

Disable server side includes (SSI) in Apache on Debian GNU / Linux to Improve minor Apache performance

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Server Side Includes

By default Apache deb installable binary on Debian GNU / Linux is shipped with Apache version (Apache 2.2.16-6+squeeze6) is **configured to be able to process Server Side Include (SSIs) scripts**.

For those who don't know what is a Server-Side Includes it a way giving possibility for inclusion through `.shtml` or even `.html` files (if configured) to *dynamically include and process external scripts*. Most admins should have already seen SSI scripts, but it is possible they don't even know it is SSI. An example code from an SSI script looks something like:

As of time of writting (on *Debian stable codename Squeeze* - and I guess the unstable one too).

In Debian.BG one of my previous employment companies SSI was used on a few website Projects; However nowadays SSI's are not so popular as they used to be and many websites using mostly *PHP for a programming backend* don't use / need the *Server Side Includes at all*. Thus it is recommended on such servers where SSIs aren't used and not planned by company to be used in short future to disable SSI (`.shtml`) support completely. As the popular saying says "less is more" - having enabled SSI hanging their is simply a waste of Apache resources and just another hanging unused feature from security stand point is not good.

SSI .shtml support in Debian is enabled via `/etc/apache2/mods-available/mime.conf`, not through **apache2.conf** because of the modular Apache Debian build structure.

Thus to disable server-side parsing on Debian (and I guess other debian derivatives);

- Edit `/etc/apache2/mods-available/mime.conf`

```
vim /etc/apache2/mods-available/mime.conf
```

- Look for file section:

```
#
```

Filters allow you to process content before it is sent to the client.

#

To parse .shtml files for server-side includes (SSI):

(You will also need to add "Includes" to the "Options" directive.)

#

AddType text/html .shtml

AddOutputFilter INCLUDES .shtml

- **Comment out .shtml mime directives to:**

#

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(You will also need to add "Includes" to the "Options" directive.)

#

##AddType text/html .shtml

##AddOutputFilter INCLUDES .shtml

- **Apply changes, with the usual apache restart:**

debian:~# apache2ctl -k restart

Don't expect that *disabling SSI will give a great boost to the webserver* but it will definitely, do a minor performance improvement. This should be noticable on Webserver hosts (using apache2-mpm-prefork) with thousands of Apache forks, on a little home Webserver perf change is unnoticeable.