

- External commands are the commands that are executed by kernel. These commands will have a process id running for it.
- Since ls is a program or file having an independent existence in the /bin directory or /usr/bin, it is branded as an external command.
- Most commands are external in nature, but there are some which are not really found anywhere, and some which are normally not executed even if they are in one of the directories specified by PATH.

```
$ type echo
```

```
echo is a shell built in
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echo is not an external command in the same way that, when you type echo, the system won't look in its PATH to locate it (even if it is there in /bin). Rather, it will execute it from its own set of built-in commands that are stored as separate files. These built-in commands of which echo is a member, are known as internal commands.

ls command i.e. an external command.

```
$ type ls
```

```
ls /bin/ls
```

- We have been attributing all this hunting work to "system" as, if there is such a thing as a system. The agency that actually does all this work is known as "shell".
- Which starts running for you when you log in, and dies when you log out.
- The shell, which itself is a command, possesses its own set of commands and even if there's a command of the same name in /bin or /usr/bin, the shell will accord top priority to its own internal command of the same name.
- This is exactly the case with echo, which is also to be found in /bin, but rarely ever executed because the shell built in almost always makes sure that the internal command echo takes precedence over the external.