

Clear Command line history in Linux

1. Clear entire Command line history using ‘*history*’ command

To view the recently-executed commands, open Terminal and ENTER:

```
history
```

To clear the history, just run any one of the following command after you’re done:

```
history -c
```

Or

```
history -cw
```

The above commands will clear the recently-executed command in the Terminal. Please remember that you should run ‘history’ command after you executing all commands.

2. Clear a Command line history using by inserting a blank space before each command

Using this method, you can clear or delete any particular command from the history. Just put a blank space (Hit spacebar from the keyboard) before any command. The command will not be recorded in history.

To do that, you must set **HISTCONTROL** environment variable’s value as “**ignorespace**” or “**ignoreboth**”.

```
export HISTCONTROL=ignorespace
```

```
<space>sudo ping ostechnix.com
```

Here **<space>** describes a blank space, and this line won’t be recorder in history file.

3. Clear Command line history automatically at logout

Instead of manually clearing history each time, follow the below steps to automatically clear it at logout.

To do so, edit **~/.bashrc** file:

```
vi ~/.bashrc
```

Add the following line:

```
unset HISTFILE
```

Save and close the file. Now, the history will be cleared after you logout from the session.

4. Delete Command line history permanently

One problem of using all above methods is they will only remove the commands from the active session i.e currently opened Terminal. That means if you have multiple Terminals running different commands, the 'history' command will only delete the history from where you run this command. The commands from other Terminals will still be available.

To remove all commands from history in all sessions (Terminals), you must remove the contents of **.bash_history file**. As you might know already, this file holds the list of commands that we run in the Terminal over time.

You can either clear this file manually each time or setup a cron job to clear it at regular intervals.

To clear the contents of this file manually each time, run:

```
cat /dev/null > ~/.bash_history
```

Like I said, this will delete the entire history of all sessions. The next day, however, this file will start to record the history. You should run this command everyday to clear the contents of this file.

Alternatively, you can schedule this task at regular interval using cron jobs.

To do so, run:

```
crontab -e
```

Add the following commands:

```
00 20 * * * cat /dev/null > ~/.bash_history
```

Save and exit file. The history will be cleared everyday at **8 pm** automatically. Please note that it will only clear the history of currently-logged-in user's history, not the all user's.