**Environment Variables**

[*Environment Variables*](https://www.codecademy.com/resources/docs/powershell/environment-variables) store information related to the current environment, like the Operating System and user sessions like our current terminal. They are global [variables](https://www.codecademy.com/resources/docs/powershell/variables), meaning we can access them across commands and programs. The operating system usually creates them, but we can also use them to configure our production environment.

**List Environment Variables**

In PowerShell, environment variables are stored as strings. We can use the Get-ChildItem cmdlet on the Env: drive to get a complete list of all existing environment variables.

PS > Get-ChildItem Env:  
Name                           Value  
----                           -----  
BROWSERSLIST\_IGNORE\_OLD\_DATA   1  
EIN\_IMAGE                      ubuntu  
…

To get the specific value of an environment variable, we can use either of the following commands:

(Get-ChildItem Env:EIN\_IMAGE).Value  
> ubuntu  
$Env:EIN\_IMAGE  
> ubuntu

Two popular environment variables in PowerShell are HOME and PATH. The HOME environment variable specifies the current user’s home directory, whereas PATH includes all the directories where applications look for executables.

**Create an Environment Variable**

The syntax to create environment variables in PowerShell is as follows:

$Env:EXAMPLE\_ENV\_VAR = "custom value"

By convention, environment variable names are usually capitalized.

The benefits of environment variables are that they are accessible across the terminal session and scripts. This allows our session to operate in one environment where all data is consistent across processes.