

Quick Unix Tutorial

Examples of Basic Commands

Action	Command	Examples	
append to file	cat >>	cat >> file1	
combine 2 files	cat	cat file1 file2 > file3	
copy files	cp	cp myfile copymyfile	
create a file	cat	cat > newfile	
edit files	vi	vi file	
list files	ls	ls bin/	
move a file	mv	mv file1 doc/chapter1	
remove a file	rm	rm unwantedfile	
rename a file	mv	mv oldfilename newfilename	
view files	cat pg more less view	cat file pg file2 file3 view file6 file7	
Directories		Command	Examples
change to another directory	cd	cd example/first/	
create a directory	mkdir	mkdir example1	
find out where you are	pwd	pwd	
go to your home directory	cd	cd	
remove an empty directory	rmdir	rmdir junk	

Redirection of Output or Input

- > redirects the output of a command to a file
- >> redirects the output of a command to the end of an existing file
- < takes the input of a command from a file, not the terminal

Summary of Basic Commands

- **apropos** [apropos\(1\)](#) locate commands by keyword lookup
- **arch** [arch\(1B\)](#) display the architecture of the current host
- **cal** [cal\(1\)](#) display a calendar
 - cal [month] year
 - month number between 1 and 12
 - year number between 1 and 9999
- **Examples:**
 - cal 1996** print calendar for year 1996
 - cal 1 1997** print calendar for January 1997
- **cancel** [lp\(1\)](#) send/cancel requests to an LP print service
- **cat** [cat\(1\)](#) concatenate and display files (To view files, create files, append to files and combine

files)

cat [options] [files]

Examples:

cat files read file(s)

cat > file create file (reads form terminal; terminate input with ^D)

cat >> file append to file (reads form terminal; terminate input with ^D)

cat file2 >> file1 appends contents of file2 to file1

- **cd** [cd\(1\)](#) shell built-in functions to change the current working directory
- **chdir** [cd\(1\)](#) shell built-in functions to change the current working directory
- **chgrp** [chgrp\(1\)](#) change the group ownership of a file
- **chmod** [chmod\(1\)](#) change the permissions mode of a file
- **chown** [chown\(1\)](#) change owner of file
- **clear** [clear\(1\)](#) clear the terminal screen
- **cp** [cp\(1\)](#) copy files
- **date** [date\(1\)](#) print and set the date
- **dc** [dc\(1\)](#) arbitrary precision desktop calculator
- **dos2unix** [dos2unix\(1\)](#) convert text file from DOS format to ISO format
- **eject** [eject\(1\)](#) eject media such as CD-ROM and floppy from drive
- **exit** [exit\(1\)](#) shell built-in functions to enable the execution of the shell to advance beyond its sequence of steps
- **file** [file\(1\)](#) [file\(1B\)](#) determine the type of a file by examining its contents
- **head** [head\(1\)](#) display first few lines of files
- **lp** [lp\(1\)](#) send/cancel requests to an LP print service
- **lpstat** [lpstat\(1\)](#) print information about the status of the LP print service
- **ls** [ls\(1\)](#) [ls\(1B\)](#) list the contents of a directory

ls [options] [directories]

the current working directory used if no directories specified

A few options:

- -a list all entries includeing hidden files (starting with .)
 - -i print inode numbers
 - -l long list (mode, links, owner, group, size, timeof last modification, and name)
 - -t sort by modification time
 - -x multi-column list, sorted across each row
- **Mail, mailx** [mailx\(1\)](#), **mail** [mail\(1\)](#) **rmail** interactive message processing system to read mail or send mail to users

Examples:

mail with no options, to read your mail

mail user to send mail to user

mail user < filename mail a file to another user

- **mkdir** [mkdir\(1\)](#) make directories
- **more** [more\(1\)](#) browse or page through a text file
- **mv** [mv\(1\)](#) move files
- **nispasswd** [nispasswd\(1\)](#) change NIS+ password information
- **page** [more\(1\)](#) browse or page through a text file
- **pg** [pg\(1\)](#) files perusal filter for CRTs
- **pr** [pr\(1\)](#) print files
- **ps** [ps\(1\)](#) [ps\(1B\)](#) display the status of current processes
- **pwd** [pwd\(1\)](#) working directory name
- **rm** [rm\(1\)](#) remove files or directories
- **rmdir** [rm\(1\)](#) remove files or directories

- **spell** [spell\(1\)](#) find spelling errors
- **tail** [tail\(1\)](#) deliver the last part of a file
- **umask** [umask\(1\)](#) shell built-in function to restrict read/write/execute permissions
- **unix2dos** [unix2dos\(1\)](#) convert text file from ISO format to DOS format
- **vi** [vi\(1\)](#) screen-oriented (visual) display editor based on ex
- **view** [vi\(1\)](#) screen-oriented (visual) display editor based on ex
- **w** [w\(1\)](#) who is logged in, and what are they doing
- **wc** [wc\(1\)](#) display a count of lines, words and characters in a file
- **which** [which\(1\)](#) locate a command; display its pathname or alias
- **who** [who\(1\)](#) who is on the system
- **whoami** [whoami\(1B\)](#) display the effective current username
- **whois** [whois\(1\)](#) Internet user name directory service
- **write** [write\(1\)](#) write to another user