



RedHat Enterprise Linux Essential

Unit 2: Running commands and Getting Help

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Running Commands

- ❖ **Commands have the following syntax:**

command [options] [arguments]

- ❖ **Each item is separated by a space**

- ❖ **Options modify the command's behavior**

- Word options usually preceded by "--"
- Single-letter options usually preceded by "-"
- can be passed as "-a -b -c" or "-abc"

- ❖ **Arguments are filenames or other data needed by the command**

Some Simple Commands

- ❖ *su - username* : change user (or *su username*)
- ❖ *id username* shows information on the current user
- ❖ *date* - display date and time
- ❖ *cal* - display calendar

Getting Help

- ❖ Don't try to memories everthing!
- ❖ Many levels of help
 - *Whatis*
 - `<command> --help`
 - *man* and *info*
 - `/usr/share/doc`
 - Red Hat documentation

The **whatis** command

- ❖ Display short descriptions of commands

ex: **whatis ls**

The --help option

- ❖ Displays usage summary and argument list
- ❖ Used by most, but not all, commands

Ex: **ls --help**

Reading Usage Summaries

- ❖ Printed by --help, man and others
- ❖ Used to describe the syntax of a command
 - Arguments in "[]" are optional
 - Arguments in "<>" are variables
 - x|y|z means "x or y or z"
 - -abc mean "any mix of -a, -b or -c"

The man command

- ❖ Provides command descriptions or manuals
- ❖ Almost every command has a man "page"
- ❖ Pages are grouped into "chapters"
- ❖ Collectively referred to as the Linux Manual

man [<chapter>] <command>

Navigating man Pages

- While viewing a man page

- Navigate with arrows, pgUp, pgDown
- /<text> Search for text
- n/N Next/Previous match
- q Quit viewing page

Searching the Manual

- man -k <keyword> List all matching pages

The info command

- ❖ Similar to man, but often more in-depth
- ❖ info pages are structured like a web site
 - Each page is divided into "nodes"
 - Links to nodes are preceded by "*"

info <command>

Navigating info Pages

- While viewing an info page

- Navigate with arrows, pgUp, pgDown
- Tab move the next link
- Enter Follow link the cursor is on
- n/p/u View next/previous/up-one node
- s[<text>] Search for text
- Ctr + S Search for next text
- q Quit vewing page

`/usr/share/doc`

<http://www.redhat.com/docs>

Sequence 1: Using the Help Tools

- ❖ 1. Look at the command-line options for the **man** command. What **man** option can be used to search the name of every manual page for a keyword and list the matches (the same behavior as **whatis**)?
- ❖ 2. What **man** option can be used to search the name and short description of every manual page for a keyword and list the matching pages?
- ❖ 3. What **man** option can be used to search the entire text (not just the names and short descriptions) of the manual for a keyword, displaying the matching pages one at a time?
- ❖ 4. Suppose you wanted to view the man page for the *basename* function of the C programming language, as opposed to that of the **basename** command. How might you do that? HINT: C functions are discussed in chapter 3 of the manual

Sequence 1: Using the Help Tools

- ❖ 5. What command-line options might you use to cause **ls** to display a long listing of files with human-readable size descriptions (i.e., 6.8M instead of 6819467)? HINT: You will need two command-line options.
- ❖ 6. Given the usage description below, which of the following would be a syntactically valid invocation of the command **foo**?

foo -x|-y [-abcde] FILENAME...

- a. **foo -x -y -a one.txt**
- b. **foo**
- c. **foo -y -abc one.txt two.txt**
- d. **foo -abc one.txt two.txt three.txt**

Sequence 2: Solving Problems with man

Scenario: You want to change */etc/issue* again (see previous lab). This time you want to see if there is an escape to make it print the system's hostname.

1. Begin by consulting the man page for */etc/issue*

```
[vmintam@localhost ~]$ man issue
```

Note that it says escape characters are dependent upon **mingetty**. Note also the reference to *mingetty(8)* in the *See Also* section. Exit the man page by pressing **q**.

2. Continue your search by looking at the **mingetty** man page. Do you need to specify chapter 8 when requesting the page? Why or why not?

Sequence 2: Solving Problems with man

3. Jump to the section on escapes by typing

/escape

Your cursor should be on the heading *ISSUE ESCAPES*. If it is not, press n to move between matches until it is. This section discusses the escape sequences introduced in a previous exercise.

4. Which escape represents the system's hostname?

Sequence 2: Solving Problems with man

3. Jump to the section on escapes by typing

/escape

Your cursor should be on the heading *ISSUE ESCAPES*. If it is not, press n to move between matches until it is. This section discusses the escape sequences introduced in a previous exercise.

4. Which escape represents the system's hostname?

Sequence 2: Solving Problems with man

5. Open `/etc/issue` in nano

```
[root@localhost ~]# nano /etc/issue
```

6. Change the welcome message you added previously to include the hostname escape. **`/etc/issue`** should now look similar to this:

```
Welcome to \n!
```

```
Red Hat Enterprise Linux Server release 5
```

```
Kernel \r on an \m
```

7. Save the file and exit **nano** by pressing Ctrl-x.
8. Log out by closing your shell with the **exit** command. This should drop you back to a new and improved login prompt! Try accessing other virtual terminals and seeing how the prompt changes. Remember that you may need to press *Enter* to see an updated prompt.



Thank You !