Different types of shells

Knowing how to work with Linux shells is an important skill for cybersecurity professionals. Shells can be used for many common tasks. Previously, you were introduced to shells and their functions. This reading will review shells and introduce you to different types, including the one that you'll use in this course.

Communicate through a shell

As you explored previously, the **shell** is the command-line interpreter. You can think of a shell as a translator between you and the computer system. Shells allow you to give commands to the computer and receive responses from it. When you enter a command into a shell, the shell executes many internal processes to interpret your command, send it to the kernel, and return your results.

Types of shells

The many different types of Linux shells include the following:

- Bourne-Again Shell (bash)
- C Shell (csh)
- Korn Shell (ksh)
- Enhanced C shell (tcsh)
- Z Shell (zsh)
- PowerShell (by microsoft also on windows)

All Linux shells use common Linux commands, but they can differ in other features. For example, ksh and bash use the dollar sign (*$*) to indicate where users type in their commands. Other shells, such as zsh, use the percent sign (%) for this purpose.

Bash

Bash is the default shell in most Linux distributions. It’s considered a user-friendly shell. You can use bash for basic Linux commands as well as larger projects.

Bash is also the most popular shell in the cybersecurity profession. You’ll use bash throughout this course as you learn and practice Linux commands.

Key takeaways

Shells are a fundamental part of the Linux operating system. Shells allow you to give commands to the computer and receive responses from it. They can be thought of as a translator between you and your computer system. There are many different types of shells, but the bash shell is the most commonly used shell in the cybersecurity profession. You’ll learn how to enter Linux commands through the bash shell later in this course.

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