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List the contents of a tar or tar.gz file

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Q. How do I list the contents of a tar or tar.gz file?

A. GNU/tar is an archiving program designed to store and extract files from an archive file known as a tarfile. You can create a tar file or compressed tar file tar. However sometime you need to list the contents of a tar or tar.gz file on screen before extracting the all files.

[1]

Task: List the contents of a tar file

Use the following command:

```
$ tar -tvf file.tar
```

Task: List the contents of a tar.gz file

Use the following command:

```
$ tar -ztvf file.tar.gz
```

Task: List the contents of a tar.bz2 file

Use the following command:

```
$ tar -jtvf file.tar.bz2
```

Where,

- **t**: List the contents of an archive
- **v**: Verbosely list files processed (display detailed information)
- **z**: Filter the archive through gzip so that we can open compressed (decompress) .gz tar file
- **j**: Filter archive through bzip2, use to decompress .bz2 files.
- **f filename**: Use archive file called filename

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