Video - Common Windows CLI Commands (7 min)

Let's take a look at some of the cool things we can do with the Windows Command Prompt. I'll go to Start, and I'll right-click on Command Prompt and run it as an administrator so I have administrative privileges. We can run some basic commands from our Command Prompt, including running programs. I can run programs that you might not think of running from the graphical user interface, like running the date command to see the date. It wants me to enter a new date, but I don't want to do that, so I'll do Control, C, and that'll exit out of that program. I can also type in the who am I program, and it returns the user, the Windows 7 – PC user, student. I'll type in C-L-S to clear the screen. Another important command is the D-I-R command to examine the directory. Right now, I'm in the C drive in the Windows folder in the system 32 folder. If I type D-I-R, you'll see that there's way too many items in the system 32 folder. That's too many to examine at one time, so if I want to examine that folder from the command line, a better way to do it would be to type D-I-R, a space, and a pipe to the more command, and now, I can see the directory listing one page at a time. Now, I just press the spacebar, and I can see the next page of content. Every time I press the spacebar, I get the next page. I'll do a Control, C to exit out of that command and type C-L-S to clear the screen. If I want to change directories, let's say I want to get from the Windows folder, system 32 folder all the way to the root of the file system to the C drive. I can type, change directory, space, and dot, dot, and that will take me up one folder.

Let's press Enter and see what happens. You can see that I'm now in the Windows folder. If I do a change directory, space, and just a single dot, it references the same directory, so the directory won't change. I'll press Enter, and you can see I'm still in the Windows directory. Now, I'm still not in the root of the C drive. Another way to get there would be to just type C-D, space, C, colon, backslash, and press Enter, and it takes me to the root of the C drive. Now, if I type D-I-R, I can see all the files and folders in the root directory of the C drive. Now, this listing just shows me the visible files and folders, but what about the hidden files? To see those, I'll type D-I-R, space, and then I'll use a switch. I'll type forward slash A, so D-I-R, all, and now, I can see the hidden files and folders.

Lets' go into the users' directory. I'll type C-D, space, users, and now I'm in the users' folder. I'll type D-I-R, and you can see there are two folders in the users' folder. There's the Public folder and the student folder, so I'll go into the student user folder, C-D student, and then, issue the D-I-R command again, and now, I'll choose another directory. This time, I want to go into the Desktop. The Desktop is what we see behind us on the graphical user interface. I'll change directories into the Desktop. Notice that I'm using a lowercase D for desktop, and I'm not using the uppercase D. Windows is not case-sensitive, so I can use uppercase or lowercase, and Windows sees it as the same directory. So now, I'm on the Desktop. If I want to make a folder, I can type M-D for make directory, and I'll type my folder, and we can see right there behind me my folder appear on the Desktop. I'll go into that folder and issue a D-I-R command, and you can see that there's no files in this folder because it's a new folder. I do have an entry for up one folder and for the same directory here, the double dot and the single dot.

Let's create a file in this folder. To create the file, I'm going to create a text file by using the echo command and echoing some text. I'll say, "this is a test," and then I'll use a redirector and redirect it into a file called newfile.txt. So this should echo this string of text into a file called newfile.txt, and it should stay in the same directory. I'll hit Enter, and sure enough, if I type D-I-R, now there's a file called newfile.txt. If I want to change the name of this file, I can use the move command. The move command serves two purposes. I can move the file to a different directory. For instance, I can move newfile.txt, put a space, and then, I'll choose a double dot, which will move it up one folder and should move it to the Desktop.

Let's see if it works. I'll press Enter, and there it is. It was moved up one folder. I'll drag it and put it back. There we go. I can also use the move command to change the name of the file. So this time, once again, let's verify that it's in there. There it is. I'll use the move command, and this time, I'll say newfile.txt, and instead of putting a double dot or putting in a path listing, I'll just change the name of the file to file.txt, and now, it says that the file's been moved, but essentially, the only thing that moved was the name. I'll put in a D-I-R command, and you can see the name is now file.txt. I can also copy the file. I'll copy the file, file.txt, and I'll copy it to another file named backupfile.txt, and now, the file's been copied. If I put in a D-I-R command, we can see that we have two files. If I want to delete this file, I just type delete, D-E-L, backupfile.txt, and the file's deleted.

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