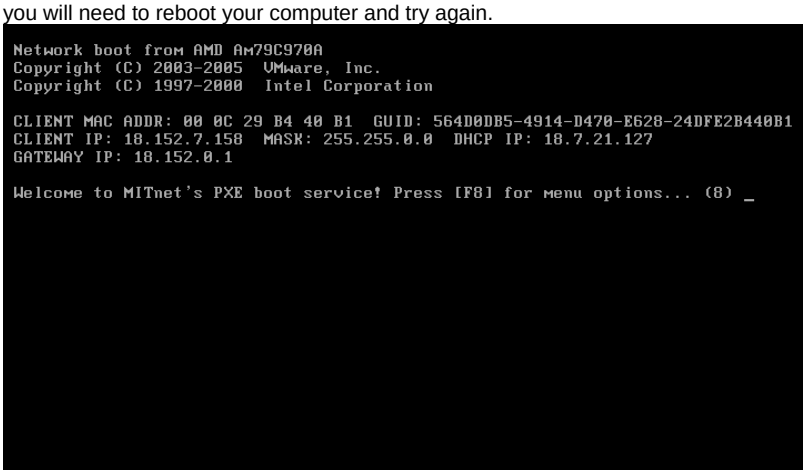
Requirements

- You must be a student, faculty or staff with a valid Kerberos ID.
- You must be on the MIT campus and have a wired Ethernet connection to MITnet. See How do I configure my computer to connect to MITnet via a wired Ethernet connection? for more information.
- You must have a static IP address. Instructions for registering for and configuring your computer to use a static IP address are available at How do I configure my computer to connect to MITnet via a wired Ethernet connection?.
- The PXE installer makes use of Ubuntu's text-based installer. It is noticeably different from `ubiquity`, the graphical installer on the Ubuntu CD. If you have never installed Ubuntu or Debian before, you may wish to use the graphical installer instead.
- Your computer must be configured to boot over the network. Many computers (the Dell Optiplex 7xx series, for example) do not come with PXE enabled by default, so it must be explicitly enabled in the BIOS. Consult your computer's documentation for more information.

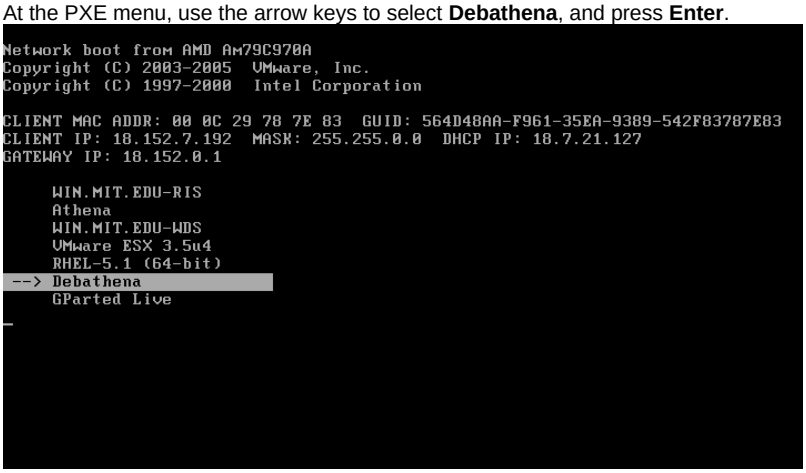
Installation

1. Configure your computer to boot over the network. Most often, this is done by pressing one of the function keys at boot time to select a boot device. Consult the documentation that came with your computer for more information.
2. Once your computer connects to the PXE server, a brief welcome message will be displayed, and you will be prompted to press the **F8 key**.

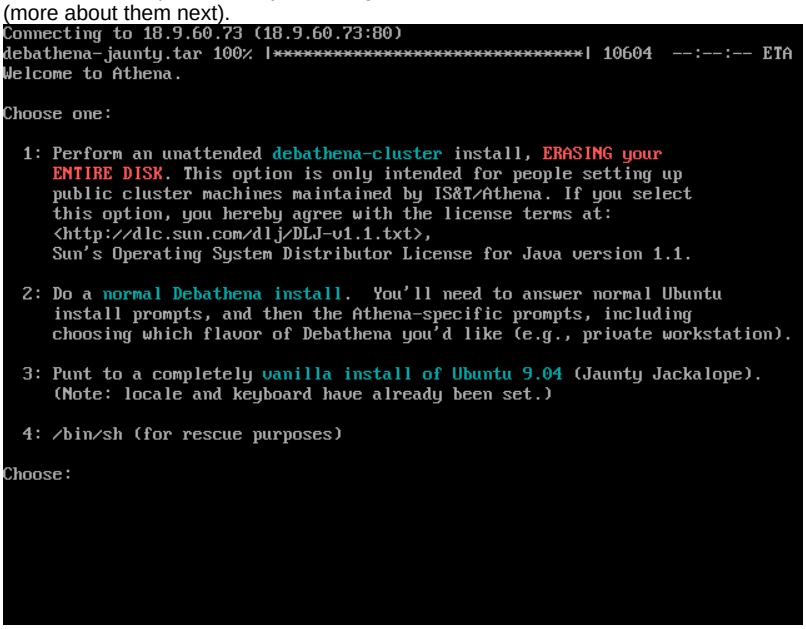
Note: If you do not press the F8 key, the PXE server will load the Windows installer for the `WIN.MIT.EDU` environment. If this happens, you will need to reboot your computer and try again.



3. At the PXE menu, use the arrow keys to select **Debathena**, and press **Enter**.



4. The installer script will attempt to configure its network connection via DHCP, and will then present you with a list of installation options (more about them next).



5. Choose an installation option.

    - debathena-cluster
      This option was used by IS&T for installing workstations in the public Athena clusters, and is **not** intended for general use. It will **DESTROY** all data on your hard drive and replace it with an Athena cluster installation, and you will not be given the opportunity to select manual disk partitioning. Additionally, the end system will not be configurable, as it is designed for public cluster user only.

    - normal debathena install

This option will install the current version of Ubuntu, and then run the Debathena installer, which will allow you to select the Debathena-metapackage you wish to install. For more information on the available Debathena-metapackages, see Which Debathena metapackage should I install?.

- vanilla install of Ubuntu 9.0
  This option will install the specified version of Ubuntu (currently Ubuntu 9.04), with no Debathena additions. Note that this uses the text-based installer, not the graphical Ubuntu installer.

- `/bin/sh`
  This option is intended for advanced users only and is a last-resort method of rescuing an existing installation. It provides a shell and minimally functional Linux environment. Users will need to mount their local drives themselves, and support for all filesystems and partition schemes may not be available. Whenever possible, consider using an Ubuntu CD for rescue purposes.

- Default
  If you are unsure which option you want, select the second choice, a **normal Debathena install**. Initially, you will proceed through the normal Ubuntu installation process. This process is documented in the Ubuntu 9.04 Installation Guide .