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Method of Loci

Memory List

1. Switch: alias Create an alias.
2. Porch Picture: apt-get Search for and install software packages.
3. Piano Bench: awk Find and Replace text.
4. Mirror: basename Strip directory and suffix from filenames.
5. Switch/Steps: bg Send to background.
6. Basement Door: break Exit from a loop.
7. Steps Picture: bzip2 Compress or decompress named file(s).
8. Basement Steps: case Conditionally perform a command.
9. Basement Window: cal Display a calendar.
10. Basement Green Table: cat Concatenate and print (display) the content of files.
11. Basement Closet: cd Change Directory.
12. My Door: chgrp Change group ownership.
13. Guitar Case: chmod Change access permissions.
14. Floor Heater: chown Change file owner and group.
15. Country Pic: chkconfig System services (runlevel).
16. Coffer Hanger: cmp Compare two files.
17. Line6 Amp: command Run a command - ignoring shell functions.
18. MicroCube: cp Copy one or more files to another location.
19. Computer: cron Daemon to execute scheduled commands.
20. Imac Keyboard: crontab Schedule a command to run at a later time.

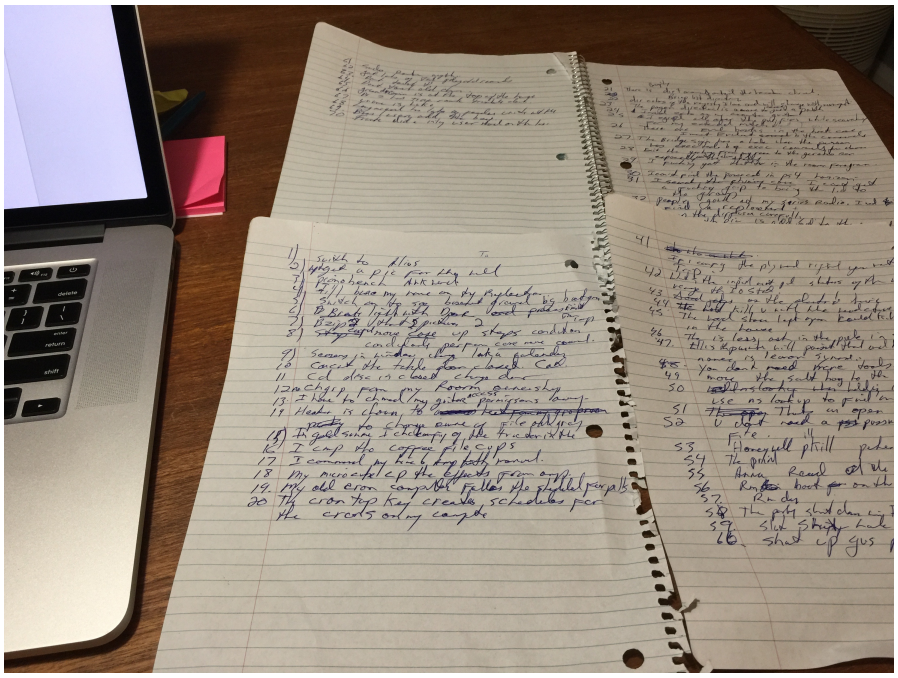
21. HDR Church: dir Briefly list directory contents.
22. Majesty: dircolors Colour setup for `ls'.
23. Purple Table Cloth: dirname Convert a full pathname to just a path.
24. Acoustic Guitar: echo Display message on screen.
25. Air Purifier: egrep Search file(s) for lines that match an extended expression.
26. Book Case: eval Evaluate several commands/arguments.
27. Bridge Sign Bullet Hole: exec Execute a command.
28. Silver Garbage Can: exit Exit the shell.
29. Ghosty TV: fg Send job to foreground.
30. Ps4: find Search for files that meet a desired criteria.
31. Chimney Intake Cover: fgrep Search file(s) for lines that match a fixed string.
32. Temperamental Sirus Radio: gawk Find and Replace text within file(s).
33. Oils Diffuser: grep Search file(s) for lines that match a given pattern.
34. Anna Goth Pic: groupadd Add a user security group.
35. Stylus Pro Printer: groupdel Delete a group.
36. Gus's Litter Box: hash Remember the full pathname of a name argument.
37. Open Chimney Vent: mkdir Create new folder(s).
38. Bar Stool Chair: head Output the first part of file(s).
39. Weight Bench: htop Interactive process viewer.
40. Window Under Deck: id Print user and group id's.
41. Plywood Over Hole: ifconfig Configure a network interface.
42. Wood Shelf: iostat Report CPU and i/o statistics.
43. Electrical Panel: jobs List active jobs.
44. WoodStove Pokers: kill Kill a process by specifying its PID.
45. WoodStove: killall Kill processes by name.
46. Ash Pale: less Display output one screen at a time.
47. Painted Panel: ls List information about file(s).
48. Tool Room: more Display output one screen at a time.
49. Salt Bag: mv Move or rename files or directories.
50. Insulation Pile: nslookup Query Internet name servers interactively.
51. Glenn and Harold Pic: open Open a file in its default application

52. Encyclopedias: passwd Modify a user password.
53. Honeywell Air Purifier: pkill Kill processes by name.
54. Picture Above Honeywell: pwd Print Working Directory.
55. Dinner Table: read Read a line from standard input.
56. Patio Doors: rm Remove files.
57. Patio Door Mat: rmdir Remove folder(s).
58. Guitar Hanger: shutdown Shutdown or restart linux.
59. Glass Table: ssh Secure Shell client (remote login program).
60. Couch: su Substitute user identity.
61. Router: sudo Execute a command as another user.
62. Old Record Player: tail Output the last part of file.
63. Polk Audio: timeout Run a command with a time limit.
64. Old Chair: touch Change file timestamps.
65. BedRoom Door: top List processes running on the system.
66. Dr. Z: traceroute Trace Route to Host.
67. MusicMan Luke: uname Print system information.
68. Fender Strat: units Convert units from one scale to another.
69. Big Bass: useradd Create new user account.
70. Frank Gambale Lux: usermod Modify user account.
71. Loch Lomond: cfdisk Partition table manipulator for Linux.
72. BathTub: users List users currently logged in.
73. BathTub Tap: vi Text Editor.
74. Floor Air Vent: w Show who is logged on and what they are doing.
75. Washer Machine: who Print all usernames currently logged in.
76. Dryer Machine: whoami Print the current user id and name (`id -un').
77. Toilet Paper Holder: write Send a message to another user.
78. Toilet: zip Package and compress (archive) files.
79. Church: date Display or change the date & time.
80. Three Crows: eject Eject removable media.

The above list was created by moving forward and to the right throughout my residence. This enabled me to create a definite and repeatable path. As I moved through the house I stuck post-it notes (that were numbered 1 to 80) on objects to be recalled with the location and relation to other objects and areas in the house. After doing this I memorized the number associated with each object. I found that the memorization process was aided by emphasizing intervals of 5. If I

lost my spot I was able to move forward or backward to the nearest iteration of 5 and reposition myself. After completing the sequence, I created the above list by associating each number in the list with a linux command. I choose commands from a list on a webpage, selecting commands I learned at school and filling the rest in an A to Z order. I didn't use alphabetical order because I believed it would help, but only to be methodical. The blue highlighted commands are links by the way.

After creating the list, my next endeavour was to commit it to memory. For each entry I scratched out a sentence or two, and created a little story to encapsulate the object, its position in the sequence, and the linux command. For the "killall" command(which favourably lined up with "wood stove") I wrote, "if the wood stove is left open it will killall in the house!". Perhaps a morbid thought, but it works very well for remembering.



Some sentences were more effective than others. Making an association with "cfdisk" or "egrep" isn't intuitive, so sometimes I used pseudo acronyms and abbreviations.

I worked out sentences in groups of 20. After that I did combinations of recall by walking through my memory palace in sequence, in random, and physically walking the post-it notes both forwards and then backwards.

(I would like to add that my focus in this exercise was to recall the commands themselves, and not necessarily their definitions.)

Conclusion

As this is my first run through using the Loci method, I can say with certainty the Method of Loci is effective. As a novice I stumbled through this exercise on this day using a combination of pre-work and a rational layering of steps. I have never had a good recall for non-contextualized information, but this surely works. I was able to recall all but 1 or 2 of the commands in any sequence I put myself too. And like I said, I'm a novice stumbling through this for the first time. The fact that it worked so well is almost embarrassing.

Two thumbs up for the Method of Loci. It should be a mandatory part of any curriculum in this age of information overload.

Bash commands definitions were taken with permission from the following link: https://ss64.com/bash