25 Basic Linux Commands For Beginners [2025]

Last Updated : 18 Dec, 2025

Linux commands are used to interact with the operating system through the terminal and perform tasks like file management, navigation, and system monitoring. Learning basic Linux commands helps beginners understand how Linux works and use it efficiently for daily tasks.

- Helps beginners understand and use the Linux terminal effectively
- Covers commonly used commands for files, directories, and system tasks
- Useful for students, developers, and system administrators
- Builds a strong foundation for advanced Linux and server management

25 Basic Linux Commands				
ls	cp	touch	man	sort
pwd	mv	ln	grep	cal
mkdir	rm	cat	echo	whereis
cd	uname	clear	wget	df
rmdir	locate	ps	whoami	wc

25 essential and commonly used Linux commands to help beginners start working with Linux confidently.

1. ls

The ls command in Linux is used to list files and directories present in the current working directory.

- Displays files and folders in a directory.
- Helps users quickly understand directory contents.

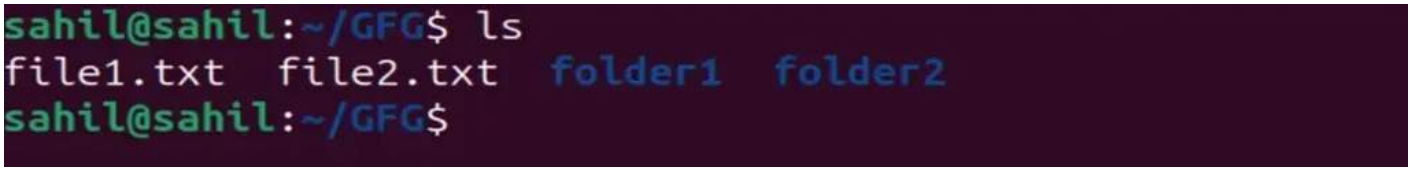
Syntax:

```
ls [options] [directory]
```

Example:

```
ls
```

Output:



- The ls command lists all the directories and files available in the current working directory.

2. pwd

The pwd command in Linux is used to display the present working directory.

- Shows the full path of the current directory.
- Helps users know their current location.

Syntax:

```
pwd
```

Example:

```
pwd
```

Output:

- The pwd command prints the absolute path of the current working directory.

3. mkdir

The mkdir command in Linux is used to create new directories.

- Creates new folders in the file system.
- Helps organize files and directories.

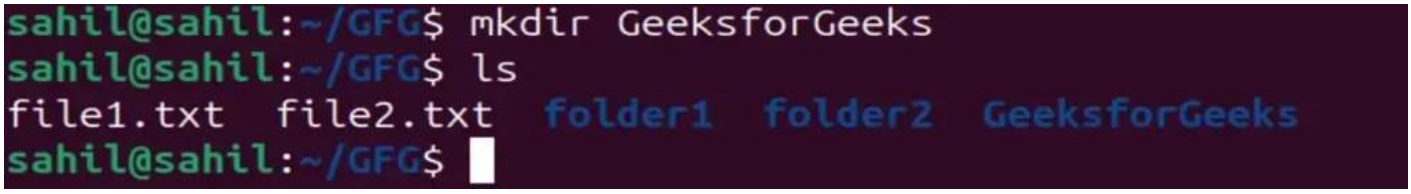
Syntax:

```
mkdir directory_name
```

Example:

```
mkdir GeeksforGeeks
```

Output:



- The mkdir command creates a new directory named GeeksforGeeks.

4. cd

The cd command in Linux is used to change the current working directory.

- Allows navigation between directories.
- Moves the user to the home directory when used without arguments.

Syntax:

```
cd directory_name
```

Example:

```
cd GeeksforGeeks
```

Output:

- The cd command changes the current working directory to GeeksforGeeks.

5. rmdir

The rmdir command in Linux is used to delete empty directories.

- Removes directories that do not contain files.
- Helps clean up unused folders.

Syntax:

```
rmdir directory_name
```

Example:

```
rmdir TestFolder
```

Output:

- The rmdir command deletes the empty directory TestFolder.

6. cp

The cp command in Linux is used to copy files or directories.

- Copies files from one location to another.
- Useful for creating backups.

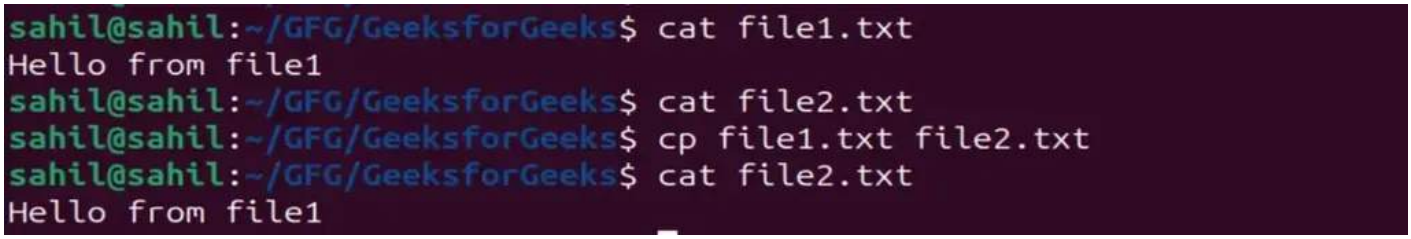
Syntax:

```
cp source destination
```

Example:

```
cp file1.txt file2.txt
```

Output:



- The cp command copies the contents of file1.txt into file2.txt.

7. mv

The mv command in Linux is used to move or rename files and directories.

- Renames files easily.
- Moves files between directories.

Syntax:

```
mv old_name new_name
```

Example:

```
mv old.txt new.txt
```

Output:

- The mv command renames the file old.txt to new.txt.

8. rm

The rm command in Linux is used to delete files permanently.

- Removes unwanted files.
- Frees disk space.

Syntax:

```
rm file_name
```

Example:

```
rm demo.txt
```

Output:

- The rm command deletes the file demo.txt.

9. uname

The uname command in Linux is used to display system information.

- Shows operating system details.
- Helps identify the system.

Syntax:

```
uname
```

Example:

```
uname
```

Output:

- The uname command displays the operating system name.

10. locate

The locate command in Linux is used to find files using a database.

- Searches files quickly.
- Faster than manual searching.

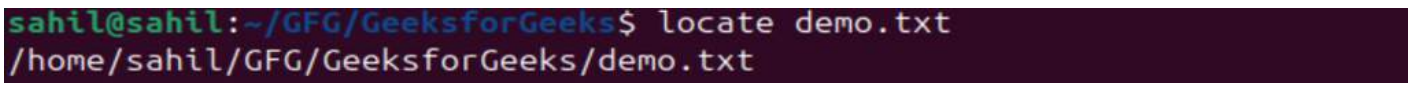
Syntax:

```
locate file_name
```

Example:

```
locate demo.txt
```

Output:



- The locate command shows the path of the searched file.

11. touch

The touch command in Linux is used to create empty files.

- Creates new files instantly.
- Updates file timestamps.

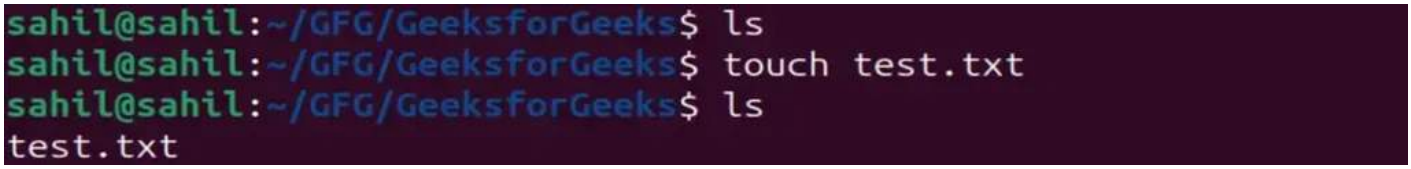
Syntax:

```
touch file_name
```

Example:

```
touch test.txt
```

Output:



- The touch command creates an empty file named test.txt.

12. ln

The ln command in Linux is used to create links between files.

- Creates shortcuts to files.
- Supports hard and soft links.

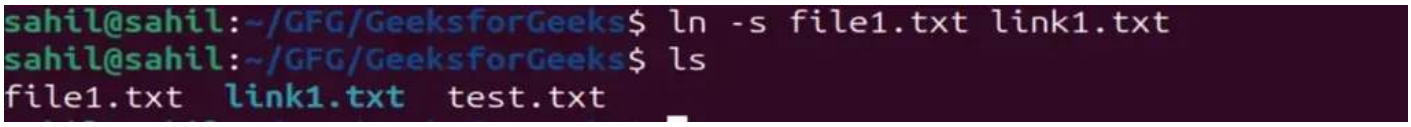
Syntax:

```
ln -s source link_name
```

Example:

```
ln -s file1.txt link1.txt
```

Output:



- The ln command creates a symbolic link.

13. cat

The cat command in Linux is used to display file contents.

- Reads file content.
- Combines multiple files.

Syntax:

```
cat file_name
```

Example:

```
cat test.txt
```

Output:

```
sahil@sahil:~/GFG/GeeksforGeeks$ cat test.txt
Hello Geeks
```

- The cat command displays the content of the file.

14. clear

The clear command in Linux is used to clear the terminal screen.

- Removes previous outputs.
- Keeps the terminal clean.

Syntax:

```
clear
```

Example:

```
clear
```

Output:

```
sahil@sahil:~/GFG/GeeksforGeeks$ ls
demo.txt  file1.txt  link1.txt  test.txt
sahil@sahil:~/GFG/GeeksforGeeks$ clear
```

- The terminal screen is cleared.

15. ps

The ps command in Linux is used to display running processes.

- Shows active processes.
- Helps monitor system activity.

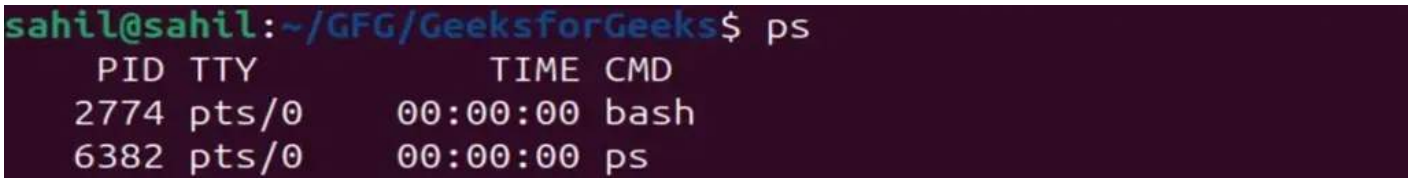
Syntax:

```
ps
```

Example:

```
ps
```

Output:



- The ps command displays currently running processes.

16. man

The man command in Linux is used to display command manuals.

- Provides command documentation.
- Explains options and usage.

Syntax:

```
man command_name
```

Example:

```
man ls
```

Output:

- The manual page of the command is displayed.

17. grep

The grep command in Linux is used to search text patterns.

- Finds specific strings.
- Filters output.

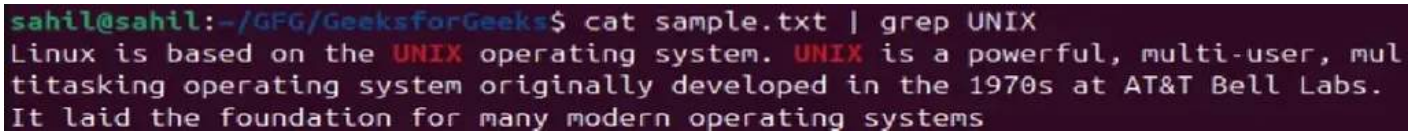
Syntax:

```
grep "text" file_name
```

Example:

```
grep "Python" notes.txt
```

Output:



- The grep command displays matching lines.

18. echo

The echo command in Linux is used to display text in the terminal.

- Prints messages.
- Writes text into files.

Syntax:

```
echo "text"
```

Example:

```
echo "Hello Linux"
```

Output:

- The text is printed on the terminal.

19. wget

The wget command in Linux is used to download files from the internet.

- Downloads files via URL.
- Works in the background.

Syntax:

```
wget url
```

Example:

```
wget http://example.com/file.zip%3C/span>
```

Output:

- The file is downloaded successfully.

20. whoami

The whoami command in Linux is used to display the current user.

- Shows logged-in username.
- Useful in multi-user systems.

Syntax:

```
whoami
```

Example:

```
whoami
```

Output:

- The current username is displayed.

21. sort

The sort command in Linux is used to sort file contents.

- Sorts data alphabetically.
- Supports numeric sorting.

Syntax:

```
sort file_name
```

Example:

```
sort test.txt
```

Output:

```
sahil@sahil:~/GFG/GeeksforGeeks$ cat test.txt
Hello Geeks
5
6
3
1
9
8
2
sahil@sahil:~/GFG/GeeksforGeeks$ sort test.txt
1
2
3
5
6
8
9
Hello Geeks
```

- The file content is displayed in sorted order.

22. cal

The cal command in Linux is used to display the calendar.

- Shows month calendar.
- Useful for date reference.

Syntax:

```
cal
```

Example:

```
cal
```

Output:

```
localhost:~# cal
    December 2025
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa
    1  2  3  4  5  6
 7  8  9 10 11 12 13
14 15 16 17 18 19 20
21 22 23 24 25 26 27
28 29 30 31
```

The current month calendar is displayed.

23. whereis

The whereis command in Linux is used to locate command files.

- Shows binary location.
- Finds command paths.

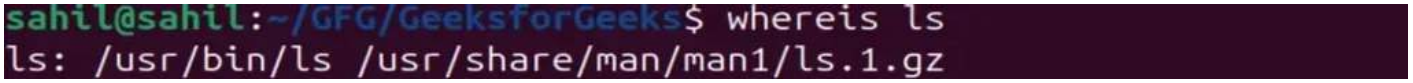
Syntax:

```
whereis command_name
```

Example:

```
whereis ls
```

Output:



- The location of the command is displayed.

24. df

The df command in Linux is used to display disk space usage.

- Shows file system usage.
- Helps monitor storage.

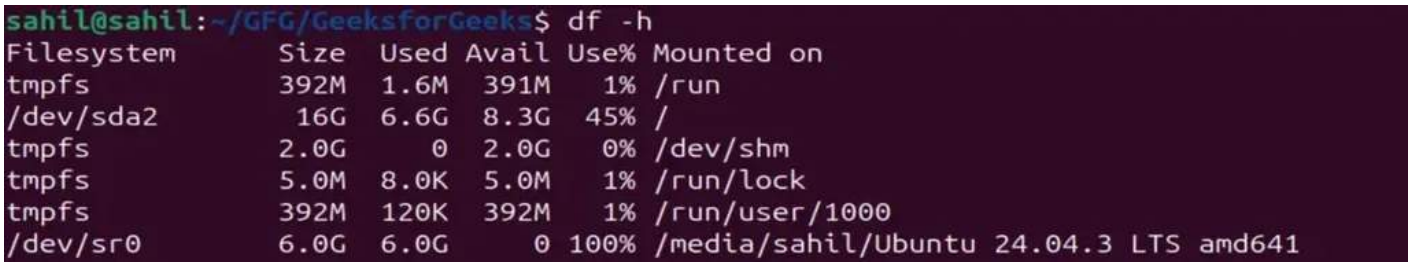
Syntax:

```
df [options]
```

Example:

```
df -h
```

Output:



- Disk usage details are displayed.

25. wc

The wc command in Linux is used to count words, lines, and characters.

- Counts file statistics.
- Useful for text analysis.

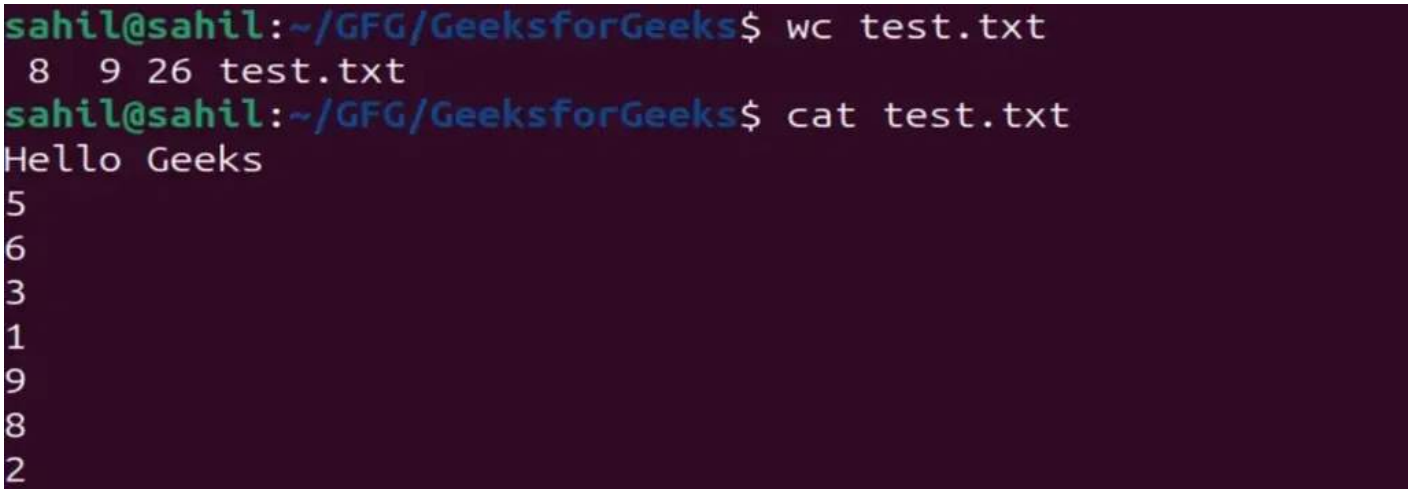
Syntax:

```
wc option file_name
```

Example:

```
wc -w test.txt
```

Output:



- The number of words in the file is displayed.

Article Tags: Linux-Unix Spotlight

Explore

- Getting Started with Linux
- Installation with Linux
- Linux Commands
- Linux File System
- Linux Kernel
- Linux Networking Tools
- Linux Process
- Linux Firewall
- Shell Scripting & Bash Scripting
- Linux Administrator System