

On-line Documentation Linux Fundamentals and Support

On-Line Documentation

Chapter 1

Performance Objectives

You will learn:

- Help commands.
- Derivatives of the man command.

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Help Commands

- Most Linux commands can be run with the "--help" option.
- Example:
 - This command will provide concise help on the Linux cp command:
cp --help | less
- More extensive information is accessed from the command line using the manual pages man topic.
- The manual pages are the standard "help" system under Linux.
 - This command will also provide help on the Linux cp command:
man cp

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info, pinfo, whatis, apropos

- There is an info command info topic.
 - Example:
info cp
 - The info command provides information similar to man, but more up-to-date.
- There is a pinfo command.
 - It is a substitute for the info interface and in some ways easier to use than info.
- whatis is another source of information and provides a list of the topics in man pages.
- In situations when it is difficult to recall precisely the name of the required command, apropos can be tried.
- Example:
 - In order to obtain a list of commands which have something to do with "copy", the following command can be executed from the command line:
apropos copy

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bash help

- The list of bash built-in commands can be obtained by typing help on the command line.
- Help on any specific bash built-in command can be obtained by issuing help followed by the name of the command.
- Example:
 help cd

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man Page Sections

- man pages are organized into sections.
- The standard ordering is:
 - User commands
 - System calls
 - C library routines
 - Device drivers and network interfaces
 - File formats
 - Games and demos
 - Miscellaneous: ASCII, macro packages, tables, etc.
 - Commands for system administration
 - Locally installed manual pages

The content of each section can vary slightly between vendors.

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Commands When Viewing a man Page

- When typing man to view a man page, if there is too much information for the window the man page information will be displayed one screen at a time.
- The following commands are used for displaying the man page:
 - <space>
 - Displays more information by current screen size.
 - <return>
 - Displays more information one line at a time.
 - /<regular expression>
 - Finds the next occurrence of the regular expression in the file.
 - b
 - Goes back to the previous page.
 - f
 - Goes forward to the next page.
 - F
 - Displays current file name and line number.
 - q
 - Returns to the console/exit from more.
 - h
 - Short for "help." Displays all the available commands.