

Users and Permissions: Takeaways

by Dataquest Labs, Inc. - All rights reserved © 2021

Syntax

- Identifying users and their groups
 - `whoami`
 - `id`
 - `groups`
- See `file` 's metadata: `stat file`
- Changing permissions:
 - Symbolic notation: `chmod [ugoa][+-][rwx] files` .
 - Adding execution permission to the owner on `file` : `chmod u+x file` .
 - Removing writing permission to the primary group on `file` : `chmod g-w file` .
 - Setting read and execution permissions to others on `file` : `chmod o=rx file`
 - Changing several permissions simultaneously on `file` : `chmod u+w,g-x,o-r file` .
 - Octal notation: `chmod ddd` where `d` represents a digit between `0` and `7` .
 - `---` : `0` (no permissions)
 - `--x` : `1` (execute only permission)
 - `-w-` : `2` (write only permissions)
 - `-wx` : `3` (write and execute permissions)
 - `r--` : `4` (read only permissions)
 - `r-x` : `5` (read and execute permissions)
 - `rw-` : `6` (read and write permissions)
 - `rwx` : `7` (read, write, and execute permissions)
- Changing ownership on `file` : `chown [new_owner][:new_group] file`
 - Changing both the ownership and the group of `file1` : `sudo chown new_owner:new_group file1` .
 - Changing the ownership of `file` while maintaining its group:
`sudo chown new_owner file` .
 - Changing the group of `file` while maintaining its ownership:
`sudo chown :new_group file` .
- Running command with superuser privileges: `sudo command`

Concepts

- Operating systems implement the concept of users.
- In Unix-like systems, everything is a file.
- Files have owners and group owners.

- Permissions are limits to the actions that users can perform.
- Permissions are a property of both files and users.
- To facilitate managing permissions, there is also the concept of group (of users). Groups also have permissions.
- Some users (like the superuser) have permissions to do everything.
- Users can elevate their privileges to that of the superuser. Extra care is needed when using this power.
- In *nix systems, users can elevate their privileges with `sudo` .

Resources

- The origin of ["Everything is a file"](#).
- The [setuid and setgid](#) permission bits.
- [Difference between symbolic link and shortcut](#)
- [Identifying file types in Linux](#)
- [POSIX standards on](#) `chmod`
- [The Uppercase X in](#) `chmod`
- [Effective user and real user](#)
- [Changing default permissions on file creation](#)