

# Special characters

- There are some characters that have special meaning to the shell

These would include `$`, `>`, `<`, `&`, `|`, `;`, `'`, `"`, `\` and others.

Later in the course, You will understand why each of those characters is special.

If you want to include any of those characters in your filename, you need to insert a backslash `\` before every single special character.

- If you tried to make a directory named `$dollars`

```
mkdir $dollars
```

It will not work.

You need to insert a backslash before the `$`

```
mkdir \$dollars
```

- If you want to create a directory named `$$dollars`

```
mkdir \$\$dollars
```

- If you want to create a directory named `cats&dogs`

```
mkdir cats\&dogs
```

The backslash `\` will simply tell the shell not to interpret the next character in any special way. So it just escapes it. That's why sometimes the backslash is referred to as an escape character.

# A complex example

- Create a directory named `$"dollars';&|<>`

```
mkdir \"$\"dollars'\';\&\|<>
```

- Inserting a backslash in your filename is no exception, You have to precede it with another backslash.
- Create a directory named `\`

```
mkdir \\
```

- Create a directory named `\\`

```
mkdir \\\
```