top Live process monitor

CONCEPTS

Keys are case sensitive: P and p are different commands. Top answers to what you type, so there is no Enter after a single key.

Load average is runnable plus waiting tasks over 1, 5 and 15 minutes; compare it with your CPU count, not with 1.

CPU line

Field	Time spent on
`us / ni`	user code / niced user code
`sy`	kernel code
`id`	idle
`wa`	waiting for disk I/O
`hi / si`	hardware / software interrupts
`st`	stolen by the hypervisor

S column (task state)

Code	Meaning
`R`	running or runnable
`S`	sleeping, interruptible
`D`	uninterruptible sleep (usually I/O)
`I`	idle kernel thread
`T / t`	stopped by job control / by a debugger
`Z`	zombie, waiting for its parent

Memory: judge by avail Mem, not free. Buff/cache is reclaimable and normally large.

SORTING

`P`
Sort by CPU

`M`
Sort by memory

`T`
Sort by cumulative CPU time

`R`
Reverse sort order

`f`
Choose sort field and columns

FILTERING AND VIEW

`u`
Show one user's tasks

`c`
Toggle command name / full line

`i`
Hide idle tasks

`V`
Forest (process tree) view

`H`
Show threads

`o`
Add filter, ignore case

SUMMARY AREA

`1`
One line per CPU

SIGNALS AND PRIORITY

`k`
Kill a task (asks PID, signal)

`r`
Renice a task

NAVIGATION AND CONTROL

`Arrows`
Scroll tasks / columns

`d` / `s`
Change refresh delay

`?` / `h`
Help

`q`
Quit

COMMAND LINE

`top -b -n 1`
One snapshot, no UI

`top -p <pid,pid>`
Watch only these PIDs