COMMENT PATCH FREE CHECKLIST · 9 NOV 2026

The 2-minute PATCH checklist

An AI just found **948 ways to break Linux** in one run. Fixes only protect you once they're installed, so here's how to make sure yours are.

2,308	1,724	948	$1.2M
POSSIBLE BUGS FLAGGED	CONFIRMED REAL	GOT A WORKING EXPLOIT	COST OF THE AI RUN

> "...having access to a low-privileged account on an operating system, that isn't up-to-date on its latest available patches should be considered **functionally equivalent to root access** for a well-resourced threat actor."
>
> OPENAI · A THOUSAND FEWER PATHS TO ROOT · 4 NOV 2026

In plain words

These bugs let someone who already has a normal account, or an app running on your device, take full admin control. Updates close those doors. Behind on updates? Assume a serious attacker can get in.



01 Your phone

~1 MIN

- [ ] **Android:** update the system
  `Settings` › `System` › `Software update`
- [ ] **Android:** update Google Play system
  `Settings` › `Security & privacy` › `System & updates`
- [ ] **Check the security patch date**
  `Settings` › `About phone` › `Android version`
  Older than ~3 months? Update now.
- [ ] **iPhone:** turn on automatic updates
  `Settings` › `General` › `Software Update` › `Automatic Updates`
- [ ] Switch on **Download**, **Install** and **Security Responses & System Files**
- [ ] Phone gets no updates any more? **Plan to replace it.**

02 Your laptop

~1 MIN

- [ ] **Windows**
  `Settings` › `Windows Update`
  Turn on “Get the latest updates as soon as they're available”, then **Check for updates**
- [ ] **Mac**
  `System Settings` › `General` › `Software Update` › ⓘ `Automatic Updates`
  Turn everything on
- [ ] **Linux**: turn on unattended security updates
  ```
  sudo apt install unattended-upgrades
  sudo dpkg-reconfigure unattended-upgrades
  ```
- [ ] **Reboot.** Kernel fixes only apply after a restart.

03 Habits that actually matter

- [ ] **Restart weekly.** Many updates sit “downloaded” until you reboot.
- [ ] **Don't install random apps or run random scripts.** These bugs need code already running on your device.
- [ ] **One account per person** on shared machines.
- [ ] **Let your browser update**, and restart it when it asks.

04 Devs & server admins

- [ ] **Patch kernels promptly** and reboot, or use live patching where you have it.
- [ ] **Assume** any shell account on an unpatched box can become root.
- [ ] **Isolate untrusted code.** OpenAI names sandboxes like **gVisor** and **Firecracker** to limit the blast radius.

Source: OpenAI, “A thousand fewer paths to root” (4 Nov 2026) · openai.com/index/a-thousand-fewer-paths-to-root