

## The Command Line Interface (CLI)

aka the shell, the terminal, xterm and more. Strictly speaking the term unix/linux refers only to the operating system itself. This provides an interface via a program known as a shell or CLI, of which there are a number of different flavours. Any graphical interface is provided by 2 programs which are platform independent, ie run on a number of different operating systems. These 2 programs are the X-server and the window-manager. The X-server runs on your local machine and is used by a window-manager to create the graphical interface. Like many things in \*nix there is a wide choice of window-managers each providing a different look&feel.

Q? Which shell are you provided with by default in Linux? How do you find out? Can you change it?

Q? Which window manager are you running. Can you run a different one? Which ones are available, ie already installed?

\*) OK. A few tools and clues that might help with the above. Your shell is set at login time from a file called `/etc/passwd`. In principle this file holds your password (encrypted) and your details such as your home directory, shell etc. To get help with commands, file types etc use the \*nix manual pages. Start by typing `man man`, or try typing `xman`&. `man command` will tell you far too much about *command*.

\*) Using the commands

`ls` to list directory (folder) contents, along with the flags (options) `-a` and `-l`. What do these flags do? what are those 'dot' files?

`cd` with relative and absolute paths

Explore the directory structure of a \*nix system. How is it different from Microsoft? Where is the 'C:' drive?

\*) What do the commands

`mkdir`

`rmdir`

`touch`

`rm`

do? Handle the last one with caution.

What other areas might you need commands for?

For a challenge have a look at the worksheets on <http://www.cems.uwe.ac.uk/~ngunton/worksheets>. Particularly the ones relating to revision control, find & grep and xmkmf. The latter will result in postit-notes on your desktop.

Alternatively try changing your window manager.

Or try the file system worksheet on <http://www.cems.uwe.ac.uk/~ngunton/worksheets/command-linefiles.pdf>.