

Simple Commands in the Terminal

When you work in the terminal, you are located in a folder in your computer. When you open the terminal, you are in the default directory of your computer. For mac, this is the directory for your user profile. For windows, this is the C: directory.

One thing we often want to do is view the files in your folder. This can be done using the “ls” command. Below is an example when working in a folder titled “Terminal Intro”. We can see this by looking at the directory located right before the terminal prompt. This folder contains three files called “project1.txt”, “project 2.txt”, and “project3.txt”. It also contains another folder titled “Future Projects”. When we do “ls” in this folder, we’re returned a list of all of these items.

```
[→ Terminal Intro ls
Future Projects project1.txt    project2.txt    project3.txt
→ Terminal Intro █
```

In order to navigate between different folders on our computer, we can use the “cd” command followed by the folder to move to. If we’re in the folder above and want to navigate to “Future Projects”, we can use the cd command. Note, if the folder contains a space then you must put the name in quotation marks as seen below. If not, you can drop the quotes to make it easier to type.

```
[→ Terminal Intro ls
Future Projects project1.txt    project2.txt    project3.txt
[→ Terminal Intro cd "Future Projects"
→ Future Projects █
```

We can confirm that this worked because the new folders name is given before the terminal prompt. We can also use the “cd” command to move backwards. If we type “cd ..”, we can move back one folder in our terminal. If we just type “cd” with nothing afterwards, then we go back to our default directory.

```
[→ Terminal Intro ls
Future Projects project1.txt    project2.txt    project3.txt
[→ Terminal Intro cd "Future Projects"
[→ Future Projects cd ..
[→ Terminal Intro ls
Future Projects project1.txt    project2.txt    project3.txt
→ Terminal Intro █
```

We can also use the terminal to create new directories and files. Let's first create a new folder in the "Terminal Intro" folder using "**mkdir**". The "mkdir" command will require a name for the folder. Let's just call this "New Folder". Once we make the folder we can run "ls" to see the directory is in the folder. Additionally, we can navigate to it using "cd". Note, if we navigate and run "ls", then we will see nothing because the folder is empty.

```
[→ Terminal Intro mkdir "New Folder"
[→ Terminal Intro ls
Future Projects New Folder      project1.txt    project2.txt    project3.txt
[→ Terminal Intro cd "New Folder"
[→ New Folder ls
→ New Folder █
```

Now, let's add a new file to the new folder called "helloworld.txt". We can do this using the "**touch**" prompt followed by the new file. Note, here we are making a text file but this command can make any file type. If we type in "ls" now, we should see the file "helloworld.txt" appear.

```
[→ New Folder touch "helloworld.txt"
[→ New Folder ls
helloworld.txt
→ New Folder █
```

Finally, let's add some text to our file. We can do this using the "**cat**" command followed by two left arrows then the file to add text to. The arrows tell the terminal that we want to change the file they point towards. Let's add the text "This is my first terminal file!". To do this we prompt the command line with "cat >> helloworld.txt". This will create a line to begin adding text. We can type in the text we want followed by enter then control D. Typing control D will end the text window and bring you back to the terminal prompt.

```
[→ New Folder cat >> helloworld.txt  
"This is my first terminal file!"  
→ New Folder █
```

Now, let's view the contents of our file to make sure this worked. We'll do this in two ways. First, we can use the "cat" command again to print the contents of the file. However, this time drop the arrows because we aren't changing the file.

```
[→ New Folder cat >> helloworld.txt  
"This is my first terminal file!"  
[→ New Folder cat helloworld.txt  
"This is my first terminal file!"  
→ New Folder █
```

You can also navigate to the file as you normally would on your computer and confirm that this worked. There are many more terminal commands than the ones shown here that can do almost anything you can think of on your laptop. Here are some resources of additional commands:

1. <https://gist.github.com/bradtraversy/cc180de0edee05075a6139e42d5f28ce>
2. https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Learn/Tools_and_testing/Understanding_client-side_tools/Command_line
3. <https://medium.com/@prasku/basic-terminal-commands-ce5790c20107>

Assignment

For this assignment, you'll get practice working with the terminal commands shown above.

1. Create a new folder using "mkdir". Call this whatever you'd like
2. In this folder, create an additional folder and two .txt files, using "touch" and "mkdir"
3. Confirm these were properly created using "ls"
4. Navigate to the new folder and add an additional .txt file
5. Add some text to this .txt files using the "cat" command and redirect the input using arrows
6. Confirm this worked by printing the text to the terminal using the "cat" command again
7. Go back to the original folder you create using "cd"
8. Follow the links above (or research on your own) to figure out how to delete one of the two files you created in step 3. Use the "ls" command to confirm this worked