Shell Initialization

Any command shell can be invoked merely by typing its name at the command line. A user's default shell can be changed with the **chsh** utility.

We will concentrate on bash, which is generally the default shell under Linux.

Kinds of shells

- A login shell is one requiring a password (logging in)
- An interactive shell is one in which the standard input/output streams are connected to terminals
- A non-interactive shell is one in which the standard input/output streams may be connected to a process, etc.

Initialization

Interactive shells

Login shells:

- if **/etc/profile** exists, source it
- if **~/.bash_profile** exists, source it
- else if **~/.bash_login** exists, source it
- else **if ~/.profile** exists, source it
- on exit, if **~/.bash_logout** exists, source it

Non-login shells:

- if **~/.bashrc** exists, source it

Non-interactive shells

Despite what the man page says, it seems to be the same as interactive shells.

Note that by default, most distributions include a system-wide file (usually **/etc/bashrc**) from the user's **~/.bashrc**.