df and du Disk space usage

CONCEPTS

df asks the filesystem how full it is; du walks the tree and adds up files. Their numbers can differ.

These are GNU flags. BSD/macOS df and du differ: no --inodes, --apparent-size or --output.

df disk is full?
↓ `which mount`
du -x which directory?
↓ `drill down`
du -d 1 which subdir / file?

Full disk but df -i shows 100% IUse? You ran out of inodes (many tiny files), not bytes.

df and du disagree when a deleted file is still held open by a process; close or restart it to free the space (find it: lsof +L1).

DF: FREE SPACE

`df -h`
Human-readable sizes (powers of 1024)

`df -h` *`<path>`*
Only the filesystem containing <path>

`df -hT`
Show filesystem type column

`df -i`
Inodes instead of blocks

`df -H`
Sizes in powers of 1000 (like disk vendors)

`df -t` *`<type>`*
Only filesystems of this type

`df -x tmpfs -x devtmpfs`
Hide filesystem types

`df -l`
Local filesystems only (skip NFS)

`df --total`
Add a grand total row

DF: FREE SPACE (cont.)

`df --output=source,avail,target`
Pick the columns (see detail for fields)

`df -a`
Include pseudo and inaccessible filesystems

`df -BG`
Fixed unit, here gigabytes (1024^3)

`df -P`
POSIX format, one line per filesystem

`df --sync`
Sync before reading usage

`df -k`
1K blocks

DU: DIRECTORY SIZE

`du -sh` *`<dir>`*
Total for one directory

`du -h -d 1` *`<dir>`*
Size of each direct subdirectory

`du -sh *`
Size of each item in the cwd

`du -ah` *`<dir>`*
Every file, not just directories

`du -h -d 1` *`<dir>`* **`| sort -h`**
Sort smallest to biggest

`du -ah` *`<dir>`* **`| sort -rh | head`**
Top 10 space users

`du -xh -d 1` *`<dir>`*
Don't cross filesystem boundaries

`du -ch` *`<file>`***`...`**
Per item plus grand total

`du -t` *`<size>`* **`-ah`** *`<dir>`*
Skip entries under <size> (negative: over)

`du --exclude='`*`<pattern>`***`'`** *`<dir>`*
Skip matching names

`du --apparent-size -sh` *`<dir>`*
Content size, not disk blocks

DU: DIRECTORY SIZE (cont.)

`du -S` *`<dir>`*
Exclude subdirectories from each dir's size

`du --time -h -d 1` *`<dir>`*
Add newest modification time

`du --inodes -d 1` *`<dir>`* **`| sort -n`**
File count per directory

`du -L` *`<dir>`*
Follow all symlinks

`du -l` *`<dir>`*
Count hard-linked files each time

`du -b` *`<file>`*
Exact bytes (apparent size)

`du -m` *`<dir>`*
Sizes in MiB (1024^2)

`du --si -s` *`<dir>`*
Powers of 1000

`du -X` *`<file>`*
Read exclude patterns from a file

`du -0` *`<dir>`* **`| sort -z`**
NUL-terminated lines for odd filenames

`du --files0-from=`*`<file>`*
Read NUL-separated names from a file or -

`du --time=ctime --time-style=long-iso`
Choose the time kind and format

RECIPES

Find what fills the disk

```
df -h
# pick the full mount, then descend
du -xh -d 1 / | sort -h | tail
du -xh -d 1 /var | sort -h | tail
```

Biggest files under a tree

```
du -ah /var 2>/dev/null | sort -rh | head -n 20
```

Size of files chosen by find

```
find . -name '*.log' -print0 | du --files0-from=- -ch | tail -n 1
```

Alert when a disk is nearly full

```
df --output=pcent,target | tail -n +2 | awk '$1+0 > 90 {print "low space:", $2}'
```