Viewing Beginning and Ending Contents of Files

Learn the commands to display the beginning and ending contents of any file.

> We can use `head` and `tail` to view beginning and ending contents of file.

head:

Definition:

`head`, by default, prints the first 10 lines of each file to standard output. It reads the first few lines of any text given to it as an input and writes them on the display screen.

Syntax:

```
head [options] [file(s)]
```

Options:

Option	Description
-n	It can be used followed by an integer representing the number of lines to be displayed.
-c	This option can be used followed by the number of bytes desired.
-q (quiet)	Never print headers identifying file names.
	Always print headers identifying

-v (verbose)	Always print headers identifying file names.

Example:

- To display first **15** lines from a file:

```
head -n 15 myFile.txt
```

---

main.sh	`head -n 15 myFile.txt`
myFile.txt	

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- To display first **5** lines from both files:

```
head -n 5 file1 file2
```

---

main.sh	`head -n 5 file1 file2`
file2	
file1	

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- To display first 10 lines of the three files: "file1.txt", "file2.txt" and "file3.txt":

```
head file1.txt file2.txt file3.txt
```

---

main.sh	a1
file3.txt	a2
	a3
	a4
	a5
file2.txt	b1
	b2
file1.txt	b3
	b4
	b5
	c1

```
c2
c3
```
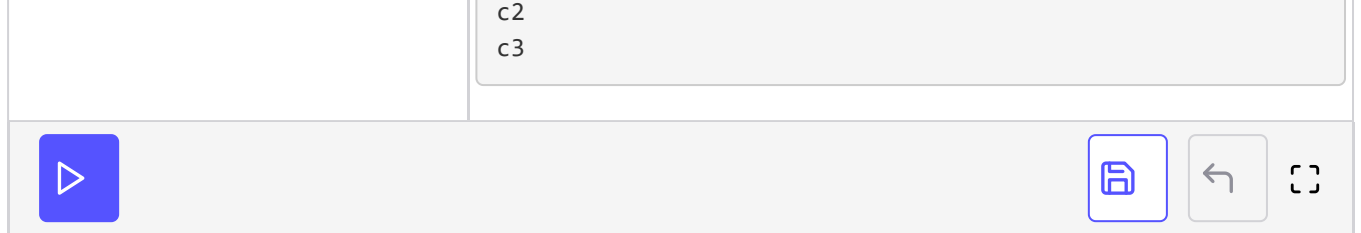
- To display the first 5 bytes of myFile.txt:

```
head -c 5 myFile.txt
```

main.sh	1
	2
myFile.txt	3
	4
	5
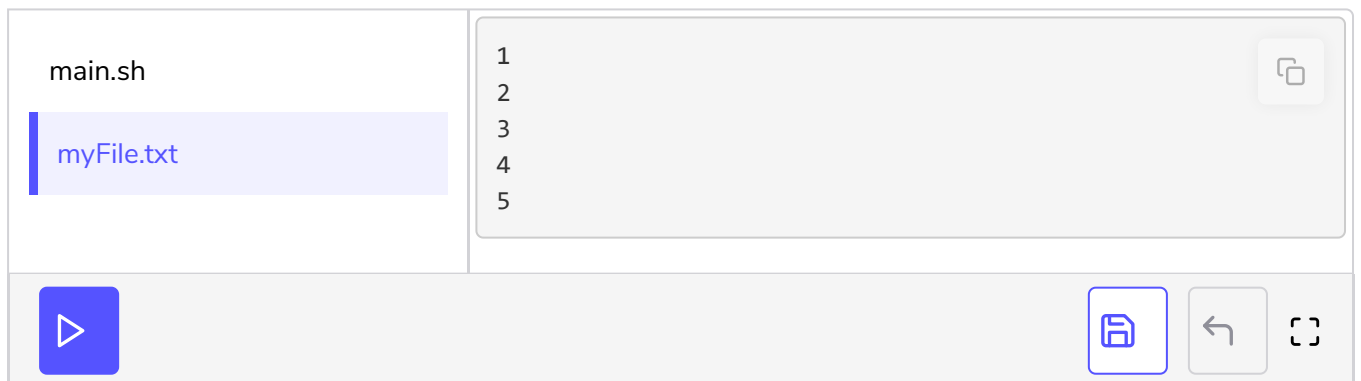
tail

`tail` reads the last few lines of any file or text given to it as an input and writes them to the standard output.

```
tail [options] [file(s)]
```

Option	Description
-n	It is followed by an integer indicating the number of lines that are to be printed.
-c	To print the specific number of bytes. this option precedes the number of bytes.

-q (quiet)	It causes tail to not print the file name before each set of lines and to eliminate the vertical space between each set of lines when there are multiple input sources.
-v (verbose)	It causes tail to print the file name even if there is just a single input file.

Examples:

- To print the last 10 lines of the files named "file1.txt" and "file2.txt":

```
tail file1.txt file2.txt
```

main.sh	tail file1.txt file2.txt
file2.txt	
file1.txt	

- To display last 3 lines of a file, "file.txt":

```
tail -n 3 file.txt
```

main.sh	tail -n 3 file.txt
file.txt	

- To print the last 3 kilobytes of the file "file.txt":

```
tail -c 3 file.txt
```

main.sh

file.txt

```
1
2
3
```