

02 – Navigating the Unix File System

CS 2043: Unix Tools and Scripting, Spring 2019 [1]

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Table of Contents

1. Everybody! SSH into `wash.cs.cornell.edu`
2. So you've logged in. Or are sitting next to someone who has.
3. Our first commands: navigating the filesystem
4. Where to go: The Unix Filesystem
5. Let's use some files (and directories!)

Everybody! SSH into
wash.cs.cornell.edu

So you've logged in. Or are sitting
next to someone who has.

Your place in the file system: where am I?

What you should see now (modulo colors)

```
NetID@wash ~ $
```

- *NetID* is your username
- **wash** is the *hostname* of the computer you're accessing
- **~** is the path to your current *directory*
 - (we call folders "directories" in *nix land because AT&T invented these words)

- This is the **bash prompt**, the default command line.
- everything in bash is based on a *current directory*
- You are currently *inside* the **~** Directory. What does this mean?
 - **~** is a special symbol for your *home* directory
 - you own everything in your home directory
 - (on personal computers) contains Desktop, Downloads, etc.

What's in a command?

- Commands work like functions for bash
- Command is a single word, like **command**
- Commands can take arguments
 - arguments are space-separated:
 - **command arg1 arg2** passes **arg1** and **arg2** to **command**
- **Most arguments are optional**
- *position-independent* arguments are called “flags” and are prefixed with a - or --
- example: **command --flag**
- example: **command -f**

Notation

- Commands will be shown on slides using **teletype text**.

Introducing New Commands

some-command **[opt1]** **[opt2]** **<arg1>** **[arg2]**

- New commands will be introduced in block boxes like this one
 - **[brackets]** indicate *optional* items (flags / arguments)
 - **<arg1>**: **arg1** is required
 - **[arg2]**: command supports multiple arguments
- To execute **some-command**, just type its name into the shell and press return / enter.
 - **\$** in code-blocks indicate a new command being entered.
\$ some-command
output of some-command (where applicable)

Our first commands: navigating the filesystem

Where am I?

- Most shells (including ours) default to using the current path in their prompt. If not, you can find out where you are with

Print Working Directory

`pwd`

- Prints the “full” path of the current directory.
 - The `-P` flag is needed when *symbolic* links are present.
- Handy on minimalist systems when you get lost.
- Can be used in scripts.

What's here?

- Knowing where you are is useful, but understanding what else is there is too...

List Directory Contents

`ls`

- Lists directory contents (including subdirectories).
- Works like the `dir` command in Windows.
- The `-l` flag lists detailed file / directory information (we'll learn more about flags later).
- Use `-a` to list hidden files.

Ok let's go!

- Moving around is as easy as

Change Directories

```
cd [directory name]
```

- Changes directory to [directory name].
- If not given a destination defaults to the user's home directory.
 - Reminder: the home directory is ~

A bit on paths

- A *path* describes how to access a file
- Most paths are *relative* paths – they start in your current working directory
- Simple paths are just file names in the current directory
 - example: I'm in `~`, which contains **course**; while I'm in `~` the path **course** will refer to this directory
- A path can *traverse* directories using the `/` separator
 - example: the path `~/course` will *always* mean the directory **course** in my home directory, no matter what my current working directory is.
 - example: to get to the directory **bar** in the directory **baz** in the directory `~`, I could `cd ~/bar/baz`.

Relative Path Shortcuts

- Relative path shortcuts worth remembering:

Shortcut	Expands To
~	current user's home directory
.	the current directory
..	the parent directory of the current directory
-	for cd , return to previous working directory

- An example:
 - ~/**course/cs2043** arbitrary choice, nothing special about it.
 - After each **cd** command, execute **pwd** to confirm.

```
$ cd ~/course/cs2043 # go to starting location
$ cd                  # now at /home/mpm288
$ cd -                # now at ~/course/cs2043
$ cd ..               # now at ~/course
```

Where to go: The Unix Filesystem

The Unix Filesystem

- Unlike Windows, UNIX has a single global “root” directory (instead of a root directory for each disk or volume).
 - The root directory is just /
- All files and directories are case sensitive.
 - `hello.txt` **!=** `hElLo.TxT`
- Directories are separated by / in Unix instead of \ in Windows.
 - UNIX: `/home/mpm288/lemurs`
 - Windows: `E:\Documents\lemurs`
- Absolute paths start with a /, and always refer to the root directory (and never care about the current working directory)
- Hidden files and directories begin with a “.”
 - e.g. `.git/` (a hidden directory)
 - e.g. `..` (your parent directory)

What's Where?

- **/dev**: Hardware devices, like your hard drive, USB devices.
- **/lib**: Stores libraries, along with **/usr/lib**, **/usr/local/lib**, etc.
- **/mnt**: Frequently used to mount (access) disk drives.
 - Your second hard drive, for example. Instead of E:\, **/mnt/better_name_than_E**
- **/media**: For accessing removable storage drives, like flash drives, CDs, etc.
 - instead of D:\, **/media/optical_drive**
- **/usr**: Mostly user-installed programs and amenities.
- **/etc**: System-wide settings.

What's Where: Programs Edition

- Programs *usually* installed in one of the “binaries” directories:
 - `/bin`: System programs.
 - `/usr/bin`: System-managed user programs.
 - `/usr/local/bin`: Manually-installed user programs

Personal Files

- Your personal files are in your home directory (and its subdirectories), which is *usually* located at

Linux	Mac
<code>/home/username</code>	<code>/Users/username</code>

- There is also a built-in alias for it: `~`
- For example, the course for the user **mpm288** is located at

Linux	Mac
<code>/home/mpm288/course</code>	<code>/Users/mpm288/course</code>
<code>~/course</code>	<code>~/course</code>

Let's use some files (and directories!)

Printing a file

- What good is moving around with reading stuff?

Concatenate files and print them

```
cat [files]...
```

- Prints (“concatenates”) the listed files to your terminal
 - With no arguments, does something more advanced
-
- **note:** if you run **cat** without any arguments and your console is just hanging, hold **CTRL** and press **C** to stop the program.
 - This works in general to stop programs.
 - try to **cat** the file **README** in your home directory!
 - **READMEs** are generally important files. Read them if you want information!

Creating a new File

- The easiest way to create an empty file is using

Change File Timestamps

```
touch [flags] <file>
```

- Adjusts the timestamp of the specified file.
 - With no flags uses the current date and time.
 - If the file does not exist, **touch** creates it.
 - “But I swear I haven’t changed the file, look at the timestamp.”
 - ... timestamps prove nothing.
- File extensions (**.txt**, **.c**, **.py**, etc) often **don’t** matter in Unix.
 - Using **touch** to create a file results in a blank plain-text file.
 - You don’t have to add **.txt** if you don’t want to.

Creating a new Directory

- No magic here...

Make Directories

```
mkdir [flags] <dir1> <dir2> <...> <dirN>
```

- Can use relative or absolute paths.
 - Not restricted to making directories in the current directory only.
- Need to specify at least one directory name.
- Can specify multiple, separated by spaces.
- The **-p** flag is commonly used in scripts:
 - Makes all parent directories if they do not exist.
 - Convenient because if the directory exists, **mkdir** will not fail.

File Deletion

- **Warning:** once you delete a file (from the command line) there is no *easy* way to recover the file.

Remove Files or Directories

```
rm [flags] <filename>
```

- Removes the file **<filename>**.
- Remove multiple files with wildcards (more on this later).
 - Remove every file in the current directory: **rm ***
 - Remove every **.jpg** file in the current directory: **rm *.jpg**
- Prompt before deletion: **rm -i <filename>**

Deleting Directories

- By default, `rm` cannot remove directories. Instead we use...

Remove Directory

```
rm -r [flags] <directory>
```

- Removes an **empty** directory.
 - Throws an error if the directory is not empty.
 - You are encouraged to use this command: failing on non-empty can and will save you!
-
- To delete a directory and all its subdirectories, we pass `rm` the flag `-r` (for recursive)
 - `rm -r /home/mpm288/oldstuff`
 - THIS IS DANGEROUS!

Copy That!

Copy

`cp [flags] <file> <destination>`

- Copies from one location to another.
- To copy multiple files, use wildcards (such as *).
 - Globbs / patterns can only be used for **<src>**.
 - **<dest>** must be explicit and singularly defined.
 - Completely reasonable...how would it know what to do if there is ambiguity in where to send the file(s)?
- To copy a complete directory: `cp -r <src> <dest>`
- To overwrite more aggressively: `cp -f <src> <dest>`

Move it!

- Unlike the `cp` command, the `move` command automatically recurses for directories.
 - Think of the implication of if it did not...

Move (or Rename) Files and Directories

```
mv [flags] <source> <destination>
```

- Moves a file or directory from one place to another.
- Also used for renaming, rename `<oldname>` to `<newname>`.
 - `mv badFolderName correctName`

Hand it in!

- For CS2043, we've written a special command **handin** to turn in your assignments

hand in your homework

```
handin <assignment> <file_name>
```

- Hands in a *single file* or a *directory you own* for the named assignment
- If you need to hand in more than one file, make a directory and **cp** the files into it

check if you **handed in** your homework

```
check-handin <assignment>
```

Recap

<code>ls</code>	list directory contents
<code>cd</code>	change directory
<code>pwd</code>	print working directory
<code>rm</code>	remove file
<code>rmdir</code>	remove directory
<code>cp</code>	copy file
<code>mv</code>	move file
<code>handin</code>	hand in homework
<code>check-handin</code>	check if <code>handin</code> worked

References

- [1] Stephen McDowell, Bruno Abrahao, Hussam Abu-Libdeh, Nicolas Savva, David Slater, and others over the years. “Previous Cornell CS 2043 Course Slides”.