



---

## 4. Linux File Contents Command

---



# TechData-Infinity-Devops with MultiCloud



There are many commands which help to look at the contents of a file. Now we'll look at some of the commands like head, tac, cat, less & more and strings.

Commands	Function
head	It displays the beginning of a file.
tail	It displays the last part of a file.
cat	This command is versatile and multi worker.
tac	Opposite of cat.
more	Command line diaplays contents in pager form that is either in more format.
less	Command line diaplays contents in pager form that is either in less format.

1. To display the file content, execute the cat command as follows:

```
cat <file name>
```

```
root@ip-172-31-22-230:~# ls
file1  snap
root@ip-172-31-22-230:~# cat file1
welcome to the Young Minds.
root@ip-172-31-22-230:~#
```

1. Let's create a file to understand how to open a file. Execute the below command:

```
cat > Test.txt
```

This is a Test file.

# TechData-Infinity-Devops with MultiCloud



```
root@ip-172-31-22-230:~# cat >test.txt
Welcome to the Young Minds
^C
root@ip-172-31-22-230:~# ls
snap  test.txt
root@ip-172-31-22-230:~# cat test.txt
Welcome to the Young Minds
root@ip-172-31-22-230:~#
```

1. To display the file content by the more command, execute it as follows:

more test.txt

```
root@ip-172-31-22-230:~# ls
snap  test.txt
root@ip-172-31-22-230:~# more test.txt
Welcome to the Young Minds
root@ip-172-31-22-230:~#
```

1. We can display the file content by using the head command, but it is slightly different than others. It displays the first part of files via standard input. By default, it displays the first ten lines of the files. It starts reading the file from the head (first line).

head < file name>

head -15 < file name>

```
root@ip-172-31-22-230:/var/log# head auth.log
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: new group: name=ubuntu, GID=1000
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: new user: name=ubuntu, UID=1000,
GID=1000, home=/home/ubuntu, shell=/bin/bash, from=none
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'adm'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'dialout'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'cdrom'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'floppy'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'sudo'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'audio'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'dip'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'video'
root@ip-172-31-22-230:/var/log#
```

# TechData-Infinity-Devops with MultiCloud



1. The tail command is similar to the head command. The difference between both commands is that it starts reading the file from the tail (last line). Similar to head command, it also displays the output of the last ten lines by default.

tail <file name>

tail -15 <file name>

```
root@ip-172-31-22-230:/var/log# head auth.log
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: new group: name=ubuntu, GID=1000
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: new user: name=ubuntu, UID=1000,
GID=1000, home=/home/ubuntu, shell=/bin/bash, from=none
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'adm'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'dialout'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'cdrom'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'floppy'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'sudo'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'audio'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'dip'
Jun 24 07:20:16 ip-172-31-22-230 useradd[430]: add 'ubuntu' to group 'video'
root@ip-172-31-22-230:/var/log#
```

## Linux Edit file

Linux file system allows us to operate various operations on files like create, edit, rename, remove. We can edit files by different Linux editors like vim, nano, Emacs, Gedit, Gvim, and more.

## How to edit files in Linux

Let's understand how to edit files on a Linux server over different text editors.

## Edit files with VI editor

The VI editor is the most widely used text editor in Linux based systems. The Vi editor has various modes like **normal mode**, **insert mode**, **command mode**, **line mode**, and **more**. Each mode allows us to operate its specific operations.

Before editing files, let's understand how to switch a mode in Vi editor:

- Press the **ESC** key for **normal mode**.
- Press **i** Key for **insert mode**.
- Press **:q!** keys to exit from the editor without saving a file.
- Press **:wq!** Keys to save the updated file and exit from the editor.
- Press **:w test.txt** to save the file as test.txt