virsh Manage libvirt VMs

CONCEPTS

As a normal user virsh talks to qemu:///session; system VMs live under qemu:///system, so add -c qemu:///system (or set LIBVIRT_DEFAULT_URI).

Connection -c qemu:///system

Domain (VM) disks, NICs, CPU, RAM

Network, pool, volume shared host resources

destroy only stops a VM like a power cut; the definition stays. undefine removes the definition.

Changes to a running VM need --live, --config (next boot) or --persistent (both); without them behaviour depends on VM state.

CONNECT

`virsh -c qemu:///system <command>`
Run against the system hypervisor

`virsh -c qemu:///session <command>`
Run against your user session

`virsh -c qemu+ssh://<user>@<host>/system list --all`
Manage a remote host over SSH

`virsh`
Interactive shell

LIFECYCLE

`virsh list`
Running VMs

`virsh list --all`
Running and stopped VMs

`virsh start <vm>`
Start a defined VM

`virsh shutdown <vm>`
Graceful ACPI shutdown

`virsh reboot <vm>`
Reboot gracefully

`virsh destroy <vm>`
Force off immediately

LIFECYCLE (cont.)

`virsh suspend <vm>`
Pause the VM in memory

`virsh resume <vm>`
Continue a paused VM

`virsh start --console <vm>`
Start and attach to console

`virsh autostart <vm>`
Start with the host

DEFINE & INSPECT

`virsh dumpxml <vm>`
Print the VM's XML

`virsh edit <vm>`
Edit the XML in $EDITOR

`virsh define <file.xml>`
Create a VM from XML

`virsh undefine <vm>`
Remove the definition

`virsh dominfo <vm>`
CPU, memory, state summary

CONSOLE & NETWORK ACCESS

`virsh console <vm>`
Serial console

`virsh domifaddr <vm>`
IP addresses of the VM

`virsh domiflist <vm>`
NICs with MAC and network

RESOURCES

`virsh setmem <vm> <size>`
Change memory of a running VM

`virsh setvcpus <vm> <n> --config`
Set vCPU count for next boot

DISKS & DEVICES

`virsh domblklist <vm>`
Disks and image paths

`virsh attach-disk <vm> <path> <target> --persistent`
Hot-add a disk

`virsh detach-disk <vm> <target> --persistent`
Remove a disk

SNAPSHOTS

`virsh snapshot-create-as <vm> <name>`
Create a snapshot

`virsh snapshot-list <vm>`
List snapshots

`virsh snapshot-revert <vm> <name>`
Roll back to a snapshot

`virsh snapshot-delete <vm> <name>`
Delete a snapshot

NETWORKS

`virsh net-list --all`
List virtual networks

`virsh net-start <net>`
Start a network

`virsh net-autostart <net>`
Start network at boot

`virsh net-dhcp-leases <net>`
Leases handed out

STORAGE

`virsh pool-list --all`
List storage pools

`virsh pool-info <pool>`
Capacity and state

`virsh vol-list <pool>`
Volumes in a pool

`virsh vol-create-as <pool> <name> 20G --format qcow2`
Create a disk image

RECIPES

Find a VM's IP and log in

```
virsh -c qemu:///system domifaddr <vm>
ssh <user>@<ip>
```

Clean snapshot before an upgrade

```
virsh shutdown <vm>
virsh snapshot-create-as <vm> pre-upgrade
virsh start <vm>
# if it goes wrong:
virsh snapshot-revert <vm> pre-upgrade
```