8.8.3 File Ownership Facts

This lesson covers how to change the ownership on files and directories.

Changing File and Directory Ownership

By default, when a user creates a file or directory, the user and the user's primary group receive ownership for that file or directory. To change the user that owns a file, you must be logged in as root. To change the group that owns a file, you must be logged in as root or as the user who currently owns the file.

The table below lists the most common commands for managing file ownership:

Command	Function	Example
ls -l	View a long listing of files and directories. The long listing shows the mode of each file and directory along with ownership information.	**drwxr-xr-x 22 root root 4096 Jun 19 15:01 sales** (Root is the file owner and the group owner in this example.)
chown	Change the ownership of a file or directory. Be aware of the following options: • **-R** changes the ownership of the file recursively throughout the directory tree. • *user* changes the file ownership only. • *user:group* or *user.group* change the user and group ownership of the file. • *:group* or **.group** changes the group ownership only.	**chown pmorril /sales/report** makes pmorril the user owner of the /sales/report file. **chown -R pmorril /sales** makes pmorril the owner of all files in the /sales directory (and below). **chown pmaxwell:sales /sales/report** makes pmaxwell the user owner and sales the group owner of the file. **chown :sales -R /sales** makes the sales group the owner of all files in the /sales directory.
chgrp	Change the group owner of a file or directory.	**chgrp sales /sales/report** makes the sales group the group owner of the file.