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How To Search Shell Command History

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

Q. How do I search old command history under bash shell? How do I display or modify previous commands?

A. Almost all modern shell allows you to search command history if enabled by user. Use history command to display the history list with line numbers. Lines listed with with a * have been modified by user.



[1]

Shell history search command

Type history at a shell prompt:

```
$ history
```

Output:

Sample output:

```
6  du -c
7  du -ch
8  ls [01-15]*-2008
9  ls -ld [01-15]*-2008
10 ls -ld [1-15]*-2008
11 ls -ld [0]*-2008
12 ls -ld [01]*-2008
13 rm -vrf [01]*-2008
14 du -ch
15 ls
16 cd
17 umount /mnt
18 df -H
19 vnstat
20 yum update
21 vnstat -m
22 vnstat -m -i eth0
....
...
996 ping router.nixcraft.in
997 ssh vivek@pl.vpn.nixcraft.in
998 alias
999 ~/scripts/clean.rss --fetch
1000 vnstat
1001 ~/scripts/clean.rss --update
```

To search particular command, enter:

```
$ history | grep command-name
$ history | egrep -i 'scp|ssh|ftp'
```

Emacs Line-Edit Mode Command History Searching

To get previous command containing string, hit [CTRL]+[r] followed by search string:

```
(reverse-i-search) :
```

To get previous command, hit [CTRL]+[p]. You can also use up arrow key.

```
CTRL-p
```

To get next command, hit [CTRL]+[n]. You can also use down arrow key.

```
CTRL-n
```

fc command

fc stands for either "find command" or "fix command". For example list last 10 command, enter:

```
$ fc -l 10
```

To list commands 130 through 150, enter:

```
$ fc -l 130 150
```

To list all commands since the last command beginning with ssh, enter:

```
$ fc -l ssh
```

You can **edit commands** 1 through 5 using vi text editor, enter:

```
$ fc -e vi 1 5
```

Delete command history

The -c option causes the history list to be cleared by deleting all of the entries:

```
$ history -c
```

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