For People New to Both FreeBSD and UNIX®

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Abstract

Congratulations on installing FreeBSD! This introduction is for people new to both FreeBSD *and* UNIX®—so it starts with basics. It assumes you are using version 2.0.5 or later of FreeBSD as distributed by FreeBSD.org, your system (for now) has a single user (you)—and you are probably pretty good with DOS/Windows® or OS/2®.

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1. Logging in and Getting Out

Log in (when you see `login:`) as a user you created during installation or as `root`. (Your FreeBSD installation will already have an account for `root`; who can go anywhere and do anything, including deleting essential files, so be careful!) The symbols `%` and `#` in the following stand for the prompt (yours may be different), with `%` indicating an ordinary user and `#` indicating `root`.

To log out (and get a new `login:` prompt) type

```
# exit
```

as often as necessary. Yes, press enter after commands, and remember that UNIX® is case-sensitive—`exit`, not `EXIT`.

To shut down the machine type

```
# /sbin/shutdown --h now
```

Or to reboot type

```
# /sbin/shutdown --r now
```

or

```
# /sbin/reboot
```

You can also reboot with Ctrl+Alt+Delete. Give it a little time to do its work. This is equivalent to `/sbin/reboot` in recent releases of FreeBSD and is much, much better than hitting the reset button. You do not want to have to reinstall this thing, do you?

2. Adding A User with Root Privileges

If you did not create any users when you installed the system and are thus logged in as `root`, you should probably create a user now with

```
# adduser
```

The first time you use `adduser`, it might ask for some defaults to save. You might want to make the default shell csh(1) instead of sh(1), if it suggests `sh` as the default. Otherwise just press enter to accept each default. These defaults are saved in `/etc/adduser.conf` , an editable file.

Suppose you create a user `jack` with full name *Jack Benimble*. Give `jack` a password if security (even kids around who might pound on the keyboard) is an issue. When it asks you if you want to invite `jack` into other groups, type `wheel`

```
Login group is ``jack''. Invite jack into other groups: wheel
```

This will make it possible to log in as `jack` and use the su(1) command to become `root`. Then you will not get scolded any more for logging in as `root`.

You can quit `adduser` any time by typing Ctrl+C, and at the end you will have a chance to approve your new user or simply type n for no. You might want to create a second new user so that when you edit `jack`'s login files, you will have a hot spare in case something goes wrong.

Once you have done this, use `exit` to get back to a login prompt and log in as `jack`. In general, it is a good idea to do as much work as possible as an ordinary user who does not have the power—and risk—of `root`.

If you already created a user and you want the user to be able to `su` to `root`, you can log in as `root` and edit the file `/etc/group` , adding `jack` to the first line (the group `wheel`). But first you need to practice vi(1), the text editor—or use the simpler text editor, ee(1), installed on recent versions of FreeBSD.

To delete a user, use the `rmuser` command.

3. Looking Around

Logged in as an ordinary user, look around and try out some commands that will access the sources of help and information within FreeBSD.

Here are some commands and what they do:

`id`
: Tells you who you are!

`pwd`
: Shows you where you are—the current working directory.

`ls`
: Lists the files in the current directory.

`ls -F`
: Lists the files in the current directory with a * after executables, a / after directories, and an @ after symbolic links.

`ls -l`
: Lists the files in long format—size, date, permissions.

`ls -a`
: Lists hidden "dot" files with the others. If you are `root`, the "dot" files show up without the `-a` switch.

`cd`
: Changes directories. `cd ..` backs up one level; note the space after `cd`. `cd /usr/local` goes there. `cd ~` goes to the home directory of the person logged in—e.g., `/usr/home/jack`. Try `cd /cdrom`, and then `ls`, to find out if your CDROM is mounted and working.

`view filename`
: Lets you look at a file (named *`filename`*) without changing it. Try `view /etc/fstab`. Type `:q` to quit.

`cat filename`
: Displays *`filename`* on screen. If it is too long and you can see only the end of it, press ScrollLock and use the up-arrow to move backward; you can use ScrollLock with manual pages too. Press ScrollLock again to quit scrolling. You might want to try `cat` on some of the dot files in your home directory—`cat .cshrc`, `cat .login`, `cat .profile`.

You will notice aliases in `.cshrc` for some of the `ls` commands (they are very convenient). You can create other aliases by editing `.cshrc`. You can make these aliases available to all users on the system by putting them in the system-wide `csh` configuration file, `/etc/csh.cshrc`.

4. Getting Help and Information

Here are some useful sources of help. *`Text`* stands for something of your choice that you type in—usually a command or filename.

`apropos text`
: Everything containing string *`text`* in the whatis database.

`man text`
: The manual page for *`text`*. The major source of documentation for UNIX® systems. `man ls` will tell you all the ways to use the `ls` command. Press Enter to move through text, Ctrl+B to go back a page, Ctrl+F to go forward, q or Ctrl+C to quit.

`which text`
: Tells you where in the user's path the command *`text`* is found.

`locate text`
: All the paths where the string *`text`* is found.

`whatis text`
: Tells you what the command *`text`* does and its manual page. Typing `whatis *` will tell you about all the binaries in the current directory.

`whereis text`
: Finds the file *`text`*, giving its full path.

You might want to try using `whatis` on some common useful commands like `cat`, `more`, `grep`, `mv`, `find`, `tar`, `chmod`, `chown`, `date`, and `script`. `more` lets you read a page at a time as it does in DOS, e.g., `ls -l | more` or `more filename`. The * works as a wildcard—e.g., `ls w*` will show you files beginning with `w`.

Are some of these not working very well? Both locate(1) and whatis(1) depend on a database that is rebuilt weekly. If your machine is not going to be left on over the weekend (and running FreeBSD), you might want to run the commands for daily, weekly, and monthly maintenance now and then. Run them as `root` and, for now, give each one time to finish before you start the next one.

```
# periodic daily
output omitted
# periodic weekly
output omitted
# periodic monthly
output omitted
```

If you get tired of waiting, press Alt+F2 to get another *virtual console*, and log in again. After all, it is a multi-user, multi-tasking system. Nevertheless these commands will probably flash messages on your screen while they are running; you can type `clear` at the prompt to clear the screen. Once they have run, you might want to look at `/var/mail/root` and `/var/log/messages`.

Running such commands is part of system administration—and as a single user of a UNIX® system, you are your own system administrator. Virtually everything you need to be `root` to do is system administration. Such responsibilities are not covered very well even in those big fat books on UNIX®, which seem to devote a lot of space to pulling down menus in windows managers. You might want to get one of the two leading books on systems administration, either Evi Nemeth et.al.'s *UNIX System Administration Handbook* (Prentice-Hall, 1995, ISBN 0-13-15051-7)—the second edition with the red cover; or Æleen Frisch's *Essential System Administration* (O'Reilly & Associates, 2002, ISBN 0-596-00343-9). I used Nemeth.

5. Editing Text

To configure your system, you need to edit text files. Most of them will be in the `/etc` directory; and you will need to `su` to `root` to be able to change them. You can use the easy `ee`, but in the long run the text editor `vi` is worth learning. There is an excellent tutorial on vi in `/usr/src/contrib/nvi/docs/tutorial` , if you have the system sources installed.

Before you edit a file, you should probably back it up. Suppose you want to edit `/etc/rc.conf`. You could just use `cd /etc` to get to the `/etc` directory and do:

```
# cp rc.conf rc.conf.orig
```

This would copy `rc.conf` to `rc.conf.orig` , and you could later copy `rc.conf.orig` to `rc.conf` to recover the original. But even better would be moving (renaming) and then copying back:

```
# mv rc.conf rc.conf.orig
# cp rc.conf.orig rc.conf
```

because the `mv` command preserves the original date and owner of the file. You can now edit `rc.conf`. If you want the original back, you would then **`mv rc.conf rc.conf.myedit`** (assuming you want to preserve your edited version) and then

```
# mv rc.conf.orig rc.conf
```

to put things back the way they were.

To edit a file, type

```
# vi filename
```

Move through the text with the arrow keys. Esc (the escape key) puts `vi` in command mode. Here are some commands:

`x`
: delete letter the cursor is on

`dd`
: delete the entire line (even if it wraps on the screen)

`i`
: insert text at the cursor

`a`
: insert text after the cursor

Once you type `i` or `a`, you can enter text. `Esc` puts you back in command mode where you can type

`:w`
: to write your changes to disk and continue editing

`:wq`
: to write and quit

`:q!`
: to quit without saving changes

`/text`
: to move the cursor to *`text`*; `/Enter` (the enter key) to find the next instance of *`text`*.

`G`
: to go to the end of the file

`nG`
: to go to line *n* in the file, where *n* is a number

Ctrl+L
: to redraw the screen

Ctrl+b and Ctrl+f
: go back and forward a screen, as they do with `more` and `view`.

Practice with `vi` in your home directory by creating a new file with `vi filename` and adding and deleting text, saving the file, and calling it up again. `vi` delivers some surprises because it is really quite complex, and sometimes you will inadvertently issue a command that will do something you do not expect. (Some people actually like `vi`—it is more powerful than DOS EDIT—find out about the `:r` command.) Use Esc one or more times to be sure you are in command mode and proceed from there when it gives you trouble, save often with `:w`, and use `:q!` to get out and start over (from your last `:w`) when you need to.

Now you can `cd` to `/etc`, `su` to `root`, use `vi` to edit the file `/etc/group` , and add a user to `wheel` so the user has root privileges. Just add a comma and the user's login name to the end of the first line in the file, press Esc, and use `:wq` to write the file to disk and quit. Instantly effective. (You did not put a space after the comma, did you?)

6. Printing Files from DOS

At this point you probably do not have the printer working, so here is a way to create a file from a manual page, move it to a floppy, and then print it from DOS. Suppose you want to read carefully about changing permissions on files (pretty important). You can use `man chmod` to read about it. The command

```
% man chmod -| col --b > chmod.txt
```

will remove formatting codes and send the manual page to the `chmod.txt` file instead of showing it on your screen. Now put a dos-formatted diskette in your floppy drive `a`, `su` to `root`, and type

```
# /sbin/mount --t msdosfs -/dev/fd0 -/mnt
```

to mount the floppy drive on `/mnt`.

Now (you no longer need to be `root`, and you can type `exit` to get back to being user jack) you can go to the directory where you created `chmod.txt` and copy the file to the floppy with:

```
% cp chmod.txt -/mnt
```

and use `ls /mnt` to get a directory listing of `/mnt`, which should show the file `chmod.txt`.

You might especially want to make a file from `/sbin/dmesg` by typing

```
% /sbin/dmesg > dmesg.txt
```

and copying `dmesg.txt` to the floppy. `/sbin/dmesg` is the boot log record, and it is useful to understand it because it shows what FreeBSD found when it booted up. If you ask questions on the FreeBSD general questions mailing list or on a USENET group—like "FreeBSD is not finding my tape drive, what do I do?"—people will want to know what `dmesg` has to say.

You can now unmount the floppy drive (as `root`) to get the disk out with

```
# /sbin/umount -/mnt
```

and reboot to go to DOS. Copy these files to a DOS directory, call them up with DOS EDIT, Windows® Notepad or Wordpad, or a word processor, make a minor change so the file has to be saved, and print as you normally would from DOS or Windows. Hope it works! Manual pages come out best if printed with the DOS `print` command. (Copying files from FreeBSD to a mounted DOS partition is in some cases still a little risky.)

Getting the printer printing from FreeBSD involves creating an appropriate entry in `/etc/printcap` and creating a matching spool directory in `/var/spool/output`. If your printer is on lpt0 (what DOS calls LPT1), you may only need to go to `/var/spool/output` and (as `root`) create the directory `lpd` by typing: `mkdir lpd`, if it does not already exist. Then the printer should respond if it is turned on when the system is booted, and `lp` or `lpr` should send a file to the printer. Whether or not the file actually prints depends on configuring it, which is covered in the FreeBSD handbook.

7. Other Useful Commands

`df`
: shows file space and mounted systems.

`ps aux`
: shows processes running. `ps ax` is a narrower form.

`rm filename`
: remove *`filename`*.

`rm -R dir`
: removes a directory *`dir`* and all subdirectories—careful!

`ls -R`
: lists files in the current directory and all subdirectories; I used a variant, `ls -AFR > where.txt` , to get a list of all the files in `/` and (separately) `/usr` before I found better ways to find files.

`passwd`
: to change user's password (or `root`'s password)

`man hier`
: manual page on the UNIX® filesystem

Use `find` to locate `filename` in `/usr` or any of its subdirectories with

```
% find -/usr --name -"filename"
```

You can use * as a wildcard in "*`filename`*" (which should be in quotes). If you tell `find` to search in `/` instead of `/usr` it will look for the file(s) on all mounted filesystems, including the CDROM and the DOS partition.

An excellent book that explains UNIX® commands and utilities is Abrahams & Larson, *Unix for the Impatient* (2nd ed., Addison-Wesley, 1996). There is also a lot of UNIX® information on the Internet.

8. Next Steps

You should now have the tools you need to get around and edit files, so you can get everything up and running. There is a great deal of information in the FreeBSD handbook (which is probably on your hard drive) and FreeBSD's web site. A wide variety of packages and ports are on the CDROM as well as the web site. The handbook tells you more about how to use them (get the package if it exists, with `pkg_add /cdrom/packages/All/`

packagename, where *packagename* is the filename of the package). The CDROM has lists of the packages and ports with brief descriptions in cdrom/packages/index , cdrom/packages/index.txt , and cdrom/ports/index , with fuller descriptions in /cdrom/ports/*/*/pkg/DESCR , where the *s represent subdirectories of kinds of programs and program names respectively.

If you find the handbook too sophisticated (what with lndir and all) on installing ports from the CDROM, here is what usually works:

Find the port you want, say kermit. There will be a directory for it on the CDROM. Copy the subdirectory to /usr/local (a good place for software you add that should be available to all users) with:

```
# cp --R -/cdrom/ports/comm/kermit -/usr/local
```

This should result in a /usr/local/kermit subdirectory that has all the files that the kermit subdirectory on the CDROM has.

Next, create the directory /usr/ports/distfiles if it does not already exist using mkdir. Now check /cdrom/ports/distfiles for a file with a name that indicates it is the port you want. Copy that file to /usr/ports/distfiles ; in recent versions you can skip this step, as FreeBSD will do it for you. In the case of kermit, there is no distfile.

Then cd to the subdirectory of /usr/local/kermit that has the file Makefile. Type

```
# make all install
```

During this process the port will FTP to get any compressed files it needs that it did not find on the CDROM or in /usr/ports/distfiles . If you do not have your network running yet and there was no file for the port in /cdrom/ports/distfiles , you will have to get the distfile using another machine and copy it to /usr/ports/distfiles . Read Makefile (with cat or more or view) to find out where to go (the master distribution site) to get the file and what its name is. (Use binary file transfers!) Then go back to /usr/local/kermit, find the directory with Makefile, and type make all install.

The other thing that happens when installing ports or packages is that some other program is needed.

Once it is installed type rehash to make FreeBSD reread the files in the path so it knows what is there. (If you get a lot of path not found messages when you use whereis or which, you might want to make additions to the list of directories in the path statement in .cshrc in your home directory. The path statement in UNIX® does the same kind of work it does in DOS, except the current directory is not (by default) in the path for security reasons; if the command you want is in the directory you are in, you need to type ./ before the command to make it work; no space after the slash.)

9. Your Working Environment

Your shell is the most important part of your working environment. In DOS, the usual shell is command.com. The shell is what interprets the commands you type on the command line, and thus communicates with the rest of the operating system. You can also write shell scripts, which are like DOS batch files: a series of commands to be run without your intervention.

Two shells come installed with FreeBSD: `csh` and `sh`. `csh` is good for command-line work, but scripts should be written with `sh` (or `bash`). You can find out what shell you have by typing `echo $SHELL`.

The `csh` shell is okay, but `tcsh` does everything `csh` does and more. It allows you to recall commands with the arrow keys and edit them. It has tab-key completion of filenames (`csh` uses the Esc key), and it lets you switch to the directory you were last in with `cd -`. It is also much easier to alter your prompt with `tcsh`. It makes life a lot easier.

Here are the three steps for installing a new shell:

1. Install the shell as a port or a package, just as you would any other port or package. Use `rehash` and `which tcsh` (assuming you are installing `tcsh`) to make sure it got installed.

2. As `root`, edit `/etc/shells`, adding a line in the file for the new shell, in this case `/usr/local/bin/tcsh`, and save the file. (Some ports may do this for you.)

3. Use the `chsh` command to change your shell to `tcsh` permanently, or type `tcsh` at the prompt to change your shell without logging in again.

Note

It can be dangerous to change `root`'s shell to something other than `sh` or `csh` on early versions of FreeBSD and many other versions of UNIX®; you may not have a working shell when the system puts you into single user mode. The solution is to use `su -m` to become `root`, which will give you the `tcsh` as `root`, because the shell is part of the environment. You can make this permanent by adding it to your `.tcshrc` file as an alias with:

```
alias su su --m
```

When `tcsh` starts up, it will read the `/etc/csh.cshrc` and `/etc/csh.login` files, as does `csh`. It will also read the `.login` file in your home directory and the `.cshrc` file as well, unless you provide a `.tcshrc` file. This you can do by simply copying `.cshrc` to `.tcshrc`.

Now that you have installed `tcsh`, you can adjust your prompt. You can find the details in the manual page for `tcsh`, but here is a line to put in your `.tcshrc` that will tell you how many commands you have typed, what time it is, and what directory you are in. It also produces a **>** if you are an ordinary user and a **#** if you are `root`, but tsch will do that in any case:

```
set prompt = "%h %t %~ %# "
```

This should go in the same place as the existing set prompt line if there is one, or under "if($?prompt) then" if not. Comment out the old line; you can always switch back to it if you prefer it. Do not forget the spaces and quotes. You can get the `.tcshrc` reread by typing `source .tcshrc`.

You can get a listing of other environmental variables that have been set by typing `env` at the prompt. The result will show you your default editor, pager, and terminal type, among possibly many others. A useful command if you log in from a remote location and can not run a program because the terminal is not capable is `setenv TERM vt100` .

10. Other

As `root`, you can unmount the CDROM with `/sbin/umount /cdrom` , take it out of the drive, insert another one, and mount it with `/sbin/mount_cd9660 /dev/cd0a /cdrom` assuming cd0a is the device name for your CDROM drive. The most recent versions of FreeBSD let you mount the CDROM with just `/sbin/mount /cdrom` .

Using the live filesystem—the second of FreeBSD's CDROM disks—is useful if you have got limited space. What is on the live filesystem varies from release to release. You might try playing games from the CDROM. This involves using `lndir`, which gets installed with the X Window System, to tell the program(s) where to find the necessary files, because they are in the `/cdrom` file system instead of in `/usr` and its subdirectories, which is where they are expected to be. Read `man lndir`.

11. Comments Welcome

If you use this guide I would be interested in knowing where it was unclear and what was left out that you think should be included, and if it was helpful. My thanks to Eugene W. Stark, professor of computer science at SUNY-Stony Brook, and John Fieber for helpful comments.

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