Working with Files and Directories

FILE DISPLAY COMMANDS(cat)

- The cat utility is one of the most used commands for viewing file content in Linux.

- To view the contents of a file using cat, simply type the command name followed by the file you want to view.

  cat /etc/passwd

In the above command, the cat command displays the contents of the passwd file. The passwd file contains user-related details on a Linux machine.

FILE DISPLAY COMMANDS(cat)

- By default, the output of the cat command will not be numbered. Therefore, if you want to number the lines in the output then you can use the -n option as follows.
- **cat -n /etc/passwd**
- You can also use the cat utility to view multiple files at a time.
- **sudo cat /etc/passwd /etc/shadow**

FILE DISPLAY COMMANDS(more)

- Sometimes the output of a file can be pretty large. The **more** utility enables easier viewing of large files in one screen, at a time.

- E.g. To view the passwd file in smaller sections, you can use the more command like:
more /etc/passwd

FILE DISPLAY COMMANDS(more)

- If you wish to specify the number of lines displayed in each section at a time then you can use the -x option, where x is the number of lines you want the command to display.

- For example, the following command will display four lines per screen:

  more -4 /etc/passwd

FILE DISPLAY COMMANDS(less)

- less command views the file one page at a time.
- The best thing is that you exit less (by pressing q), there are no lines displayed on the screen.

FILE DISPLAY COMMANDS(less)

e.g.

less /etc/passwd

- To display line numbers in the output, use the -N option as follows.

less -N /etc/passwd

FILE DISPLAY COMMANDS(head)

- Sometimes you might only want to view the first few lines of a file, and this is where the head utility comes in picture. By default, only the first 10 lines of a file are shown.

- **head /etc/passwd**

FILE DISPLAY COMMANDS(head)

- To customize the number of lines you want to view, use the -x option, where x is the number of lines you want to view.

- For example, to view the first 20 lines: **head -20 /etc/passwd**

FILE DISPLAY COMMANDS(tail)

- The tail command works in an almost opposite manner to the head utility i.e. it outputs the last part of a file.
- By default, the last 10 lines of a file are shown.

tail /etc/passwd

FILE DISPLAY COMMANDS(tail)

- Like the head command, you can also customize the number of lines you want to view with tail command.

tail -10 /etc/passwd

FILE DISPLAY COMMANDS(tail)

- To display live data in interactive mode, use the -f flag with the tail command.

- For example, to always view the latest 10 log messages in the syslog file:
tail -f /var/log/syslog