

## Creating Aliases

If you find yourself typing the same command over and over again, you can create a shortcut for it called an alias. An alias can be thought of as a text expander. Creating aliases for commands that are really long is also a common practice. For example, if you type `ls -l` frequently, you may want to abbreviate it to `ll`. As a matter of fact, this alias often comes predefined on many Linux distributions.

`alias [name[=value]]` - List or create aliases. If no arguments are provided the current list of aliases is displayed. Use `name=value` to create a new alias.

```
$ ls -l
total 4
-rw-r--r-- 1 bob bob 221 Nov 13 11:30 file.txt
$ alias ll='ls -l'
$ ll
total 4
-rw-r--r-- 1 bob bob 221 Nov 13 11:30 file.txt
$ alias
alias egrep='egrep --color=auto'
alias fgrep='fgrep --color=auto'
alias grep='grep --color=auto'
alias l='ls -CF'
alias la='ls -A'
alias ll='ls -l'
alias ls='ls --color=auto'
$
```

You can even use aliases to fix common typing errors. If you find yourself typing `grpe` when you intend to type `grep`, create an alias.

```
$ alias grpe='grep'
```

Aliases can be created to make your work environment similar to that of another platform. For instance, in Windows `cls` clears the screen, but in Linux the equivalent command is `clear`. If you are coming from an HP-UX background you are most likely familiar with the command `bdf` which displays disk usage. On Linux a very similar command is `df`. You could create these shortcuts to help you feel more at home.

```
$ alias cls='clear'
$ alias bdf='df'
```

Note that if you were to log out and log back in, your aliases would be lost. To make them persist between sessions add them to one of your personal initialization files (dot files) like `.bash_profile`.

The downside to creating several aliases is that when you are on a system that does not have your aliases you might feel lost. If you want to be able to work effectively on any system that you have access to, keep your alias usage to a minimum. Another way to handle this situation is to copy your configuration files to each system that you work on.

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