Environment Variables and Class Paths

If you do:

```
$ java -version
```

and things work fine, your basic path is set correctly as described in the **alternatives** section. You might also try:

```
$ readlink -f $(which java)
```

which will follow the links to print out the path to the actual installation.

The **CLASSPATH** environment variable can be used to locate user classes that are in addition to those directly part of the **jdk** or **jre** installation and extensions.

While you can always set this variable in your **.bashrc** initialization file, this becomes associated with the environment only of the particular user and is effective at all times. It is thus generally better to use the **-cp** option when invoking Java with the application: this could be made part of a startup script, for example.