

Change variables in bash

Asked 10 years, 10 months ago Modified 7 years, 4 months ago Viewed 130k times

How do I change this var ?

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```
max=0;
min=200000000;
cat |while read
do
    read a
    if [[ $a -gt $max ]]
    then
        max=a`
    fi
    `if [[ $a -lt $min ]]
    then
        min=a
    fi
done
echo $max
echo $min
```

My min and max are still the same, 0 and 2000000. Can anybody help me with this ? I have no idea.

bash

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edited May 1, 2012 at 20:19



user unknown

35.1k 11 74 121

asked May 1, 2012 at 18:45



pkruk

759 1 5 23

For those of us who missed your previous question, can you provide more information for this one.
What var are you trying to change? – [Andrew Brock](#) May 1, 2012 at 18:48

3 also max=a should be max=\$a , same with min=a should be min=\$a – [Andrew Brock](#) May 1, 2012 at 18:49

What should be min if every values are greater than 20000000 ? I guess that min and max should be your first value... – [Luc M](#) May 1, 2012 at 20:25

Possible duplicate of [A variable modified inside a while loop is not remembered](#) – [melpomene](#) Jan 18, 2018 at 2:33

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Another one is that you're calling `read` twice - this might be intended if you want to skip every other line, but that's a bit unusual.



The last one is that `min=a` sets `min` to `a`, literally. You want to set it to `$a`.



Using [process substitution](#) to get rid of the first problem, removing the (possibly) un-necessary second read, and fixing the assignments, your code should look like:

```
max=0
min=200000000
while read a
do
    if [[ $a -gt $max ]]
    then
        max=$a
    fi
    if [[ $a -lt $min ]]
    then
        min=$a
    fi
done <<(cat)    # careful with the syntax
echo $max
echo $min
```

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edited Sep 30, 2015 at 12:55

answered May 1, 2012 at 18:56



Tomáš Zato

48.5k 52 258 755



Mat

200k 40 389 404

ahhhh Thank's now i understand this. Thank's :) – [pkruk](#) May 1, 2012 at 20:01

2 4th problem: unmotivated backticks in the middle of the script, not explainable by beginner mistake. :) – [user unknown](#) May 1, 2012 at 20:21

1 @userunknown: I assumed those were the result of a fight with the markdown editor, not present in the code :) – [Mat](#) May 1, 2012 at 20:27

In Bash (and Ksh and Zsh), I recommend this form: `if ((a > max))`. Also, if `cat` is not a placeholder for something else, then the whole redirection and process substitution can be eliminated since the script will read from `stdin` by default anyway. – [Dennis Williamson](#) May 1, 2012 at 21:28

1 is there a better answer for this now? – [Hossein Kalbasi](#) Dec 7, 2019 at 5:05