

# SC2046

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## Quote this to prevent word splitting.

### Problematic code:

```
ls -l $(getfilename)
```

### Correct code:

```
# getfilename outputs 1 file
ls -l "$(getfilename)"

# getfilename outputs multiple files, linefeed separated
getfilename | while IFS=" " read -r line do
  ls -l "$line"
done
```

### Rationale:

When command expansions are unquoted, word splitting and globbing will occur. This often manifests itself by breaking when filenames contain spaces.

Trying to fix it by adding quotes or escapes to the data will not work. Instead, quote the command substitution itself.

If the command substitution outputs multiple pieces of data, use a loop instead.

### Exceptions

In rare cases you actually want word splitting, such as in

```
# shellcheck disable=SC2046
gcc $(pkg-config --libs openssl) client.c
```

This is because `pkg-config` outputs `-lssl -lcrypto`, which you want to break up by spaces into `-lssl` and `-lcrypto`.

A bash alternative in these cases is to use `read -a` for words or `mapfile` for lines. ksh can also use `read -a`, or a `while read` loop for lines. In this case, since `pkg-config` outputs words, you could use:

```
# Read words into an array in bash and ksh
read -ra args < <(pkg-config --libs openssl)

# expand args
gcc "${args[@]}" client.c
```

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► Pages 478

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- Installation
  - [CentOS6](#)
  - [More Installation Guides](#)
- Usage
  - [Directive](#)
  - [Ignore](#)
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  - [Misc. contributions](#)
  - [Azure Pipelines](#)
  - [CircleCI](#)
  - [DevGuide](#)
  - [Integration](#)
  - [JUnit](#)
  - [Phabricator](#)
  - [TravisCI](#)
  - [GitLab CI](#)
  - [Drone](#)

- [Severity](#)
- [Template](#)

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