

# PsLoggedOn View logged-on users in Windows

<https://4sysops.com/archives/psloggedon-view-logged-on-users-in-windows/>

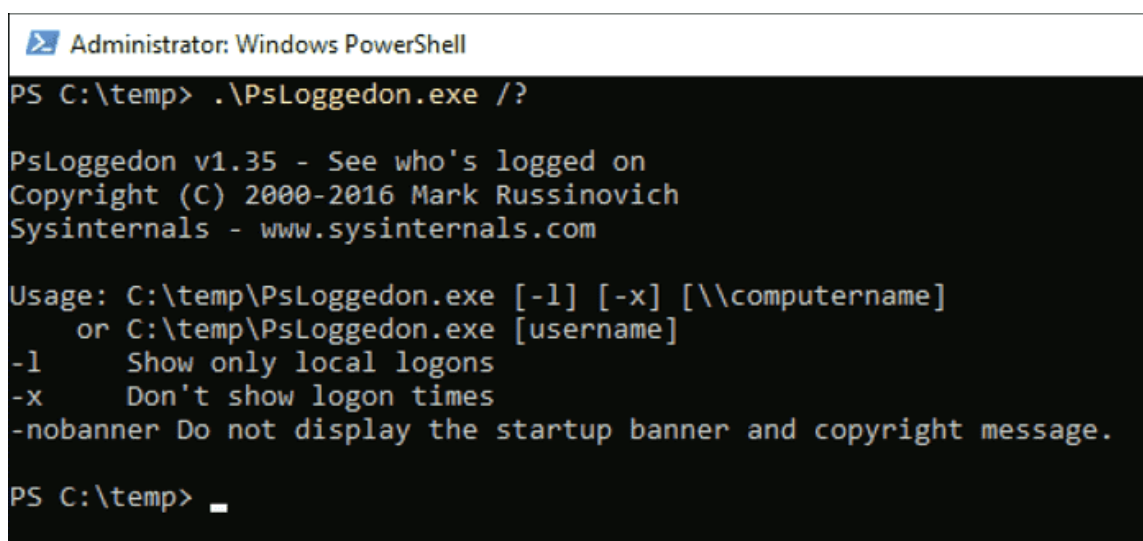
PsLoggedOn, a command line tool that is part of the Sysinternals suite, gets information about users logged on to Windows. Unfortunately, not everything works as it should.

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Every administrator knows these situations. You need to reboot a server, but you are not sure whether someone is using it. Or there is a user account getting locked, but the user claims they are not logged on anywhere. PsLoggedOn allows you to get this information quickly with a single command, at least for the first part.

`.\PsLoggedon.exe /?`



```
Administrator: Windows PowerShell
PS C:\temp> .\PsLoggedon.exe /?

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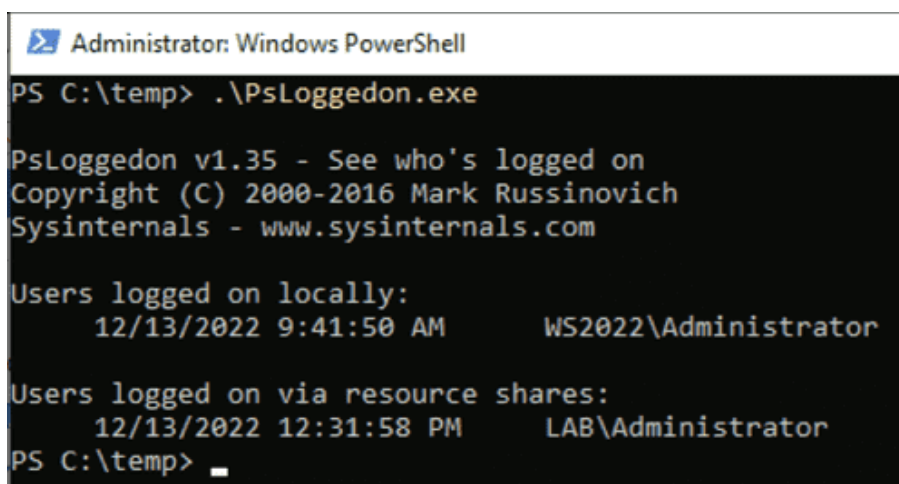
Usage: C:\temp\PsLoggedon.exe [-l] [-x] [\\computername]
       or C:\temp\PsLoggedon.exe [username]
-l      Show only local logons
-x      Don't show logon times
-nobanner Do not display the startup banner and copyright message.

PS C:\temp> _
```

*PsLoggedOn command line options*

## Get logged on users on a local computer

When you run PsLoggedOn without any command line options, it reports information about the local computer. It is available in both 32-bit and 64-bit versions. The tool will show you two types of logon information: users who are logged on locally and users who are logged on through resource (network) shares. It also shows the time at which the session started. Locally, administrative permissions are not required.



```
Administrator: Windows PowerShell
PS C:\temp> .\PsLoggedon.exe

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Users logged on locally:
    12/13/2022 9:41:50 AM      WS2022\Administrator

Users logged on via resource shares:
    12/13/2022 12:31:58 PM   LAB\Administrator

PS C:\temp> _
```

*Logon information from a local system*

A local logon means a user whose profile is loaded into the registry. In that case, the user's security identifier (SID) is present as a subkey in the HKEY\_USERS registry hive. PsLoggedOn will use the last-write time stamp from a subkey of that SID and report it as the user's logon time. Therefore, the time might not be 100% accurate.

A resource (network) share logon means that a user is accessing the computer over SMB file shares, RemoteRegistry service, and so on. The output is similar to the *net session* command. PsLoggedOn uses the NetSessionEnum API to query such information.

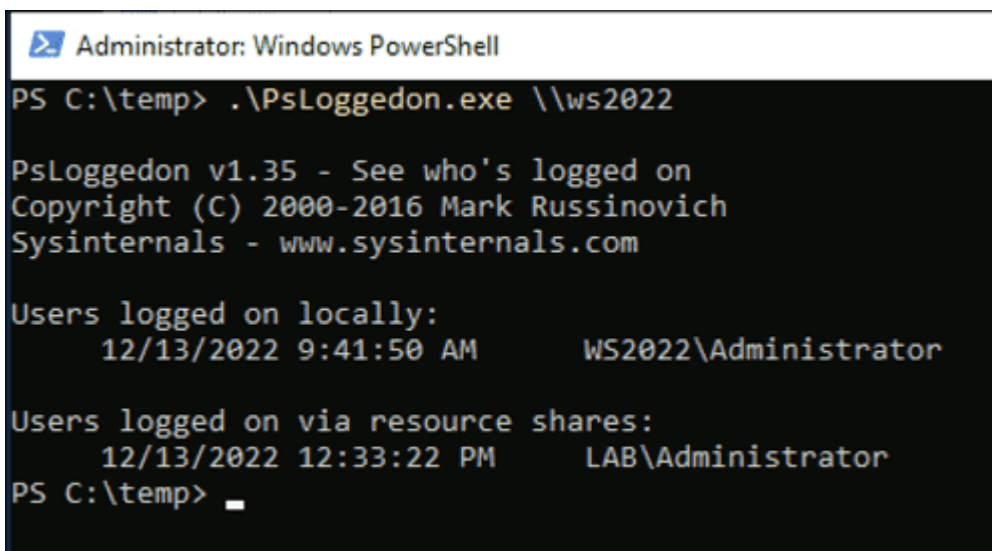
To show only local logons, use the **-l** (lower L) option. To hide the timestamp information, use the **-x** option.

### Get logged on users from remote systems

All the PsTools utilities support remote operations using a syntax that is consistent across the entire suite. Not all the utilities perform the operation the same way; there might be different requirements. PsLoggedOn requires RemoteRegistry service on remote systems.

PsLoggedOn **does not support** the options **-u** and **-p** to specify alternate credentials. Therefore, you need to run the tool under an account that has administrative permissions on the remote computer.

```
.\PsLoggedon.exe \\ws2022
```



```
Administrator: Windows PowerShell
PS C:\temp> .\PsLoggedon.exe \\ws2022

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Users logged on locally:
    12/13/2022 9:41:50 AM      WS2022\Administrator

Users logged on via resource shares:
    12/13/2022 12:33:22 PM   LAB\Administrator
PS C:\temp> _
```

*Logon information from a remote system*

As mentioned earlier, PsLoggedOn uses the RemoteRegistry service to query the information from a remote system. Because of this, it will always be shown in the resource shares logon (in my case, LAB\Administrator).

### Get a particular user's information

The [Sysinternals website](#) says that PsLoggedOn can search computers in the network neighborhood and tell you if a particular user is logged on to them. Unfortunately, this no longer seems to work. All my attempts failed to get any information at all. I tried in three different environments. The first one was a production customer domain, where I got an error message: "Error browsing network: The list of servers for this workgroup is not currently available." Note that the "browsing" instead of "browsing" is not my typo—it really is shown by the tool.

The second attempt was made in a lab environment with two Windows Server 2022 machines and a clean domain installation. The error message was the same as before.

```
.\PsLoggedon.exe LAB\Administrator
```

```
Administrator: Windows PowerShell
PS C:\temp> .\PsLoggedon.exe LAB\Administrator

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Error browsing network: The list of servers for this workgroup is not currently available

PS C:\temp> _
```

*Not everything works well in PsLoggedOn*

When I saw that message, I thought that it was caused by disabled network discovery in advanced network settings. I enabled the network discovery and disabled the Windows firewall, but the result was still the same. The last test attempt was made on a workgroup Windows 10 machine, where the error message was still the same.

It's a little sad that this feature does not work in a domain environment where the tool could easily query computers from the domain controller.