

Advanced Unix Commands

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Regular Expressions (regex)

- Used in text editors, programming languages, and command-line tools (grep, sed, awk etc)
- regex: a pattern that matches a set of strings
- Metacharacters: characters with special meaning
 - “^” beginning of a line (Can also mean “not” if inside [])
 - “\$” end of line
 - “.” match any single character
 - “\” escape a special character
 - “|” or operation i.e. match a particular character set on either side

Quantifiers: specifying the number of occurrences of a character

- “*” Match the preceding item zero or more times
- “?” Match the preceding item zero or one time
- “+” Match the preceding item one or more times
- “{n}” Match the preceding item exactly n times
- “{n,}” Match the preceding item at least n times
- “{,m}” Match the preceding item at most m times
- “{n,m}” Match the preceding item from n to m times

Groups and Ranges

- “ () ” group patterns together
- “ { } ” match a particular number of occurrences (seen before)
- “ [] ” match any character from a range of characters
 - ab[xyz]c "abxc" and "abyc" and "abzc"
 - [^.....] matches a character which is not defined in the square bracket
 - [a-z] matches letters of a small case from a to z
 - [A-Z] matches letters of an upper case from A to Z
 - [0-9] matches a digit from 0 to 9.

More Commands

- **grep**: “global regular expression print”
 - Searches files for a particular pattern of characters
 - Lots of options: -v, -r, -w, -n, -c, -A, -B, -o, -i etc
- **find**: locate files/directories with known pattern
 - Options: -name, -type, -size, -mtime, -perm, -delete
- **wc**: print word, character, line, byte count in a file
 - can accept zero (reads from standard input) or more input
 - Default output: lines, words, characters
 - “-l” number of lines.
 - “-w” number of words.
 - “-m” number of characters.
 - “-c” number of bytes

- cut: helps cut parts of a line by delimiter, byte position
 - “-f” specifies field(s)
 - “-b” specifies bytes(s)
 - “d” specify a delimiter that will be used instead of the default “TAB”
 - --complement - Complement the selection. When using this option cut displays all bytes, characters, or fields except the selected.
 - --output-delimiter - The default behavior of cut is to use the input delimiter as the output delimiter. This option allows you to specify a different output delimiter string
- paste: helps merge lines of files horizontally
 - Checkout options: -s, -d

- sort: sorts the records in a file
 - Checkout options: -r, -n, -k, -t
- zip/unzip: archive/unarchive files with compression
 - For zip, checkout options: -r, -s, -e
 - For unzip, checkout options: -d, -l

- tar: similar to zip, except
 - zip directly handles compression and archiving in a single step; works well across many OS
 - tar is used for archiving, compression handled by external programs (gzip, bzip2); more common in Unix systems
 - Important options:
 - -c: Create a new archive.
 - -v: Verbose mode
 - -f: Specify the name of the archive file
 - -x: Extract files from an archive.
 - -z: Specifies that the archive is compressed with gzip
 - -t: Lists the contents of the archive

- To create a TAR archive: `tar -cvf archive.tar file1 file2 directory1`
- To extract a TAR archive: `tar -xvf archive.tar`
- To create a compressed TAR archive: `tar -czvf archive.tar.gz file1 file2 directory1`
- To extract a compressed TAR archive: `tar -xzvf archive.tar.gz`
- To view contents of compressed tar without untarring: `tar -ztvf archive.tar.gz`

Process Management

- A process is a program in execution
 - Hierarchy of processes
- Init has process id 1
 - parent of all processes
 - executed by the kernel during the booting of a system
- From a process, another process can be created
 - Achieved via fork system call
 - Parent-child relationship between the two processes

- `ps` (process status): displays a list of the processes currently executing
 - default output is a list of the processes associated with the command-line
 - Shows unique process id (pid), terminal used, amount of CPU time, and the program name
 - `ps aux` more informative
 - “a”: display the processes of all users
 - “u”: user-oriented format → more details
 - “x”: list the processes without a controlling terminal
 - started on boot time and running in the background

- USER - The user who runs the process.
- %CPU - The cpu utilization of the process.
- %MEM - The percentage of the process's resident set size to the physical memory on the machine.
- VSZ - Virtual memory size of the process in KiB.
- RSS - The size of the physical memory that the process is using.
- STAT - The process state code, such as Z (zombie), S (sleeping), and R (running)
- START - The time when the command started.

- Kill: can terminate a process if it hangs and not responding
 - Needs PID; -9 option kills it with no questions asked (e.g. `kill -9 12876`)
 - Often a process running in command-line in foreground can be killed via `ctrl-C`

Input/Output

Stream: a special file that either continuously receives text in or pushes text out

- Whenever a process starts, that process is given access to three “standard” streams; fd is file descriptor
 - Standard input (stdin; fd is 0)
 - Standard output (stdout, fd is 1)
 - Standard error (stderr, fd is 2); used when an error has occurred
- When a process starts
 - stdout and stderr are configured to print whatever they receive to the terminal screen
 - stdin is configured to read input from the user’s keyboard

Redirection (>, >>, <)

- >: Output of a command redirected to a file
 - `command > file` same as `command 1> file` (stdout redirected, stderr still screen)
 - `command 2> file` (send stderr to file, stdout is screen)
 - `command 2> error.txt 1> out.txt` (send both to different files)
 - `command > file 2>&1` (send both to same file)
 - `command 2> /dev/null` (suppress error messages)
 - `/dev/null` is a special file that discards anything written to it
- >> : same as above but append instead of replace
- <: stdin of “command” read from “file.txt”
 - `command < file.txt`

Pipe (|)

- How many files and folders in /etc ?
 - `ls /etc > temp.txt; wc -l temp.txt; rm temp.txt`
- Pipe takes output from one command and feeds it as input to another command
 - `ls /etc | wc -l`
 - Operates entirely in memory
 - Unidirectional: flows from left to right
- `command1 | command2 | command 3...`

Command Substitution

- How to use the output of a command in the arguments of another
 - Note: pipes are great for sharing stdin and stdout between processes
- Command substitution: Output of a command replaces the command itself
 - `$(command)` or
 - ``command``

Access Control

- UNIX is a multi-user system
- Every file and directory (in your account) can be protected from or made accessible to other users. How?
- Permissions for a file or directory may be any or all of
 - r - read; w - write; x - execute
 - a directory must have both r and x permissions if the files it contains are to be accessed
- Each permission (rwx) can be controlled at three levels:
 - u (user = yourself)
 - g (group, a set of users)
 - o (others, everyone else)
- File access permissions are displayed using “ls -l”

- First field: - for File, d for Directory, l for Link
- Second,third,fourth fields: permissions for owner, group and others
- Fifth field: specifies the number of links or directories inside this directory
- Sixth field: user
- Seventh field: group
- Eighth field: size in bytes (use -lh option for better understanding)
- Ninth field: date of last modification
- Tenth field: name of the file/directory

- “chmod” command helps change access permissions for files you own
 - `chmod [OPTIONS] MODE FILE(s)/directory(s)`
 - Only root, the file owner or user with sudo privileges can change the permissions of a file
 - Symbolic Mode:
 - u - The file owner.
 - g - The users who are members of the group.
 - o - All other users.
 - a - All users, identical to ugo
 - - Removes the specified permissions.
 - + Adds specified permissions.
 - = Changes the current permissions to the specified permissions
 - If no permissions are specified after the = symbol, all permissions from the specified user class are removed
 - E.g. `chmod g=r filename`; `chmod a-x filename`;

- Numeric mode:
 - r (read) = 4
 - w (write) = 2
 - x (execute) = 1
 - no permissions = 0
 - chmod 640 samplefile (octal notation, user has r+w, group has read, others have none)
 - chmod -R 700 dirname (Recursively set read, write, and execute permissions to the file owner and no permissions for all other users on a given directory)

Superuser

- Superuser: user with super powers
 - A real user account (often root) that can do just about anything (modify/delete files, run any programs etc)
- For security reasons, “su” was introduced
 - Can mean ‘superuser’ or ‘switch user’
 - Helps change to another user without having to log out and in
 - Terminal session switched to the other user
 - Requires password of the other user
 - Administrators spend most time using normal account, when needed switch to superuser, do task and logout

- Further improvement, “sudo” was introduced
 - “switch user and do this command”
 - Prevents long-lived terminal sessions with dangerous powers
 - sudo is used to prefix a specific command that has to be run with superuser privileges
 - Requires user’s own password with some caching for a period of time
- Be very careful when using sudo or su

apt: Software Installation

- apt: helps install, update, remove packages on Ubuntu, Debian etc
 - Most of the apt commands need sudo privileges
- apt update: pulls the latest changes from the APT repositories
- apt upgrade: upgrades packages to their latest versions
 - doesn't upgrade packages that require removal of installed packages; use apt full-upgrade
 - apt upgrade package_name (to upgrade specific package)
- apt install: installs a package(s)
 - Normally pull from repo, but if path specified installs local copy
- apt remove: removes package
 - Can use apt purge for more complete removal including config files
- apt list: lists all packages
 - apt list --installed
 - apt list --upgradeable
- apt show: retrieves information (dependencies, size etc) about a given package

References

- <https://ubuntu.com/tutorials/command-line-for-beginners#1-overview>
- <https://linuxize.com/> (good resource, use search box for info on different commands!)