

Environment Variables

Environment variables are not limited in length or number. Lots of applications use them, for instance, in order to set default values for configuration options.

Examples include **HOME**, **HOST**, **PATH**, and can be set as in **PATH: PATH=\$HOME/bin:\$PATH** for example.

Note: Putting **/** in your path is a security risk; an unfriendly user might substitute an executable which could be quite harmful. However, if you are on a single user system, you may want to violate this recommendation.

Type **env** (or **export**) to get a list of presently exported environment variables, set to get the complete set of variables.

Some variables to set (use whatever values make sense for you!):

```
1  EDITOR=/usr/bin/emacs
2  CD_PATH=$HOME:/tmp
3  LS_COLORS="....."
4  PAGER=/usr/bin/less
5  HISTSIZE=1000
6
```

An environment variable must be exported to propagate its value to a child process. You can do either of the following:

```
1  $ VAR=value ; export VAR
2  $ export VAR=value
```

You can also make one or more environment variables take effect for just one command:

```
1  $ LD_LIBRARY_PATH=$PWD DEBUG=3 ./foobar
```