

# Introduction to Terminal

Computing in Optimization and Statistics: Lecture 1  
Jackie Baek

MIT

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# Overview

Introduction & Motivation

Navigation commands

Files

- Basic file commands

- File path shortcuts

- Hidden Files

- `.bashrc` / `.bash_profile`

Redirection

SSH

Simple Pattern Matching

How bash works

- Environment Variables

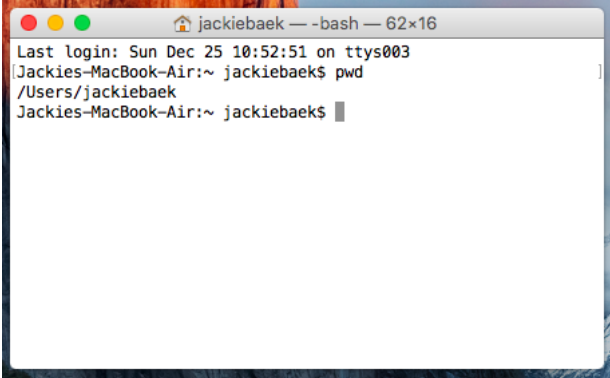
Documentation

Key Takeaways

# What is the terminal?



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```
jackiebaek — -bash — 62x16
Last login: Sun Dec 25 10:52:51 on ttys003
[Jackies-MacBook-Air:~ jackiebaek$ pwd
/Users/jackiebaek
Jackies-MacBook-Air:~ jackiebaek$ █
```

- ▶ The terminal is a text-based interface to interact with the computer.
- ▶ Alternate names: console, shell, command line, command prompt

## Example

- ▶ Say you want to delete all files in a directory that end with .pyc

```
$ rm *.pyc
```

- ▶ This is possible to do without the terminal, but it requires much more effort.

# Why should I learn it?

- ▶ You can do almost everything using just the terminal.
- ▶ It can do many tasks faster than using a graphic interface.
- ▶ It is sometimes the only option (e.g. accessing a client's server using SSH).
- ▶ It is universal.

# Terminal Basics

- ▶ We will be using a **shell** called **bash**: a program that interprets and processes the commands you input into the terminal.
- ▶ The shell is always in a **working directory**.
- ▶ A typical command looks like:

```
$ command <argument1> <argument2> ...
```

# Basic navigation commands

**pwd**: prints working directory.

```
$ pwd
```

```
/Users/jackiebaek
```



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```

**ls:** lists directory contents.

```
$ ls  
Applications          Movies  
Desktop               Music  
Documents             Pictures
```

# Basic navigation commands

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```

**cd <directory>**: change working directory to new directory.

```
$ cd Documents  
$ pwd  
/Users/jackiebaek/Documents
```

# Tab and arrow keys are your friends

- ▶ Use **tab** to autocomplete *commands* and *file paths*.
- ▶ Use ↑ and ↓ arrow keys to navigate through your command history.
- ▶ Use **clear** or **cmd-k** to clear screen.

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Every file and directory has a unique location in the file system, called a **path**.

- ▶ **Absolute path:**

  - /Users/jackiebaek/Dropbox/Documents/hello.txt*

- ▶ **Relative path** (if my current working directory is

  - /Users/jackiebaek/Dropbox*): *Documents/hello.txt*

# Working with files



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```

```
Hello, World!
```

**cp** *source target*: copy.

**mv** *source target*: move/rename.

```
$ cp helloworld.txt helloworld_copy.txt
```

```
$ mv helloworld.txt goodbyeworld.txt
```

# File path shortcuts

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- .. is parent directory.
  - ▶ ../*file.txt* references a file named *file.txt* in the parent directory.

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~ is home.

- ▶ expands to */Users/<username>* (or wherever *home* is on that machine).
- ▶ *~/Documents* → */Users/jackiebaek/Documents*
- ▶ The command **cd** (without any arguments) takes you to *~*.

# Hidden Files

- ▶ Files that start with a dot (.) are called **hidden** files.
- ▶ Used for storing preferences, config, settings.
- ▶ Use `ls -a` to list all files.

```
$ ls  
github_notes.md  presentation  scripts
```

```
$ ls -a  
.                .git          github_notes.md  scripts  
..               .gitignore    presentation
```



## .bashrc / .bash\_profile

- ▶ There is a hidden file in `~` directory called `.bashrc` or `.bash_profile`.
- ▶ This file is a bash script that runs at the beginning of each session (i.e. when you open the terminal).

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- ▶ This file is a bash script that runs at the beginning of each session (i.e. when you open the terminal).
- ▶ This file can be used to set variables or to declare **aliases**.
- ▶ **alias** *new\_command=command*

```
$ alias athena="ssh baek@athena.dialup.mit.edu"
```

# Redirection

> redirects output to a file, *overwriting* if file already exists.

```
$ ls > out.txt
```

>> redirects output to a file, *appending* if file already exists.

```
$ python fetch_data.py >> output.csv
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< uses contents of file as STDIN (standard input) to the command.

```
$ python process_stuff.py < input.txt
```

# Secure Shell (SSH)

- ▶ Sometimes we need to work on a remote machine.
  - ▶ We need more computing power than just our local machine.
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Password:
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```
$ ssh baek@athena.dialup.mit.edu
```

```
Password:
```

```
Welcome to Ubuntu 14.04.5 LTS
```

```
...
```

```
Last login: Tue Aug 30 10:11:49 2016 from howe-and-ser-...
```

```
baek@howe-and-ser-moving:~$
```

Use *logout* to exit SSH session.



## Secure Copy (scp)

Can transfer files between local and remote machines using the **scp** command on your local machine.

Move *my\_file.txt* from local machine to remote home directory.

```
$ scp my_file.txt baek@athena.dialup.mit.edu:~
```

Move *remote\_file.txt* from remote to local machine.

```
$ scp baek@athena.dialup.mit.edu:~/remote_file.txt .
```

## Simple Pattern Matching (Globbing)

- ▶ Match [multiple] filenames with wildcard characters.
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Example:

```
$ ls
```

```
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```
$ echo a*  
a1.txt    a2.pdf    apple.txt
```

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```

```
$ echo a*  
a1.txt      a2.pdf      apple.txt
```

```
$ echo a[0-9]*  
a1.txt      a2.pdf
```

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```
$ echo a[0-9]*  
a1.txt      a2.pdf
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$ echo *.pdf  
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# Simple Pattern Matching (Globbing)

Wildcard	Description	Example	Matches
*	matches any number of any characters including none	Law*	Law , Laws , or Lawyer
		*Law*	Law , GrokLaw , or Lawyer .
?	matches any single character	?at	Cat , cat , Bat or bat
[ abc ]	matches one character given in the bracket	[CB]at	Cat or Bat
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Figure: Source: Wikipedia

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```
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```

Copy all files that has "dog" in its name to the *animal/* directory.

```
$ cp *dog* animal/
```

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- ▶ Bash is a programming language.
  - ▶ Can set variables, use for loops, if statements, comments, etc.
- ▶ There are several special "environment" variables (i.e. \$PATH, \$HOME, \$USER, etc.) that many programs rely on.

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  - ▶ Usually under a directory called *bin*, which stands for *binary*.
- ▶ When you type in a command, bash looks for a program with that name under the directories listed in the *\$PATH* environment variable.

```
$ echo $PATH
```

```
/Users/jackiebaek/.local/bin:/Users/jackiebaek/.cabal/bin:/Applications/ghc-7.10.3.app/Contents/bin:/usr/local/bin:/usr/bin:/bin:/usr/sbin:/sbin:/usr/texbin
```

- ▶ *\$PATH* contains is a list of directories separated by :
- ▶ Bash looks into each of these directories to look for the program *pwd*.



# Documentation

- ▶ To look up documentation for a particular command, use '**man** *command*'. (man = manual)

```
$ man mkdir
```

## NAME

```
mkdir -- make directories
```

## SYNOPSIS

```
mkdir [-pv] [-m mode] directory_name ...
```

## DESCRIPTION

```
The mkdir utility creates the directories named as operands ...
```

- ▶ *d* for down, *u* for up, *q* to quit.
- ▶ Commands can have required and/or optional arguments.
- ▶ Optional arguments usually come first, and are indicated by a hyphen (-). These are called **flags**.

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- ▶ So is *tab* for autocomplete, *arrow keys* for history.
- ▶ Be careful with *rm*.
- ▶ Getting comfortable with the terminal can be daunting at first, but it has the potential to greatly boost your efficiency!

Thank you!