Basic Linux Commands

Command	Example	Description
cat		Sends file contents to standard output. This is a way to list the contents of short files to the screen. It works well with piping.
	cat .bashrc	Sends the contents of the ".bashrc" file to the screen.
cd		Change directory
	cd /home	Change the current working directory to /home. The '/' indicates relative to root, and no matter what directory you are in when you execute this command, the directory will be changed to "/home".
	cd httpd	Change the current working directory to httpd, relative to the current location which is "/home". The full path of the new working directory is "/home/httpd".
	cd ..	Move to the parent directory of the current directory. This command will make the current working directory "/home.
	cd ~	Move to the user's home directory which is "/home/username". The '~' indicates the users home directory.
cp		Copy files
	cp myfile yourfile	Copy the files "myfile" to the file "yourfile" in the current working directory. This command will create the file "yourfile" if it doesn't exist. It will normally overwrite it without warning if it exists.
	cp -i myfile yourfile	With the "-i" option, if the file "yourfile" exists, you will be prompted before it is overwritten.
	cp -i /data/myfile .	Copy the file "/data/myfile" to the current working directory and name it "myfile". Prompt before overwriting the file.
	cp -dpr srcdir destdir	Copy all files from the directory "srcdir" to the directory "destdir" preserving links (-p option), file attributes (-p option), and copy recursively (-r option). With these options, a directory and all it contents can be copied to another directory.
dd	dd if=/dev/hdb1 of=/backup/	Disk duplicate. The man page says this command is to "Convert and copy a file", but although used by more advanced users, it can be a very handy command. The "if" means input file, "of" means output file.
df		Show the amount of disk space used on each mounted filesystem.
less	less textfile	Similar to the more command, but the user can page up and down through the file. The example displays the contents of textfile.
ln		Creates a symbolic link to a file.
	ln -s test symlink	Creates a symbolic link named symlink that points to the file test Typing "ls -i test symlink" will show the two files are different with different inodes. Typing "ls -l test symlink" will show that symlink points to the file test.
locate		A fast database driven file locator.
	slocate -u	This command builds the slocate database. It will take several minutes to complete this command. This command must be used before searching for files, however cron runs this command periodically on most systems.
	locate whereis	Lists all files whose names contain the string "whereis".
logout		Logs the current user off the system.
ls		List files

	ls	List files in the current working directory except those starting with . and only show the file name.
	ls -al	List all files in the current working directory in long listing format showing permissions, ownership, size, and time and date stamp
more		Allows file contents or piped output to be sent to the screen one page at a time.
	more /etc/profile	Lists the contents of the "/etc/profile" file to the screen one page at a time.
	ls -al |more	Performs a directory listing of all files and pipes the output of the listing through more. If the directory listing is longer than a page, it will be listed one page at a time.
mv		Move or rename files
	mv -i myfile yourfile	Move the file from "myfile" to "yourfile". This effectively changes the name of "myfile" to "yourfile".
	mv -i /data/myfile .	Move the file from "myfile" from the directory "/data" to the current working directory.
pwd		Show the name of the current working directory
	more /etc/profile	Lists the contents of the "/etc/profile" file to the screen one page at a time.
shutdown		Shuts the system down.
	shutdown -h now	Shuts the system down to halt immediately.
	shutdown -r now	Shuts the system down immediately and the system reboots.
whereis		Show where the binary, source and manual page files are for a command
	whereis ls	Locates binaries and manual pages for the ls command.