Table Of Contents

Table Of Contents

nixCraft: Linux Tips, Hacks, Tutorials, And Ideas In Blog Format
http://www.cyberciti.biz/

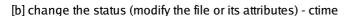## Find files by access, modification date under Linux or UNIX

Posted by Vivek Gite <vivek@nixcraft.com>

Q. I don't remember where I saved pdf and text files under Linux. I have downloaded files from internet a few months ago. How do I find my pdf files?

A. You need to use find command. Each file has three time stamps, which record the last time that certain operations were performed on the file:
[a] access (read the file's contents) - atime

[b] change the status (modify the file or its attributes) - ctime

[c] modify (change the file's contents) - mtime

[1]

You can search for files whose time stamps are within a certain age range, or compare them to other time stamps.

You can use -mtime option. It returns list of file if the file was last accessed N*24 hours ago. For example to find file in last 2 months (60 days) you need to use -mtime +60 option.

- **-mtime +60** means you are looking for a file modified 60 days ago.
- **-mtime -60** means less than 60 days.
- **-mtime 60** If you skip + or - it means exactly 60 days.

So to find text files that were last modified 60 days ago, use

```
$ find /home/you -iname "*.txt" -mtime -60 -print
```

Display content of file on screen that were last modified 60 days ago, use

```
$ find /home/you -iname "*.txt" -mtime -60 -exec cat {} \;
```

Count total number of files using wc command

```
$ find /home/you -iname "*.txt" -mtime -60 | wc -l
```

You can also use access time to find out pdf files. Following command will print the list of all pdf file that were accessed in last 60 days:

```
$ find /home/you -iname "*.pdf" -atime -60 -type -f
```

List all mp3s that were accessed exactly 10 days ago:

```
$ find /home/you -iname "*.mp3" -atime 10 -type -f
```

There is also an option called -daystart. It measure times from the beginning of today rather than from 24 hours ago. So, to list the all mp3s in your home directory that were accessed yesterday, type the command

```
$ find /home/you -iname "*.mp3" -daystart -type f -mtime 1
```

Where,

- **-type f** - Only search for files and not directories

Read man page of find command for more information.

4000+ howtos and counting! Want to read more Linux / UNIX howtos, tips and tricks? Subscribe to our daily email newsletter or weekly newsletter to make sure

you don't miss a single tip/tricks. Alternatively, subscribe via **RSS/XML** feed.

Article printed from Frequently Asked Questions About Linux / UNIX: **http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/**

URL to article: **http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/howto-finding-files-by-date/**

URLs in this post:

[1] Image: **http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/faq/category/bash-shell/**