

Keyboard shortcuts

editing text (always works)

(almost)
backspace
Ctrl+W delete word
Ctrl+U delete line
(except in text editors)

editing text

(these often work in a
readline-like situation)

arrow keys
Ctrl+A beginning of line
or Home
Ctrl+E end of line
or End
Ctrl+arrow keys left/right a word
(or sometimes Alt+arrow keys
or Option+arrow keys
or Alt+b / Alt+f)

Ctrl+K delete forward
Ctrl+Y paste
Ctrl+H might help if
Backspace doesn't
work

also many shells have a "vi mode"
if that's your jam

in less

/ search
n/N next/prev match
space/PageDn scroll down

fixing broken output

fix messed up terminal

clear the screen:
clear
ask the terminal emulator &
OS to reset everything:
reset
(or just open a new tab!)

ways to quit

Ctrl+C quit (SIGINT)
Ctrl+Z stop process (SIGTSTP)
(resume with fg or bg
or kill with kill)
Ctrl+D quit (in a REPL)
q quit (in a TUI)
Enter ~ . exit frozen
SSH session
Ctrl+\ send SIGQUIT
(quit and core dump)

other useful stuff

Ctrl+L clear screen
Ctrl+R search history
Ctrl+Q unfreeze screen (that
you accidentally froze
with Ctrl+S)

copy and paste

in your terminal emulator,
it's usually:

Ctrl+Shift+C/V
or Cmd+C/V

if selecting text doesn't work,
try holding Shift

mouse stuff that might work

Option+click place cursor
or Alt+click
scroll wheel scroll

force program not to buffer its output

make its output a TTY with:
unbuffer CMD

core tasks

glob expansion

expand filenames with `*`
ls *.png
expand in all subdirectories:
wc **/*.txt
(not all shells support ** though)
include files starting with a dot:
ls .*

switch users

run a command as root with sudo
sudo cmd
or start a new shell as root:
su

change directories

go to home directory:
cd
go to prev directory:
cd -
go to /some/dir:
cd /some/dir

set environment variables

set a variable for one command:
env NAME=val cmd
NAME=val cmd

(they do almost the same
thing but I prefer the env
version because it behaves
the same in every shell)

set it for the whole session:
export NAME=val

(also what you put in your
bash/zsh config file to set
it permanently, in fish it's
set -x NAME val)

view environment:

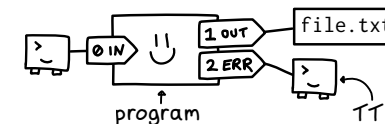
env

search environment:

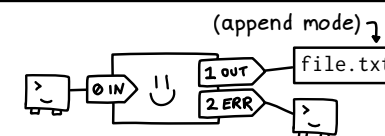
env | grep MAIL

pipes & redirects

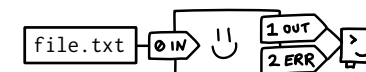
redirect to a file:
cmd > file.txt



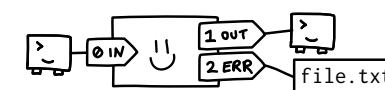
append to a file:
cmd >> file.txt



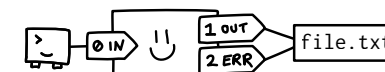
send a file to stdin:
cmd < file.txt



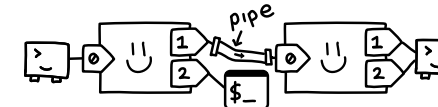
redirect stderr to a file:
cmd 2> file.txt



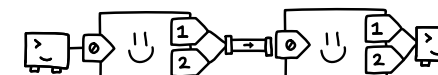
redirect stdout AND stderr:
cmd > file.txt 2>&1
-or-
cmd &> file.txt



pipe stdout:
cmd1 | cmd2



pipe stdout AND stderr:
cmd1 2>&1 | cmd2



managing processes

killing programs

send a SIGTERM:
kill PID
send a SIGKILL (can't be ignored):
kill -9 PID

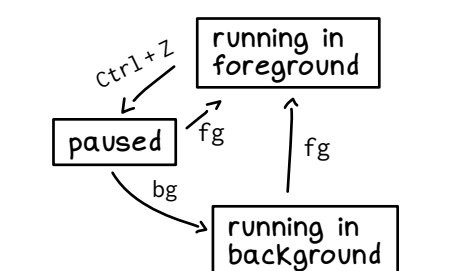
kill all processes with python3
anywhere in its arguments:
pkill python3

kill all processes named python3:
killall python3

see what's using all your CPU:
top or htop

find a process's PID to kill it:
\$ ps aux | grep python3
bork 7213 ... python3
↑
the PID

job control



list jobs:
jobs
lists numbered jobs,
you can refer to
them like %2

stop a program from closing
when the terminal tab is closed:
nohup CMD
disown %1

& more

history

look at history:
history

search history:
Ctrl+R

rerun prev command as root:
sudo !! ← bash/zsh
rerun line 33 from history:
!33 ← bash/zsh

add a directory to your PATH

at the end:
export PATH=\$PATH:/my/dir

at the beginning:
export PATH=/my/dir:\$PATH

in fish the syntax is
different, like:
set PATH \$PATH /my/dir

PATH debugging

show each PATH entry on its
own line:

echo "\$PATH" | tr ':' '\n'

find the first time a program
appears in PATH:
which CMD

find all instances of program
in PATH:
which -a CMD

ask your shell if CMD is a
function or alias or program:
type CMD

aliases

alias ll="ls -l"