

Unix Command Line Cheatsheet

A quick reference guide to essential Unix command-line shortcuts and commands for efficient navigation and system management.



Navigation & File Management

Basic Navigation

pwd	Print Working Directory: Displays the current directory path.
cd	Change Directory: Navigates to the specified directory. cd Move up one directory. cd Go to home directory. cd Go to previous directory.
ls	List Directory Contents: Shows files and directories in the current directory. 1s -1 - Long listing format (permissions, size, date). 1s -a - Show all files, including hidden ones (starting with .). 1s -t - Sort by modification time (newest first).
mkdir	Make Directory: Creates a new directory. [mkdir directory_name]
rmdir	Remove Directory: Deletes an empty directory. [rmdir directory_name]
touch	Create an empty file or update the timestamp of an existing file. touch file_name

File Operations

ср	Copy: Copies files or directories. cp source destination cp -r source_directory destination_directory (recursive copy for directories)
mv	Move/Rename: Moves files or directories, or renames them. mv old_name new_name mv file destination_directory
rm	Remove: Deletes files. rm file_name rm -r directory_name (recursive removal for directories) rm -f file_name (force removal, bypass prompts) rm -rf directory_name (force recursive removal)
ln	Create links between files. [ln -s source_file symbolic_link] (creates a symbolic link)
cat	Concatenate and display file content. [cat file_name]
les	View file content page by page. less file_name Use arrow keys to navigate, q to quit.

Searching & Redirection

Searching Files

find	Find files based on criteria. findname "*.txt" (find all .txt files in the current directory and its subdirectories).
	<pre>find / -name "important_file" (find 'important_file' in the entire system). findsize +10M (find files larger than 10MB in the current directory).</pre>
grep	Search for patterns within files. grep 'pattern' file_name (search for 'pattern' in file_name). grep -i 'pattern' file_name (case-insensitive search). grep -r 'pattern' directory_name (recursive search in directory). grep -v 'pattern' file_name (find lines that do NOT contain the pattern).
whic	Locate the executable file associated with a command. which command_name
locat	Find files by name using a pre-built index. Requires updatedb to update the index. [locate file_name]

Input/Output Redirection

>	Redirect output to a file (overwrites existing content). command > file.txt
>>	Append output to a file (adds to existing content). command >> file.txt
2>	Redirect standard error to a file. command 2> error.txt
&> or >&	Redirect both standard output and standard error to a file. [command &> output.txt] or command >& output.txt]
(pipe)	Pipe: Sends the output of one command as input to another. command1 command2
<	Redirect input from a file to a command. command < input.txt

System Information & Process Management

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System Information

unam	Print system information. uname -a (all information). uname -r (kernel release).
df	Disk Free: Shows disk space usage. df -h (human-readable format).
du	Disk Usage: Shows disk space usage of files and directories. du -sh directory_name (summary in human-readable format). du -hmax-depth=1 directory_name (show usage for each subdirectory).
free	Display amount of free and used memory in the system. free -m (in MB). free -g (in GB).
uptim	Show how long the system has been running, current time, number of users, and system load average.
date	Display the current date and time.

User Management & Permissions

User Management

whoami	Display the current user's username.
id	Display user ID, group ID, and groups.
W	Show who is logged on and what they are doing.
last	List last logged-in users.
passwd	Change user password.
su	Switch user. su username

Process Management

ps	Process Status: Displays information about active processes. ps_aux (show all processes). psef (show all processes with full command lines).
top	Display real-time system processes, CPU usage, and memory usage. Press $\boxed{\mathfrak{q}}$ to quit.
kill	Terminate a process. kill process_id (sends a TERM signal). kill -9 process_id (forcefully kills the process with a KILL signal).
pkill	Kill processes by name. [pkill process_name]
bg	Resume a stopped process in the background. bg %job_id (where job_id is the job number).
fg	Bring a background process to the foreground. [fg %job_id]

File Permissions

chmod	Change file permissions. chmod 755 file_name (rwxr-xr-x) chmod +x file_name (add execute permission for all) chmod u+w file_name (add write permission for the user) chmod g-r file_name (remove read permission for the group)
chown	Change file owner. chown user file_name chown user:group file_name (change owner and group)
chgrp	Change file group. chgrp group file_name
umask	Set default file permissions. umask 022 (removes write permission for group and others)
ls -1	Shows permissions for the file. Example: -rwxr-xr 1st character: d (directory), - (file), 1 (link) Next 3 characters: owner permissions (read, write, execute) Next 3 characters: group permissions Last 3 characters: others permissions

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