

Linux commands cheat sheet

Basic navigation

Command	Purpose	Examples	
cd	change working directory	cd .. cd /course/cs017 cd - cd ~/course cd ~dap/pub	Change to parent directory Change to /course/cs017 Change to previous directory Change to /home/YOUR_USERNAME/course Change to /home/dap/pub
ls	list files in a directory	ls ls dir1 ls -l dir1 ls -a dir1	list files in current directory list files in dir1 show details for each file in dir1 show all files (even hidden files)
pwd	print the current working directory's name		

People

Command	Purpose	Examples	
floor	see who's logged in where	floor ta	print a map of who's logged into TA areas
finger	find out about a person	finger dap	
snoop	find out about a person	snoop dap	
anyone	find your friends logged in	anyone	Add logins, 1 per line to your ~/.anyone
zwrite	send a message to a person	zwrite dap	
su	switch to user	Don't use this. Use sux.	
sux	switch to user (can use graphical apps)	sux - dap	Switch to user 'dap'

Permissions

Command	Purpose	Examples	
chgrp	change the group which owns a file	chgrp GROUP file	Change group of 'file' to GROUP
chmod	change the user who owns a file	chmod MODE file	Change mode of 'file' to MODE
umask	change your umask	umask MODE	Change default umask to MODE

Specific file types

Command	Purpose	Command	Purpose
acroread	Views pdf files	gzip/gunzip	Gzip compression
xpdf	Views pdf files	zip/unzip	Windows-compatible compression
xdvi	Views dvi files		
gv	Views postscript files (.ps)		

Miscellaneous commands

Command	Purpose	Examples	
mv	move and rename files	mv file1 file2 mv file1 dir1	Renames 'file1' to 'file2' Moves 'file1' into 'dir1'
cp	copy files	cp file1 file2 cp -r dir1 dir2	Copies 'file1' to 'file2' Copies everything in 'dir1' to new directory 'dir2'
file	print the type of a file	file file1.pdf	Prints the type of 'file1.pdf'
cat	print a file to the screen	cat file1.txt	Prints 'file1.txt'
less	print a file to the screen, but allow scrolling	less file1.txt	Prints 'file1.txt', with scrolling
rm	delete a file	rm file1 rm -r dir1	Delete 'file1' Delete 'dir1' and everything in it
rmdir	delete an empty directory	rmdir dir1	Delete 'dir1' (must be empty)
mkdir	create a directory	mkdir dir1	Create 'dir1' (must not exist)
tar	create a tar archive	tar xzvf file.tar.gz tar czvf file.tar.gz file1 file2	Decompress 'file.tar.gz' Create 'file.tar.gz', a zipped version of 'file1' and 'file2'
grep	search within a file	grep Lambda file1 file2 grep -i Lambda file1 grep -r lambda /course/cs017	Search for 'Lambda' in 'file1' and 'file2' Case-insensitive search Search all of /course/cs017 (recursively)
find	finds files in a directory tree	find dir1 -name boo	Find file named 'boo' in directory 'dir1'
ps	list running processes	ps -U <yourlogin>	Print processes you're running
kill	kills a process	kill <pid> kill -9 <pid>	End process by process id (obtained from ps) For stubborn processes, REALLY kill them.
pkill	kills a process by name	pkill <name> pkill -9 <name>	Kill all processes with <name> in their name For REALLY stubborn processes