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# Unix history commands for Java developer productivity

Posted on [January 25, 2015](#) by [Arulkumaran Kumaraswamipillai](#) — No[Comments](#) ↓

When you are using Linux/Unix command line frequently, using the history effectively can be a major productivity boost. You can accomplish things with less typing. For example, you will be typing lots of commands like

```
1 ls -ltr
2 cd /tmp/user
3 pwd
4 cd /tmp/usr
5
```

and so on. There are 6 ways to repeat your previous commands quickly without having to type a lot.

1. Use the **up arrow** to view the previous command and press enter to execute it.
2. Type **!!** and press enter from the command line to execute the last command again

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3. Type **!-1** and press enter from the command line to execute the last command !-2 for command before the last and so on.
4. Type **history** followed by enter, which prints a list of last few commands, and then **!25** to execute a particular command
5. Press **Control+P** will display the previous command, press enter to execute it.
6. Press **Control + R**, and then search for the command or arguments typed. This the most useful one.

```

1 $history | more
2
3      71  ls -ltr
4      72  ls -ltr
5      73  ls -ltr
6      74  ls -ltr
7      75  pwd
8      76  pwd
9      77  I-2
10     78  pwd
11     79  ls -ltr
12     80  pwd
13     81  pwd
14     82  pwd
15     83  ls -ltr
16     84  hsitory | more
17     85  history | more
18
19

```

To execute the command **pwd** again, you can do

```

1 !71
2

```

Now, what if you want to execute a previous command that starts with certain letters

```

1 !p
2

```

to execute the **pwd** command again. The most useful

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command of all is

**Control+P** type "<search text>"

```

1
2
3 $ cd test15/myAppProperties/
4 $ ls -ltr
5 $ cd /opt/tmp
6 $ CONTROL+Rjb and type <test15>
7 $(reverse-i-search)`jbTest15': cd test15/myAppPr
8
9 </test15>

```

This a contextual search of your command history. As you type the search text, the display changes. The most powerful, and useful.

By default, history is stored in ~/.bash\_history and ~/.sh\_history files. You can list the hidden files with

```

1
2 $ cd ~
3 $ ls -a
4

```

~ is the home directory.

You can clear all the previous history with

```

1
2 $ history -c
3

```

You can do a lot more, but for Java developers, this is a good start.

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