

# **UNIX/Linux Operating System**

#### **Shells**

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#### Introduction to shells

- The outermost layer of the operating system
  - ➤ It provides the user interface, which interprets the user commands
  - ➤ It was the unique interface before the introduction of graphics servers

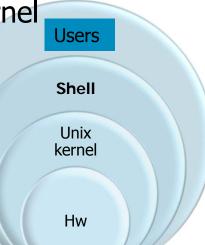
In Unix, a shell is not part of the kernel

> It is a normal user process

> Similar to DOS command

but more powerful

> Offers a programming environment



Operating Systems

#### Introduction to shells

- A shell allows
  - > Submitting commands
  - Writing shell programs (scripts)
    - Storing commands in a script file
    - Script execution by submitting the script file
- Writing a script avoids
  - > Typing complex command sequences repeatedly
  - Automating tedious, repetitive and error prone tasks

# Main shells

Shell	Characteristics
Bourne shell (sh)	Original shell, often used in Unix system programming
C-shell (csh)	Berkeley shell, very good for interactive usage, and for user scripts. Uses a syntax similar to C language
Korn shell (ksh)	Bourne shell rewritten by AT&T to be similar to C-shell
Tahoe C-shell (tcsh)	Tahoe project, an improved C-shell (superset)
Bourne again shell (bash)	Is compatible but extends csh and ksh Standard GNU Shell; POSIX conformant; powerful but not complex. Most sh scripts are interpreted by bash without changes

### Introduction to shells

- Often/bin/sh is a link to the current shell
  - > The default shell can be modified
    - chsh (change login shell)
- Different shells may accept slightly different commands

tcsh	bash
set myVar = "ciao"	myVar="ciao"
setenv MY_DIR /home/usr/	export MY_VAR=/home/usr/
if (\$str1==\$str2) then else endif	if test \$str1=\$str2 then else fi if [ \$str1=\$str2 ]; then else fi

#### shell execution

- A shell can be activated
  - > Automatically at login
  - Nested within another shell
  - > As a user program
    - | bin/tcsh, /bin/bash, ...
- A shell exit by typing
  - > Command exit
  - ➤ The EOF character (usually CTRL-d)
    - Exiting an inner shell will return to the outer shell

#### Introduction to bash

- At login a shell looks for, and executes, some configuration files that contain initialization commands
  - > For each login with password, the shell executes
    - Global scripts
    - /etc/profile
    - User scripts (executes the first existing file among)
      - ~/.bash\_profile, ~/.bash\_login, ~/.profile
  - For each login without a password, the shell executes
    - ~/.bashrc
  - > For each logout, the shell executes
    - ~/.bash\_logout

### shell command expansion

- Some characters have special meaning within the shell
- bash provide complex substitution mechanisms
  - ➤ After dividing the command line into tokens, the shell expands or solves these tokens, i.e., it applies different types of replacement
    - Braces, tilde, variables and parameters, commands, arithmetic expressions, etc.
  - ➤ The substitution is complex and takes place with a specific order

#### **Parentheses**

- Parentheses (), [], {}
  - > Enclose variables, arithmetic operations, etc.
  - ➤ In some cases, they are subject to automatic expansion (brace expansion)

echo: print command

- name=Jean
- echo \$namePaul
- > echo {\$name}Paul
  {Jean}Paul
- pecho \${name}Paul
  JeanPaul

This variable does not exist

### Quoting

- "Quoting" means the use of for quotation marks
  - Quotes ' '
    - Variables within quotes are not expanded
    - They cannot be nested
  - Double quotes " "
    - Variables within double quotes are expanded
    - They can be nested
  - ➤ Backslash \
    - Identifies the escape character, which remove the special meaning of the character that follows it

# **Examples**

```
myVar="A string"
```

- echo \$myVar
- A string
- > echo 'v = \$myVar'
- v = \$myVar
- > echo "v = \$myVar"
- v = A string
- > echo \\$myVar \$myVar
- echo "double quote\""
  double quote"

variable usage:

- set without \$
- used with \$

 $\dots$   $\rightarrow$  no expansion

" ... "  $\rightarrow$  expansion

\ cancels the meaning of the next character, which becomes a "meta-character"

### Using the output of command

- The standard output of a command can be captured by
  - > Enclosing the command in \$ (...)
  - Enclosing the command in backquotes ``
- In particular, the output of a command can be stored in a variable

```
>out=`cat file.txt`
>echo $out
>... file content ...
>out=`< file.txt`
>echo $out
>... file content ...
```

#### **Command execution**

- In a shell a command can be executed
  - Directly
    - d /home ; ls

The current shell executes the command; change directory to /home; executes ls; at the end of the working directory is /home

- > Indirectly
  - (cd /home; ls)

The current shell executes the command in a subprocess; change directory to /home; executes 1s; at the end of the working directory is the original directory

### History

#### A shell

- > Keeps the list of the last submitted commands
  - In bash, the list is stored in file .bash\_history
  - Stored in the user home directory
- > Shell commands allow reference this list

Command	Meaning
history	Displays the list of the last submitted commands
!n	Executes command number n in the history list
!str	Executes last command beginning by str
^str1^str2	Executes last command replacing str1 by str2

### **Aliasing**

- In shell you can define new names to existing commands
  - > The alias command allows defining these names

No blanks near symbol =

- alias name="string"
  - defines a new alias for "string"
- > The shell maintains a list of aliases
  - alias
    - provides the list of active aliases used in the shell
- Old aliases can be deleted
  - unalias name
    - Deletes the alias name from the shell

# **Examples**

```
Existent aliases
alias
alias egrep='egrep --color=auto'
alias emacs='emacs -r -geometry 100x36 -fn 9x15 &'
alias fgrep='fgrep --color=auto'
alias grep='grep --color=auto'
alias ls='ls --color=auto'
alias mx='xdvi -mfmode ljfour:1200'
                                       Definition of a new
alias ll= "ls -la"
                                             alias
 unalias emacs
                              Deletion of a pre-existing alias.
unalias 11
```