

Program 3 – CS 344

Overview

In this assignment you will write your own shell in C. The shell will run command line instructions and return the results similar to other shells you have used, but without many of their fancier features.

In this assignment you will write your own shell, called smallsh. This will work like the bash shell you are used to using, prompting for a command line and running commands, but it will not have many of the special features of the bash shell.

Your shell will allow for the redirection of standard input and standard output and it will support both foreground and background processes.

Your shell will support three built in commands: `exit`, `cd`, and `status`. It will also support comments, which are lines beginning with the `#` character.

Specifications

All execution, compiling, and testing of this program should be done from the bash prompt on the `os-class.engr.oregonstate.edu` server.

Use the colon `:` symbol as a prompt for each command line. Be sure you flush out the output buffers each time you print, as the text that you're outputting may not reach the screen until you do in this kind of interactive program. To do this, call `fflush()` immediately after each and every time you output text.

The general syntax of a command line is:

```
command [arg1 arg2 ...] [< input_file] [> output_file] [&]
```

...where items in square brackets are optional. You can assume that a command is made up of words separated by spaces. The special symbols `<`, `>`, and `&` are recognized, but they must be surrounded by spaces like other words. If the command is to be executed in the background, the last word must be `&`. If standard input or output is to be redirected, the `>` or `<` words followed by a filename word must appear after all the arguments. Input redirection can appear before or after output redirection.

Your shell does not need to support any quoting; so arguments with spaces inside them are not possible.

Your shell should support command lines with a maximum length of 2048 characters, and a maximum of 512 arguments. You do not need to do any error checking on the syntax of the command line.

Command Execution

You will use `fork()`, `exec()`, and `waitpid()` to execute commands. The shell will wait for completion of foreground commands (commands without the `&`) before prompting for the next command. The shell will not wait for background commands to complete.

Background commands should have their standard input redirected from /dev/null if the user did not specify some other file to take standard input from. What happens to background commands that read from standard input if you forget this?

Your shell should use the PATH variable to look for commands, and it should allow shell scripts to be executed. If a command fails because the shell could not find the command to run, then the shell will print an error message and set the exit status to 1.

After the fork() but before the exec() you must do any input/output redirection. A redirected input file should be opened for reading only; if your shell cannot open the file for reading it should print an error message and set the exit status to 1. A redirected output file should be opened for write only, it should be truncated if it already exists or created if it does not exist. If your shell cannot open the output file it should print an error message and set the exit status to 1.

The built-in command `status` can be used to print the exit status of the last foreground command. If a command (either a foreground or background command) is terminated by a signal, a message indicating which signal terminated the process will be printed. The shell will print the process id of a background process when it begins. When a background process terminates, a message showing the process id and exit status will be printed. You should check to see if any background processes completed just before you prompt for a new command and print the message *then*. In this way the messages about completed background processes will not appear during other running commands, though the user will have to wait until they complete some other command to see these messages (this is the way the C shell and Bourne shells work). You will need to use waitpid to check for completed background processes.

Be sure that a CTRL-C interrupt from the keyboard does not terminate your shell, but only the foreground command it is running. To do this, you'll have to create the appropriate signal handlers.

Background processes should not be terminated by a CTRL-C signal, nor should they send their standard output to the screen (consider /dev/null, instead, as needed). To do this, you'll also need to create the appropriate signal handler.

Built-in Commands

Your shell will support three built in commands: `exit`, `cd`, and `status`.

The `exit` command exits the shell. It takes no arguments. When run, it must kill any other processes or jobs that your shell has started before it terminates your shell itself.

The `cd` command changes directories. By itself, it changes to the directory specified in the HOME environment variable (not to the location where smallsh was executed from, unless your shell is located *in* the HOME directory). It can also take one argument, the path of the directory to change to. Note that this is a working directory: when smallsh exits, the pwd will be the original pwd when smallsh was launched. Your `cd` command should support both absolute and relative paths.

The `status` command prints out the exit status or terminating signal of the last foreground process. You do not have to support input/output redirection for these built in commands and they do not have to set any exit status.

These three built-in commands are the only ones that your shell will handle itself - all others are simply passed on to a member of the `exec()` family of functions (which member is up to you).

Finally, your shell should allow blank lines and comments. Any line that begins with the `#` character is a comment line and should be ignored. A blank line (one without any commands) should do nothing; your shell should just re-prompt for another command.

Example

Here is an example:

```
$ smallsh
: ls
junk    smallsh    smallsh.c
: ls > junk
: status
exit value 0
: cat junk
junk
smallsh
smallsh.c
: wc < junk
      3      3      23
: test -f badfile
: status
exit value 1
: wc < badfile
smallsh: cannot open badfile for input
: status
exit value 1
: badfile
badfile: no such file or directory
: sleep 5
^Cterminated by signal 2
```

```
: status
terminated by signal 2
: sleep 15 &
background pid is 4923
: ps
  PID TTY          TIME CMD
  4923 pts/4        0:00 sleep
  4564 pts/4        0:03 tcsh-6.0
  4867 pts/4        1:32 smallsh
:
:
: # that was a blank command line, this is a comment line
background pid 4923 is done: exit value 0
: # the background sleep finally finished
: sleep 30 &
background pid is 4941
: kill -15 4941
background pid 4941 is done: terminated by signal 15
: pwd
/nfs/stak/faculty/b/brewsteb/CS344/prog3
: cd
: pwd
/nfs/stak/faculty/b/brewsteb
: cd CS344
: pwd
/nfs/stak/faculty/b/brewsteb/CS344
: exit
$
```

Grading Method

In addition to your shell needing to replicate the above example in functionality, this assignment is provided with the [actual grading test script](#) that will be used to assign your program a grade. Your program must function with this grading script, as follows. To run it, place it in the same directory as your compiled shell, chmod it (`chmod +x ./p3testscript`) and run this command from a bash prompt:

```
$ p3testscript 2>&1
```

or

```
$ p3testscript 2>&1 | more
```

or

```
$ p3testscript > mytestresults 2>&1
```

Don't worry if the spacing, indentation, or look of the output of the script is different than when you run it interactively: that won't affect your grade. The script may add extra colons at the beginning of lines or do other weird things, like put output about terminating processes further down the script than you intended. Use the script to prepare for your grade, as this is how it's being earned, but base the look and feel of your program on the interactive running of your shell.

What to submit

Please submit a single zip file of your program code, which may be in as many different files as you want. Also, inside that zip file, you must provide a file called `readme.txt` that contains instructions on HOW to compile your code; you may compile your code however you wish. DO NOT include a copy of the testing script.

The graders will compile your code according to your exact specifications. They will make a reasonable effort to make it work, but if it doesn't compile, you'll receive a zero on this assignment.

Hints

Recommended Procedure for Running Commands

To summarize, from a conceptual perspective, consider setting up your shell to run in this manner: let the parent process (your shell) continue running. Whenever a non-built in command is received, have the parent fork off a child. This child then does any needed input/output redirection before running `exec()` on the command given. Note that when doing redirection, that after using `dup2()` to set up the redirection, the redirection symbol and redirection destination/source are NOT passed into the following `exec` command (i.e., if the command given is `ls > more`, then you do the redirection and then simply pass `ls` into `exec()`).

If the command given was a foreground command, then the parent shell does NOT return command line access and control to the user until the child terminates. It is recommend to have the parent simply call `waitpid()` on the child, while it waits.

If the command given was a background process, then the parent returns command line access and control the user immediately after forking off the child. In this scenario, your parent shell will need to periodically check for the background child processes to complete (with `waitpid()`), so that they can be cleaned up, as the shell continues to run and process commands. Consider storing the PIDs of non-completed background processes in an array, so that they can periodically checked for. Again, the time to check for whether these background processes have completed is just BEFORE command line access and control are returned to the user, every time that happens.

It is recommended that you program the built-in commands first, before tackling the `fork()`, `exec()`, `waitpid()` specifications. Don't forget to use `fflush()`, as described above!

Re-Entrancy

A topic we haven't covered much is the concept of [re-entrancy \(Links to an external site.\)](#). This is important when we consider that signal handlers cause jumps in execution that cause problems with certain functions.

For our purposes, note that the `printf()` family of functions is NOT re-entrant. In your signal handlers, when outputting text, you must use other output functions!

Where to Program

Finally, I HIGHLY recommend that you develop this program directly on the os-class server. Doing so will prevent you from having problems transferring the program back and forth, and having compatibility problems.

If you do see `^M` characters all over your files, try this command:

```
$ dos2unix bustedFile
```

Grading

Once the program is compiled, according to your specifications, your shell will be executed to run a few sample commands against (`ls`, `status`, `exit`, in that order). If the program does not successfully work on those commands, it will receive a zero. If it works, it will have the `p3testscript` program ran against it (as detailed above) for final grading. Points will be assigned according to the test script.

150 points are available in the test script, while the final 10 points will be based on your style, readability, and commenting. Comment well, often, and verbosely: we want to see that you are telling us WHY you are doing things, in addition to telling us WHAT you are doing.