

HOWTO: FreeTDS for Newbies (almost complete)

Source: <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/PHP/comp.lang.php/2003-11/1640.html>

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You may want to connect Linux/PHP to a remote MS SQL Server eventually. One way to do that is to install FreeTDS, recompile PHP, and then use the `mssql_*` API within PHP. That API is well documented on php.net.

Note that my instructions here cover PHP 4.2.2 that ships with RH9. If you have an earlier or later version, this might not synchronize 100%. Also note on my RH9 system that I installed EVERYTHING in the Add/Remove Programs because that's my preference.

So what is FreeTDS? Well, TDS (Tads, you might say) is the native MS SQL Server protocol served up on port 1433. FreeTDS is a free API for *nix to connect you to that.

You can go to freetds.org and install the RPMs on Unix or Linux (*nix). This will create an executable called `tsql`, which you can use to verify whether this was installed properly or not.

Let's start using that testing tool:

```
tsql -S ip.ip.ip.ip -H windows01 -p 1433 -U sa -P "
```

This connects to ip address "ip.ip.ip.ip", server named "windows01", port 1433 (the default port for `mssql`), user "sa", and no password (specified with two tick marks). If I had a password, I'd replace the two tick marks with the password.

If you're firewall and net configuration is set up correctly, and FreeTDS is installed properly, you'll see something like:

```
1>
```

What the heck is that? That's similar to an old Oracle command line interface I once saw. It gives you numbers for every line you type up until you type GO. Then it starts over again. So, type this:

```
use pubs
go
select * from authors
go
quit
```

You'll see a table of authors from the MS SQL Server's pubs database.

That proves that your Linux system has FreeTDS configured correctly. Now you just need to get PHP to talk to it. The php.net website says (paraphrased):

You enable the MSSQL extension by adding...

```
extension=mssql.so
```

...to php.ini. (You may have to use Search in GNOME or KDE to find php.ini on your system.) (The website says it as php_mssql.dll, but that's incorrect on *nix! I've also not confirmed this filename exactly, but I assume I am correct from other documentation on the php.net site.)

Next you must recompile PHP with...

```
--with-mssql=<dir>
```

...where <dir> is the place where the FreeTDS *.so libraries are. On RH9, that's /usr/lib.

Once you have this recompiled, you can use the mssql_* API that's documented on php.net.

Enjoy!

THE END

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I'm stuck. When I try to compile PHP, I tried to download some tar file (