

lp and lpr

The command **lp** or **lpr** prints a file (onto paper as opposed to the screen). Some systems have **lp**; others have **lpr**. The syntax is:

```
lp option(s) filename(s)
lpr option(s) filename(s)
```

Printers on Unix systems are usually shared by a group of users. After you enter the command to print a file, the shell prompt returns to the screen and you can enter another command. However, seeing the prompt doesn't mean that your file has been printed. Your file has been added to the printer queue to be printed in turn.

Your system administrator has probably set up a default printer at your site. To print a file named *bills* on the default printer, use the **lp** or **lpr** command, as in this example:

```
$ lp bills
request id is laserp-525 (1 file)
$
```

lp shows an ID that you can use to cancel the print job or check its status. If you need ID numbers for **lpr** jobs, use the **lpq** program (see the section “lpstat and lpq” later in this chapter). The file *bills* will be sent to a printer called *laserp*. The ID number of the request is “laserp-525.”

lp and **lpr** have several options. Table 4-2 lists three of them.

Table 4-2. Some lp and lpr options

Option		Description
lp	lpr	
-dprinter	-Pprinter	Use given <i>printer</i> name if there is more than one printer at your site. The printer names are assigned by the system administrator.
-n#	-#	Print # copies of the file.
-m	-m	Notify sender by email when printing is done.

Windowing applications like StarOffice typically run **lp** or **lpr** for you, “behind the scenes.” They may have a printer configuration menu entry where you can specify any **lp** or **lpr** options you want to use on every print job.

If **lp** and **lpr** don't work at your site, ask other users for the printer command. You'll also need the printer locations, so you know where to get your output.