

# Using nc (netcat) instead of telnet

A commonly used command in Linux is `telnet`, used to check if a connection can be established to another device. For example:

```
telnet <ip/host> <port>
```

However, when this fails, a decent error message is missing. The only thing the user can do is use [ Ctrl ] + [ C ] to abort the command. Instead of `telnet`, it's better to use `nc`, which is a modern replacement and also has a built-in option for connection timeouts. Using `nc` is considered much cleaner/better than using `telnet` for connectivity checks. For example:

```
nc -vz -w 5 <ip/host> <port>
```

- `-w 5` → 5-second timeout
- `-z` → just scan, don't send data
- `-v` → verbose

Examples, comparing the output from `telnet` to `nc`/netcat:

Using telnet		Using nc/netcat	
<code>telnet concera.com 80</code>	<pre>concera@CoCoS:~\$ telnet concera.com 80 Trying 45.81.52.84... Connected to concera.com. Escape character is '^['.</pre>	<code>nc -vz -w 5 concera.com 80</code>	<pre>concera@CoCoS:~\$ nc -vz -w 5 concera.com 80 INFO fwd/rev mismatch: concera.com IP: 84.concera.hosting concera.com [45.81.52.84] 80 (http) open concera@CoCoS:~\$</pre>
<code>telnet concera.com 800</code>	<pre>concera@CoCoS:~\$ telnet concera.com 800 Trying 45.81.52.84... ^C concera@CoCoS:~\$</pre>	<code>nc -vz -w 5 concera.com 800</code>	<pre>concera@CoCoS:~\$ nc -vz -w 5 concera.com 800 INFO fwd/rev mismatch: concera.com IP: 84.concera.hosting concera.com [45.81.52.84] 800 (?): Connection timed out concera@CoCoS:~\$</pre>
<code>telnet 192.168.200.123 443</code>	<pre>concera@CoCoS:~\$ telnet 192.168.200.123 443 Trying 192.168.200.123... ^C concera@CoCoS:~\$</pre>	<code>nc -vz -w 5 192.168.200.123 800</code>	<pre>concera@CoCoS:~\$ nc -vz -w 5 concera.com 80 INFO fwd/rev mismatch: concera.com IP: 84.concera.hosting concera.com [45.81.52.84] 80 (http) open concera@CoCoS:~\$</pre>

## References:

- Mastering the Installation and Usage of `nc` Command in Linux  
<https://linuxvox.com/blog/how-to-install-nc-command-in-linux/>

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Revision #2

Created 2026-04-08 12:36:04 UTC by ADMIN Stefan

Updated 2026-04-08 13:07:21 UTC by ADMIN Stefan