

# **CS 241: Systems Programming**

## **Lecture 2. Introduction to Unix and the Shell**

Fall 2023

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# What is the shell?

Text-based interface to the operating system and to the file system

User enters commands

The shell runs the commands

Output appears on a terminal (terminal emulator)

Commands can change files/directories on the file system

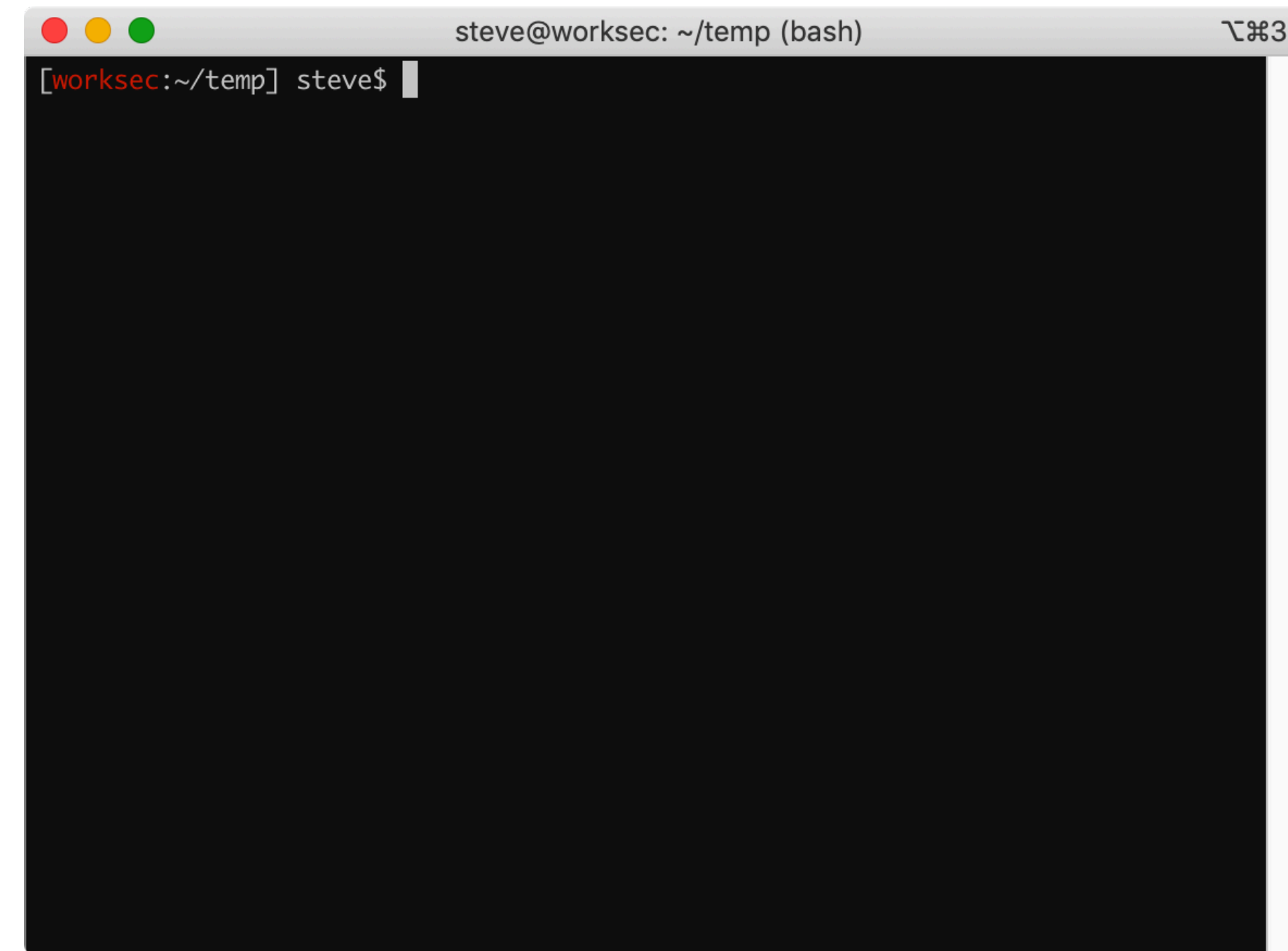
# Terminals/terminal emulators

DEC VT100 terminal



<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/6f/Terminal-dec-vt100.jpg>

iTerm2 terminal emulator



# There are many shells

sh Bourne shell

**bash** Bourne again shell (the one we'll be using)

dash Light-weight Bourne shell (often named sh on Linux)

csh C shell

tcsh An improved csh

ksh Korn shell (sh-compatible, some csh features)

zsh Z shell (incorporates aspects of tcsh, ksh, and bash)

# Interpreter loop

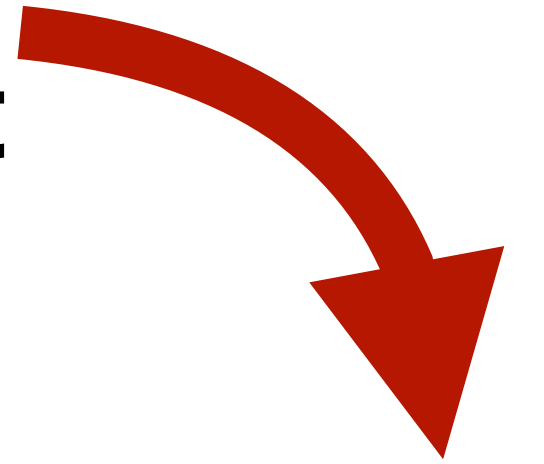
```
[worksec:~/temp] steve$ █
```

**Display  
prompt**

# Interpreter loop

```
[worksec:~/temp] steve$ ls
```

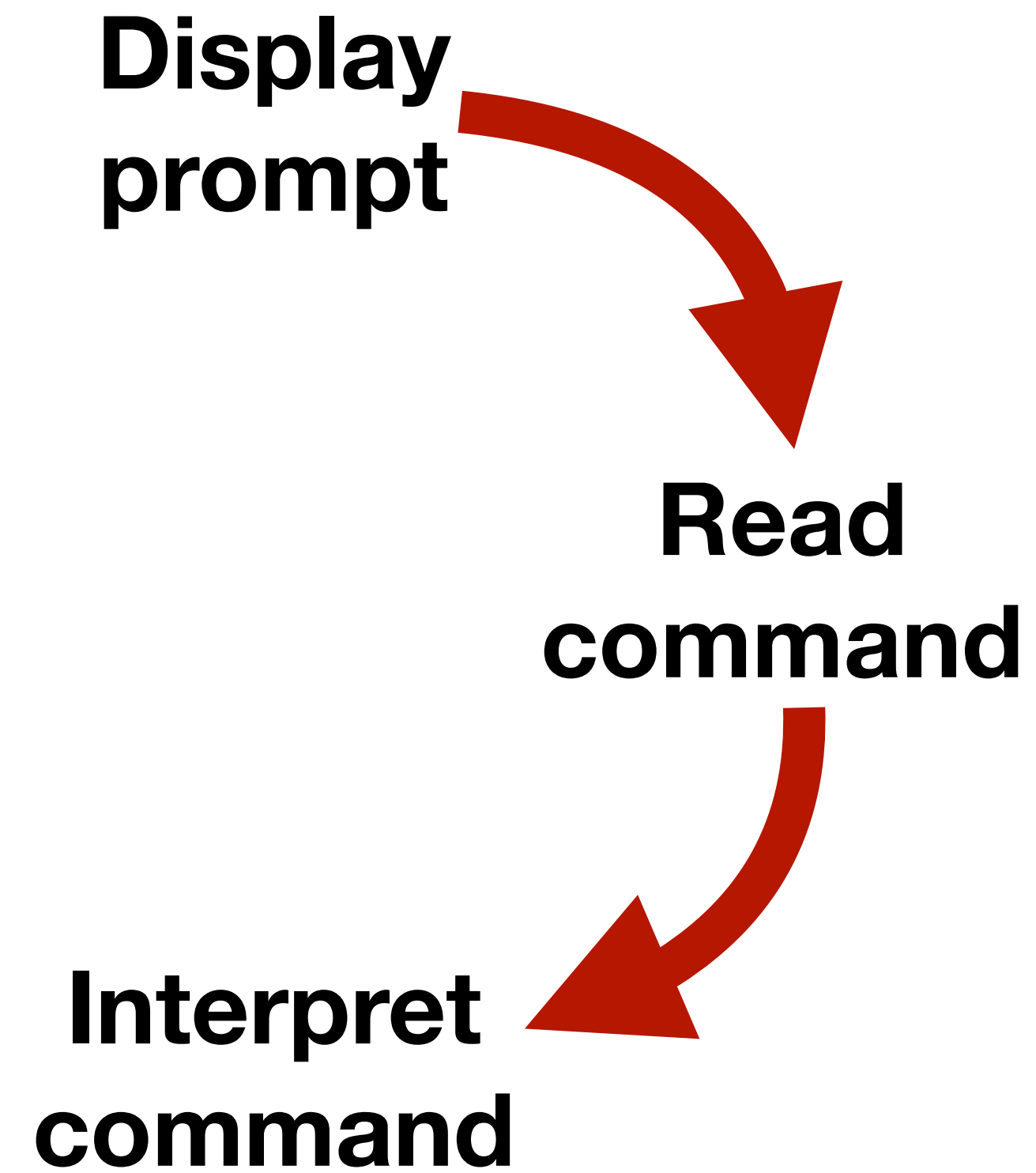
**Display  
prompt**



**Read  
command**

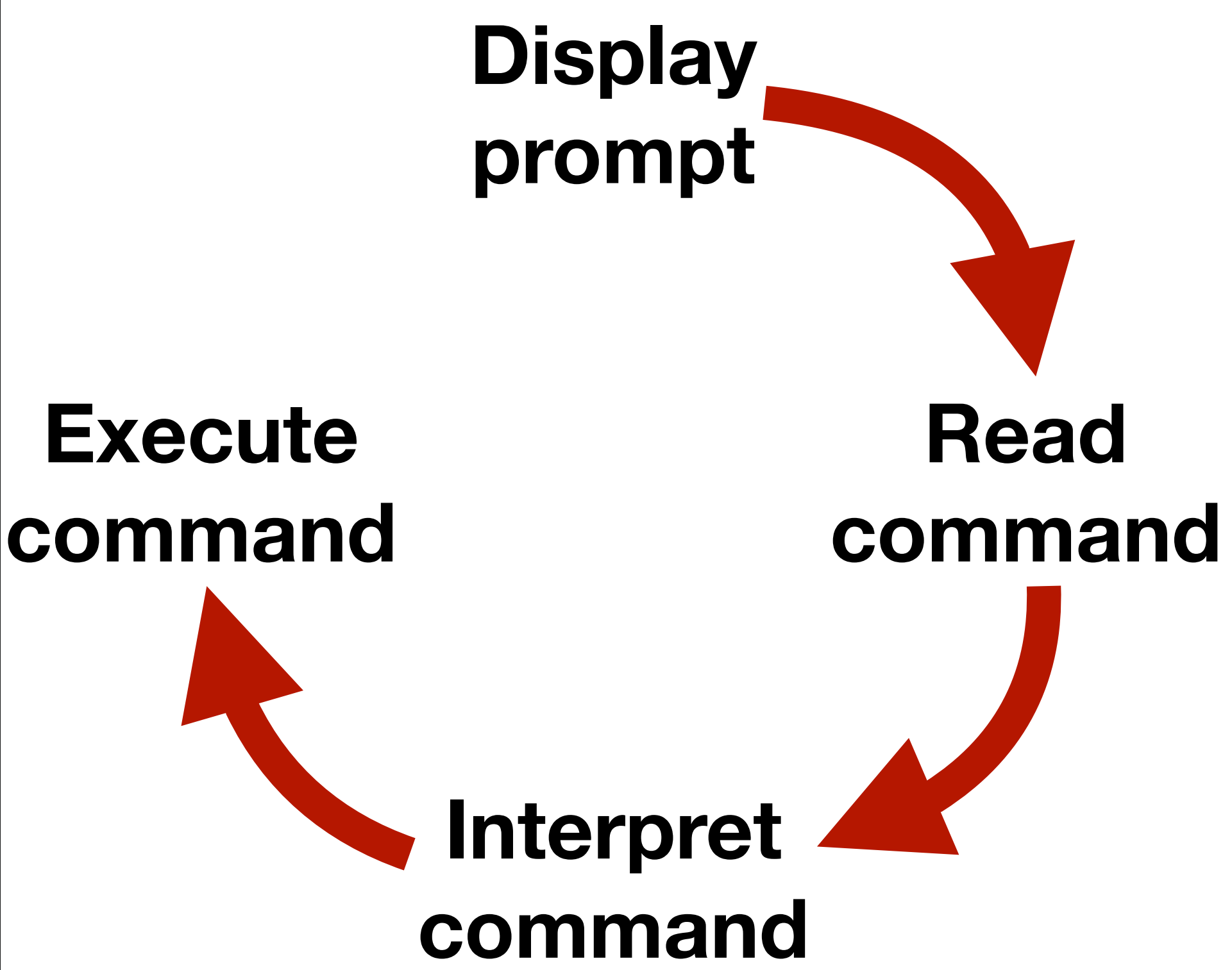
# Interpreter loop

```
[worksec:~/temp] steve$ ls
```



# Interpreter loop

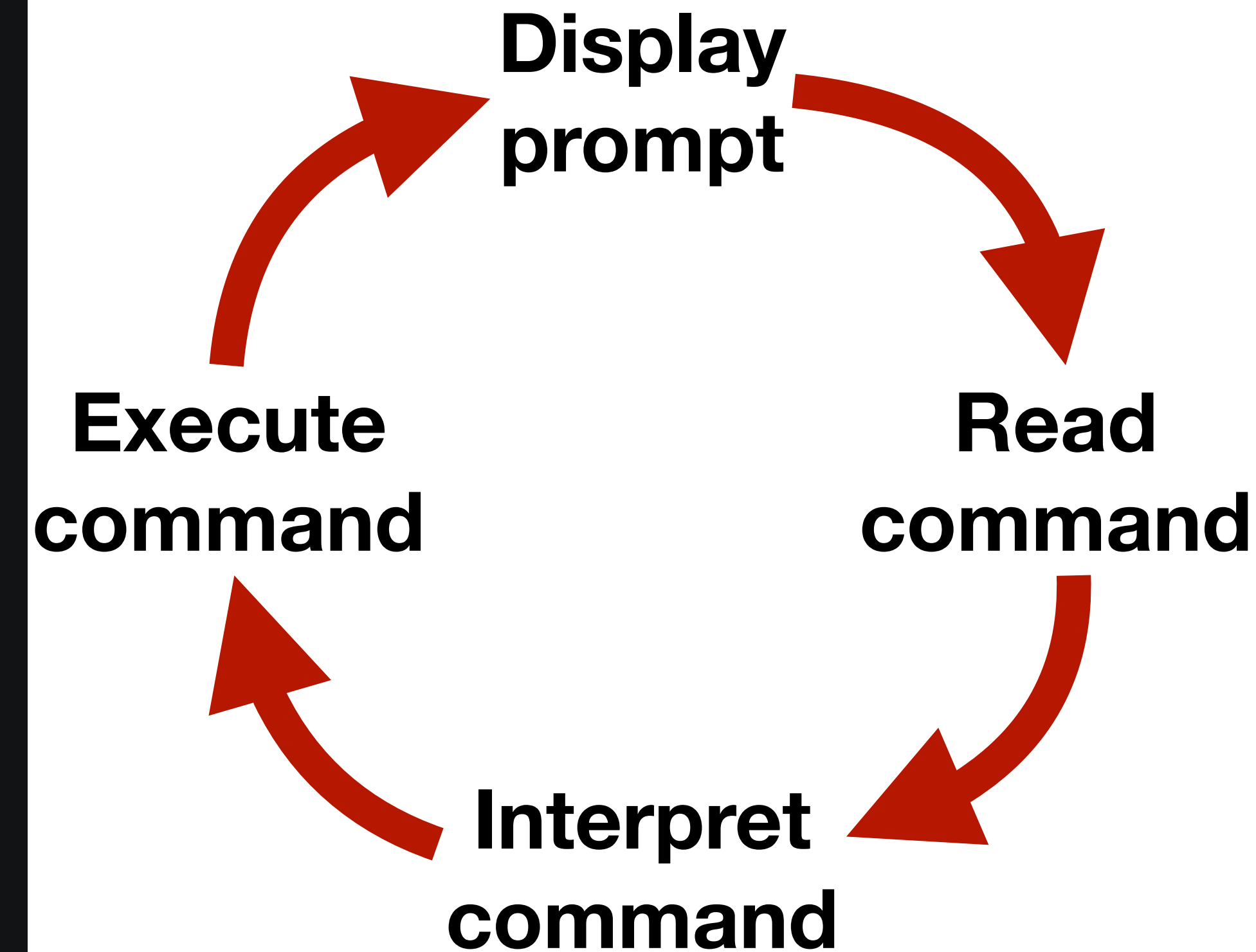
```
[worksec:~/temp] steve$ ls
Messages          context-state    families.log     olt.s           texput.log
a.c               count.c         families.tex     pickle          twitter
a.cc              count.s         findjumps.c     serial          twitter.dSYM
a.out             crc             foo             serial2         twitter.tar.gz
a.out.ld_AQpFuk  crc.c          implicitcatcode.tex  silly.hs       unix09.cls
b.s               crypto.py      lineNumber.aux  simd.c         whee.c
b.s-jmp           example.aux    lineNumber.log  ssl.html       whee.o
b.s-ret-cache    example.ent   lineNumber.tex  test.aux       whee.s
bug              example.log   luhn.py        test.log       xmodem
cfi              example.pdf   mmap_crash.c   test.pdf       xmodem.c
comparison.h     example.tex   notebook       test.tex       xmodem.dSYM
concat           families.aux  olt.cc         texput.aux    xmodem.out
```





# Interpreter loop

```
[worksec:~/temp] steve$ ls
Messages          context-state    families.log     olt.s           texput.log
a.c               count.c         families.tex    pickle          twitter
a.cc              count.s         findjmps.c      serial          twitter.dSYM
a.out             crc             foo             serial2         twitter.tar.gz
a.out.ld_AQpFuk  crc.c          implicitcatcode.tex  silly.hs       unix09.cls
b.s               crypto.py      lineNumber.aux  simd.c         whee.c
b.s-jmp           example.aux    lineNumber.log  ssl.html       whee.o
b.s-ret-cache    example.ent    lineNumber.tex  test.aux       whee.s
bug              example.log    luhn.py        test.log       xmodem
cfi              example.pdf    mmap_crash.c   test.pdf       xmodem.c
comparison.h     example.tex    notebook       test.tex       xmodem.dSYM
concat           families.aux   olt.cc         texput.aux    xmodem.out
[worksec:~/temp] steve$ █
```



# Types of commands

## Commands to print output to the screen

- ▶ `$ echo 'Hello world!'`

## Commands to manipulate the file system

- ▶ `$ ls`

- ▶ `$ mv old_name.txt new_name.txt`

## GUI programs

- ▶ `$ code lab1`

- ▶ `$ firefox`

Most commands run programs, some are shell builtins

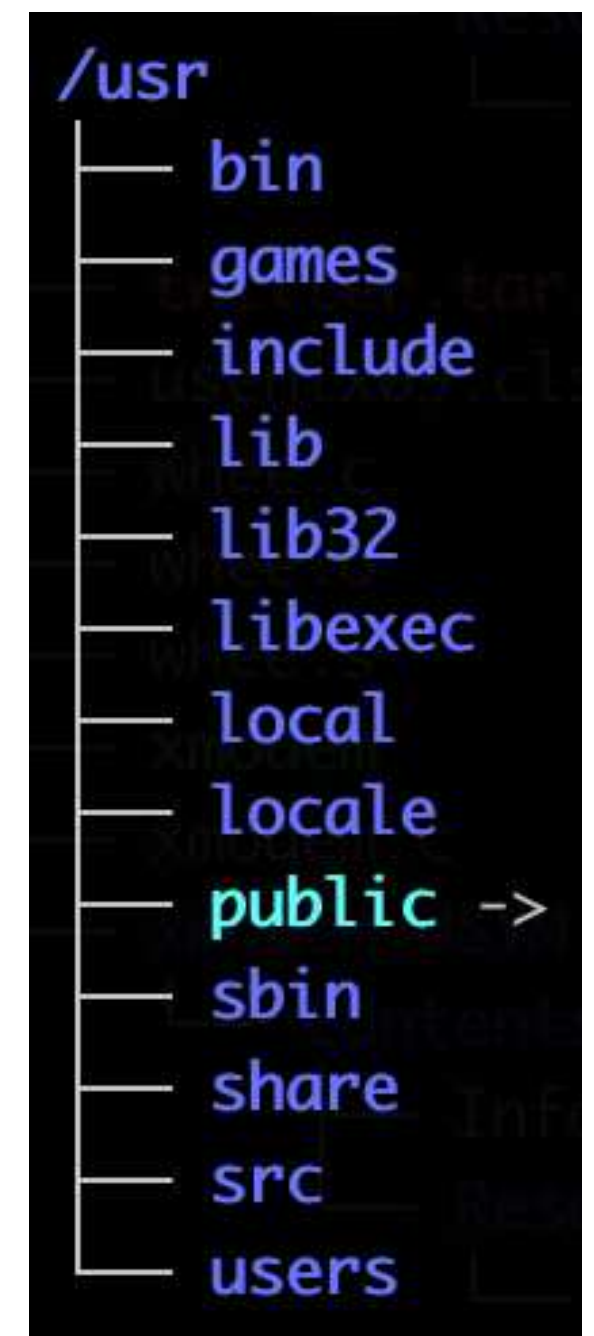
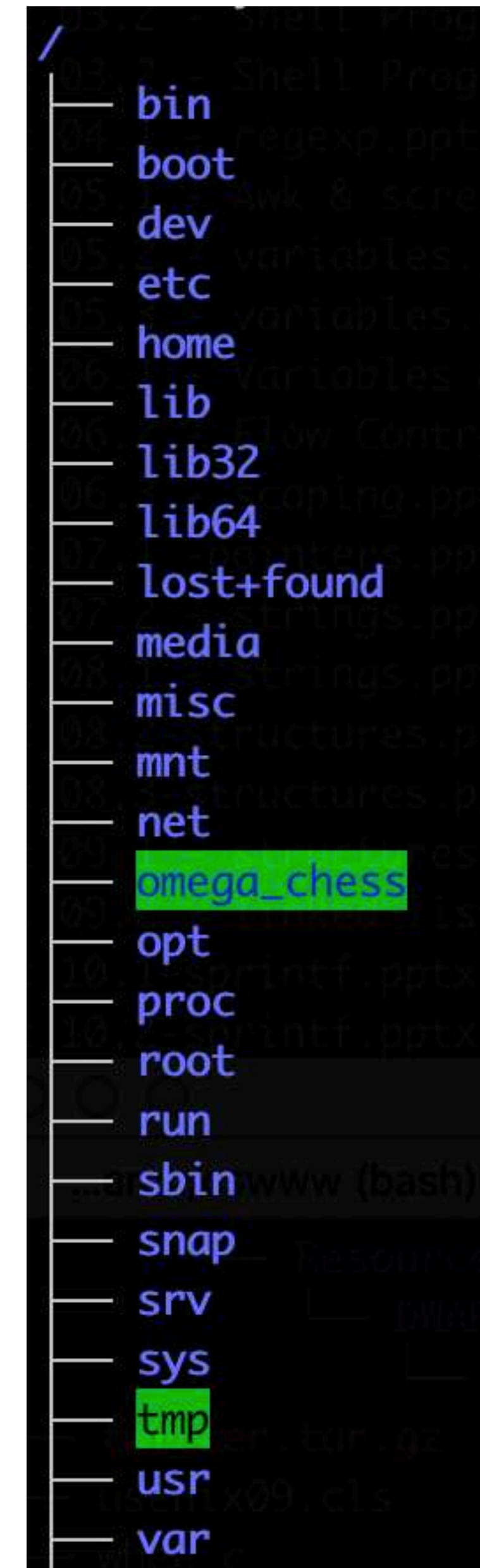
# The file system

Structured as a single tree with **root** node: /

Directories hold files and directories

We name files (or directories) by giving a path through the tree

- ▶ **Absolute path**: /usr/bin/ssh
- ▶ **Relative path** (we'll come back to this)



# Some important directories

<code>/</code>	The root directory
<code>/bin</code>	Holds programs used for essential tasks (e.g., <code>cp</code> , <code>mv</code> , <code>ls</code> )
<code>/sbin</code>	Superuser (administrator) binaries
<code>/etc</code>	System-wide configuration files
<code>/usr</code>	Holds programs and support files for user programs
<code>/usr/bin</code>	User binaries
<code>/home</code>	Holds users' home directories (this is configurable)

# The current working directory

Every program on the system has its own **current working directory**

Not related to where the program lives in the file system

Programs can change their current working directory

The initial working directory of a running program is the current working directory of the parent—the program that launched the program

# Bash's current working directory

The shell has a current directory (like every running program)

`cd` changes the current working directory

`pwd` prints the current working directory

We can name files using an absolute path or a relative path

- ▶ Absolute (starts with a /): `/usr/bin/ssh`
- ▶ Relative to the current working directory (doesn't start with a /)

Programs run by `bash` start with their initial working directory set to `bash`'s current working directory

# Example of a relative path

```
steve@clyde:~$ pwd
/usr/users/noquota/faculty/steve
steve@clyde:~$ ls /usr/bin/ssh
/usr/bin/ssh
steve@clyde:~$ cd /usr
steve@clyde:/usr$ pwd
/usr
steve@clyde:/usr$ ls bin/ssh
bin/ssh
```

# Running bash from bash

When we open a terminal (emulator), it runs our shell, usually bash

In Lab 0, we ran

```
$ bash hello.sh
```

Two instances of bash running at the same time

- ▶ The interactive bash we typed our commands in; and
- ▶ The noninteractive bash that ran the commands from inside `hello.sh`

`hello.sh` is a relative path to the file that the noninteractive bash tried to read



If bash's current working directory is your home directory and the script you want to run, `foo.sh`, is in the `programming` directory inside your home directory, which of the following commands would you use?

A. `$ bash foo.sh`

B. `$ bash programming foo.sh`

C. `$ bash programming\foo.sh`

D. `$ bash programming/foo.sh`

E. `$ bash programming:foo.sh`

# Useful commands

- ▶ `ls` – list files
- ▶ `cd` – change directory
- ▶ `pwd` – print the working directory
- ▶ `pushd`, `popd`, `dirs` – use a stack to change directories
- ▶ `cp` – copy a file
- ▶ `man` – show the manual page
- ▶ `mv` – rename (move) a file
- ▶ `mkdir`, `rmdir` – make or delete a directory
- ▶ `rm` – delete a file
- ▶ `chmod` – change file permissions
- ▶ `cat` – concatenate files
- ▶ `more`, `less` – pagers
- ▶ `head`, `tail` – show first/last lines
- ▶ `grep` – match lines
- ▶ `wc` – count words
- ▶ `tr` – transform characters
- ▶ `split`, `join`, `cut`, `paste`
- ▶ `sort`, `uniq`

If we have three (poorly named) files with paths

```
/dir/file
```

```
/dir/dir/file
```

```
/dir/dir/dir/file
```

and we run the two commands

```
$ cd /dir
```

```
$ rm dir/file
```

which file is deleted by the `rm` command?

A. `/dir/file`

B. `/dir/dir/file`

C. `/dir/dir/dir/file`

D. All three files

E. None of them (e.g., because it's an error)



# Two special directory entries

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Each directory contains two special entries

- ▶ `.` the directory itself (pronounced "dot")
- ▶ `..` the directory's parent (pronounced "dot dot")

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We can use these in paths

- ▶ These all refer to the same directory
  - `/usr/bin`
  - `/usr/./bin/.`
  - `/etc/../../usr/bin`
- ▶ `.` is usually only used at the start of a relative path as `./`
  - `./foo`
- ▶ `cd ..` takes us to the parent directory of the current directory
- ▶ `cd ../../` takes us to the current directory's parent's parent

Which directory is listed if we run the following two commands in the shell?

```
$ cd /usr
```

```
$ ls bin/../../bin
```

A. /

B. /bin

C. /usr/bin

D. /usr/bin/bin

E. Some other directory

# Commands

⟨**command**⟩ ⟨**options**⟩ ⟨**arguments**⟩

- ▶ ⟨**command**⟩ is the name of a command or a path to a program
- ▶ ⟨**options**⟩ are directives to the command to control its behavior
  - Usually start with one or two hyphens
- ▶ ⟨**arguments**⟩ are the things the command acts on
  - Often file paths or server names or URLs

Example: **rm** **-r** **foo** **bar**



# Example meaning

```
▼ rm(1) -r foo bar
```

remove files or directories

**-r, -R, --recursive**  
remove directories and their contents recursively

Remove (unlink) the FILE(s).

[Click to go to explainshell.com](https://explainshell.com)

# Option consistency

Related commands often have similar arguments:

- ▶ `$ cp -r` Copy directories recursively
- ▶ `$ rm -r` Remove directories recursively
- ▶ `$ grep -r` Search for text in files in directories recursively
- ▶ `$ zip -r` Zip directories recursively

But not always

- ▶ `$ ln -r` Create links relative to the link location (requires `-s`)
- ▶ `$ uname -r` Print the kernel version

# Learning about arguments/options

Most programs respond to `-h`, `--help`, or `-help`

Many modern programs support commands in addition to arguments

- ▶ `<program> <global-options> <command> <options> <arguments>`
- ▶ Examples:
  - `$ git commit`
  - `$ cargo build`
- ▶ These often support a `help` command like `git help`

Many programs have manual pages that can be accessed using `man`

- ▶ `$ man ls` Shows the manual page for `ls`
- ▶ `$ man cp` Shows the manual page for `cp`

# Manual (man) pages

`man` is the system manual

- ▶ Use this to find out more about Unix programs
- ▶ `$ man cp`

`whatis` show just single line information

- ▶ also via `$ man -f cp`

`apropos` search for keyword, return single lines

- ▶ also via `$ man -k cp`

`whereis` locate binary, source, man page

- ▶ `$ whereis cp`  
`cp: /bin/cp /usr/share/man/man1/cp.1.gz`

# Sections of the manual

Divided into sections

1. user commands (e.g., `cp(1)`, `ls(1)`, `cat(1)`, `printf(1)`)
2. system calls (e.g., `open(2)`, `close(2)`, `rename(2)`)
3. library functions (e.g., `printf(3)`, `fopen(3)`, `strcpy(3)`)
4. special files
5. file formats (e.g., `ssh_config(5)`)
6. games
7. overview, conventions, and miscellany section
8. administration and privileged commands (e.g., `reboot(8)`)

Use `man 3 printf` to get info from section 3

- You can use `man -a printf` to get all sections