Fail2ban Ban brute-force attackers

CONCEPTS

Log or journal watched by a jail
↓ `filter regex`
Failure one match per IP
↓ `maxretry in findtime`
Ban action runs
↓ `after bantime`
Unban action undoes it

A jail ties a log, a filter and an action together; it bans an IP after maxretry failures within findtime.

Edit jail.local or jail.d/*.local, never jail.conf: .local files override it and survive package upgrades.

SERVICE AND CONFIG CHECK

`sudo systemctl enable --now fail2ban`
Start now and at boot

`sudo systemctl status fail2ban`
Check the daemon

`sudo fail2ban-client -t`
Test the configuration

`sudo fail2ban-client reload`
Reload all config

`sudo fail2ban-client reload <jail>`
Reload one jail

STATUS AND BANS

`sudo fail2ban-client status`
List jails

`sudo fail2ban-client status <jail>`
Failed and banned IPs of a jail

`sudo fail2ban-client banned`
All banned IPs, per jail

`sudo fail2ban-client set <jail> banip <ip>`
Ban an IP by hand

STATUS AND BANS (cont.)

`sudo fail2ban-client set <jail> unbanip <ip>`
Unban an IP in a jail

`sudo fail2ban-client unban <ip>`
Unban an IP everywhere

JAILS AT RUNTIME

`sudo fail2ban-client set <jail> bantime <time>`
Change ban length

`sudo fail2ban-client set <jail> addignoreip <ip>`
Whitelist an IP

CONFIG FILES

`/etc/fail2ban/jail.local`
Your jail overrides

`[DEFAULT]`
Section for settings every jail inherits

`enabled = true`
Turn a jail on

`bantime = 1h`
Ban length (s, m, h, d, w, mo, y)

`findtime = 10m`
Window for counting failures

`maxretry = 5`
Failures allowed before a ban

`ignoreip = 127.0.0.1/8 ::1 <ip>`
Never ban these hosts or CIDRs

FILTERS AND TESTING

`fail2ban-regex <logfile> <filter-or-regex>`
Test a filter against a log

`fail2ban-regex <logfile> /etc/fail2ban/filter.d/sshd.conf`
Test a filter file

LOGS

`sudo tail -f /var/log/fail2ban.log`
Follow Fail2ban's own log