ncdu Disk usage browser

CONCEPTS

Scan once, then dig down: the biggest entries sit on top, so open the top directory and repeat.

Scan ncdu <path>
↓ -o / -0
Export file JSON or binary
↓ -f
Browse read-only view
↓ d
Delete live scan only

Imported scans cannot delete, refresh or spawn a shell; only a live scan can.

Sizes are disk usage (blocks) by default; press a to compare with apparent size, e.g. for sparse files.

NAVIGATE

Up / Down
Move the selection

k / j Move up / down (vi keys)

Enter / Right
Open the selected directory

Left / h
Go to the parent directory

l
Open the selected directory (vi key)

? Show help, keys and about

q Quit ncdu

SORT AND VIEW

s
Sort by size; press again to reverse

n
Sort by name; press again to reverse

C Sort by item count

M Sort by newest child mtime

a
Toggle disk usage / apparent size

SORT AND VIEW (cont.)

g
Cycle percentage and graph display

c Show item counts

m Show newest child mtime

t Directories first on or off

u
Toggle shared / unique size column

e
Show or hide hidden and excluded items

ACT ON ITEMS

d Delete the selected item

i
Show details of the selected item

r Rescan the current directory

b Open a shell in this directory

Flags in the first column: ! unreadable, . error below, > other filesystem, @ symlink or special, H hard link counted already, e empty dir, < excluded.

SCAN OPTIONS

`ncdu <path>`
Scan a directory and browse it

`ncdu -x <path>`
Stay on one filesystem

`ncdu -e <path>`
Also record owner, mode and mtime

`ncdu -t <n> <path>`
Scan with n threads

`ncdu -L <path>`
Count the targets of symlinks

`ncdu --exclude <pattern> <path>`
Skip matching files (repeatable)

`ncdu -X <file> <path>`
Read exclude patterns from a file

`ncdu --exclude-caches <path>`
Skip dirs holding CACHEDIR.TAG

`ncdu --exclude-kernfs /`
Skip proc, sys and similar

DISPLAY OPTIONS

`ncdu --si`
Use kB / MB instead of KiB / MiB

`ncdu --sort <col>-desc`
Pick the starting sort

`ncdu --color dark`
Use the dark colour scheme

EXPORT AND IMPORT

`ncdu -o <file> <path>`
Scan and save as JSON

`ncdu -0 <file> <path>`
Scan and save in binary format

`ncdu -f <file>`
Browse a saved scan

`ncdu -co- <path>`
Write compressed JSON to stdout

`ncdu -f-`
Read a JSON scan from stdin

SAFETY AND CONFIG

`ncdu -r <path>`
Read-only: no delete

`ncdu --delete-command "gio trash --"`
Trash instead of delete

Put one option per line in ~/.config/ncdu/config (or /etc/ncdu.conf) to make flags permanent; command-line flags win.

RECIPES

Find what fills the root disk

```
sudo ncdu -x /
# s sorts by size, Enter dives in,
# -x skips other mounts and network shares
```

Scan a remote host, browse locally

```
ssh <user>@<host> ncdu -co- / | ncdu -f-
```

Save a scan, review it later

```
ncdu -1x0 scan.ncdu /
ncdu -f scan.ncdu
```

Browse a cleanup without deleting

```
ncdu -r -x --exclude node_modules ~/projects
```