Bash Command Tutorial 1

When you open Ubuntu (WSL) you'll see a prompt that looks like this:

[your_name]@[your_computer]:~$

For example, mine looks like this:

hayden@Hayden-KatanaGF76:~$

Let's break that down:

hayden

This is your UNIX **username**, which you created when you first set up Ubuntu.

@

This is the "at" symbol. It just separates your UNIX username from your machine's **hostname**.

Hayden-KatanaGF76

This is the hostname of your machine or Linux environment.

:

The colon is a separator between the hostname and your current **directory**. A directory is equivalent to a folder in Windows.

~

The tilde is a symbolic shortcut to your **home directory**, which is the default directory when you open up a Linux terminal. "~" shortcuts to /home/[username]. This means that hayden@Hayden-KatanaGF76:~$ is equivalent to hayden@Hayden-KatanaGF76:/home/hayden$.

$

The dollar sign is the prompt symbol for a normal user. If you are a root (administrator) user, you see a # instead.

So, hayden@Hayden-KatanaGF76:~$ means "the user hayden on the machine Hayden-KatanaGF76 is currently in the home directory, and the terminal is ready for the next command."

That's a lot to remember, but you'll get the hang of it if you keep practicing!

Let's practice some commands. Type this and hit Enter:

mkdir practice

"mkdir" stands for "make directory". A directory is like a folder in Windows. "mkdir practice" means "make a new directory named 'practice'".

Next we want to check that our command actually worked. Enter this:

ls

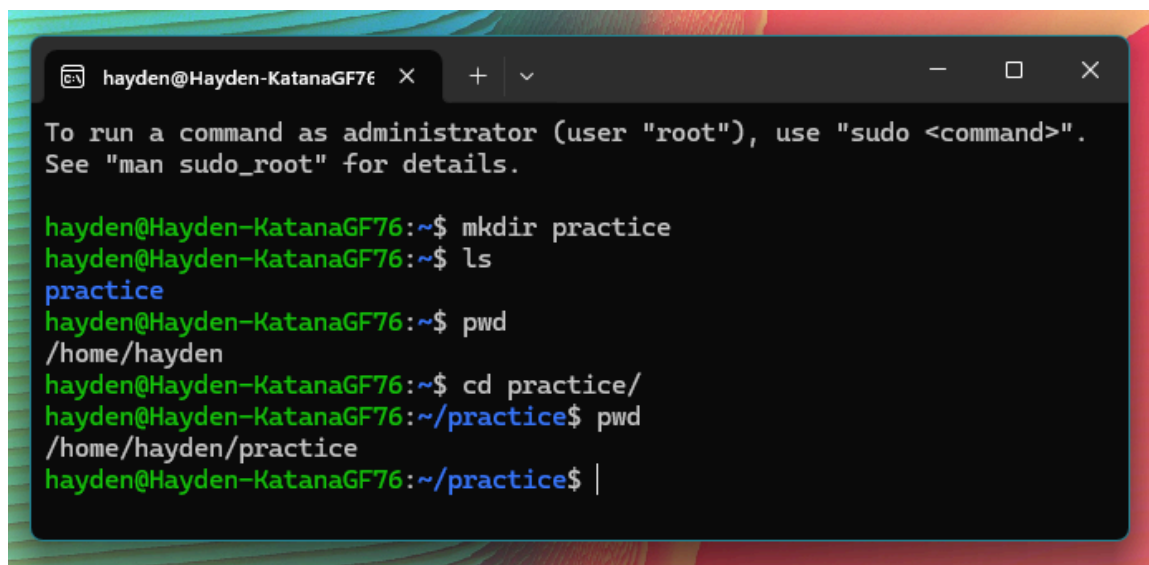"ls" stands for "list". It shows all the contents of the directory you're currently in. Since you just made a directory named 'practice' you should see this:

practice

The next command we want to practice is "pwd". That stands for "print working directory". In other words, "where are we right now?" Running that command should show /home/[your_name].

Next, enter cd practice/ and then pwd again. "cd" is "change directory", so "cd practice/" means "move into the directory named 'practice'". Once you're there, "pwd" should tell you that you successfully moved into that new directory.

If you followed all these steps, your terminal should look something like this:

Make sure everything looks right before you move on. Then return to your home directory with cd .. (that's two dots). In Linux, a dot **.** represents the current directory and two dots **..** represents one level above the current directory. To go up multiple levels, you'd enter "cd ../..", "cd ../../..", and so on.

Once you're back in the home directory you can enter clear to wipe the terminal history. It doesn't undo your commands or reset the terminal, it just gives you a clean slate so you can focus on what you're doing next.