# Selecting Terminal output and copy to the Clipboard

## Summary

Selecting text on a Windows operating system (OS) is not very difficult. However, let us say that the mouse is no longer available and you have to only use the keyboard and a screen reader. Now, things become a little more difficult, but still not too bad. If we step into an information technology (IT) or software development role, then being able to select and copy text becomes more important. For example, as an IT person, their will be times you will need to remotely access a crashed server and the only way to do that is from a terminal window. Selecting and copying the error from the terminal window is not as easy as selecting text from just any text, word, or web doc. You will need to know a few things about how your screen reader and machine work before trying to attempt this. That is where this document comes into play, and now we will take a look at selecting and copying text from different command lines and terminals.

## Terminals We Will Explore

* Windows Power Shell
* Windows Command Prompt
* Git Bash
* Bash- Ubuntu 22.04 LTS (At the time of this writing.)

## Windows Power Shell and Command Prompt

I will be grouping Power Shell and Command Prompt into the same category, because they both use the same commands to select all and copy to clipboard.

Getting started, with either Power Shell or Command Prompt open:

1. To select all in terminal output: Control + Shift + A
2. To copy the selected text tot the clipboard: Control + Shift + C

And that is it! You should now have the contents of the terminal output copied to your clipboard.

## Git Bash

Git Bash, will give the feel of a Linux bash line, but on a windows machine. Git Bash can be downloaded independently, but I picked it up along with a few other handy tools in Git for Windows. Clicking the embedded external link, will take you to the download page.

Note: I explain the key strokes for a lab top for focusing the Git Bash terminal, because using the alternate shift + f10 will not work.

How to properly focus Git Bash terminal with NVDA screen reader and open context menu:

Lab top layout:

1. Focus the terminal: Caps lock key + backspace
2. Move object navigator to mouse: Caps lock key + shift + M
3. Right click: Caps lock key + ]

Desktop layout:

1. Press the applications key on keyboard. ( Usually to the left of the right control key.)

Now that the context menu is open, we have access to the “select all” and “copy” actions.

You may arrow through the options, but here we will use the hot keys.

For hot keys and With the context menu open:

1. Press a to select all.
2. Open context menu again and press c to copy to clipboard.

All done! Now the terminal output should be copied to your clipboard.

## Bash (Ubuntu 22.04)

With Windows 10 and 11, we are able to download Ubuntu from the Microsoft store. That is what I did here. Opening Ubuntu, gives us a bash terminal as if we were on a Linux machine.

Note: All commands performed below were done on a wireless keyboard that includes a num pad.

1. Focus screen reader to terminal: Keystroke: Insert + -
2. Focus mouse to object navigator: Keystroke insert + /
3. Move focus of mouse up: Keystroke insert + 8
4. Move object navigator to system menu for terminal window: insert + 2
5. Focus mouse to object navigator located at system menu: Keystroke insert + /

You should hear “System Menu”.

1. Right click system menu: Keystroke \* (remember, on num pad)
2. Down arrow till you hear “Export text” and press enter.

You will be prompted with a save as window. I saved to downloads and was able to access the file which was named after my terminal window.