03 – UNIX Permissions and find

CS 2043: Unix Tools and Scripting, Spring 2019 [2]

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1. As always: Everybody! ssh to wash.cs.cornell.edu

2. Quiz time! Everybody! run **quiz-01-28-19**

3. So, if a special user owns printing stuff and serial ports... How to I print?

4. Types of Files and Usages

5. Flags & Command Clarification
As always: Everybody! ssh to wash.cs.cornell.edu
Quiz time! Everybody! run quiz-01-28-19
• Welcome back to WASH!
• Wash is a *multi-user* machine
  • there are multiple users on here
  • how to solve conflicts?
• You’re going to be working on wash..
• Security is *kinda* important
There are 217 users on wash.
Even on a personal Linux computer, there are usually at least 30 different user account
why so many users?
  - security
  - separation of concerns
  - principle of least privilege

EXAMPLE: The `lp` user owns printing-related files
So, the security model is...?

- *NIX security model is *access control*-based
- Define who is *allowed* to use what resources
- What do users control?
  - file ownership and permissions
  - processes
- Most things are [represented by] a file
  - **EXAMPLE**: The file `/dev/ttyS0` represents the serial port
    - early USB predecessor
    - ...what, I’m not *that* old.
So, if a special user owns printing stuff and serial ports... How to I print?
• Users can belong to [lots of] groups

List groups to which a user belongs

```
groups [user name]
```

- Lists groups to which [argument] belongs.
- With no argument, lists your groups

• All files are owned by both a user and a group

• Groups grant permissions on certain files and actions
  
  • Example: the `lp` group allows printing
  • Example: the `uucp` group allows serial port access
Let’s see what groups we’re in!

Groups with **groups**

$ groups
mpm288 cs2043student student_only

- the **netID** group is just for you (you’re the only one in it)
- the **cs2043student** group is for the entire class — everyone is in it!
- the **student_only** group is for security; defines “student” as your *maximum privilege*
  - not getting into what that means this lecture ;)

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• You can discern who owns a file many ways, the most immediate being `ls -l`

Permissions with `ls`

```
$ ls -l README
-rwxrw---- 1 milano cs2043tas 20 Jan 26 15:48 README
#    milano    <-- the user
#   cs2043tas  <-- the group
```

• Third column is the `user`, fourth column is the `group`.
• Other columns are the `link count` and `size`
  • we’ll talk about like count in .... 5 lectures?
What is this RWX Nonsense?

- **r** = read, **w** = write, **x** = execute.

| - rwx - - - - - | User permissions |
| - - - - rwx - - | Group permissions |
| - - - - - - rwx  | Other permissions |

- Directory permissions begin with a **d** instead of a **-**
- **Other**: “neither the owner, nor a member of the group”.
An example

• What would the permissions `-rwxr--------` mean?
  • It is a file.
  • User can read and write to the file, as well as execute it.
  • Group members can read the file
  • Group members cannot write to or execute the file.
  • Other cannot do anything with it.
Hold on... *execute* the file?

- Programs are just files!
- Most programs contain a special format of *binary data*, called ELF
- Some programs are *scripts*, which means they’re just text!
- try to **cat** out the **handin** command, for example
  - (the path to it is: `/course/cs2043/bin/handin`)
Ok but... execute the directory?

- This one is a bit counter-intuitive
- **Reading** a directory means listing its contents
- **Writing** a directory means removing or creating
- **Executing** a directory means *interacting* with its contents
  - editing, printing, etc.
  - `drwx--------` means you can create, remove, and list contents, but *cannot* print, edit, or execute anything *inside* the directory
  - `d-wx--------` means you can create, remove, and use contents, but *cannot* list them.
- Execute without read means you have to know the name of the contents in order to access them!
  - no other way to discover the contents.
  - kinda like a password...
Changing Permissions

**Change Mode**

`chmod <mode> <file>`

- Changes file or directory permissions to `<mode>`.
- The format of `<mode>` is a combination of three fields:
  - Who is affected: a combination of `u`, `g`, `o`, or `a` (all).
  - Use a `+` to add permissions, and a `-` to remove.
  - Specify type of permission: any combination of `r`, `w`, `x`.

  # Add read, write, & execute for user, group, & other
  $ chmod ugo+rwx <file> # or chmod a+rwx <file>
  # Remove read and write for other
  $ chmod o-rw <file>

- Can specify mode in octal: user, then group, then other.
  - E.g., `750` means `user=7, group=5, other=0` permissions.
The Octal Version of `chmod`

- For the formula hungry, you can represent `r`, `w`, and `x` as binary variables (where 0 is off, and 1 is on). Then the formula for the modes is

  \[
  r \cdot 2^2 + w \cdot 2^1 + x \cdot 2^0
  \]

  **Octal Ownership Permissions**

- Examples
  - `chmod 755`: `rwxr-xr-x`
  - `chmod 777`: `rwxrwxrwx`
  - `chmod 600`: `rw-----`

- If that makes less sense to you, feel free to ignore it.
  - Just use the `stat` command to help you convert :)  

- The octal version can be confusing, but will save you time.

  Excellent resource in [1].
Changing Ownership

- Changing the *group* of a file / directory

**Change Group**

`chgrp group <file>`

- Changes the group ownership of `<file>` to *group*.
- The `-R` flag will recursively change permissions of a directory.

- Changing the *owner* of a file / directory

**Change Owner and Group**

`chown user:group <file>`

- Changes the ownership of `<file>`.
- The *group* is optional (`chown user <file>`).
- The `-R` flag will recursively change permissions of a directory.
The root user

- The special user **root** is the ultimate administrator on the system
- Gets the permissions of *any* user on the system
  - if anyone can read/write/exec it, **root** can too
- can change permissions any way it wants
  - can even set an owner/group combo where the owner’s not in the group!
- can become root with the **su** or **sudo** commands
  - we won’t be using these in this class...
  - you should **never** use **su** or **sudo** on wash!
File Ownership, Alternate

- You will likely forget which column is which in `ls -l`...

### Status of a File or Filesystem

```bash
stat [opts] <filename>
```

- Gives you a wealth of useful information.
- **Uid** (%U) is the user, **Gid** (%G) is the group.
  - BSD/OSX: `stat -x <filename>` for “standard” behavior.
- Can be useful to mimic file permissions you don’t know.
  - Human readable: `--format=%A`, e.g. `-rw-rw-r--`
    - BSD/OSX: `-f %Sp` is used instead.
  - Octal: `--format=%a` (great for `chmod`), e.g. `664`
    - BSD/OSX: `-f %A` is used instead.
Types of Files and Usages
Plain text files are human-readable, used for things such as:

- Documentation,
- Application settings,
- Source code,
- Logs, and
- Anything you may want to read via the terminal
  - README
  - INSTALL
  - etc.
Binary Files

- Binary files are not human-readable. They are written in the language your computer prefers.
  - Executables,
  - Libraries,
  - Media files,
  - Archives (.zip, etc), and many more.
Special Files

- Special Files represent things which ought not be files!
  - Sockets (connections)
  - Devices (hard disk, keyboard, etc)
  - Raw Memory (RAM)
  - The (software-emulated) terminal you’re using now!
  - A lot of really random other stuff

- The UNIX philosophy: represent *everything you possibly can* as a file
Default Permissions on Creation

**User Mask**

`umask <mode>`

- *Remove* `mode` from the file’s permissions.
- Similar syntax to *chmod*:
  - `umask 077`: +rwx for *owner*, - for all others.
  - `umask g+w`: enables group write permissions.
- `umask -S`: display the current mask.
- Just a bit mask with `0o777` and your *mode*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full permissions</th>
<th>0o777</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample User Mask</td>
<td>0o002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical &amp; Gives</td>
<td>0o002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Changing `umask` only applies for the remainder of the session.
  - Permanent if put in your `~/.bashrc` or `~/.bash_profile`.
Using your terminal to examine a file is very convenient!

**File Perusal Filter for (crt) Viewing**

- `more <filename>`
  - Scroll through one page at a time.
  - Program **exits** when end is reached.

**As the saying goes...**

- `less <filename>`
  - Scroll pages or lines (mouse wheel, space bar, and arrows).
  - Program does **not** exit when end is reached.
Long files can be a pain with the previous tools.

Print the Beginning (head) or End (tail) of a File

head -[numlines] <filename>
tail -[numlines] <filename>

- Prints the first / last numlines of the file.
- First 5 lines: head -5 file.txt or head -n5 file.txt
- Last 5 lines: tail -5 file.txt or tail -n5 file.txt
- Default is 10 lines.
You can talk to yourself in the terminal too!

**Display a Line of Text**

`echo <text>`

- Prints the input string to the standard output (the terminal).
- We will soon learn how to use `echo` to put things into files, append to files, etc.
- Show off to your friends how cool you are:

  ```bash
  $ echo 'I can have a conversation with my computer!'
  $ echo 'But it always copies me. RUDE.'
  ```
• Most commands take flags and optional arguments.
• These come in two general forms:
  • Switches (no argument required), and
  • Argument specifiers (for lack of a better name).

• When specifying flags for a given command, keep in mind:
  • Flags modify the behavior of the command / how it executes.
  • Some flags take precedence over others, and some flags you specify can implicitly pass additional flags to the command.

• There is no absolute rule here: research the command.
• A flag that is
  • One letter is specified with a single dash (-a).
  • More than one letter is specified with two dashes (--all).
  • The reason is because of how switches can be combined.

• We generally use “flag” and “switch” interchangeably:
  • “flag” the command, telling it that “action X” should occur
  • specify to the command to “switch on/off action X”
Switches take no arguments, and can be specified in a couple of different ways.

Switches are usually one letter, and multiple letter switches usually have a one letter alias.

One option:
- `ls -a`
- `ls --all`

Two options:
- `ls -l -Q`
- `ls -lQ`

Usually applied from left to right in terms of operator precedence, but not always:

- This is up to the developer of the tool.
- Prompts: `rm -fi <file>`
- Does not prompt: `rm -if <file>`
The `--argument="value"` format, where the `=` and quotes are needed if `value` is more than one word.

- Yes: `ls --hide="Desktop" ~/`
- Yes: `ls --hide=Desktop ~/`
  - One word, no quotes necessary
- No: `ls --hide = "Desktop" ~/`
  - Spaces by the `=` will be misinterpreted
  - It used `=` as the argument to `hide`

The `--argument value` format (space after the `argument`).

- Quote rules same as above.
- `ls --hide "Desktop" ~/`
- `ls --hide Desktop ~/`

Usually, `--argument value` and `--argument=value` are interchangeable.

- Not always!
Flags and Options: Conventions, Warnings

- Generally, always specify the flags before the arguments.
- `ls -l ~/Desktop/` and `ls ~/Desktop/ -l` both work.
  - Sometimes flags after arguments get ignored.
  - Depends both on the command, and the flag(s).
- The special sequence `--` signals the end of the options.
  - Executes as expected: `ls -l -a ~/Desktop/`
  - Only uses `-l`: `ls -l -- -a ~/Desktop/`
    - "`ls: cannot access -a: No such file or directory``
    - The `-a` was treated as an argument, and there is no `-a` directory (for me)
- In this example:
  - `-l` and `-a` are the flags.
  - `~/Desktop/` is the argument.
• The special sequence `--` that signals the end of the options is often most useful if you need to do something special.

• Suppose I wanted to make the folder `-a` on my Desktop.

```
$ cd ~/Desktop  # for demonstration purpose
$ mkdir -a      # fails: invalid option -- 'a'
$ mkdir -- -a   # success! (ls to confirm)
$ rmdir -a      # fails: invalid option -- 'a'
$ rmdir -- -a   # success! (ls to confirm)
```

• This trick can be useful in many scenarios, and generally arises when you need to work with special characters of some sort.
• How do I know what the flags / options for all of these commands are?

**The Manual Command**

`man command_name`

- Loads the manual (manpage) for the specified command.
- Unlike google, manpages are *system-specific*.
- Usually very comprehensive. Sometimes *too* comprehensive.
- Type `/keyword` to search for *keyword*, and hit `<enter>`.
- The `n` key jumps to the next search result.

• Search example on next page if that was confusing. Intended for side-by-side follow-along.
• The **man** command is really useful!

```
$ man man  # you now have the manual loaded
$ /useful  # type /useful, then hit enter
# first result highlighted
$ n  # followed by enter
# next result highlighted
# The default 'pager' is `less`, type `q`
# without backticks to exit.
```

• Subtle differences depending on distribution, e.g. `ls -B`

• BSD/OSX: Force printing of non-printable characters in file names as `\xxx`.

  • ***xxx*** is the numeric value of the character in octal.

• GNU (Fedora, Ubuntu): don’t list implied entries ending with ~

  • Files ending with ~ are *temporary* backup files that certain programs generate (e.g. some text-editors, your OS).