

Table Of Contents

Table Of Contents 1

Rules for naming file names 2

How do I show hidden files? 2

How do I access filenames with spaces? 2

[Home](#) > [Faq](#) > [CentOS](#)

Linux Rules for file names

Posted by [Vivek Gite](#) <vivek@nixcraft.com>



[1]

Q. Can you specify rules for naming a file name under Linux?

A. When you save a data, you need to select a file name, you need to follow certain rules and regulation regarding the length of the name and the types of characters you include.

Rules for naming file names

The rules for **naming a file names** under Linux (and UNIX like oses) are as follows:

[a] The file names can be **up to 255 characters** (or bytes) long

[b] You cannot use all special characters, try to use:

=> Uppercase or lowercase letters

=> Digits

=> Special characters, such as: +, -, _, .

[c] File names are case-sensitive. Thus, the following file names all are different:

```
vivek Vivek VIVEK VIVeK
```

[d] Try to avoid non printable and following characters in filenames:

/, >, <, ?, ", ', blank space

How do I show hidden files?

Use `ls -a` or `ls -la` command:

```
$ ls -la
$ ls -a
```

Use `-a` to see invisible file names.

How do I access filenames with spaces?

To access a filename with spaces, enclose the filename in quotes:

```
$ cat "my bio data.txt"
$ cd "a long dir name"
```

Please note that above rules almost apply to other UNIX like operating system such as HP-UX, Solaris, FreeBSD etc.

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/linux-file-names/>

URLs in this post:

[1] Image: <http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/faq/category/file-system/>

Copyright © 2006-2010 [nixCraft](http://www.cyberciti.biz/). All rights reserved. This print / pdf version is for personal non-commercial use only. More details <http://www.cyberciti.biz/tips/copyright>.