

Table Of Contents

Table Of Contents 1

[Home](#) > [Faq](#) > [BASH Shell](#)

How do I Compress a Whole Linux or UNIX Directory?

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



[1]

Q. How can I compress a whole directory under Linux / UNIX using a shell prompt?

A. It is very easy to compress a Whole Linux/UNIX directory. It is useful to backup files, email all files, or even to send software you have created to friends. Technically, it is called as a compressed archive. GNU tar command is best for this work. It can be use on remote Linux or UNIX server. It does two things for you:

=> Create the archive
=> Compress the archive

You need to use tar command as follows (syntax of tar command):

tar -zcvf archive-name.tar.gz directory-name

Where,

- -z: Compress archive using gzip program
- -c: Create archive
- -v: Verbose i.e display progress while creating archive
- -f: Archive File name

For example, you have directory called /home/jerry/prog and you would like to compress this directory then you can type tar command as follows:

```
$ tar -zcvf prog-1-jan-2005.tar.gz /home/jerry/prog
```

Above command will create an archive file called prog-1-jan-2005.tar.gz in current directory. If you wish to restore your archive then you need to use following command (it will extract all files in current directory):

```
$ tar -zxvf prog-1-jan-2005.tar.gz
```

Where,

- -x: Extract files

If you wish to extract files in particular directory, for example in /tmp then you need to use following command:

```
$ tar -zxvf prog-1-jan-2005.tar.gz -C /tmp
$ cd /tmp
$ ls -
```

See also:

- [Howto: Use tar command through network over ssh session](#) [2]

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/how-do-i-compress-a-whole-linux-or-unix-directory/>

URLs in this post:

[1] Image: <http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/faq/category/unix/>

[2] Howto: Use tar command through network over ssh session: <http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/2006/02/howto-use-tar-command-through-network.php>

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