

(SS64)

macOS

How-to

Search

An A-Z Index of the **Apple macOS** command line (macOS bash)

```

afconvert Audio File Convert
afinfo Audio File Info
afplay Audio File Play
airport Manage Apple AirPort
alias Create an alias •
alloc List used and free memory
apropos Search the whatis database for strings
asr Apple Software Restore
atsutil Font registration system utility
awk Find and Replace text within file(s)

b
basename Convert a full pathname to just a filename
bash Bourne-Again SHell
bc Arbitrary precision calculator language
bg Send to background •
bind Set or display readline key and function bindings •
bless Set volume bootability and startup disk options
break Exit from a For, While, Until or Select loop •
builtin Execute a shell builtin •
bzip2 Compress or decompress files

c
caffeinate Prevent the system from sleeping
cal Display a calendar
calendar Reminder Service
caller Return the context of a subroutine call •
cancel Cancel print jobs
case Conditionally perform a command •
cat Concatenate and print (display) the content of files
cd Change Directory •
chflags Change a file or folder's flags
chgrp Change group ownership
chmod Change access permissions
chown Change file owner and group
chroot Run a command with a different root directory
cksum Print CRC checksum and byte counts
clear Clear terminal screen
cmp Compare two files
comm Compare two sorted files line by line
command Run a command (not a function) •
complete Edit a command completion [word/pattern/list] •
continue Resume the next iteration of a loop •
cp Copy one or more files to another location
cpio Copy files to and from archives
cron Daemon to execute scheduled commands
crontab Schedule a command to run at a later date/time
csplit Split a file into context-determined pieces
csrutil Configure System Integrity Protection (SIP)
cupsfilter Convert a file to another format using cups filters
curl Transfer data from or to a server
cut Divide a file into several parts

d
date Display or change the date & time
dc Desk Calculator
dd Data Duplicator - convert and copy a file, clone disks
declare Declare variable & set attributes •
defaults Set preferences, show hidden files
df Display free disk space
diff Display the differences between two files
diff3 Show differences among three files
dig DNS lookup
dirname Convert a full pathname to just a path
dirs Display list of remembered directories •
diskutil Disk utilities - Format, Verify, Repair
disown Unbind a job from the current login session •
ditto Copy files and folders
dot_clean Remove dot-underscore files
drutil Interact with CD/DVD burners
dscacheutil Query or flush the Directory Service/DNS cache
dseditgroup Edit, create, manipulate, or delete groups
dsenableroot Enable root access
dsmemberutil View user and groups rights
dscl Directory Service command line utility
du Estimate file space usage

e
echo Display text on screen •

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ed A line-oriented text editor (edlin)
 enable Enable and disable builtin shell commands •
 env List or Set environment variables
 eval Evaluate several commands/arguments •
 exec Execute a command •
 exit Exit the shell •
 execsnoop Snoop new process execution
 expand Convert tabs to spaces
 expect Programmed dialogue with interactive programs
 Also see [AppleScript](#)
 export Set an environment variable •
 expr Evaluate expressions
 f
 false Do nothing, unsuccessfully
 fc Fix command (history)
 fdisk Partition table manipulator for Darwin UFS/HFS/DOS
 fdesetup FileVault configuration, list FileVault users
 fg Send job to foreground •
 file Determine file type
 find Search for files that meet a desired criteria
 fmt Reformat paragraph text
 fold Wrap text to fit a specified width
 for Loop command •
 fsck Filesystem consistency check and repair
 fs_usage Filesystem usage (process/pathname)
 ftp Internet file transfer program
 function Define Function Macros
 fuser List processes that have one or more files open
 g
 GetFileInfo Get attributes of HFS+ files
 getopt Parse positional parameters
 getopts Parse positional parameters •
 goto Jump to label and continue execution
 grep Search file(s) for lines that match a given pattern
 groups Print group names a user is in
 gzip Compress or decompress files
 h
 halt Stop and restart the operating system
 hash Refresh the cached/remembered location of commands •
 head Display the first lines of a file
 hdiutil Manipulate iso disk images
 history Command History •
 hostname Print or set system name
 i
 iconv Convert the character set of a file
 id Print user and group names/id's
 if Conditionally perform a command •
 ifconfig Configure network interface parameters
 iostat Report CPU and i/o statistics
 ipconfig View and control IP configuration state
 info Help info
 install Copy files and set attributes
 iosnoop Snoop I/O events as they occur
 j
 jobs List active jobs •
 join Join lines on a common field
 k
 kextfind List kernel extensions
 kextstat Display status of loaded kernel extensions (kexts)
 kextunload Terminate driver instances and unload kernel extensions.
 kickstart Configure Apple Remote Desktop
 kill Kill a process by specifying its PID
 killall Kill processes by name
 l
 l List files in long format (ls -l)
 last Indicate last logins of users and ttys
 launchctl Load or unload daemons/agents
 ll List files in long format, showing invisible files (ls -la)
 less Display output one screen at a time
 let Evaluate expression •
 lipo Convert a universal binary
 ln Make links between files (hard links, symbolic links)
 local Set a local (function) variable •
 locate Find files
 logname Print current login name
 login log into the computer
 logout Exit a login shell (bye) •
 look Display lines beginning with a given string
 lp Print files
 lpr Print files
 lprm Remove jobs from the print queue
 lpstat Printer status information

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ls          List information about file(s)
lsregister  Reset the Launch Services database
lsbom       List a bill of materials file
lsof        List open files

m
man          Help manual
mdfind      Spotlight search
mdls        List the metadata attributes for a specified file
mdutil      Manage Spotlight metadata store
mkdir       Create new folder(s)
mkfifo      Make FIFOs (named pipes)
mkfile      Make a file
mktemp      Make a temporary file
more        Display output one screen at a time
mount       Mount a file system
mv          Move or rename files or directories

n
nano        Simple text editor
nc/netcat   Read and write data across networks
net         Manage network resources
netstat     Show network status
networksetup Network and System Preferences
nice        Set the priority of a command
nohup       Run a command immune to hangups
ntfs.util   NTFS file system utility
nvram       Manipulate firmware variables

o
onintr      Control the action of a shell interrupt
open        Open a file/folder/URL/Application
opensnoop   Snoop file opens as they occur
openssl     OpenSSL command line
osacompile  Compile Applescript
osascript   Execute AppleScript

p
passwd      Modify a user password
paste       Merge lines of files
pbcopy      Copy data to the clipboard
pbpaste     Paste data from the Clipboard
pgrep       List processes by a full or partial name
ping        Test a network connection
pkill       Kill processes by a full or partial name
pkgbuild    Build a macOS Installer component package
pkgutil     Query and manipulate installed packages
plutil      Property list utility
pmset       Power Management settings
popd        Restore the previous value of the current directory •
pr          Convert text files for printing
printenv    List environment variables
printf      Format and print data •
ps          Process status
pushd       Save and then change the current directory
pwd         Print Working Directory •

q
quota       Display disk usage and limits

r
rcp         Copy files between machines
read        Read one line from standard input •
readonly    Mark a variable or function as read-only •
reboot      Stop and restart the system
ReportCrash Enable/Disable crash reporting
return      Exit a function •
rev         Reverse lines of a file
rm          Remove files
rmdir       Remove folder(s)
rpm         Remote Package Manager
rsync       Remote file copy - Sync file tree

s
say         Convert text to audible speech
screen      Multiplex terminal, run remote shells via ssh
screencapture Capture screen image to file or disk
scselect    Switch between network locations
scutil      Manage system configuration parameters
sdiff       Merge two files interactively
security    Administer Keychains, keys, certificates and the Security framework
sed         Stream Editor
select      Generate a list of items •
serverinfo  Server information
set         Set a shell variable = value •
setfile     Set attributes of HFS+ files
sharing     Create share points for afp, ftp and smb services
shasum      Print or Check SHA Checksums
shift       Shift positional parameters •

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shopt      Set shell options •
shutdown   Shutdown or restart macOS
sips       Scriptable image processing system
sleep      Delay for a specified time
softwareupdate System software update tool
sort        Sort text files
source      Execute commands from a file •
spctl      Security assessment policy/Gatekeeper
split       Split a file into fixed-size pieces
sqlite3     SQL database (download history)
srm         Securely remove files or directories
stat        Display the status of a file
stop        Stop a job or process
su          Substitute user identity
sudo        Execute a command as another user
sum         Print a checksum for a file
suspend     Suspend execution of this shell •
sw_vers     Print macOS operating system version
sysctl      Get or set kernel state
system_profiler Report system configuration
systemsetup Computer and display system settings

t
tail        Output the last part of files
tar          Tape ARchiver
tccutil     Manage the privacy database
tcpdump     Dump traffic on a network
tee          Redirect output to multiple files
test         Condition evaluation •
textutil    Manipulate text files in various formats (Doc,html,rtf)
time         Measure Program Resource Use
times        Print shell & shell process times •
tmutil      Time Machine utility
top          Display process information
touch        Change file timestamps
tput         Set terminal-dependent capabilities, color, position
tr           Translate, squeeze, and/or delete characters
trap         Execute a command when the shell receives a signal •
traceroute   Trace Route to Host
trimforce    Enable TRIM commands on third-party drives
true         Do nothing, successfully
tty          Print filename of terminal on stdin
type         Describe a command •

u
ufs.util     Mount/unmount UFS file system
ulimit       limit the use of system-wide resources •
umask        Users file creation mask
umount       Unmount a device
unalias      Remove an alias •
uname        Print the Darwin OS Kernel version / release / machine name
unexpand     Convert spaces to tabs
uniq         Uniquify files
units        Convert units from one scale to another
unset        Remove variable or function names •
until        Loop command •
uptime       Show how long system has been running
users        Print login names of users currently logged in
until        Execute commands (until error)
uencode      Encode a binary file
udecode      Decode a file created by uencode
uuidgen      Generate a Unique ID (UUID/GUID)
uucp         Unix to Unix copy

v
vi           Text Editor

w
w           Show who is logged on and what they are doing
wait        Wait for a process to complete •
wall        Write a message to users
wc          Print byte, word, and line counts
whatis      Search the whatis database for complete words
whereis     Locate a program
which        Locate a program file in the user's path
while       Loop command •
who         Print all usernames currently logged on
whoami      Print the current user id and name ('id -un')
write       Send a message to another user

x
xargs        Execute utility - passing arguments
xattr        Display and manipulate extended attributes
xcode-select --install Install the command line developer tools
youtube-dl   Download video
yes          Print a string until interrupted

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zip	Package and compress (archive) files.
!!	Run the last command again

Commands marked • are bash *built-in* commands. bash is the default shell, it runs under [Darwin](#) the open source core of macOS. In macOS Catalina the default shell will change to zsh and in time this page will be updated to include that.

[Discussion forum](#)

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"Mac OS X is a rock-solid system that's beautifully designed. I much prefer it to Linux" - [Bill Joy](#)