

Commonly Used Commands

This is a list of commonly used console-based commands for Linux and other Unix-like operating systems. Each command has a short description and bare syntax. Nearly all programs in this list support much more complex command-line usage and options, so you should consult the appropriate man page for details. The list is organized by usage and/or purpose, but many commands will have overlapping roles on your system.

Note that Fedora Core Includes thousands of other clients for use with your console or graphical desktop.

FILE UTILITIES

bzip2 Compress, uncompress input.
Syntax: **bzip2** [opts] [filenames]

cat Concatenate input. Syntax: **cat** [opts] [file]

cdrdao Write audio CD.
Syntax: **cdrdao** [opts] [device] [speed] [toc file]

cdrecord Burn data CD.
Syntax: **cdrecord** [opts] [device] [speed] [image]

chmod Set file read, write, and execution permissions.
Syntax: **chmod** [opts] [mode] [file]

chgrp Change file or directory group ownership.
Syntax: **chgrp** [opts] [group] [file]

convert Translate graphic file.
Syntax: **convert** [opts] [file1] [file2]

cp Copy a file. Syntax: **cp** [opts] [source] [destination]

cpio Copy, create, extract file archives.
Syntax: **cpio** [opts] [archive] [filelist]

chown Change ownership of file.
Syntax: **chown** [opts] [username] [file]

dd Convert and copy files. Syntax: **dd** [opts] [infile] [outfile]

df Show free disk space of mounted filesystems.
Syntax: **df** [opts] [file]

diff Generate file or directory difference list.
Syntax: **diff** [opts] [from] [to]

du Show disk usage of designated directory.
Syntax: **du** [opts] [path]

dump Back up a file system. Syntax: **dump** [opts] [files]

eject Eject removable media.
Syntax: **eject** [opts] [device/mount point]

fdisk Edit a device's partitions. Syntax: **fdisk** [opts] [device]

file Determine file type. Syntax: **file** [opts] [file]

find Return file system query. Syntax: **find** [opts] [path]

fgrep, egrep Search files named for lines matching given pattern. Syntax: **grep** [opts] [pattern] [file]

gpg Encrypt, decrypt files.
Syntax: **gpg** [file] [opts] [command]

gzip Compress, uncompress input. Syntax: **gzip** [opts] [file]

import Take screenshot of local or remote desktop.
Syntax: **import** [opts] [display] [file]

ln Create a symbolic link to file or directory.
Syntax: **ln** [opts] [target] [name]

locate Display all matching filenames on filesystem.
Syntax: **locate** [opts] [file]

ls List directory contents. Syntax: **ls** [opts] [path]

lsuf List open files on the system. Syntax: **lsuf** [opts] [file]

mkdir Create directory. Syntax: **mkdir** [opts] [dir]

FILE UTILITIES (CONTINUED)

mount Make a local or remote filesystem available locally.
Syntax: **mount** [opts] [device] [dir]

mv Rename a file or directory.
Syntax: **mv** [opts] [file] [destination]

parted Edit a device's partitions.
Syntax: **parted** [opts] [device]

restore Restore a file system. Syntax: **restore** [opts] [dump]

rm Remove named files or directories. Syntax: **rm** [opts] [file]

rmdir Remove directory. Syntax: **rmdir** [opts] [dir]

tar Create, list, or extract compressed or uncompressed archive. Syntax: **tar** [opts] [file1] [file2]

touch Create file or update timestamp.
Syntax: **touch** [opts] [file]

tree Display directory tree. Syntax: **tree** [opts] [path]

umount Remove a mounted device from filesystem.
Syntax: **umount** [opts] [dir]

zip, unzip Create or uncompress an archive.
Syntax: **zip** [opts]

INTERNET UTILITIES

curl Retrieve files via FTP, HTTP. Syntax: **curl** [opts] [URL]

dig Query domain name. Syntax: **dig** [domain] [opts]

elinks Text-based Web browser. Syntax: **elinks** [opts] [URL]

fetchmail Retrieve mail from remote server.
Syntax: **fetchmail** [opts] [mailserver]

ftp File Transfer Protocol client. Syntax: **ftp** [opts] [ftpserver]

mail Compose, read, send mail. Syntax: **mail** [opts] [user]

ncftp Remote FTP client. Syntax: **ncftp** [opts] [URL]

slrn Read Usenet news. Syntax: **slrn** [opts]

traceroute Display route to remote host.
Syntax: **traceroute** [opts] [host]

wget Retrieve files via FTP, HTTP. Syntax: **wget** [opts] [URL]

wvdial PPP connection utility. Syntax: **wvdial** [opts]

NETWORK UTILITIES

hostname Show or set the hostname of the computer.
Syntax: **hostname** [opts] [hostname]

ifconfig Configure a networking interface.
Syntax: **ifconfig** [interface] [opts] [address]

iwconfig Configure a wireless interface.
Syntax: **iwconfig** [interface] [opts]

nc Read, write files across a network. Syntax: **nc** [opts] [host]

netstat Print network information. Syntax: **netstat** [opts]

ping Measure packet round-trip between two hosts.
Syntax: **ping** [opts] [host]

scp Secure copy command.
Syntax: **scp** [opts] [user@host:file1] [user@host:file2]

Commonly Used Commands (continued)

NETWORK UTILITIES (CONTINUED)

sftp Secure FTP client. Syntax: **sftp** [opts] [host]
ssh Secure shell client. Syntax: **ssh** [opts] [host]
wall Send message to all users. Syntax: **wall** [opt] [message]

SYSTEM UTILITIES

apropos Display related manual page titles.
 Syntax: **apropos** [opts] [keyword]
apt-get Install, remove, update software package.
 Syntax: **apt-get** [command] [package]
at Execute command at specified time
 Syntax: **at** [opts] [time]
cal Display current or designated calendar.
 Syntax: **cal** [opts] [month] [year]
cd Change directory; used for navigating.
 Syntax: **cd** [opts] [path]
chkconfig Edit specified runlevel services.
 Syntax: **chkconfig** [level] [service] [action]
crontab Execute command at regularly scheduled time.
 Syntax: **crontab** [opts] [file]
date Display (or set) the current date and time.
 Syntax: **date** [opts] [MMDDHHMMYY]
dmesg Display kernel messages. Syntax: **dmesg**
echo Print argument to output. Syntax: **echo** [opts] [string]
exit Exit out of current shell; logout. Syntax: **exit** [status]
free Display free memory, swap usage and other system info.
 Syntax: **free** [opts]
hwclock Set system and/or hardware clock.
 Syntax: **hwclock** [opts]
info Display GNU info page about command.
 Syntax: **info** [opts] [name]
kill Stop or control a running process using a process ID.
 Syntax: **kill** [opts] [PID]
man Display manual pages. Syntax: **man** [opts] [name]
mc Run a visual shell. Syntax: **mc** [opts]
minicom Console dialup client. Syntax: **minicom** [opts]
ps Show processes. Syntax: **ps** [opts]
pwd Print current working directory. Syntax: **pwd** [opts]
rpm Red Hat Package manager. Syntax: **rpm** [opts] [package]
screen Manage multiple console sessions.
 Syntax: **screen** [opts] [command]
shutdown Reboot or shutdown the workstation/server.
 Syntax: **shutdown** [opts] [time]
startx Start an X session from console.
 Syntax: **startx** [opts]
uptime Display how long system has been running.
 Syntax: **uptime** [opt]
w Show current system uptime, users logged in.
 Syntax: **w** [opts] [user]
watch Execute given command every 2 seconds.
 Syntax: **watch** [opts] [command]
whatis Display man page header for command.
 Syntax: **whatis** [opts] [name]

SYSTEM UTILITIES (CONTINUED)

whereis Display location of command and man page.
 Syntax: **whereis** [opts] [name]
which Show path of command. Syntax: **which** [opts] [name]

TEXT UTILITIES

aspell Check input spelling. Syntax: **aspell** [opts] [file]
dos2unix Convert DOS text files to UNIX format.
 Syntax: **dos2unix** [opts] [infile] [outfile]
ed Edit lines of text. Syntax: **ed** [opts] [file]
emacs The GNU emacs editor. Syntax: **emacs** [opts] [file]
enscript Convert text file to PostScript document.
 Syntax: **enscript** [opts] [file]
head Print a portion of the beginning of input.
 Syntax: **head** [opts] [file]
less Display input one screenful at a time.
 Syntax: **less** [opts] [file]
look Lookup word in system dictionary.
 Syntax: **look** [opts] [string] [file]
lp Print input to a local or remote printer.
 Syntax: **lp** [opts] [printer] [file]
lpq Display the print queue. Syntax: **lpq** [opts] [queue]
lprm Remove [stop] a print job.
 Syntax: **lprm** [opts] [job number]
more Page like less. Syntax: **more** [opts] [file]
nano Console-based text editor. Syntax: **nano** [opts] [file]
sed Edit stream of text. Syntax: **sed** [opts] [pattern] [file]
sort Sort input. Syntax: **sort** [opts] [in] [out]
tail Print a portion of the end of input.
 Syntax: **tail** [opts] [file]
uniq Strip input of adjacent duplicate lines.
 Syntax: **uniq** [opts] [file]
wc Count input's words, lines, and characters.
 Syntax: **wc** [opts] [file]
vi Visual text editor. Syntax: **vi** [opts] [file]

USER ADMINISTRATION

adduser Create a new user for the system.
 Syntax: **adduser** [opts] [user]
chfn Edit user information. Syntax: **chfn** [opts] [user]
chsh Change login shell. Syntax: **chsh** [opts] [username]
edquota Edit user disk quotas. Syntax: **edquota** [opts] [user]
last Display list of last logged in users.
 Syntax: **last** [opts] [tty]
passwd Change password. Syntax: **passwd** [opts] [user]
su Log in or perform action as other user.
 Syntax: **su** [opts] [user]
sudo Allow root operations by specified users.
 Syntax: **sudo** [opts] [command]
useradd Create new user. Syntax: **useradd** [opts] [user]
userdel Delete user. Syntax: **userdel** [opts] [user]
who Display logged in users. Syntax: **who** [opts] [file]
whoami Display your info. Syntax: **whoami** [opts]