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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 tex**t>"

```
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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