



Command Line Reference

These instructions provided a basic reference for the command line. We list examples to navigate file directories using `pwd` and `cd`, view directory contents using `ls`, move files using `mv`.

Command	Results
<code>pwd</code>	Print the file path of your current directory.
<code>cd [dir]</code>	Move from to a new directory specified by the supplied file path.
<code>cd ..</code>	Move up one directory from where you currently are.
<code>ls</code>	List contents of the current directory.
<code>ls [dir]</code>	List contents of the directory specified.
<code>ls -l [dir]</code>	List contents of the directory specified along with file size and other info.
<code>less [file]</code>	Open a preview of the specified file. Close the preview by pressing <code>q</code> .
<code>cat [file]</code>	Print the contents of the specified file to the screen.
<code>head [file]</code>	Print the first 5 lines of the specified file to the screen.
<code>head -n [file]</code>	Print the first <code>n</code> lines of the specified file (replace <code>n</code> with any number).
<code>tail [file]</code>	Print the last 5 lines of the specified file to the screen.
<code>tail -n [file]</code>	Print the last <code>n</code> lines of the specified file (replace <code>n</code> with any number).
<code>rm [file]</code>	Delete a file (<i>use with extreme caution - there is no way to undo</i>).
<code>mv [file] [dir]</code>	Move the specified file into the specified directory (must already exist).
<code>mv [dir1] [dir2]</code>	Move <code>dir1</code> into <code>dir2</code> (<code>dir2</code> must exist).
<code>mv [file1] [file2]</code>	Rename <code>file1</code> as <code>file2</code> .
<code>mv [dir1] [dir2]</code>	Rename <code>dir1</code> as <code>dir2</code> (<code>dir2</code> should not already exist).
<code>mkdir [dir]</code>	Make a directory with the specified directory name.
<code>wc [file]</code>	Display the word/line/character/byte counts for a file.
<code>wc -l [file]</code>	Display the number of lines present in a file.



Some useful shortcuts to know when navigating the command line

Symbol	Interpretation
~	Refers to your home directory.
.	Refers to your current working directory.
..	Refers to the parent directory of the current working directory.

Many commands (`ls`, `mv`, `cp`, `rm`) can act on sets of filenames sharing a common pattern using wildcards (* symbol).

Pattern	Matches
*	All filenames
g*	All filenames that begin with the character "g"
*.txt	All filenames that end with the characters ".txt"
g*.txt	All filenames that begin with the letter "g" and end with the characters ".txt"

Getting help

All of the commands described above have a multitude of options not discussed here, but which might be useful for your work. There are two built-in resources you can consult to get more information about these commands.

1. Many options support a `--help` option that displays a description of the command's supported syntax and options. For example, type `mkdir --help` to view details of the `mkdir` command.
2. Most commands provide a formal piece of documentation called a *manual* or *man page*. These can be viewed using the `man` command:

```
man program
```

Where `program` is the name of the command to view. Man pages can vary, but typically contain a title, a synopsis of the command's syntax, a description of the command's purpose, and a listing and description of each of the command's options. Try viewing the man page for the `ls` command. You can exit the man page using the `q` key or `Ctrl + c`.