

User Directories, Environments, etc.

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On Linux systems, user directories are conventionally placed under **/home**, as in **/home/coop**, **/home/student**, etc. All personal configuration, data, and executable programs are placed in this directory hierarchy.

On other UNIX-like operating systems, the concept of the **/home** directory tree exists, but can be subtly different. For example, on Solaris, user directories are created in **/export/home** and then, the **automount** facility will eventually mount them in **/home**.

This is because the usual situation is that the home directory may be anywhere on a corporate network, probably on an NFS server, and the home directory will be mounted automatically upon first use.

Linux has these same automount facilities, but many users are not even aware of them, and on self-contained systems, the concept of NFS mounts will probably not apply.

A given user can always substitute the environment variable **HOME** for their root directory, or the shorthand **~**; i.e. the following are equivalent:

```
$ ls -l $HOME/public_html
```

```
$ ls -l ~/public_html
```

There is one very important exception: the home directory for the root user on Linux systems is always placed in **/root**. Other system-provided accounts (such as **daemon** and **bin**) can also have directories in locations other than **/home**.