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How do I find the largest top 10 files and directories on a Linux / UNIX / BSD filesystem?

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

Sometime it is necessary to find out what file(s) or directories is eating up all disk space. Further it may be necessary to find out it at particular location such as /tmp or /var or /home etc.

There is no simple command available to find out the largest files/directories on a Linux/UNIX/BSD filesystem. However, combination of following three commands (using pipes) you can easily find out list of largest files:

- du : Estimate file space usage
- sort : Sort lines of text files or given input data
- head : Output the first part of files i.e. to display first 10 largest file



[1]

Here is what you need to type at shell prompt to find out top 10 largest file/directories is taking up the most space in a /var directory/file system:

```
# du -a /var | sort -n -r | head -n 10
```

Output:

```
1008372 /var
313236 /var/www
253964 /var/log
192544 /var/lib
152628 /var/spool
152508 /var/spool/squid
136524 /var/spool/squid/00
95736 /var/log/mrtg.log
74688 /var/log/squid
62544 /var/cache
```

If you want more human readable output try:

```
# du -ks /var | sort -n -r | head -n 10
```

Where,

- -a : Include all files, not just directories (du command)
- -h : Human readable format
- -n : Numeric sort (sort command)
- -r : Reverse the result of comparisons (sort command)
- -n 10 : Display 10 largest file. If you want 20 largest file replace 10 with 20. (head command)

Updated for accuracy!

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

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