



Fwd: Awk commands

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HANDY ONE-LINERS FOR AWK 22 July 2003
compiled by Eric Pement <pement@northpark.edu> version 0.22
Latest version of this file is usually at:
<http://www.student.northpark.edu/pement/awk/awklline.txt>

USAGE:

```
Unix:  awk '/pattern/ {print "$1"}'    # standard Unix shells
DOS/Win:  awk '/pattern/ {print "$1"}'  # okay for DJGPP compiled
          awk "/pattern/ {print \"$1\"}" # required for Mingw32
```

Most of my experience comes from version of GNU awk (gawk) compiled for Win32. Note in particular that DJGPP compilations permit the awk script to follow Unix quoting syntax '/like/ {"this"}'. However, the user must know that single quotes under DOS/Windows do not protect the redirection arrows (<, >) nor do they protect pipes (|). Both are special symbols for the DOS/CMD command shell and their special meaning is ignored only if they are placed within "double quotes." Likewise, DOS/Win users must remember that the percent sign (%) is used to mark DOS/Win environment variables, so it must be doubled (%%) to yield a single percent sign visible to awk.

If I am sure that a script will NOT need to be quoted in Unix, DOS, or CMD, then I normally omit the quote marks. If an example is peculiar to GNU awk, the command 'gawk' will be used. Please notify me if you find errors or new commands to add to this list (total length under 65 characters). I usually try to put the shortest script first.

FILE SPACING:

```
# double space a file
awk '1;{print ""}'
awk 'BEGIN{ORS="\n\n"};1'
```

```
# double space a file which already has blank lines in it. Output file
# should contain no more than one blank line between lines of text.
# NOTE: On Unix systems, DOS lines which have only CRLF (\r\n) are
# often treated as non-blank, and thus 'NF' alone will return TRUE.
awk 'NF{print $0 "\n"}'
```

```
# triple space a file
awk '1;{print "\n\n"}'
```

NUMBERING AND CALCULATIONS:

```
# precede each line by its line number FOR THAT FILE (left alignment).
# Using a tab (\t) instead of space will preserve margins.
awk '{print FNR "\t" $0}' files*

# precede each line by its line number FOR ALL FILES TOGETHER, with tab.
awk '{print NR "\t" $0}' files*
```



```

awk '{gsub(/\l\tj+$/, ""); print}'
awk '{$1=$1; print}' # also removes extra space between fields

# insert 5 blank spaces at beginning of each line (make page offset)
awk '{sub(/^/, "    "); print}'

# align all text flush right on a 79-column width
awk '{printf "%79s\n", $0}' file*

# center all text on a 79-character width
awk '{l=length(); s=int((79-l)/2); printf "%(s+l)s\n", $0}' file*

# substitute (find and replace) "foo" with "bar" on each line
awk '{sub(/foo/, "bar"); print}' # replaces only 1st instance
gawk '{ $0=gensub(/foo/, "bar", 4); print}' # replaces only 4th instance
awk '{gsub(/foo/, "bar"); print}' # replaces ALL instances in a line

# substitute "foo" with "bar" ONLY for lines which contain "baz"
awk '/baz/{gsub(/foo/, "bar");}{print}'

# substitute "foo" with "bar" EXCEPT for lines which contain "baz"
awk '!/baz/{gsub(/foo/, "bar");}{print}'

# change "scarlet" or "ruby" or "puce" to "red"
awk '{gsub(/scarlet|ruby|puce/, "red"); print}'

# reverse order of lines (emulates "tac")
awk '{a[i++]=$0} END {for (j=i-1; j>=0; ) print a[j--]}' file*

# if a line ends with a backslash, append the next line to it
# (fails if there are multiple lines ending with backslash...)
awk '/\\$/ {sub(/\\$/, ""); getline t; print $0 t; next}; 1' file*

# print and sort the login names of all users
awk -F ":" '{ print $1 | "sort" }' /etc/passwd

# print the first 2 fields, in opposite order, of every line
awk '{print $2, $1}' file

# switch the first 2 fields of every line
awk '{temp = $1; $1 = $2; $2 = temp}' file

# print every line, deleting the second field of that line
awk '{ $2 = ""; print }'

# print in reverse order the fields of every line
awk '{for (i=NF; i>0; i--) printf("%s ", i); printf("\n")}' file

# remove duplicate, consecutive lines (emulates "uniq")
awk 'a !~ $0; {a=$0}'

# remove duplicate, nonconsecutive lines
awk '! a[$0]++' # most concise script
awk '!($0 in a) {a[$0]; print}' # most efficient script

# concatenate every 5 lines of input, using a comma separator
# between fields
awk 'ORS=NR%5?",": "\n"' file

```

SELECTIVE PRINTING OF CERTAIN LINES:

```
# print first 10 lines of file (emulates behavior of "head")
awk 'NR < 11'

# print first line of file (emulates "head -1")
awk 'NR>1{exit};1'

# print the last 2 lines of a file (emulates "tail -2")
awk '{y=x "\n" $0; x=$0};END{print y}'

# print the last line of a file (emulates "tail -1")
awk 'END{print}'
```

```
# print only lines which match regular expression (emulates "grep")
awk '/regex/'

# print only lines which do NOT match regex (emulates "grep -v")
awk '!/regex/'

# print the line immediately before a regex, but not the line
# containing the regex
awk '/regex/{print x};{x=$0}'
awk '/regex/{print (x==" " ? "match on line 1" : x)};{x=$0}'

# print the line immediately after a regex, but not the line
# containing the regex
awk '/regex/{getline;print}'

# grep for AAA and BBB and CCC (in any order)
awk '/AAA/; /BBB/; /CCC/'

# grep for AAA and BBB and CCC (in that order)
awk '/AAA.*BBB.*CCC/'

# print only lines of 65 characters or longer
awk 'length > 64'

# print only lines of less than 65 characters
awk 'length < 64'

# print section of file from regular expression to end of file
awk '/regex/,0'
awk '/regex/,EOF'

# print section of file based on line numbers (lines 8-12, inclusive)
awk 'NR==8,NR==12'

# print line number 52
awk 'NR==52'
awk 'NR==52 {print;exit}'          # more efficient on large files

# print section of file between two regular expressions (inclusive)
awk '/Iowa/,/Montana/'          # case sensitive
```

SELECTIVE DELETION OF CERTAIN LINES:

```
# delete ALL blank lines from a file (same as "grep '.' ")
awk NF
awk '/./'
```

CREDITS AND THANKS:

Special thanks to Peter S. Tillier for helping me with the first release of this FAQ file.

For additional syntax instructions, including the way to apply editing commands from a disk file instead of the command line, consult:

"sed & awk, 2nd Edition," by Dale Dougherty and Arnold Robbins
O'Reilly, 1997
"UNIX Text Processing," by Dale Dougherty and Tim O'Reilly
Hayden Books, 1987
"Effective awk Programming, 3rd Edition." by Arnold Robbins
O'Reilly, 2001

To fully exploit the power of awk, one must understand "regular expressions." For detailed discussion of regular expressions, see "Mastering Regular Expressions, 2d edition" by Jeffrey Friedl (O'Reilly, 2002).

The manual ("man") pages on Unix systems may be helpful (try "man awk", "man nawk", "man regexp", or the section on regular expressions in "man ed"), but man pages are notoriously difficult. They are not written to teach awk use or regexps to first-time users, but as a reference text for those already acquainted with these tools.

USE OF '\t' IN awk SCRIPTS: For clarity in documentation, we have used the expression '\t' to indicate a tab character (0x09) in the scripts. All versions of awk, even the UNIX System 7 version should recognize the '\t' abbreviation.