Linux users and groups

Accounts and groups

CONCEPTS

usermod -G alone replaces all supplementary groups. Always write -aG to add one. Group changes apply from the next login.

useradd -m defaults from login.defs
↓ writes
/etc/passwd name, UID, home, shell
↓ plus
/etc/shadow hash, aging, expiry
↓ plus
/etc/group own group, same name
↓ copies
/home/<user> from /etc/skel

WHO IS WHO

id
Your UID, GID and groups

id *<user>*
Same for another user

groups *<user>*
List a user's groups

getent passwd *<user>*
Look up an account entry

getent group *<group>*
Show a group and its members

who
Users logged in now

w
Logged in users and what they run

CREATE USERS

useradd -m *<user>*
Create a user with a home dir

useradd -m -s /bin/bash *<user>*
Set the login shell too

useradd -m -G *<g1>,<g2>* *<user>*
Add supplementary groups

useradd -r -s /usr/sbin/nologin *<user>*
Create a system user for a service

MODIFY USERS

usermod -aG *<group>* *<user>*
Add to a group, keep the rest

MODIFY USERS (cont.)

gpasswd -d *<user>* *<group>*
Remove a user from one group

usermod -s *<shell>* *<user>*
Change the login shell

usermod -L *<user>*
Lock the password

usermod -U *<user>*
Unlock the password

DELETE USERS

userdel *<user>*
Delete the account, keep files

userdel -r *<user>*
Delete account, home and mail

GROUPS

groupadd *<group>*
Create a group

gpasswd -a *<user>* *<group>*
Add a user to a group

PASSWORDS AND AGING

passwd
Change your own password

passwd *<user>*
Set another user's password

passwd -S *<user>*
Password status: P, L or NP

passwd -e *<user>*
Force a change at next login

chage -l *<user>*
Show aging and expiry info

chage -E *<YYYY-MM-DD>* *<user>*
Expire the account on a date

FILES

/etc/group
name:x:GID:member,member

SWITCH USER

su - *<user>*
Log in as user, full environment

sudo -iu *<user>*
Login shell as user via sudo