

DOS and Linux Commands

What follows are some common commands used at the MS-DOS prompt in Windows 9x, and in Linux, as well as a basic example of how the command is used at the Linux shell prompt. Note that these commands usually have a number of options. To learn more about each command, read its associated man page (for example, type **man ls** at the shell prompt to read about the **ls** command).

Table C-1. Similar Commands

Command's Purpose	MS-DOS	Linux	Basic Linux Example
Copies files	copy	cp	cp <i>thisfile.txt</i> /home/<i>thisdirectory</i>
Moves files	move	mv	mv <i>thisfile.txt</i> /home/<i>thisdirectory</i>
Lists files	dir	ls	ls
Clears screen	cls	clear	clear
Closes prompt window	exit	exit	exit
Displays or sets date	date	date	date
Deletes files	del	rm	rm <i>thisfile.txt</i>
"Echoes" output on the screen	echo	echo	echo <i>this message</i>
Edits files with simple text editor	edit	pico[a]	pico <i>thisfile.txt</i>
Compares the contents of files	fc	diff	diff <i>file1 file2</i>
Finds a string of text in a file	find	grep	grep <i>this word or phrase</i> <i>thisfile.txt</i>
Formats a floppy	format a: (if floppy's in A:)	mke2fs (or mformat[b])	/sbin/mke2fs /dev/fd0 (/dev/fd0 is the Linux equivalent of A:)
Displays command help	<i>command</i> /?	man[c]	man <i>command</i>

Creates a directory	mkdir	mkdir	mkdir <i>directory</i>
Screens through a file	more	less [d]	less <i>thisfile.txt</i>
Renames a file	ren	mv	mv <i>thisfile.txt thatfile.txt</i> [e]
Shows your location in the file system	chdir	pwd	pwd
Changes directories with a specified path (<i>absolute path</i>)	cd <i>pathname</i>	cd <i>pathname</i>	cd <i>/directory/directory</i>
Changes directories with a <i>relative path</i>	cd ..	cd ..	cd ..
Displays the time	time	date	date
Shows amount of RAM and use	mem	free	procinfo

Notes:

- Pico is a simple text editor; other editors you can use in place of **pico** include **emacs** and **vi**.
- This formats a disk for the DOS filesystem.
- Or you can use **info** for some commands.
- You can also another *pager*, called **more**, to scroll through a file a screen at a time.
- The **mv** command serves double-duty, because it can both move a file and, if you want to rename a file in the same directory, you "move" that file to the same directory with a new name, as in this example.