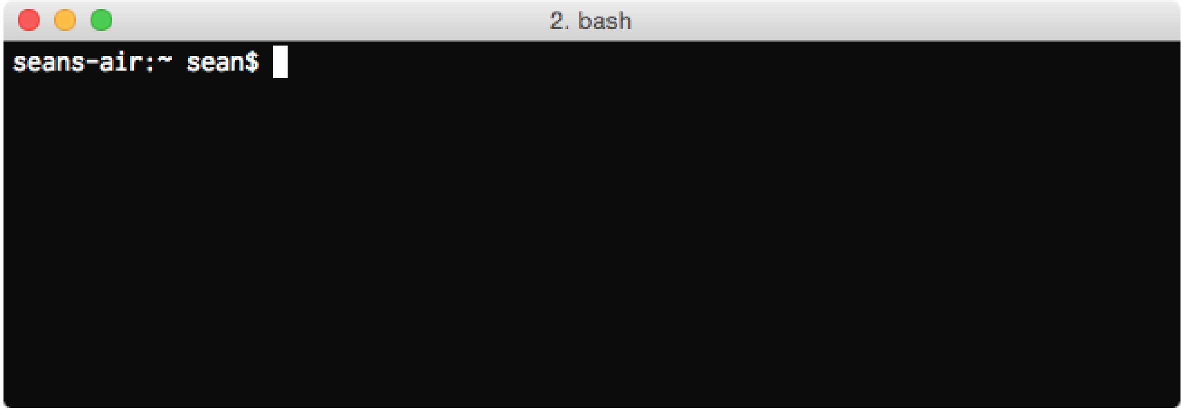
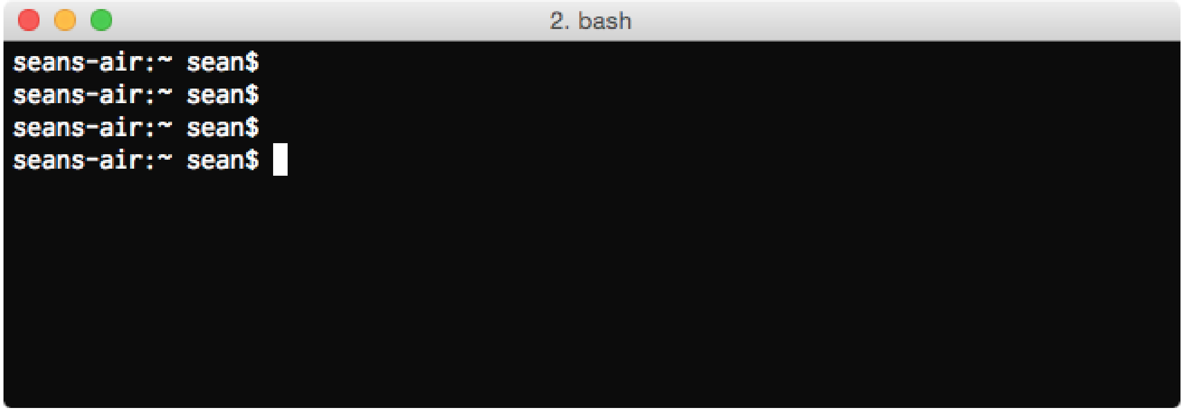
Once you have opened up Terminal then you should see a window that looks something like this:



```
seans-air:~ sean$ 
```

What you're looking at is the bash shell! Your shell will surely look different than mine, but all bash shells have the same essential parts. As you can see in my shell it says seans-air:~ sean$. This string of characters is called the **prompt**. You type command line commands after the prompt. The prompt is just there to let you know that the shell is ready for you to type in a command. Press Enter on your keyboard a few times to see what happens with the prompt. Your shell should now look like this:



```
seans-air:~ sean$
seans-air:~ sean$
seans-air:~ sean$
seans-air:~ sean$ 
```

If you don't type anything after the prompt and you press enter then nothing happens and you get a new prompt under the old prompt. The white rectangle after the prompt is just a cursor that allows you to edit what you've typed into the shell. Your cursor might look like a rectangle, a line, or an underscore, but all cursors behave the same way. After typing something into the command line you can move the cursor back and forth with the left and right arrow keys.

Don't you think your shell looks messy with all of those old prompts? Don't worry, you're about to learn your first shell command which will clear up your shell! Type clear at the prompt and then hit enter. Voila! Your shell is back to how you started.

Every command line command is actually a little computer program, even commands as simple as clear. These commands all tend to have the following structure:

```
[command] [options] [arguments]
```

Some simple commands like clear don’t require any options or arguments. Options are usually preceded by a hyphen (-) and they tweak the behavior of the command. Arguments can be names of files, raw data, or other options that the command requires. A simple command that has an argument is echo. The echo command prints a phrase to the console. Enter echo "Hello World!" into the command line to see what happens:

```
echo 'Hello World!'
## Hello World!
```

We’ll be using the above syntax for the rest of the book, where on one line there will be a command that I’ve entered into the command line, and then below that command the console output of the command will appear (if there is any console output). You can use echo to print any phase surrounded by double quotes ("") to the console.

If you want to see the last command press the Up arrow key. You can press Up and Down in order to scroll through the history of commands that you’ve entered. If you want to re-execute a past command, you can scroll to that command then press Enter. Try getting back to the echo "Hello World!" command and execute it again.

Summary

- You type command line commands after the prompt.
- **clear** will clean up your terminal.
- **echo** prints text to your terminal.
- You can scroll through your command history with the **Up** and **Down** arrow keys.

Mark as completed