
Math 4610 Fundamentals of Computational Mathematics - Topic 6.

This section will give a simple example of writing a code, compiling a code, and executing a code in a terminal. First start up a terminal to do the work to create a file with code in it. For Cygwin, double click on the Cygwin Icon on your desktop or click on the the icon in the task bar if the app is pinned to the taskbar.

A terminal as shown below will appear. In these notes, we will create a directory for each project we build. In addition, we will add in a directory structure to keep track of source code files and binaries as needed. The project we will work on is the usual “hello world” code that we all have seen in programming classes.

So, we will want to create a directory to keep track of the project files and such. Suppose we want to organize the directory structure that keeps track of the work we do in Math 4610 and also the projects in the course. Then it would make sense to have a subfolder for the class, say math4610, and subfolders contained in math4610 for each project. One way to do this involves a sequence of three commands.

```
koebbe% mkdir math4610
koebbe% cd math4610
koebbe% mkdir project
```

This will create the subfolder, math4610, change the working directory to math4610 and then make a subfolder named project.

Let’s consider the hello world example from the previous topic. The commands to set this up would be

```
koebbe% mkdir math4610
koebbe% cd math4610
koebbe% mkdir hello_world
```

Most Linux/Unix commands have shortcuts for operations like this. We could just as easily used the following command to get the same two subfolders.

```
koebbe% mkdir -p math4610/hello_world
```

The -p flag will create parent directories as needed. In our case, if the folder ./math4610 does not exist, the folder will be created and then the ./math4610/hello_world/ is created if it does not already exist. If the parent folders exist, the command will continue down through the folders. This command will not change existing files and folders in the folder tree.

To see that this has worked, list the files in the current folder.

```
koebbe% ls
```

Now, let’s get to the appropriate folder using the cd or change directory command.

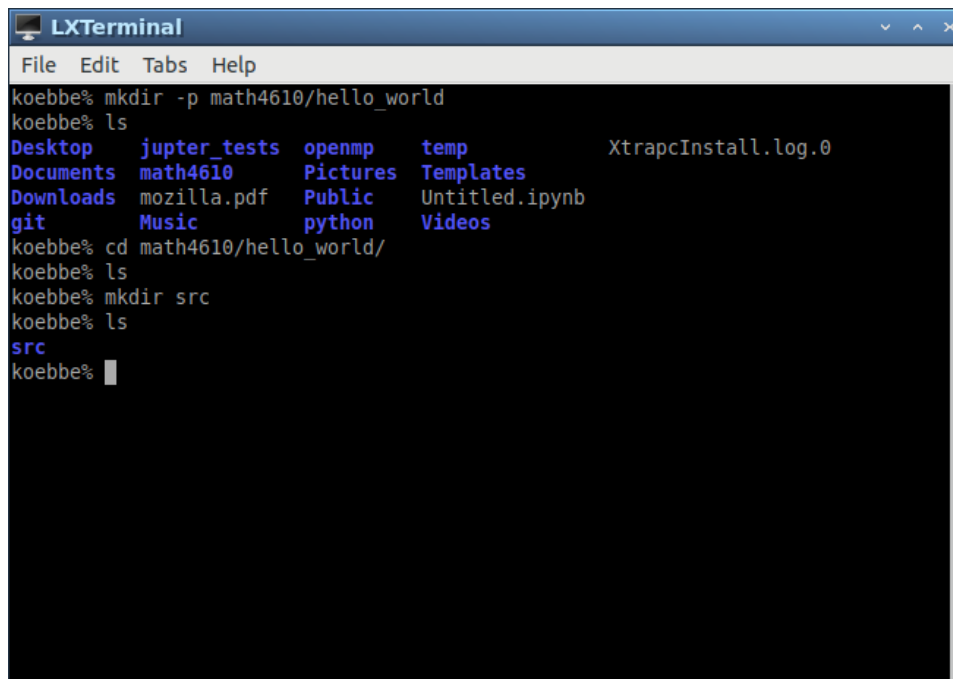
```
koebbe% cd math4610/hello_world
```

Notice the folder name we are using is a subfolder and the Linux/Unix file separator is the “ ” character between the folder names. In any case, our terminal session should be in the appropriate subfolder.

Within the project folder, we should try to be organized in the development of the code. Type in the command shown below to create a new subfolder in the current directory where we can store the program file we are going to create.

```
koebbe% mkdir src
```

The commands to this point in the process are shown in the following figure.



```
LXTerminal
File Edit Tabs Help
koebbe% mkdir -p math4610/hello_world
koebbe% ls
Desktop  jupyter_tests  openmp  temp          XtrapcInstall.log.0
Documents math4610       Pictures Templates
Downloads mozilla.pdf    Public   Untitled.ipynb
git      Music         python  Videos
koebbe% cd math4610/hello_world/
koebbe% ls
koebbe% mkdir src
koebbe% ls
src
koebbe% █
```

Figure 1: The commands in the window set up the file structure for the hello world example. The `ls` command is used to verify the folders have been created.

Change Directory and Edit

To change the directory, use the command

```
koebbe% cd src
```

Once in the new directory, the next step is to edit a file to implement some sort of action for the computer. So, to edit a file, type:

```
koebbe% vim hello.c
```

The editor, “vim”, is a very standard editor and comes with the installation of Cygwin.

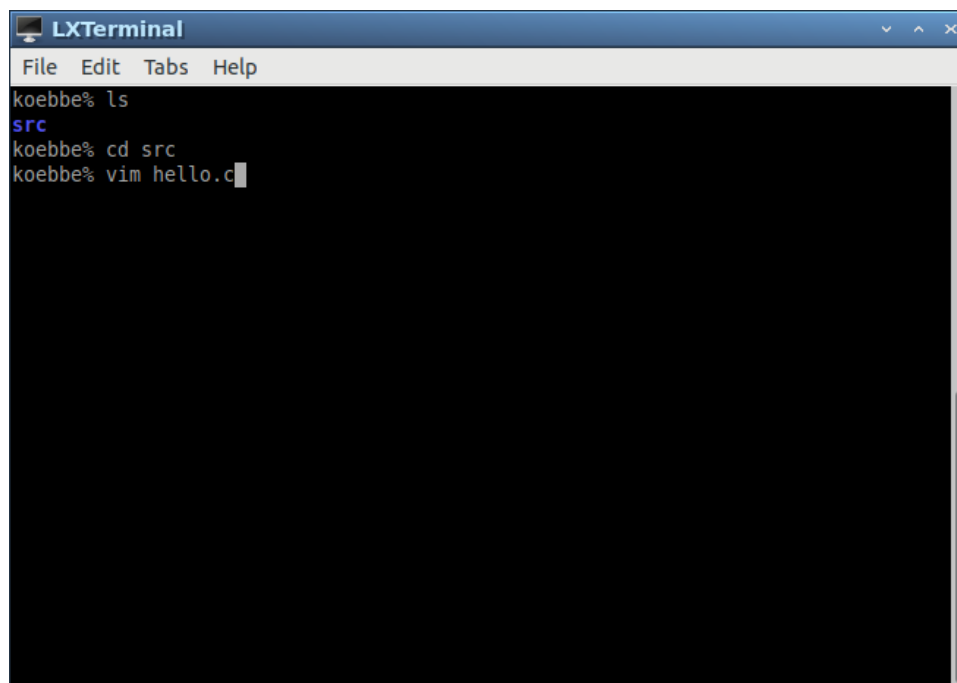


Figure 2: The next step is to list the current folder, change into the src folder, and start up an editor to build the program

Typing in a Program in C with vim

When the vim command is executed, the terminal you are using will look like the following screenshot. Since the file, hello.c, did not exist, the view that you see is an empty file ready to be modified.

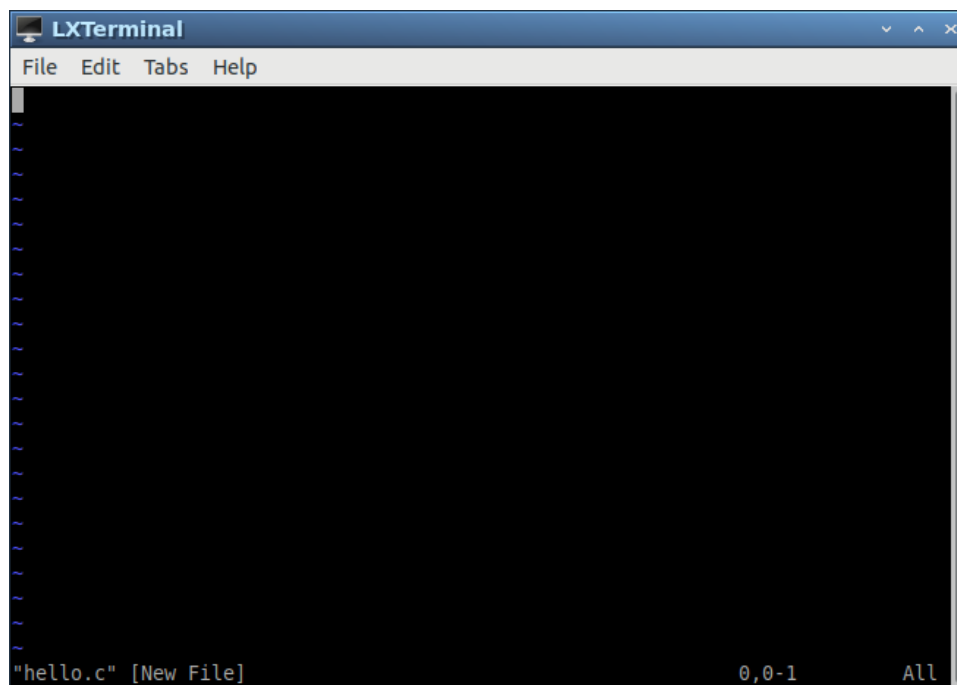


Figure 3: For a new/empty file, when the vim command executes the terminal will look like the screenshot in this figure.

To get a program into a text file, start by typing in the vim command “a” to append characters to the file we are creating. The vim commands will not explicitly show up unless input is needed. The lines in the terminal shown below define a C program for doing a very simple task. Namely, to print the string

Hello World!

to the screen.

A screenshot of the LXTerminal application window. The title bar reads "LXTerminal". Below it is a menu bar with "File", "Edit", "Tabs", and "Help". The main area has a black background with green text representing C code:

```
#include <stdio.h>\n\nvoid main()\n{\n    printf("Hello World!\\n");\n}
```

The cursor is at the end of the last line. On the left side, there are several blue tilde (~) characters indicating scrollable history or output. At the bottom right, the status bar shows "5,27" and "All".

Figure 4: One version of how to write the code to print the Hello World! string is shown in this figure.

Saving the File and Getting Back to the Command Prompt

To exit the vim session and save the file, type in a colon character “:” followed by x and return. The terminal will revert to the command terminal ready to type in commands. The “x” vim command tells vim to exit the edit session and save the file.

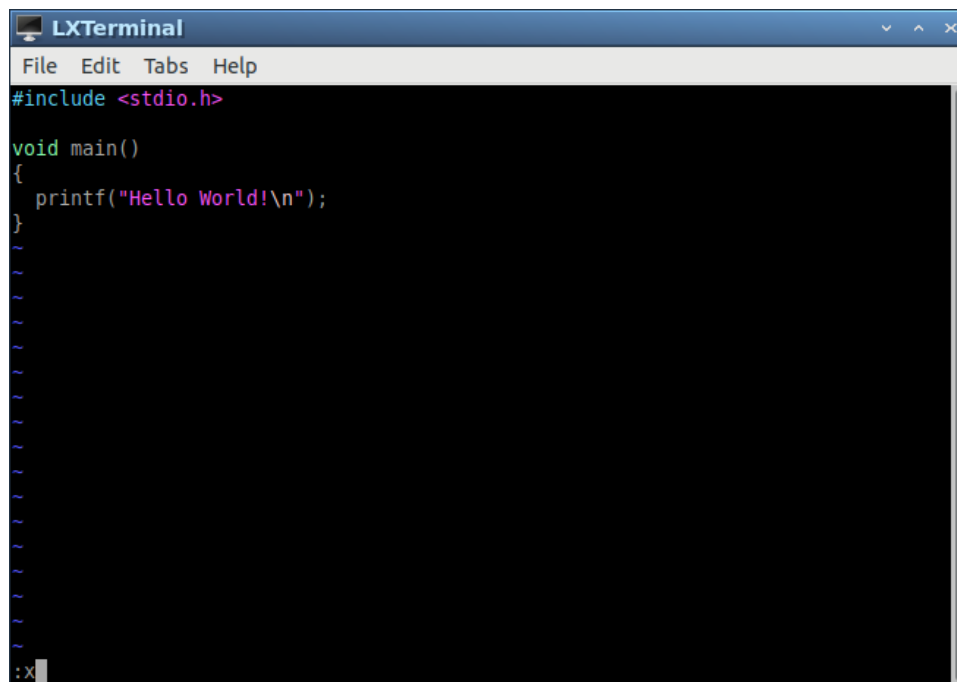
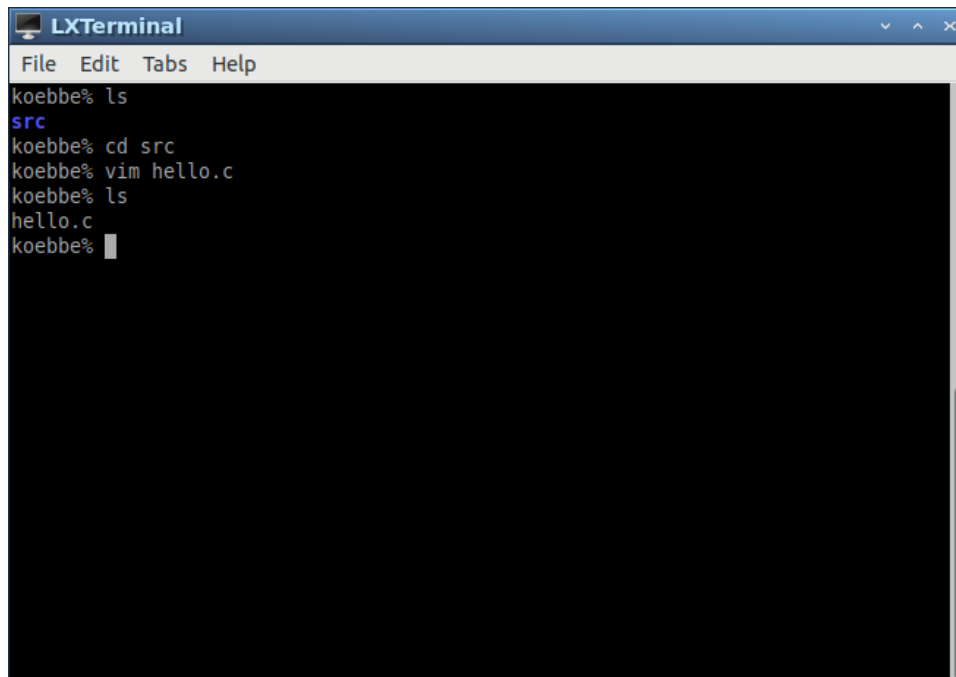


Figure 5: Once the characters are all typed in, the next step is to save and exit vim.

Making sure the File Exists

At the command prompt, the first two lines will be as they were to start. The next command lists the directory and shows the file “hello.c” now exists in the folder.

A screenshot of an LXTerminal window. The window has a title bar with the text "LXTerminal" and standard window controls (minimize, maximize, close). Below the title bar is a menu bar with "File", "Edit", "Tabs", and "Help". The terminal area has a black background with white text. The text shows a series of commands and their output: "koebbe% ls" followed by "src" on the next line, then "koebbe% cd src", "koebbe% vim hello.c", "koebbe% ls", and finally "hello.c" on the next line. The prompt "koebbe%" is followed by a cursor on the last line.

```
koebbe% ls
src
koebbe% cd src
koebbe% vim hello.c
koebbe% ls
hello.c
koebbe% 
```

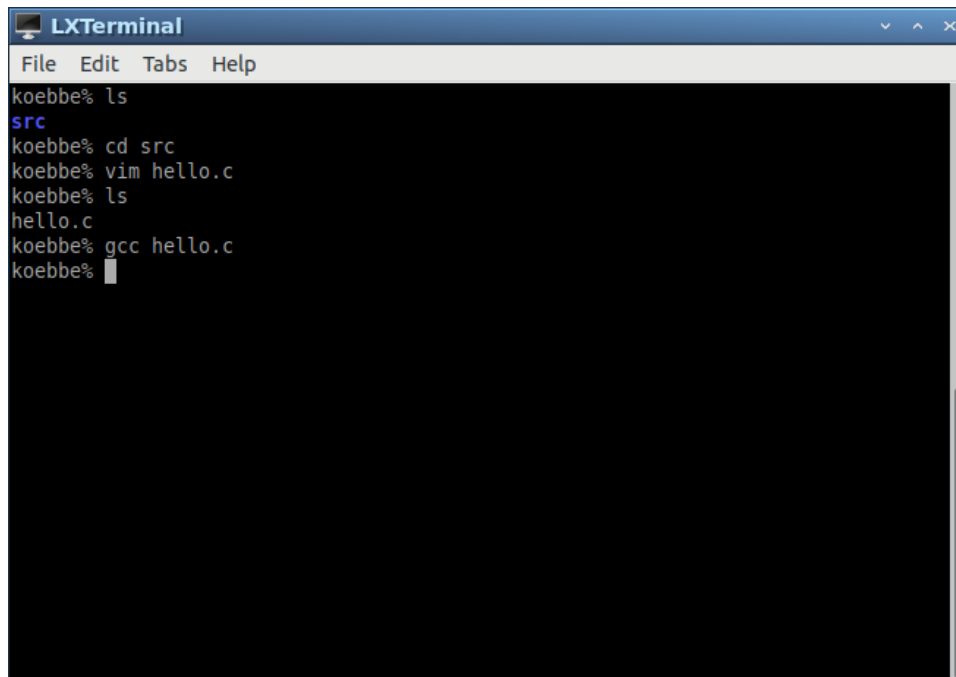
Figure 6: Using ls to make sure hello.c has been created.

Compiling the Code in C

After this, the next thing to do is to compile the code. The compiler we will use is gcc which comes along with Cygwin and many other computer platforms. That is,

```
koebbe% gcc hello.c
```

will compile the program and create an executable file for you. The last part below is used to see what is in the directory. The command does not create a response unless there is an error occurs. This will produce an executable file. If a name is not specified for the executable, gcc produces a file with a default name, a.out.



```
LXTerminal
File Edit Tabs Help
koebbe% ls
src
koebbe% cd src
koebbe% vim hello.c
koebbe% ls
hello.c
koebbe% gcc hello.c
koebbe%
```

Figure 7: The commands for compiling the code is shown in this figure.

Running the Code

To run the computer code, use the following command.

```
koebbe% a.out
```

or

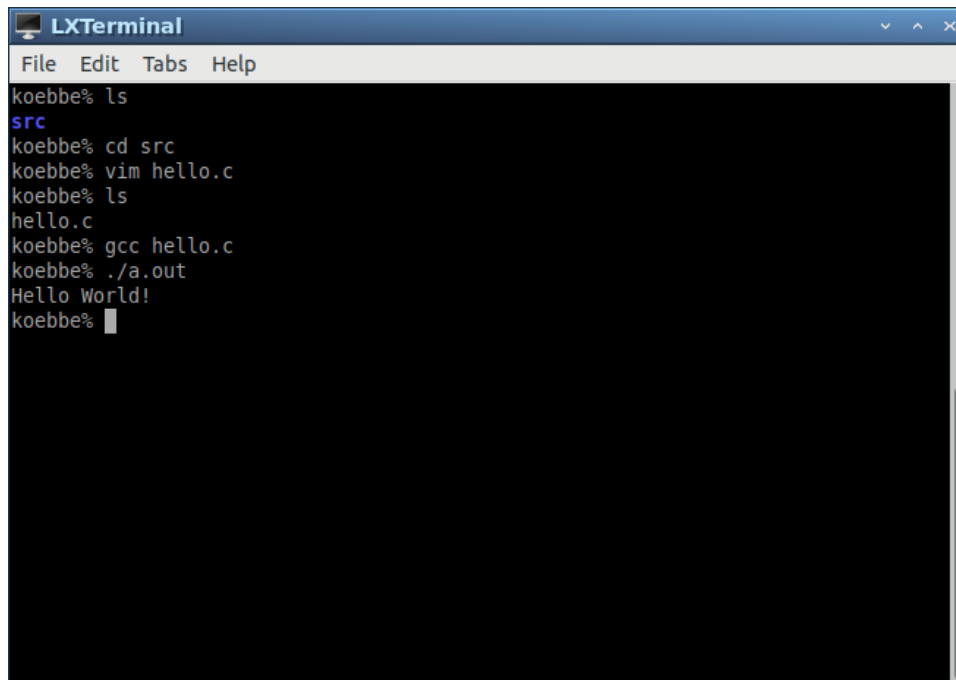
```
koebbe% ./a.out
```

The “.” will execute a binary in the current directory.

Once we have an executable file, hello.exe, the code can be run as follows.

```
koebbe% ./hello.exe
```

The output from this command will be as shown in the image below. The output is printed on the first line.



```
LXTerminal
File Edit Tabs Help
koebbe% ls
src
koebbe% cd src
koebbe% vim hello.c
koebbe% ls
hello.c
koebbe% gcc hello.c
koebbe% ./a.out
Hello World!
koebbe% █
```

Figure 8: The command to execute the computer code you have written.

Changing the Name of an Executable

Next, let's use an appropriate name for the executable. We can use the mv command as follows:

```
koebbe% mv a.out hello.exe
```

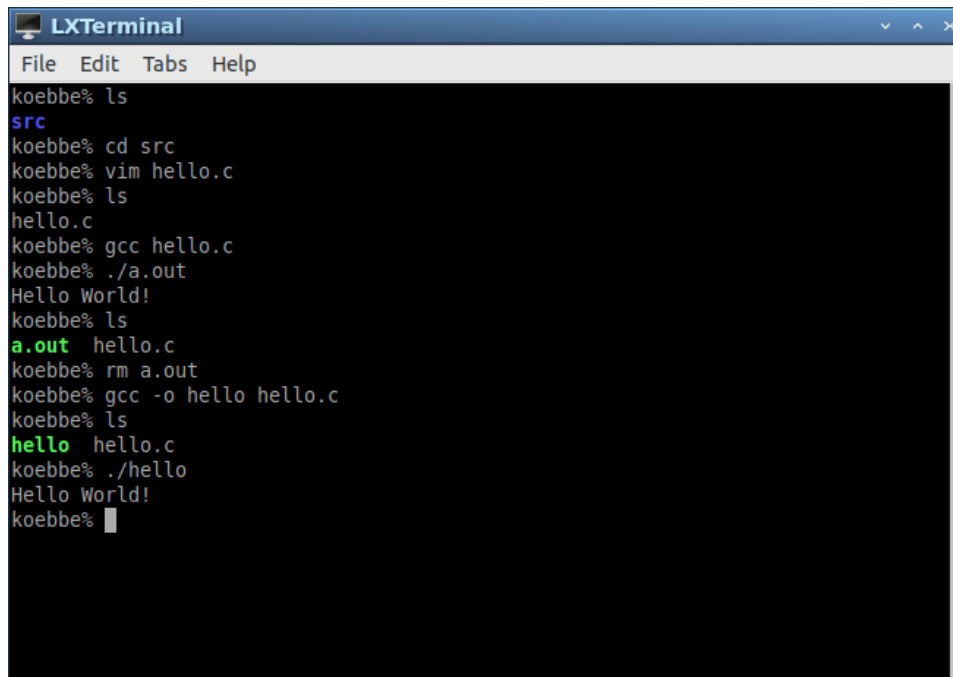
or we can use a flag on gcc to rename the executable as follows.

```
koebbe% rm a.out
koebbe% gcc -o hello hello.c
```

This will produce an executable with name “hello” in the current folder. To test the new executable file we can try

```
koebbe% ./hello.exe
```

to obtain the same result as before.

A screenshot of an LXTerminal window with a blue title bar and menu bar. The terminal shows a series of commands and their outputs. The user first runs 'ls' and 'cd src'. Then they use 'vim hello.c' to create a file. After 'ls', they compile 'hello.c' with 'gcc hello.c', which produces 'a.out'. Running './a.out' prints 'Hello World!'. Then, they remove 'a.out' with 'rm a.out' and compile 'hello.c' again with 'gcc -o hello hello.c'. A subsequent 'ls' shows 'hello' instead of 'a.out'. Finally, running './hello' also prints 'Hello World!'.

```
LXTerminal
File Edit Tabs Help
koebbe% ls
src
koebbe% cd src
koebbe% vim hello.c
koebbe% ls
hello.c
koebbe% gcc hello.c
koebbe% ./a.out
Hello World!
koebbe% ls
a.out hello.c
koebbe% rm a.out
koebbe% gcc -o hello hello.c
koebbe% ls
hello hello.c
koebbe% ./hello
Hello World!
koebbe% █
```

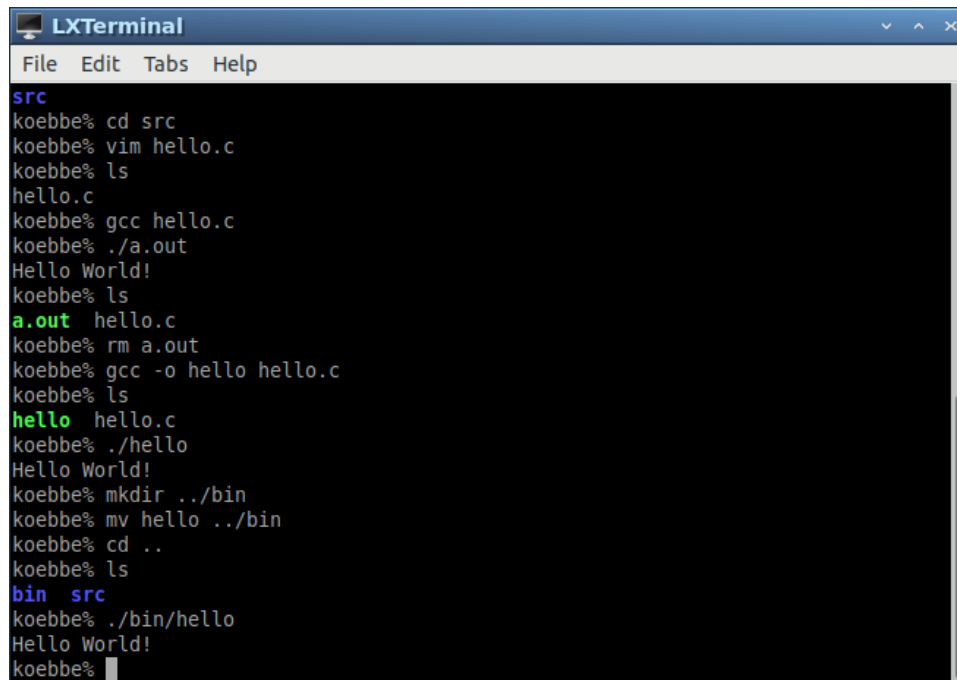
Figure 9: How to Rename the Executable for Future Use

A Slight Change to the Directory Structure

As a personal preference, we might want to put the executable in a place for executable files. In a lot of Linux/Unix platforms, the folder “bin” is used to contain all executable files. So, the last thing to do would be to create a bin folder and place our executable hello.exe in that folder. To that end we can use the following commands.

```
koebbe% mkdir ../bin
koebbe% mv hello.exe ../bin
koebbe% cd ..
koebbe% ls
koebbe% ../bin/hello.exe
```

The last command of the three is included to test the binary in its new location. Since the cd command moves us up one level, the src and bin folders are a subfolder of hello_world.



```
LXTerminal
File Edit Tabs Help
src
koebbe% cd src
koebbe% vim hello.c
koebbe% ls
hello.c
koebbe% gcc hello.c
koebbe% ./a.out
Hello World!
koebbe% ls
a.out hello.c
koebbe% rm a.out
koebbe% gcc -o hello hello.c
koebbe% ls
hello hello.c
koebbe% ./hello
Hello World!
koebbe% mkdir ../bin
koebbe% mv hello ../bin
koebbe% cd ..
koebbe% ls
bin src
koebbe% ../bin/hello
Hello World!
koebbe%
```

Figure 10: Organizing a File Structure to keep Track of binaries and source files

