Commands & Arguments (Optional)

A short introduction to commands, arguments, and options.

If you're a beginner, then it is strongly recommended that you read this section to grasp the basic concepts of commands, arguments, and options. If you are somehow familiar with these concepts already, then you can skip this lesson and jump to the next lesson where you can test your command line skills by using interactive code widgets. Good luck!

Command Syntax

The general syntax followed by any Bash command is:

```
command_name [-option(s)] [argument(s)]
```

Let's divide this syntax and understand what each of the terms mean:

Command Name:

A command name is a unique word which is used to indicate to the system what action needs to be performed. Each command has its own set of arguments and options to narrow down the functionality even more. For example, `ls` is a very commonly used command.

Argument:

Any Bash command takes a list of arguments to indicate to the system which objects to look for while performing the action. An argument could be a string, set of string or a token passed to the command. For example, the command `ls` can take a directory's path as an argument.

```
ls /home/user/Downloads/Music
```

Options:

An option is also referred as the “mode” of the command. It controls the behavior of the command. It is a single character carry that carries a unique meaning. Most of the commands run without the option. Some commands can also take multiple sets of options simultaneously. For example, the command `ls` can take `-a` as an option which generally means “all” and is used to show hidden files.

```
ls -a
```

Important Points:

1. Some commands might not take any arguments or options such as `pwd`
2. Any option is written with a hyphen (-)
3. A double hyphen (–) is used to show the end of options if more than one options are used
4. The order of argument matters sometimes
5. In some commands, we can also pass flags as arguments. It simply carries a true or false value which could be used as an indication to perform something or not.