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CLI vs. GUI

The graphic user interface (GUI) is a system in which information is displayed with graphics, icons, and text. This allows the common layman to easily understand how to use and navigate a computer. The command-line interface (CLI) is a system comprised of the most basic components of a computer: code. Rather than navigating through a computer system with graphics such as folders, files, and documents, commands are used to execute certain tasks.

One major difference between the two is that the CUI is often difficult— or even impossible— to use without at least a basic knowledge of command prompts. The GUI on the other hand is purposely made to be simple, and its graphic based system allows people of different languages and ages to understand its interface, in a similar vein to street signs.

Another difference is that the CLI has greater capabilities than the GUI. With the GUI, you can really only interact with the elements given to you. You can make folders or files, rename, move, and delete them. The CLI, on the other hand, has the potential to change and affect almost anything on the computer.