

# Run Ansible Tasks Based on OS Distribution

```
greys@maverick:~/proj/ansible $ ansible-playbook --tags=rhel vm.yaml
PLAY [Tech Stack baseline] *****
TASK [Gathering Facts] *****
ok: [stream]
TASK [techstack : Register RHEL 8 against Tech Stack] *****
skipping: [stream]
PLAY RECAP *****
stream : ok=1   changed=0   unreachable=0   failed=0   skipped=1   rescued=0   ignored=0
greys@maverick:~/proj/ansible $
```

## Skipping Tasks Based on Ansible Conditionals

I'm actively refreshing my [Ansible](#) setup for both servers and desktops, running mostly [Red Hat Enterprise Linux](#) and [CentOS Linux](#). Today's quick tip is about the functionality that **Ansible** has for precise control of configuration management in such closely related distros.

## How To Run Ansible Task In Specific OS Distribution

[Ansible](#) has quite a few facts it collects about each managed system, they are usually established (collected) at the very start of running any playbook (unless you decide to [skip gathering facts](#)).

A whole group of **Ansible** facts talks about OS distribution. Here they are as confirmed from the freshly deployed [CentOS 8 Stream](#) VM:

One of these facts is **ansible\_distribution**:

```
greys@maverick:~/proj/ansible $ ansible stream -m setup| grep distribution
```

```
    "ansible_distribution": "CentOS",
"ansible_distribution_file_parsed": true,
"ansible_distribution_file_path": "/etc/redhat-release",
"ansible_distribution_file_variety": "RedHat",
"ansible_distribution_major_version": "8",
"ansible_distribution_release": "Core",
"ansible_distribution_version": "8.0",
```

We can use the very first one, called `ansible_distribution`. For CentOS, it says “CentOS”, but for [Red Hat Enterprise Linux](#), it will be “RedHat”.

## Example of using `ansible_distribution`

I have the following task below. It’s activating [RHEL 8](#) subscription using my account, but obviously should only be doing this for Red Hat systems. For [CentOS](#), I simply want to skip this task.

That’s why I’m checking for `ansible_distribution`, and as per below – the code will only run if and when the distribution is specifically [RedHat](#), and not [CentOS](#) as my “stream” VM:

```
- name: Register RHEL 8 against Tech Stack
  shell: "subscription-manager register --activationkey=rhel8
--org=100XXXXX --force"
```

```
tags:
  - rhel
when:
  ansible_distribution == "RedHat"
```

That's it! Even if I specify the **tags=rhel** filter, **ansible-playbook** will skip this task based on the collected facts (**stream** is the VM hostname):

```
greys@maverick:~/proj/ansible $ ansible-playbook --tags=rhel
vm.yaml
PLAY [Tech Stack baseline] ***
TASK [Gathering Facts] *
ok: [stream]
TASK [techstack : Register RHEL 8 against Tech Stack]
skipping: [stream]
PLAY RECAP *
stream : ok=1 changed=0
unreachable=0 failed=0 skipped=1 rescued=0
ignored=0
```

## See Also

- [Ansible](#)
- [Getting Started with Ansible](#)
- [RHEL8](#)
- [Ansible 2.0](#)
- [Create a Unix group with Ansible](#)
- [Specify User per task in Ansible](#)
- [Running Ansible scripts without making changes](#)