Introduction

Welcome to the School of Computer Science and Information Technology (CS&IT) at RMIT!

As a CS&IT student at RMIT you have access to a wide range of facilities that you will find useful whilst completing your program. Most of these resources are computer-based.

This handbook and the induction sessions introduce you to some of the facilities you have access to as a student, and have been designed to equip you with the necessary skills to utilise them properly. You will also become familiar with the terminology that is used here in CS&IT at RMIT.

The Quick Start Guide for new students at the beginning of this manual is to answer your basic questions about what you will be doing now that you are at University. Please take the time to read it and look at the services mentioned.

Your orientation begins with the Lab Induction which is a formal class, much like a tutorial session, giving an overview of the CS&IT network and how you will be using it. The first part of this workshop will be directed. When you have been guided through the material you will have an opportunity to practise at your own pace.

The subsequent workshops, Unix Survival Skills, are lab sessions where you will be working with essential Unix skills, followed by some more advanced material. As CS&IT students you are expected to be able to use the Unix operating system for your coursework.

If you have any questions, make sure you have read the section carefully, you might find the answer yourself! However please ask if you would like some further explanation.

Complete all the Test Yourself tasks and you will be well equipped to study in CS&IT.

We hope that you find these sessions both useful and enjoyable.

Keep this manual as a resource to come back to during your program.

Jeanette Holkner, Orientation Co-ordinator, and the Induction Team
July 2008

Special thanks to Alex for the rewrite of the Unix sections.
Thanks also to Skye, Saied and Clemens for their earlier work on this manual.
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Quick Start Guide for new students

Now that you have enrolled in your degree program in Computer Science and Information Technology what will you need to be thinking about? The next few pages are to point you in the right direction and to help you feel like you know what is going on. There is much information on the web and in your enrolment pack about courses, administration and support services. Become familiar with where to find things now, then when you need them you will be ready.

The words in bold are terms used by the University if you do not understand them, please ask someone. The page references are for this manual.

Your Program

This is the degree you are doing, it is managed by CS&IT and any questions you have about what you should do will be answered by a Program Advisor, reading the Program Summary and meeting with a Teaching and Learning Advisor. see page 23

Your Program Summary has the rules you need to follow to complete your degree and graduate. It is used with Enrolment Online to select courses each year, and to make any changes at the beginning of the semester. You must complete the specified core courses (these are compulsory), courses from your specialisation or major study and electives. The order you do things is determined by the availability of courses and the prerequisites you have already completed. If you have advanced standing you will need to know the courses from which you have been exempted. Your Program Advisor has this information.

Your Courses

Each semester you will typically study four courses. They must be ones that contribute to your program and you choose them after you have had advice.

A course has timetabled teaching activities and learning resources both online and in print. The Course Guide details everything that is available to you and all that is expected from you, including how you will be assessed. You will find the course guide in the Learning Hub, or by searching for it. See pages 24, 25.

The Course Guide has two parts, the Course Overview (part A) helps you select the course, and the Course Detail (part B) which gives specific information for this semester including the lecturer, textbook, topics and assessment due dates. You must read these.

Many people are involved in supporting your learning in each course.

Lecturer – manages the course and the teaching team. Delivers lectures.

Tutors – facilitate tutorial sessions which are small classes where you discuss exercises and questions that you have prepared in advance. Tutors also mark assignments.

Head Tutor – If a large number of students are enrolled in the course, a head tutor will assist the lecturer in managing the course. The Head Tutor is often the main contact person for students.

Lab Assistants – Practical classes held in computer labs have assistants who will help you with the given task and mark assessments in the lab as required.

Mentors – some programming courses have student volunteers who you can meet with to talk about that programming language.

Teaching and Learning Advisors – will help you with general study skills and specific issues that are affecting your study.
Keeping in touch

Communication is the key to university study, you will do lots of listening and reading, but it is also important for you to talk and write.

As a student you are expected to be active in your learning and also to take responsibility for administrative matters. You will therefore need to be aware of deadlines, changes and opportunities. It is assumed by the School and the University that you are attending to your study and keeping in touch.

Email

The primary communication tool used by staff and students at RMIT and in CS&IT is student email. See page 27 You will receive lots of messages; read them and archive them as you may need the information later.

There are different types of messages:

Broadcast messages from RMIT are sent to all students in the form of announcements and bulletins. You may not be expecting anything as you have not asked a question, but it is important you scan through each message, some of the information will be relevant to you.

Broadcast messages are also sent from CS&IT to students enrolled in our programs. Again you didn't ask for anything but the information will be relevant to you because you are a student in the program. Read, make note of deadlines and activities, and act on the information.

Email from your lecturer or head tutor may be sent to everyone enrolled in the course. This is usually when something urgent needs to be said to all students.

Personal email will be sent to you as replies to questions or comments that you have sent to an administrator or lecturer. If you do not get a reply to an email, think of another way of communicating, perhaps talking after a lecture or attending consultation time. You might see a Teaching and Learning Advisor if you have problems like this.

Personal email between students is an important learning tool, especially if you are working on a group assignment. If you do not hear anything from a group member you should try another way of getting in touch. If this fails alert your lecturer, head tutor or a Teaching and Learning Advisor.

It is your responsibility to check your email, and clear your mailbox.

Online Discussion

Each course will have at least one area (usually in the Blackboard area of the Learning Hub) where students can post and read messages about course work. All other students can then read and learn from the discussion. Many students are a bit shy about using this tool and only read. This is ok, but it is much better to ask a question early rather than wait for someone else. The discussion area is usually managed by the Head Tutor, but other tutors and the lecturer will add comments. You will need to learn their names so you know who the answer is from.

Newsgroups are discussion areas where you are free to read and post items relevant to that group. A few courses use newsgroups, but the main ones of interest to CS&IT students are related to IT. You can read online or through UNIX. See pages 30, 31
Face-to-Face Communication

While you are on campus talking with someone will often be necessary, there are a number of ways to do this.

Course Consultation

Time is set aside by each lecturer or head tutor to meet with students outside class time. It can be that you need to clarify part of a topic that you don't understand, or you want to check up on something related to assessment. The time and location for consultation is given in the first lecture and will be in Blackboard in the staff information area.

Meeting a Program Advisor

Anything related to your program can be discussed with your advisor. At busy times of the semester you might be asked to make an appointment via email, or wait to meet outside their office at the time they have allocated for meetings. Your advisor has probably put a notice on their door regarding meeting times.

Teaching and Learning Advisors are available to meet students most days. You can email for an appointment, make a booking using the staff booking system or just knock on the door.

Administrative Questions

The Main Office for CS&IT is 10.10.07 and has an enquiry counter. Staff here will either answer your question or refer you to the Hub or an Advisor.

Duty Programmers at 10.10.13 will answer technical questions. see page 7

The Hub located on Level 4 of Building 12 is the place for all questions about being a student. The staff will either give you information or refer you to the correct service. The Hub also has lots of information about Student Services offered by RMIT.

Student Staff Consultative Committees

You are invited to become a part of the process for improving the learning experience for students in CS&IT. These SSCC meetings provide direct communication between students and staff of the school. The minutes of these meetings are available online and include issues and actions taken. All programs and year levels need representatives for these committees, the meetings are friendly and assistance and training for representatives is available. http://www.rmit.edu.au/csit/sscc

Group Meetings

Students like to work together and finding a space can be a challenge. The Swanston Library has eight discussion rooms equipped with computer and white board which can be booked for up to two hours per day for group assignment work or informal study groups. http://www.rmit.edu.au/library

The Student Lounge on Level 9 of Building 14 has tables and chairs and is useful for informal discussion.
Learning Resources

Here is a quick look at the tools and activities you will engage with while you are studying in CS&IT.

Time

The Academic Calendar has the semester and exam dates and deadlines for making changes to your enrolment. These deadlines are final.

Your Timetable is your personal schedule of classes during the week. See pages 23, 25. Once you have filled in lectures, labs and tutorials you will need to schedule your personal study and coding practice time. Allow a minimum of 12 hours for every course you are doing. Full time study is a commitment to 48 hours per week; it is recommended that you make this your priority. Paid work can then fit around your study, perhaps a day on the weekend or two afternoons during the week. The semester break is a good time to do extra paid work and get money in the bank.

A Study Planner is the whole semester's work at a glance. You fill in the weeks with course topics, assessment starting and due dates as well as progressive submission dates. The Student Union produces a free planner or you can draw up your own. Some lectures make a planner for their course with week by week links to lecture, tutorial and lab tasks. Your job is to combine them all so you know what you are doing each week, and also planning for busy times when a lot of assignments are due. Teaching and Learning Advisors can help with this.

Classes

You are encouraged to attend all the classes for each course. Your lecturer assumes that this is what you are doing, and that you come to class prepared for that topic. This means reading the lecture notes and text book chapters before the lecture. The tutorial will challenge you with questions related to the topic from the previous week. This gives you time to prepare your answers, to think about the ideas, and to try the programming examples. Lab classes often relate to assignment work. Key concepts and skills that you need for the assignment are presented in exercises. Once you have completed them successfully you should be able to work on that part of the assignment.

If you miss classes because of something unavoidable such as ill health, you should meet your lecturer or head tutor during consultation time to get advice on how to quickly catch up. Even if you are ill, you can often keep in touch with the online elements of your course. However serious illness requires advice regarding Special Consideration. Teaching and Learning Advisors and Student Services can help.

If you get behind with topics and assessment, tell your lecturer, tutor or Teaching and Learning Advisor as soon as you can. Don't just try and catch up weeks and weeks of work without advice.

Study Skills

The RMIT Study and Learning Centre at the Hub provides free assistance in English language, study skills, academic writing, and Maths. There are online study skills tutorials too. http://www.rmit.edu.au/studyandlearningcentre
Computing Resources

As a student in the School of Computer Science and Information Technology (CS&IT) at RMIT you are granted access to computer resources by means of individual student accounts.

You have been provided with accounts on two different types of network server, each with a different operating system:

Unix

Your Unix accounts provide you with access to web browsing, e-mail, Internet news and a host of other facilities which you will find useful whilst you are completing your course.

A large part of the work you will be required to do in the course can be done using your Unix account, especially for programming subjects.

Students in CS&IT have accounts on 2 Unix servers:

- yallara
- numbat

Students may also have accounts on other Unix machines specific to certain courses. Such accounts will be detailed by the course lecturer.

Windows Terminal Server

These machines allow students to use Microsoft Windows and standard Microsoft applications such as Word and Excel.

They also provide indirect access to your Unix Accounts as well as other useful applications such as Mozilla Firefox, which allows you to access the World Wide Web (WWW).

Windows Terminal Servers are named Blowfly1, Blowfly2, Blowfly3.......... You might find it more effective to use a server with a higher number.
CS&IT Computer Network

The RMIT CS&IT computer network is set up in the following manner:
Each student is allocated a section of storage space in the department file server.
Each student is allocated an individual account on each of the student Unix network servers (numbat, yallara).
Each student is allocated an individual account on the Windows network servers.
Each student can access their storage space through both Unix and Windows.
Each student can access all student printers through either Windows or Unix.
Each student is allocated a print quota at the beginning of the year, additional credit can be purchased at the Hub.
The printers are in the following locations:
- student1010  Babbage Lab 10.10.28
- student1011  Bolam Lab 10.11.22
- student1409  Corridor outside Scheutz Lab 14.09.23
- student1410  Beard Lab 14.10.32

For an overview of the RMIT CS&IT computing setup, take the Tour:
http://www.cs.rmit.edu.au/support

Thus the computer network system here at RMIT something like the diagram below.

![Diagram of RMIT CS&IT Network](Figure 1: Basic layout of the RMIT CS&IT Network)
Duty Programmers Office

The Duty Programmers are the student’s first point of contact for any technical problems or support for the resources in CS&IT.

Typical problems that the duty programmers tackle daily are password changes, new account setup, software issues, and printer servicing and fixing jams etc. If a printer is not working, report it to the Duty Programmers and they will attend to it immediately.

Staff are also able to answer questions regarding programming, they are not there (of course) to complete your assignments. From the website, students are also able to access the online helpdesk documentation.

You can also borrow CDs of software relevant to your course from the help desk. If you provide a blank CD, the duty programmers can copy free software or your coursework files onto it for you. The available software is listed on the noticeboard next the desk and includes Linux Distributions, a Windows Software CD (Freeware Applications) including Eclipse, PuTTY. If you do not have a broadband connection this is the best way to get the resources you need.

Email: helpdesk@cs.rmit.edu.au
Log a call online: http://helpdesk.cs.rmit.edu.au

City Campus:

Room 10.10.13
Ph: 992 51994

Hours: During the semester.
8:30am – 8:00pm Mon-Fri
closed Sat & Sun
Opening hours are reduced in vacation periods.

The Duty Programmers cannot help with Blackboard or Weblearn issues, you should direct any of these to your course lecturer, particularly if you cannot access your course material.
Computer Labs

There are two types of general-purpose machines in the labs in CS&IT. These are PCs and X-Terminals. The PCs are generally a standard Pentium-based computer with a CD-rom. An X-Terminal is a dual purpose computer that can run either a unix xwindows or Microsoft Windows session.

Lab opening times are weekdays 8:30am to 8:30pm. Opening times will change during holidays as announced on CS newsgroups. Postgraduate students may obtain 24 hour access to CSIT labs and Undergraduate students can use the ITS Learning Centre – see below.

CSIT Labs

**PC Labs:**
- Pearcy 14.10.31
- Oasis 14.10.31a
- Lions 14.10.30

**X-Terminal labs**
- Beard 14.10.32
- Babbage 14.09.23
- Boole 14.09.15

**Specialist labs**
- Turing (Solaris System Admin) 10.11.24
- Games Studio (Games Degree) 14.11.37
- Alice (Games Degree) 14.11.36
- Sutherland (Graphics lab) 14.11.38
- YourSoftware (PG Industry Projects only) 10.09.32

Except where specified, and provided that a class is not scheduled, all labs are available for free access. You may also be able to use a terminal in a lab while a scheduled class is present, provided that the supervising lab assistant permits it, however you will be expected to work quietly so that the lab class is not disturbed.

CS Tutors and Lab Assistants are authorised to request that students not allocated to a lab class remove themselves from the lab even if the lab is not full to capacity. Please be accommodating if requested to vacate the lab.

**RMIT ITS Labs**
https://inside.cs.rmit.edu.au/support/pub:labhours has useful information on how to use VNC and Citrix clients installed in ITS Labs to access CS lab environments.

**Learning Centre 14.04.12**
- This lab is open 24 hours a day seven days a week.
- This lab is open for general use on Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm.
- At all other times, each user must have an authorised 24 hour access card to enter and use this facility

**PostGraduate Lab Building 28 Level 4**

**Gaining entry to labs after hours**
All students wishing to use the 24 hour labs, must obtain an RMIT security perimeter access card. The request form is available at the school office 10.10.07.
Rules of Use

You will have signed and agreed to the RMIT CS&IT terms of use upon signing up for your computer account at enrolment.

Specific rules for the labs include:

- Access to CS&IT labs is restricted to only those who are enrolled in CS&IT courses. Duty Programmers, security or any staff member of RMIT University may ask for identification.
- No food or drinks are to be consumed or brought into the labs. This rule is enforced vigorously by staff to avoid damage to the machines, the fixtures in the labs, and to reduce the amount of cleaning required.
- CS&IT labs are for students to complete their work and for research purposes. They are not to be used as general gathering areas. Because labs are spaces shared by many people, those using them should be courteous to others and refrain from excessive noise.
- Terminals and other equipment are to be used for course related work only. Chat, games and accessing inappropriate websites are forbidden.
- Students are not permitted to access websites that involve downloading extremely large files except where this is directly related to course work. YouTube and Google Video are examples of such sites.

Make sure you know these rules well, and observe them carefully. Failure to observe the rules can result in your account being suspended.

Online copies of the rules and policies are available at

http://www.cs.rmit.edu.au(rules)

A related resource is the RMIT University Computer Rules of Use:


This page is only a brief summary and is not a substitute for the full documents. A list of activities that will result in account suspension is found at the back of this manual.
Accessing the Network

The terminal you are sitting at allows you to access your Windows account, as well as accessing your UNIX account on Numbat and Yallara. (Goanna and Whitefly are staff servers and cannot be used by students.) What you should see on your screen in the server selection window, which is referred to as the 'chooser'. This is the version for Building 14 labs. The appearance is different in the Building 10 labs, although the functioning is similar.

Figure 2: Chooser screen

Click on XDMCP for a list of Unix servers or WINDD for a list of Windows servers

(Note: If your screen is blacked out then your terminal is probably in power save mode. Move the mouse around to power it up, or, if that fails, try turning the power off with the switch at the front of the monitor and turning it back on again. If that fails or if you don’t have a chooser window on your screen then ask one of the lab assistants to help you).

Your Windows Account

In order to use the Windows based facilities here in Computer Science you must first log into your Windows account.

On an X-Terminal double-click on a Blowfly Server.

You can also log directly into Windows by using one of the PC Terminals in rooms 10.11.22, 10.11.23, and 14.10.30

Once you have done so you will see the following box on your screen:

Figure 3: Windows login prompt

If you do not have this box on your screen:

Press Ctrl-Alt-Delete to make it appear if you are on a PC terminal. OR Double click with the left mouse button on one of the blowfly servers if you are on an X-Terminal. If this doesn't work then ask one of your session assistants for help.

Once you have this box up on the screen, you need to enter the username and password you were given when you enrolled. Be careful and make sure you type it in exactly as it is shown. After you have entered your username and password, select to log on to ‘RMITCS’, then click on the OK button to log in.

If you make a mistake when typing either your username, or your password, you will see an error message. If this happens, click on the OK button. You will be taken back to the login screen in Figure 2, where you can try again.
Changing your Windows Password

Once you have successfully logged in, you should see a screen like this:

Figure 4: Windows Desktop

The first time you log in, you will need to change the password given to you by the Duty Programmers. You will need to press the Ctrl, Alt and Delete keys at the same time. Once you have done this, the following box will appear:

Figure 5: Windows security dialog box

Click on the 'Change Password' button in the bottom left hand corner of this box to get to the password-changing window shown below.

Figure 6: Windows password changing box
Figure 6: Windows password changing box

Once you have got this window on the screen, you will need to do the following:

1. Type in your old password, exactly as it is shown on the sheet you were given when you enrolled, in the box labelled ‘Old Password’.
2. Type in your new password in the box labelled ‘New Password’.
   The password you choose should be something you will be able to remember and will not be easily guessed by other people. For example, don’t choose your name, your pet’s name, your car registration, or any combination of English words.
3. Retype your new password in the box titled ‘Confirm New Password’ to ensure that you haven’t mistyped your new password.
4. Click on the ‘OK’ button.
   If you have done this correctly, you will see a dialog box that confirms this. Click on the ‘OK’ Button to continue.
   If you have typed an invalid password then a warning dialog box will appear. You will need to choose another strong password.

You will be saving your work to H:\ your home directory. **Do not save anything on the desktop, next time you log in it will be gone!**

**Note:** To log off from Windows, you need to click on the ‘Start’ button in the bottom left hand corner select the ‘Logoff’ menu option and click on the ‘OK’ button that appears. If you do not logoff your session properly you will not be able to login to Windows for up to 30 min.

Always log off when you leave a workstation, even if you plan to return in a short time.

*Never let anyone else use your login or know your password*
Accessing the Unix servers

Note: There is a table of Unix Commands at the end of this manual.

Your space on the Unix servers

An RMITCS student will, as a general rule, have 50MB of initial storage quota. In addition, programs in the SET portfolio receive an extra 12MB of quota, and a student will receive a further 12MB of quota for each course they study in RMITCS.

This means that a typical (full-time) computer-science or IT student will have \((50 + 12 + 4 \times (12)) = 110\)MB quota.

Certain courses receive a quota bonus if the course content necessitates it.

Your home directory (H:\ - yallara, numbat) is backed up conventionally on a regular basis. Additionally, all home directories (drive H:) are stored on a file server which has a recovery mechanism called a checkpoint. You will learn how to use this in your Unix session.

What this means is that you will be able to save your assignment and lab work on the CSIT Unix servers and it will be backed up regularly. And you have enough space to save progressive backups of your work, important when you are learning something new. In the Unix sessions you will learn about file management and further on in this session you will learn how to access Numbat and Yallara from home.

Logging into the Unix Servers

The terminal you are using allows you to access both your UNIX accounts on Yallara and Numbat, as well as accessing your Windows account. Yallara and Numbat are equivalent so you are encouraged to log in to Numbat to even up the load on the servers. What you should see on your screen in the server selection window, which is referred to as the 'chooser'.

(Note: If your screen is blacked out then your terminal is probably in power save mode. Move the mouse around to power it up, or, if that fails, try turning the power off with the switch at the front of the monitor and turning it back on again. If that fails or if you don't have a chooser window on your screen then ask one of the lab assistants to help you).

First, access Yallara or Numbat by double-clicking on the yallara or numbat entry in the chooser window.

In this workshop Yallara will be referred to in the text, but don't get into the habit of only logging in to Yallara, like most other students. Numbat is usually a better choice only because not as many students use it!

You should see a login box. Enter the username and password you were given at enrolment.

Take care that you type in these items carefully; otherwise the system will not permit you to log in. If you enter your username and password correctly then you should see the following screen:
The basic setup of your screen is fairly similar to Windows in that it uses a desktop and has a **Start Button**, which lists some of the applications you can use when you are logged into UNIX.

There are two **Session Windows** for the server you logged in to where you enter commands and run applications in. Finally there is a **Desktop Bar**, which contains the following:

- server load (how much the server is being used)
- a mini display of your desktop which shows you what windows you have open and allows you to switch between desks, which you can do by clicking on one of the four sections shown in the desk display.
- a mailbox icon which tells you when you have new e-mail by showing a little flag on the mailbox
- a 'kill' button, which allows you to shut down windows manually if you are having difficulty closing them in the normal fashion. You do this by clicking on the 'kill' button and then click on the window you want to close.

We will now examine the facilities you can access via the **Start Button**. Clicking on the Start button will produce the following result: You access the available facilities via the menu list.
The **Unix Terminals** menu allows you to start up more session windows on the server you originally logged in to, using Normal Xterm or Large Xterm. Or you can open session windows on other servers where you have an account.

![Terminal menu options](image1)

**Windows NT** lists the Windows servers that you can use:

![Windows menu options](image2)

The menu option **Internet** gives access to the World Wide Web (using Firefox), e-mail (using the 'elm' and 'mutt' mail readers) and 'ftp' which allows you to transfer files between servers.

![Internet menu options](image3)
The Accessories menu lists useful applications as shown below:

![Figure 12: Accessory menu options](image)

The next menu option we are going to examine is the **FVWM95 Modules** option. Again you will find some of these options useful at some point.

![Figure 13: FVWM95 Modules menu options](image)

The last menu option we are going to look at is the Shut Down option, which is shown below:

![Figure 14: Shut Down menu options](image)

The important option here is the **logout** option, which you must use in order to log out correctly from your X-Terminal.

**Workshop Note** Do not log out yet!
Changing your Unix Password

Now that we have examined the menu options available to you, we are going to start working with your UNIX session windows.

If this is the first time you have logged into Yallara, then you should change your password to something that you will remember more easily.

The command to change your password on your Unix accounts is `passwd`

To do this, click the left mouse button on one of your Yallara session windows, and type `passwd` at the command prompt, after which you will see the following:

![Figure 15: Changing Passwords](image)

To change your password you must do the following:

Type in your existing password (this may be the password you were given at enrolment) and press the Enter key.

If you do this incorrectly, you will be taken back to the command prompt and will need to start again.

If you typed in your password correctly then you will be asked to enter your new password. Try to choose something that you will remember that meets the following criteria:

- Your password must be at least 6 characters long
- Your password must contain at least two letters and one digit For example, ‘f1ba3’ would be accepted, but ‘yellow’ would not.

In general, you should avoid:

- words or combinations of words that appear in a dictionary, e.g. ‘bravenewworld’,
- names, e.g. ‘louispasteur’,
- dates, e.g. ‘21031980’.

If your password is too short, then you will see this message:

![Figure 16: Password too short](image)
If your password doesn't meet the above criteria, you will see:

![Figure 17: Password specification information]

In either case, you should select another password.

If you type in a correct new password, then you will be asked to confirm the change by typing it in again.

If you type the password you've chosen incorrectly the second time around then you will see the following message:

![Figure 18: Non-matching passwords]

If you type in your new password correctly the second time around then the change will be confirmed with the following message:

![Figure 19: Successful password change]

You should take the opportunity to set the passwords on your other Unix accounts today as well by doing the following.

Open up a Numbat session window by clicking on the Numbat option in the Terminal menu mentioned above and repeat the process you followed with the Yallara window.

Finally, let's get some practice at using the Kill Button. Click on the Kill button in the desktop button area and then click on your newly opened Numbat window.

Workshop Note: Log out of Yallara now.
Logging In From Home

Using SSH and SCP

To use the Unix servers in a secure manner, you will need to use SSH (Secure SHell).

You can use SCP (Secure Copy) to transfer files to and from your home directory.

If your home computer runs MS Windows

You can use the program PuTTY for SSH and the program WinSCP for SCP.

These programs are available on the RMIT CS&IT Student CD (obtainable from the duty programmers’ desk), and on the Web at:

PuTTY:
http://putty.planetmirror.com/

WinSCP:
http://winscp.com

Exercise: Log on to your yallara account using PuTTY in Windows.

If your home computer runs Linux, FreeBSD, or Mac OS X

You will already have the SSH and SCP programs installed. To connect to yallara, you can type:

    ssh loginname@yallara.cs.rmit.edu.au

To transfer the file Assignment.doc to your home directory on yallara:

    scp Assignment.doc loginname@yallara.cs.rmit.edu.au:/home/l/loginname

Here, loginname is your CS&IT login name, and l is the first letter of your login name.

If your home computer runs Mac OS 9 or earlier

You can use the program Nifty Telnet SSH; this is available on the student CD, and from the TSG software downloads page at:

CS&IT resources on the Web

The School of Computer Science and Information Technology at RMIT provides reference material and resources for use by students on the World Wide Web.

In order to access these resources, you will need to run an application called a browser.

Browsers installed on the RMIT CS machines include Firefox, Opera, Internet Explorer, and lynx. To start a browser:

**Under Windows:** Start, Programs, Web Browsers. Select Mozilla Firefox or Internet Explorer.

![Figure 20: Starting a browser under Windows.](image)

**Under Unix,** either use the menus Start, Internet Select Firefox or from a shell type ‘firefox&’ or ‘opera&’.

![Figure 21: Starting a browser under Unix](image)
A note about the web proxy:

For reasons of security and efficiency, all web traffic to sites outside RMIT must pass through a machine called a web proxy. You may need to tell any browser you use about this proxy if you have problems accessing external sites.

For Firefox, the relevant section is accessed from the **Edit** menu; select **Preferences**.

- Click **Connection Settings**
- Click **Manual proxy configuration**
  - The “HTTP proxy” set to bluetongue.cs.rmit.edu.au port 8080.
- Check “Use this proxy server for all protocols”

Note that web-based email services, such as Hotmail, Yahoo and GMail are blocked, it is not permitted to use these services from within RMIT. You must use the student EMS for web-based email.
The RMIT CS&IT Home Page

The School of Computer Science and IT at RMIT has a web page available for you to access and which contains many useful resources and essential information for students.

Type in the following address as shown below and press the 'Enter' key to access the CS web site.

http://www.rmit.edu.au/csit

Fig 23: CS&IT Homepage

You can find the area you need in a number of ways. The buttons to the left link directly to currently relevant pages. These change during the semester. At the right is a table of contents, which is dynamic and changes for each area you view.

The three central menus School, Resources and Highlights link to the key areas of CS&IT. Highlights has links to areas that are relevant at a particular time during the semester including **CSIT Orientation 2008**

**Programs and Courses**  http://www.rmit.edu.au/csit/programs

Information about program structure, core and elective courses and prerequisites.

Program summaries document the courses you must complete and their availability each semester.


Lists CS&IT staff, contact and location details including links to homepages and email. Your lecturer's home page often has additional information or postings on the courses that they teach. You can also find resources that the lecturer has found to be useful and their research areas.
Current Students  
http://www.rmit.edu.au/csit/current

The link RMIT Student Essentials takes you to information, resources, forms etc that are used by all RMIT students. You should spend some time exploring this area, it is full of all the things you will need at some time during your study.

Information specifically for CS&IT students is organised into five areas.

Administration  
Everything to do with the management of your enrolment and the critical dates and events in the semester. The place to find forms for just about everything.

Timetables  
http://www.rmit.edu.au/csit/timetables/

This very readable version of the timetables helps you plan your personal timetable. It has lecturers and tutors, also venue location information and semester dates.

The Supplement on Students Timetabling System (STS) at the end of this manual will help you complete tutorial and lab allocation.

Rules and Policies  
Don’t wait until you are in a difficult situation, become familiar with the policies that affect the way you work and the correct procedures for resolving problems related to study and assessment. Why rely on what you are told by other students when they might know less than you?

Study Resources  
Web resources for your courses are at Online@RMIT. Programming students should use the C and Java Helpdesks. Other resources here are for specific programs and courses.

Support  
Program Advisors are consulted when there are questions about your program and course selection, there is an Advisor allocated to each program. Teaching and Learning Advisors provide a wide range of assistance, including course advice, to students who have a question or a problem, be it about visa conditions, preparing for after graduation, unexpected interruptions to study, or things are just not going well. In addition to CS&IT support, RMIT Student Services are listed at http://www.rmit.edu.au/students and on campus The Hub has contact information.

Other Useful Links  
The Student Staff Consultative Committee (SSCC) is the way you can get involved with the school as a representative of students in your program.
The Learning Hub, often referred to as Blackboard, is an RMIT resource for online course material. There is a link to the learning hub on the Current Students Page. When you login to Learning Hub using your NDS login and password, you will see areas for each of your enrolled courses.

Blackboard and Weblearn are tools in the Learning Hub that are commonly used to provide important learning resources. You may find your course uses the Blackboard Discussion Board and has links to Course Documents such as lecture notes, assignments and revision material. Weblearn may be used by your course to submit assignments or do quizzes and tests. It is important that you check the Course Guide for a listing of the resources each course will use. The lecturer will also announce this in the first lecture and you will find it printed in the Lecture Notes that you purchase at the Bookshop.

If you are enrolled in a course but you cannot see it in the Learning Hub you should ask your Lecturer or Head Tutor for assistance. It does take a day or two from course enrolment using EOL to the course appearing in the Learning Hub.

It is also especially important to regularly check the Learning Hub for courses you are doing as lecturers often place important announcements such as assignment details on these web pages. If a change is made to one lecture time or location the Learning Hub is the place where it will be announced.

The student user guide to logging in and using the Learning Hub is at the back of this manual.
Searching for information

At the top of each RMIT web page is a search tool. With careful use you can find what you are looking for at RMIT. First select from the pick list which area you want searched, then type in your key words and click on search.

Some people prefer to use http://www.google.com/univ/rmit to search all RMIT sites.

Student Elective Search http://www.rmit.edu.au/students/studentelectives

Bookshop Textbook Search http://www.rmitbookshop.com.au/rmittexts.html and if you put your course code as the Author in the Search and Order box you can find out the availability of course notes.

Exercises

- Find the name of a textbook for one of your courses. How much will it cost for a student to buy.
- Who is your Program Advisor?
- Where can you get help with C and Java programming questions? What room and how do you make a booking.
- Check the timetables for your courses http://www.rmit.edu.au/csit/timetables

Select your tutorials and labs at Student Timetabling System. There are step by step instructions at the back of this manual

If you cannot remember the course codes, your enrolment can be found at Enrolment Online https://enrol.rmit.edu.au/eol/

PLEASE NOTE Sometimes an unavoidable change is made to the timetable for a course after you have allocated yourself into lectures, labs and tutes. Check your STS timetable again before classes start. If you have any problems getting into a tutorial or lab group, contact the Head Tutor for the course. A Teaching and Learning Advisor can also help.
RMIT Information Technology Services (ITS)

NDS Username and Password

All RMIT staff and students are assigned an RMIT-wide username and password that can be used to access protected parts of the RMIT network, such as the student email system.

You can also use your NDS account details to log on to computers in the RMIT libraries; for this, you may need to specify the context ug.cs.appsci.rmit if you are an undergraduate student, or pg.cs.appsci.rmit if you are a postgraduate student.

Your NDS username is the letter 's' followed by the numeric portion of your student number. For example, if you had a student number of 3012345, your NDS username would be s3012345. Likewise, student number 1234567d translates to user name s1234567.

Your initial password is your date of birth in the format YYYYMMDD. For example, if you were born on the 21st of March 1980, your password would be '19800321'. You should change this as soon as possible after first logging in.

Remote Access

Some RMIT web sites are restricted to Internal viewing; viewing from identifiable RMIT locations. Visitors from non-RMIT locations get the 'Forbidden' error. To be at an identifiable RMIT location you must be either on campus or off campus using RMIT University's Remote Dial-Up Service (RDS).

Dial-in remote access is provided to undergraduates, postgraduates and staff registered on the Novell Directory Service (NDS). Once dialed in, students can perform various tasks within the RMIT domain (rmit.edu.au addresses), including:

- Checking email
- Browsing the RMIT web site
- Browsing the RMIT library catalogue
- Logging in to RMIT Unix computers [and browsing the entire Internet with the lynx text-based browser]
- Transferring files to and from RMIT Unix systems

To connect using RMIT Dial-in services, configure your computer to dial 9664 2200, and log in using your NDS username and password. Sessions are restricted to 2 hours maximum. The modems are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week excluding scheduled maintenance. Note that while RDS is free, you will be charged for the phone call itself.

For further information see: http://www.rmit.edu.au/its/remote
Student EMS (Email)

Every student enrolled at RMIT has an RMIT student e-mail account. This is used for official RMIT correspondence; **you must check this email account regularly.** To access the system, visit the URL:

http://studentems.rmit.edu.au

You use your NDS username and password to access the Student EMS. Your email address is your_NDS_username@student.rmit.edu.au. For example:

Student number 3012345:  s3012345@student.rmit.edu.au  
Student number 1234567d:  s1234567@student.rmit.edu.au  

You must use your Student EMS account for all communication with RMIT staff - you may not receive a response otherwise.

Resource allocation

Messages that exceed your available space will be bounced (returned to sender). You should take steps to manage your mailbox by purging unwanted mail. Each message sent and received can have a size of up to 5Mb (including attachments), however it wise to use less than 95% of this limit.

Students have a maximum of 50MB of email, so ensure that you clean out your read or unwanted email regularly or new messages sent to your mailbox will bounce and you may miss critical notifications.

Any read mail will automatically be deleted after 14 days, and any unread mail after 30 days. There are no facilities for students to exceed their disk space allocation.

RMIT network rules of use apply to Student EMS. See:

http://www.rmit.edu.au/rules

Assistance is available from the CS&IT Duty Programmers desk and online at:

Reading email externally to EMS

This section is for you if you already have another email service/system you prefer to use to read your email, rather then using the EMS website. There are two solutions: Forwarding, and POP.

Forwarding

You can forward to any established e-mail account and use any e-mail software. There is a catch. Your student e-mail account will not be in the 'from' field when you send/reply. To send an e-mail in the name of 's1234567@student.rmit.edu.au' you need to login to http://studentems.rmit.edu.au or find how to set your correct return address on your mail client. Instructions are available via the EMS web site.

POP Service

The POP service uses high security POP3 with SSL technology. So far Outlook Express 5.5 and above, and Eudora 5 and above, are the only MS Windows email clients that support these technologies. Using the POP service you can receive e-mail through your RMIT student e-mail address. Instructions are available via the EMS web site. The School of Computer Science & IT has also provided information on how to fetch your Student EMS email to RMITCS Unix machines. This is not necessary, but some students may find this useful. http://www.cs.rmit.edu.au/tsg/support/docs/

RMIT Libraries

RMIT University Library is much more than a traditional library. Internet access is available and every subject area has an information expert (Liaison Librarian) who conducts training in information skills relating to your course requirements. Library Orientations are recommended so that you can make the most of this resource. eBooks and ejournals mean that the references you need can be accessed at any time.

There are three RMIT libraries that are important to CS&IT students:
Swanston (City) Library Building 8, Level 5
Bundoora East Library Building 215, Level 2
Carlton Library Building 94, Level 3
Using a web browser to read News

Internet 'News' is a worldwide discussion forum where people can post articles related to topics they are interested in. This discussion forum is organised by topic, so that users can quickly locate relevant articles. Each topic area is referred to as a newsgroup.

At RMIT CS&IT, newsgroups may be used as an alternative to forums as a form of communication between students and their tutors and lecturers. It is important that students read the course newsgroups regularly, if they are used by your course.

You can do this via your web browser as it is simple, but it is slow.

To access use the WebNews link on the Current Students page:

You will learn in the next section how to read news via Unix. This is in fact the most reliable and effective way to read news. Use webnews only if you have difficulty reading and posting from the unix shell.

The box on the left is a short cut list, at the top are Popular newsgroups which are listed when you first access the page.

- For general issues related to RMIT: rmit.general
- For general issues related to RMIT CS&IT: rmit.cs.general
- Announcements about facilities in the School: rmit.cs.announce
- Announcements about items wanted or for sale: rmit.forsale

To return to the webnews index click on Group List at the top right.

rmit.cs.* lists all the groups managed by computer science including course newsgroups. These are listed alphabetically by course name, with no spaces e.g. rmit.cs.SoftwareEngineering1.

Posting a message using webnews is similar to writing an email, except that everyone can read your message, so think before you post. A good place to do your first post and reply using the web is the Orientation newsgroup. You can ask questions here about your first days at RMIT, the reply you get could be from a staff member or a current student.

Many courses use the forum found in Blackboard (part of online@RMIT), and others use their own discussion board. You should be told at the beginning of the course which system will be used.

Exercises

- Post a message to the rmit.cs.Orientation newsgroup – remember the Acceptable Use Policy. Make sure your post is meaningful, you could add a comment to a thread that already exists.
- Check your student email: http://studentems.rmit.edu.au/
Reading News from the Unix shell

To make setting up your Internet newsreader easier, do each of the following steps, type `rm -f ~/.newsrc`

To start the reading news, type `rtin` at the Unix command prompt while you are logged into yallara or numbat.

Internet News is broken into many different discussion groups organised by topic. These groups are commonly referred to as 'newsgroups'.

In order to participate in a discussion in one of the newsgroups you first have to join that newsgroup by 'subscribing' to it.

Subscribing to Newsgroups

At the moment you are may not subscribed to any discussion groups so this list may be empty. To subscribe to a newsgroup so that you can join the discussion in that group, you have to hit 'S' and then type in the name of the group you want to subscribe to. To subscribe to the general CS&IT discussion group:

1. hit the capital 'S' key
2. type `rmit.cs.general` and hit the Enter key

Reading the articles in a newsgroup

Now you will have an entry in your newsgroup subscription list.

The format of these entries is some thing like the example below:

```
1  64  rmit.cs.general
```

- The first number is the position of the newsgroup in your subscription list.
- The second number is the number of articles that you have yet to read in the newsgroup.
- This is followed by the name of the newsgroup that you have subscribed to.

To enter a newsgroup you have subscribed to, use the right arrow key.

Once you have entered a newsgroup, you will see the list of discussions that have articles you have not already read in the newsgroup.

You can move through the list of discussions with the arrow keys.

To see the full list of articles in all discussions, hit `r`.

To go back to the list of discussions with articles you haven't read, hit `r` again (`r` switches between 'all articles' and 'unread articles').

Getting involved in discussions about computing and related topics is one of the best things about being in CS&IT. You can share your ideas with students and staff who are really passionate about the technologies.
Each of the discussions listed will look like this:

```
1 + 2 9 mobile phone for sale sstewart@cs.rmit.edu.au
```

- 1 indicates the number of articles in the discussion
- + indicates that there are unread articles in the group
- 9 position of this discussion in your list
- mobile phone for sale subject of the article
- sstewart@cs.rmit.edu.au author of the article

To enter a discussion, move to that discussion, hit the right arrow key.

Once you have entered a discussion, you will see a the list of articles waiting
in that discussion, each of which will look like:

```
0 [ 9] mobile phone for sale Scott Stewart
```

- 0 subject of the article
- 9 number of lines in the article
- mobile phone for sale author of the article

Responses to an article are indicated by an entry like the one below:

```
1 [ 18] -> The Jackal
```

- 1 indicates that this is a response to the previous article in the list
- 18 number of lines in the article
- The Jackal author of the response

To look at the articles in a discussion topic move to the article you wish to view
using the up/down arrow keys and hit the right arrow key. To return to the
discussion group, hit the left arrow key.

Once you are finished reading articles in the discussion you have entered, hit
the left arrow key to move back to the discussion list.

You will be asked whether you wish to mark the discussion as being read so
that the articles in the discussion will be skipped the next time you use rtin
(skipped articles can be viewed by hitting R while you are in the discussion list
of a newsgroup).

If you want to skip the articles currently in the discussion next time you are
reading news, hit Y, otherwise hit N.

To return to the list of newsgroups you are subscribed to, hit the left arrow key
while you are inside a newsgroup.
Posting articles of your own to a newsgroup

Now that you can read articles from newsgroups, you will post an article of your own to a newsgroup. First, subscribe to the following newsgroup:

    rmit.cs.test

This is a newsgroup that is reserved for testing whether you can make news postings. Do not make test postings to any other newsgroup.

Move into the group rmit.cs.test by moving to it in your list of subscribed newsgroups and hitting the right arrow key.

To post an article of your own to news, hit w while you are inside the newsgroup.

You will then be asked to provide a subject for your article. Enter the subject line

    Test posting for <your name>

and hit enter, e.g.: ‘Test posting for Craig Hamilton’

You will then be able to write your article in the vi editor.

Hit “i” to enter insert mode. Write something about whatever you like (e.g. the weather, yourself or even your thoughts on how wonderful the presenters of the induction session are). When you are finished writing your article, save it and exit the program. (vi editor commands are on p65) Once you do this you will see the following screen (take note of the advice given in the message!):

Your article:

    Test posting for..........

will be posted to the newsgroup

    rmit.cs.test

The list at the bottom of the screen is the options you have available to you.

q)uit, e)dit, i)spell, g) pgp, p)ost, p(o)stpone: p

The three options you will most likely use are

    q - quit without posting your article
    e - edit the contents of your article again
    p - post your article (this is the default option)

To post your article to the newsgroup, hit enter. Note that it may take a little while for your article to appear in the newsgroup.

If your article contains quoted text please take some time to pare it down to just the key points to which you are responding. Many people simply skip any article whose first page is largely quoted material.

Format your article to fit in less then 80 characters per line - 72 is a good choice, as it allows quoting without exceeding the limit. If you aren’t careful and considerate in formatting your posting, people are likely to ignore it completely.
**Following up to an existing article with a response**

To do this you need to first enter the desired newsgroup and find the article you want to follow up in the article list of the group you are in by using the up/down arrow keys.

The article you should follow up to is in rmit.cs.test and has the following subject line:

```
Induction session article to follow up
```

Now open the article by hitting the right arrow key.

To follow up to the article hit the F key.

You will be taken into vi where you can type up your response. You can quote text from the article you are responding to by typing below the points you are interested in.

As a general rule, when you are following up to an article it is best to delete previous text you do not wish to quote in your article.

When you have finished typing your response in the editor, save and quit. You will see the same options you saw when you posted an article of your own. Hit 'p' to post your article.

---

**End of Lab Induction!**
Basic Unix

While the Windows PCs and terminal servers are available for you to use, most Computer Science assignments need to be completed on the Unix servers (Yallara and Numbat).

What is Unix?

There are actually many operating systems that are “Unix-like”. Both Yallara and Numbat run Sun Solaris. You may have heard of some others: Linux, FreeBSD, Mac OS X, SCO, and so on. While internally these operating systems are very different, they all share a common interface, meaning the skills you learn here are generally applicable to all Unix-like operating systems.

If you have used Linux or another Unix-like operating system before you may already be familiar with many of the commands introduced here; be aware, however, that there are some commands that are either Solaris or RMIT specific.

Using the terminal

When you first log into Yallara you are presented with two xterms. Remember you can always open another terminal from the start menu if you need to; it is often convenient to have a few open when doing several tasks at once.

After the welcome message is the prompt, which lets you know that the terminal is ready for input:

yallara.cs.rmit.edu.au%

In this manual we usually don’t show the prompt; just the commands you need to type. For example, try typing “date” and pressing enter:

date

This runs the program “date” and displays the output to the terminal. Most commands accept arguments, or parameters, which modify their behaviour. For example, if you type:

date -u

Sat Feb 11 14:17:57 GMT 2006

the “date” program is run with the argument “-u”, which then displays the time at GMT (a different timezone). This time we have also shown the result, in a smaller, italicised font.

When you need to repeat a command with the same or similar arguments, you can save typing by pressing the up-arrow on the keyboard. This shows the last command you entered. You can continue pressing the up and down keys to move back and forth through the history of commands you have typed in the current session.
Getting help

When you know the name of a command, but can’t remember what arguments it takes, you can look it up in the man pages (short for manual pages). For example, to find out all the options for the date program:

```bash
man date
```

You can scroll through the page with the spacebar. To quit viewing the manual page and return to the prompt, press q.

If you don’t remember the name of the command, man won’t help. You will probably need to ask a friend, lab assistant, use this manual or Google.

Files and Directories

Most people are familiar with Windows and DOS drive letters where disks are accessed as C:, D:, and so on. In Unix there is no such distinction. All files, regardless of where they are stored, are accessible through the root directory or “/”. Whereas on Windows directories (sometimes called folders) are separated in a path with a backslash ("\"), on Unix you must use a forward slash ("/"). Here are some example directory paths:

```plaintext
/
/home
/home/j
/home/j/joebloggs
/usr/local/bin
```

Paths are read from left to right. The first slash ("/"") means to start at the root directory (you can start in some other places as well, as we shall see shortly).

You can use the ls command to list the contents of a directory:

```bash
ls /
```

This will print out all files and directories directly below the root directory. Some of these directories and their purpose is explained below:

- /bin: Standard Unix programs
- /etc: Configuration files
- /home: Students’ home directories
- /public: Academic material for specific courses
- /tmp: Temporary files
Look inside the /home directory:

```
ls /home
```

This directory contains every student’s personal home directory organised by the first letter of their username. For example, if your username is joebloggs, your home directory is /home/j/joebloggs. Try to list the contents of your own home directory now. Your home directory is the place where you should store any assignments you are working on, email, and is where applications can store your preferences.

As a shortcut to writing out your whole home directory path, you can simply write ~ (tilde character, in the top-left corner of the keyboard). Assuming your username is joebloggs, the following two commands are equivalent:

```
ls /home/j/joebloggs
ls ~
```

What happens when you try to list another student’s directory?

```
ls /home/a/aholkner
/home/a/aholkner: Permission denied
```

You are sharing the computer Yallara with all other Computer Science staff and students, but there are systems in place that prevent you from reading or modifying other people’s data, as well as data that could interfere with the upkeep of the system. Permissions are discussed in detail later.

---

**Test yourself**

- What is the path to your home directory?
- What files and directories exist in your home directory? Can you guess what they are?
- Log into Numbat now. Can you see any differences in either your home directory or the root directory? Why do you think that might be? Return to Yallara when you are done.

---

**Working directory**

Every terminal window you have open has a current working directory. This is the directory that applications will load and save their data to or from by default. You can print the entire path to the working directory with the `pwd` command:

```
pwd
/home/j/joebloggs
```

If the directory or file in which you are interested is in the current working directory, you don’t need to specify a complete path to it. For example, you can list the contents of the current working directory by typing `ls` without any arguments:

```
ls
```
Creating directories

There is not much interesting in your home directory yet, so let’s create some
directories. To create a directory, use the `mkdir` command. Let’s say you
want to create a directory called “courses” within your home directory:

```
mkdir courses
```

Remember that since your current working directory is your home directory
you didn’t need to type in the whole path. Of course, you could have if you
wanted to; the above is equivalent to:

```
mkdir /home/j/joebloggs/courses
```

List the contents of your home directory now and make sure you can see
courses as one of the items.

Let’s assume you are taking 3 courses: “maths”, “programming” and
“databases”, and create a directory under courses for each one:

```
mkdir courses/maths
mkdir courses/programming
mkdir courses/databases
```

Now list the contents of courses and make sure you can see all of these
directories.

```
ls courses
```

```
databases maths programming
```

Changing the working directory

Earlier we saw that the current working directory was your home directory.
Let’s now change directory to the “courses” directory:

```
cd courses
```

Now that the working directory has changed, what do `pwd` and `ls` do?

```
pwd
```

```
/home/j/joebloggs/courses
```

```
ls
```

```
databases maths programming
```

Create one more directory under courses named “induction”:

```
mkdir induction
```

Note that we didn’t write courses/induction this time, as we are creating the
directory directly within the current working directory. List the contents of the
current directory and make sure you now see all 4 directories.
The layout of directories is often referred to as a directory tree, and is displayed like this:

```
/ (root directory)
  bin/
  home/ 
    a/ 
    j/ 
      joebloggs/ 
        courses/ 
          databases/ 
          induction/ 
          maths/ 
          programming/ 
    z/ 
  tmp/ 
```

In this diagram you can see that the joebloggs directory is the parent of courses, which in turn is the parent of the four subject directories you created. We changed directory from joebloggs to courses by typing

```
cd courses
```

You can’t, however, change back to joebloggs from courses by typing `cd joebloggs`; this is because joebloggs is not visible from courses. You can change back to joebloggs by typing its full path:

```
cd /home/j/joebloggs
```

or, you can change to the parent directory with “..” (two full-stops, commonly pronounced “dot-dot”):

```
cd ..
```

The “dot-dot” can appear anywhere in a regular path to signify “the parent”:

```
cd /home/j/..
pwd
/home
cd /home/j/..a
pwd
/home/a
cd /home/j/joebloggs/../../..
pwd
```
Test yourself Change directory to the courses directory

- Write down the absolute path of the following paths (an absolute path is one that begins at the root directory):
  
  - courses/
  - courses/..
  - ../
  - ../..
  - courses/..../courses/..../courses

- Create two further directories under courses/maths named “calculus” and “algebra”.
- Change directory to algebra, from there list the contents of courses.

Tab completion

When typing the names of files or directories on the command-line, you can often type just the first few characters, then press the \texttt{tab} key to fill in the rest automatically. For example, you can save a lot of typing when changing to the courses/maths directory by just typing:

\begin{verbatim}
cd c (tab) m (tab)
\end{verbatim}

which is expanded as you type to:

\begin{verbatim}
cd courses/maths/
\end{verbatim}

Hidden files and directories

Change to your home directory and list all the files. Now add the -\texttt{a} option to \texttt{ls}:

\begin{verbatim}
ls -a
\end{verbatim}

You should see about 20 extra files and directories that weren’t in the standard listing. These are hidden files, and have a full-stop (“.”) as the first character in their name. Typically they are used to store application preferences and caches.

Create a hidden directory in courses named “.hidden”:

\begin{verbatim}
mkdir courses/.hidden
\end{verbatim}

Make sure you can see it only when you use the –\texttt{a} option with \texttt{ls}.

At the beginning of the listing of hidden files in each directory are the two special directories “.” and “..”. We already know that “..” refers to the parent directory. The “.” (“dot”) directory refers to the current directory. Ordinarily this is not needed on the command line, but you may find you need it at some stage.

Check now that the following three commands are equivalent:

\begin{verbatim}
ls courses
ls ./courses
ls ./courses/.
\end{verbatim}
Checkpoint directory

There is one more special directory that exists on the file server used by Yallara and Numbat. It is named ".ckpt" and does not even show in a ls -a listing. You can, however, see inside it:

```bash
ls .ckpt
```

The “checkpoint” directory contains backups of the current directory that are made automatically at regular intervals. For example, you might see a directory called `.ckpt/2006_02_05_13.15.01_GMT`, which is the backup that was made on the 5th of February at 1:15 PM, GMT. If you list the contents of that directory you will see the files that existed in your home directory at that exact time.

This automatic backup is a feature of the RMIT Computer Science servers and is generally not available on standard Unix systems. Backups are not kept forever, so you should make a habit of continuing to backup your work both at home and university onto CDs and storing them away from your computer.

Note that you cannot modify files or directories in the checkpoint directory, but you can view them and make copies back into your regular home directory.

Creating and editing text files

Many files you work on in your Computer Science subjects will be plain text files (they have no formatting or fonts like a Microsoft Word file, for example). There are many programs you can use to edit these files. One very powerful and flexible editor is `vim`, which is introduced in the next section of this manual. Regular practise is recommended so that you become proficient editing using vim.

For now, however, we will use a much simpler editor called `nedit` which only runs in xterm. Another editor you might use is pico.

Change into the `courses/maths` directory and start editing a new file called “assignment1”:

```bash
cd courses/maths
nedit assignment1
```

`nedit` behaves much like any Windows text editor, though it does have some helpful features when programming. Type a few lines of text and save it with the File,Save menu or by pressing Control+S. Quit nedit with the File,Exit menu or by pressing Control+Q.

Renaming, moving, copying and deleting files

You should now have a file `assignment1` in the `maths` directory. Let’s say you wanted to rename it to “assignment1.txt”:

```bash
mv assignment1 assignment1.txt
```

The first argument to `mv` is the original file name, the second is the name you would like it renamed to. `mv` won’t actually output anything; you will need to list the current directory contents with `ls` to check that the result is what you expected.
You can use the same command to move a file to another directory:

```
mv assignment1.txt ../induction
```

This moves the file `assignment1.txt` to the directory `../induction`. Remember that the double-dots ("..") indicate to start from the parent directory, which in this case is `courses`.

Similarly, you can move entire directories with the same command:

```
mv ../induction ~/.
```

This moves the `induction` directory to your home directory (remember that the tilde `~` is short-hand for your home directory).

The `cp` command works similarly, except that instead of moving or renaming a file it makes a copy:

```
cp ~/induction/assignment1.txt ./
```

This makes a copy of `assignment1.txt` and places it in the current working directory (remember that "." means to start from the current directory), which if you have not changed it is the `maths` directory.

If you want to copy an entire directory you need to specify the `-r` argument to `cp`:

```
cp -r ./ ../maths-backup
```

This copies the current working directory (`maths`) to the directory `~/courses/maths-backup`.

To delete a file, use the `rm` command:

```
rm ~/induction/assignment1.txt
```

To delete an entire directory, add the `-r` argument to `rm`:

```
rm -r ../databases
```

Careful! The automatic backups only take place every few hours; if you delete something you need there may be no way to get it back if it's too recent. The `mv` and `cp` commands won't give you any warning if you overwrite another existing file.

---

Test yourself

- Rename the `maths-backup` directory to make it hidden. Hint: how does the name need to change to make it not show up in a normal directory listing? Check with `ls` that it doesn't show up, then show that it is there when you supply the appropriate argument to `ls`.
- Create a text file in the `induction` directory listing all the commands you have learnt so far and call it `notes.txt`.
- Make a copy of this file (`notes.txt`) in the same directory and call it `commands.txt`.
- Find a file in the checkpoint directory (the automatic backup directory) from two days ago and copy it into the `induction` directory.
- Delete the original `notes.txt` file.
In the space below, write out the whole directory tree starting from your home directory and including all the files and directories you have added.

---

**A note about Unix filename conventions**

You will have noticed that most of the directory and filenames given in this manual are composed entirely of lower-case letters. This is entirely optional: Unix systems allow filenames to have any form of letter, including most punctuation marks and characters from non-English character sets. Unlike Windows and DOS, however, Unix treats upper- and lower-case letters as different. In other words, you can have a directory containing the files `test.txt`, `TEST.TXT` and `Test.TXT`, and they would all represent different files. As you can imagine, this can get quite confusing.

For the sake of simplicity and clarity, most users elect to name their files entirely in lowercase English letters, with the addition of the hyphen (“-“), full-stop (“.”) and underscore (“_“) punctuation marks. Some programs may not work correctly with other punctuation marks in the filename, as they have special meaning to the command environment, as you will see.

You will have also noticed that unlike Windows, many files do not have an extension (like `.txt`). Again, these are optional, however they can help you to organise your files and they let programs know what kind of data to expect.
Using Windows files on Unix

Often you will want to work on an assignment at home on Windows, then copy it back to Yallara for submission (see page 15 for tips on copying files from home).

There is a sample Windows file at /public/induction/windows.txt. Copy this file to your induction directory, and change to that directory:

```
    cp /public/induction/windows.txt ~/induction
    cd ~/induction
```

If you open this file with nedit it will look fine. Now try opening it in gvim, another text editor that you will learn about in the next session:

```
gvim windows.txt
```

What's wrong with the text? Can you see the extra ^M characters at the end of each line?

In Windows and DOS, each line of a text file is terminated by two characters: a carriage return (CR, code 13) followed by a line-feed (LF, code 10). In Unix, lines in a text file are terminated with just a line-feed. Some Unix programs (like nedit) can handle both types of file, but most will not work correctly with the Windows style line-endings.

In gvim, the carriage returns appear as ^M characters, which is harmless but annoying. In Perl (a programming language), however, a program written with these characters will just fail to work. This can be quite a shock to a student who has worked all weekend at home on an assignment only to find it does not work at all at uni.

Luckily, the solution is simple: simply remove the carriage returns from the file. You can use the dos2unix program to do this:

```
dos2unix windows.txt unix.txt
```

This converts the file windows.txt and saves it as unix.txt (It will print out a 2-line warning about an unknown keyboard layout which you can safely ignore). Open this file in gvim and check that the lines now look correct.

Filename globbing

List the contents of the /public/induction directory. There are a series of files ending in .ant and .syn. These are lists of words that are antonyms or synonyms of the filename, respectively.

If you were to copy all of the synonym files (those ending in .syn) into your current directory, you would need to type the cp command 8 times. Actually, there is an easier way:

```
    cp /public/induction/*.syn ./
```

The “*” character (an asterisk, commonly called a “star”) is a placeholder, or “globbing operator” for any sequence of characters. You can use it in place of part of a filename where you want to list all the files that match the pattern.

It works on all commands, not just cp:

```
    ls /public/induction/*.ant
    ls ./d*
```
Warning: using a glob is equivalent to typing out all the filenames it matches in sequence. This is not always intuitively what you want. Consider what happens when you type:

```
dos2unix *.txt
```

This is equivalent to typing (assuming there are two files in the directory):

```
dos2unix file1.txt file2.txt
```

Instead of converting all the files in the directory, you have overwritten `file2.txt` with `file1.txt`! Later in this manual we will write a script that can convert all the files in a directory.

**Finding text within files**

You should now be in a directory with several `.syn` synonym files. If you look at these files with nedit you can see that they are just simple text files with one word per line.

You can search a file for a word or phrase with the `grep` command:

```
grep perplexed *.syn
```

This searches all files matching the glob `*.syn` for the word “perplexed”. If any are found they will be printed to the terminal. Specifying the `-n` option also causes the line number that the word was found on to be printed:

```
grep -n perplexed *.syn
```

This is a particularly useful feature when you start dealing with large amounts of source code, and need to find where a particular variable or routine is being used.

**Finding files within directories**

grep is very good for searching within files, but it doesn’t help when you know the name of a file but can’t remember which directory it is in. Do you remember where the `assignment1.txt` file is? You can use the `find` command here:

```
find ~/ -name assignment1.txt
```

Note that the arguments are quite different from `grep`. First, you specify a directory where the search will start. You could specify the root directory (“/”), but that would take a long time; here we start from the home directory. The `-name` option instructs `find` to show only files with the given filename.

You can use a glob with `find` to locate files with just part of the filename, but you must then surround it in quotation marks:

```
find ~/ -name "*.txt"
```

---

**Test yourself**

- Use the `unix2dos` program to add carriage-returns to `assignment1.txt`. Check that you can see the `^M` symbols in gvim. Now convert it back to Unix format and check the output.
- Copy all the antonym files (those ending in `.ant`) from `/public/induction` into your `~/induction` directory.
- What files contain the word “satisfied”?
- What is “addlepated” a synonym for?
- Where under the `/usr/include` directory is there a file named `scf.h`?
Submitting assignments

Every course lecturer has their own preference for how you submit assignments. It is important that you follow their directions carefully – simply emailing an assignment will normally result in you failing that hurdle. Some courses use WebLearn in the Learning Hub for assignment submission.

Read the assignment documentation carefully and follow the given instructions for submitting your work. Check the discussion area if you have any doubts. If you are required to format the files in a particular way make sure you do, if you are not sure how the Duty Programmers can help.

A system that is commonly used by computer science courses is turnin.

To submit an assignment with turnin, use the **turnin** command. There is a pretend course set up called **induct2008** which you can practice submitting assignments to. To submit all the `.syn` files:

    turnin -c induct2008 *.syn

If this were a real assignment, you would substitute **induct2008** with the course code provided by your lecturer. You can get a list of all the courses being used by turnin at the moment with the `-l` (lower-case L) option:

    turnin -l

You can submit an assignment as many times as you like; each submission overwrites the previous one. It is a very good idea to submit an assignment every day that you work on it, even before it is finished. Firstly, this lets the lecturer know how often and when you worked on it, and can help prove that your work is your own if a plagiarism case arises. Secondly, it is a good backup in the event that you accidentally lose your own copy, or forget to complete the assignment by the due date – at least you will have submitted something, getting partial marks.

Most importantly, remember to submit all the files in the assignment at once. If you submit them one at a time, each will overwrite the last, and only one file will be submitted for marking! You can see a listing of all the files you submitted with the `-v` option:

    turnin -c induct2008 -v
Disk usage

You have a limited amount of disk space on the file servers. You can check your current usage with the `quota` command:

```
quota -v
```

```
Disk quotas for joebloggs (uid 1234):
Filesystem usage quota limit
/home 5912 20000 20000
```

The “usage” column shows the amount of disk space you are currently using, in kilobytes. The “limit” column shows how much disk space you are permitted before limits are enforced (also in kilobytes). In this case, the user has used 5.9 megabytes of their 20 megabyte limit. The amount of space you are allocated is dependent on how many courses you are taking.

When you are approaching your limit (or are over it!) you will need to delete files so you can continue working. It can be helpful to see which files or directories are taking up the most room. You can use the `du` command for this:

```
du -ks ~/*
```

This shows the size of each file and directory (directories recursively include the size of all files and directories within them) in kilobytes in your home directory. Don’t forget to check for hidden files:

```
du -ks ~/.*
```

Note that this also lists the total size of the parent directory (“..”), which you can of course ignore. You may find that the “.mozilla” directory is using a lot of space; this is due to Firefox’s browser cache. You can easily clear this from within Firefox.

Compressing, archiving and extracting files

When you are running out of disk space, an easy way to reclaim some space is to compress files you don’t use on a day-to-day basis, but don’t want to delete (such as old assignments).

The most common way for compressing files on Unix is using the programs tar and gzip. tar creates one file that contains many files, and gzip, reduces the file size of that file. Thankfully `gtar` can do this all in one step:

```
gtar -czf backup.tar.gz *.syn
```

We pass three options to `gtar`: `-c` means to create a new archive, `-z` means to compress it with gzip, and `-f` is used directly before the name of the file to create. Finally, `*.syn` is the list of files to backup. `.tar.gz` is the standard extension for files made this way, though you may also see `.tgz` sometimes.

We can see a list of the files in an archive with the `-t` option:

```
gtar -tzf backup.tar.gz
```
To extract the contents of the archive into the current directory, use the `-x` option:

```
  gtar -xzf backup.tar.gz
```

Besides gzip, some people are starting to use bzip2 compression on their files instead; this almost always makes files smaller. Archives created this way typically have the extension `.tar.bz2`, and you can work with them by using the `-j` option instead of `-z`:

```
  gtar -cjf backup.tar.bz2 *.syn
  gtar -tjf backup.tar.bz2
  gtar -xjf backup.tar.bz2
```

Note that there is also a `tar` command which is commonly used on Linux and other operating systems, however the version installed on Yallara and Numbat is different and generally not useful; you should always use `gtar` instead.

On Windows it is more common to use `zip` files. You can work with them on Unix as well with the `zip` and `unzip` commands:

```
  zip backup.zip *.syn
  unzip backup.zip
```

Note that none of these commands deletes the original file(s); typically if you are trying to save space you would delete the files after creating the backup and checking that its contents are correct.

**File permissions**

Earlier we saw that certain files and directories (such as those belonging to other students) cannot be read and gave the error message “Permission denied”. Unix file permissions are quite complicated but it is essential you understand the basics of them so you know how to protect and share your files appropriately.

First, let’s look in more detail at the files in your home directory, by adding the `-l` (lower-case “L”) flag to `ls`:

```
  ls -l ~
  drwx------   2 joebloggs students    80 Jan 24 10:59 Mail
  drwx------   2 joebloggs students    80 Jan 24 10:59 News
  drwxr-xr-x   4 joebloggs students  1024 Feb  2 14:05 WINDOWS
  drwxr-xr-x   5 joebloggs students  1024 Feb 10 18:05 courses
  drwxr-xr-x   5 joebloggs students  1024 Feb 10 19:21 induction
  -rw-r--r--   1 joebloggs students    12 Feb 10 21:31 unix.txt
```
Instead of just listing the names of the files, we now have a detailed listing of the files. The columns, from left to right, are:

- **drwx------** The permission bits for this file or directory. These are explained in great detail below.
- **2** The number of hard links to the file or directory. You can probably ignore this number for your entire career.
- **joebloggs** The owner of the file. That’s you.
- **students** The group that the file belongs to. Groups are described below.
- **80** The size of the file, in bytes. Note that for a directory this does not include the files within it, merely the amount of space the directory itself is taking.
- **Jan 24 10:59** The date and time the file was last modified.
- **Mail** The name of the file or directory.

When you access a file, you are classified into one of three categories with respect to the file:

- You are the owner of the file.
- You belong to the group that the file belongs to.
- You are someone else.

To see what groups you belong to, use the `groups` command:

```
$ groups
students
```

You may be added to more groups for certain courses, or to access a particular resource such as a CD burner. While you can belong to many groups, a file can only belong to one group. By default, all the files you create will belong to the `students` group.

Now look closely at the permission bits for the last file in the earlier list:

```
-rw-r--r--
```

Ignoring the first hyphen (it is a `d` for directories), you can divide the remaining characters into three sets of three characters:

```
rw- r-- r--
```

Each of these sets corresponds to the rules to apply for a user falling into the respective category listed above. The first set is for the owner of the file, the second for a user belonging to the group that the file belongs to, and the third set is for everybody else.
Each set can have the letters \texttt{r} (read), \texttt{w} (write), or \texttt{x} (execute) set. If a letter is not set, a hyphen ("-"") is displayed in its place. The meaning of these letters depends on whether the file is a directory or a regular file:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>File</th>
<th>Directory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>\texttt{r}</td>
<td>The contents of the file can be read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\texttt{w}</td>
<td>The file can be written to or replaced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\texttt{x}</td>
<td>The file is a script or program and can be run</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The contents of the directory can be listed. Files can be added to and deleted from this directory. The user can change to this directory, and can access files within this directory.

So, for the permission bits:

\begin{verbatim}
-rw-r--r--
\end{verbatim}

The owner of the file can read and write it, members of its group can read it, and everyone else can also read it.

The three categories that the permission bits address are called \textit{user} (for the owner), \textit{group} (for members of the group) and \textit{world} or \textit{other} (for everyone else). So we would say the above file is world-readable and user-writeable.

You can use the \texttt{chmod} command to change the permissions of a file or directory that you own:

\begin{verbatim}
chmod g+w unix.txt
\end{verbatim}

The \texttt{g} refers to the \textit{group} category of users, \texttt{+} means to add permission, and \texttt{w} refers to the \textit{write} permission bit. In other words, it gives write permission to members of the group. The resultant permission bits will be:

\begin{verbatim}
-rw-rw-r--
\end{verbatim}

Another example:

\begin{verbatim}
chmod ug+x unix.txt
\end{verbatim}

This adds the execute permission bit (\texttt{x}) for the owner (\texttt{u}) and group (\texttt{g}). You can remove permissions with a minus sign:

\begin{verbatim}
chmod ugo-x unix.txt
\end{verbatim}

This removes the execute permission bit (\texttt{x}) for the owner (\texttt{u}), group (\texttt{g}) and others (\texttt{o}).

So \texttt{chmod} alters the permission bits for files and directories. The left-hand side selects which users to apply the changes to (\texttt{u}, \texttt{g} or \texttt{o}), the right hand side selects what permission bits to change (\texttt{r}, \texttt{w} or \texttt{x}), and they are separated by either a \texttt{+} sign, to add the permission, or a \texttt{-} sign, to remove the permission.

Note that Windows does not have the same security model as Unix, so all permissions on files will be lost when you transfer them to a Windows computer. When copying files from a Windows computer to Unix, you will often find that all files have all the permission bits set for all users.
Test yourself

- Submit all the antonym files and all the synonym files to the induct2006 course using turnin. Check that what you submitted is what you expected.
- How much disk space do you have left, in megabytes?
- Which directory or file is taking up most of the space in your home directory?
- Compress that file or directory with tar/gzip, tar/bzip2 and zip. Which method gives the best result (Hint: you could use either du or ls -l to check the file sizes)?
- Who owns your home directory? Does this mean you can change the permission bits on it?
- Create a new text file in your home directory. What permission bits does it have? Can another student read it? Ask your friend to try and open the file. Can they? Why or why not? (Hint: you may need to look at the permission bits for the directory it is in, as well as the file itself).
- Change the permission bits on the file so your friend cannot read it, if they could; or change them so they can, if they could not.
- Set appropriate permissions on your courses directory so that other students cannot read the files within it, or even see what files are in it. Get your friend to check for you that they cannot access it.

Creating a personal homepage

You can use your account on Yallara to set up a small personal website, for showing off previous projects, keeping a weblog or just telling the world a little bit about yourself.

First of all, create a directory under your home directory named “.HTMLinfo”. Note that the capitalisation is important, as is the full stop (making it a hidden directory). Make this directory world-readable and executable (that is, set the r and x permission bits for all users u, g and o).

Now, make sure your home-directory is world-executable (it should not be readable, however, except for yourself).

Using nedit or another editor, create a file in that directory called “index.html”. Make sure it’s world-readable. Write a couple of lines of text introducing yourself and save the file.

If all has gone well, you should now be able to access your home page at http://yallara.cs.rmit.edu.au/~joebloggs

Please remember that your website is viewable by anyone, including people outside RMIT, and reread the appropriate sections of the Acceptable Usage Policy for guidelines on what you may and may not publish.
Printing

Unlike in Windows, where to print you simply select a printer from a list, in Unix you need to specify a complete program to print to, which in turn takes care of printing the document. For example, start Firefox and go to the File, Print menu.

When you click on the “Printer Properties” button you will see the command that gets executed. To print the web page normally, you would type in the lpr command here (type it in Firefox’s print dialog, not in a terminal):

```
lpr -Pstudent1010
```

Note that you must use a capital -P in the option, and there must be no space between the -P and the name of the printer. In this case we have chosen the printer student1010, which is located in building 10, level 10, in room 10.10.24.

You can see a list of all the printers’ names with the lpstat command:

```
lpstat -v
```

You can also use lpstat to see how busy a printer is (the more students printing to a printer, the longer your job will have to wait in the queue):

```
lpstat student1010
```

Note that most printers are unavailable to undergraduate students, for example those named “staff” or “research”. Check with the duty programmers’ desk if you need access to a particular type of printer.

You should try to save paper; both for the sake of the environment, and also because you have a limited quota of pages per semester. Using the mpage command you can shrink pages and fit 2 or more pages on each sheet. You would use this command in place of the lpr command in Firefox’s print dialog.

```
mpage -4 -Pstudent1010
```

Specifying -4 instructs mpage to fit 4 pages per sheet (they will be laid out in a grid). For most web pages or course notes, this is still quite legible.

You can cancel a print job with the cancel command:

```
cancel
```

This cancels all of your pending print jobs.
PDF, PostScript and image files

Many lecturers publish lecture notes and assignments as PDF files. On Windows you use Adobe Acrobat to read these files. On Unix, this is called acroread.

```
acroread /public/induction/coversheet.pdf
```

You can print PDF files from acroread through the File, Print menu and typing one of the lpr or mpage commands that you used in Firefox (see above).

Although they are less common nowadays, some documents are distributed in PostScript format (they typically have the extension .ps). The easiest way to deal with these files is to convert them to PDF files and then open them with acroread.

```
ps2pdf document.ps document.pdf
```

This would convert document.ps to document.pdf.

To view an image file (for example, in JPEG, GIF, PNG, BMP, EPS, TIFF, etc format), use the xv program:

```
xv image.tif
```

Right-click on the image to bring up a menu. Follow the same procedure for printing an image as with acroread and Firefox.

Starting programs in the background

Start gvim from a terminal. While gvim is still open, switch back to the terminal window and notice what happens when you type. You will find that you are unable to return to the prompt until gvim is closed. The same will happen with any program that opens its own window, such as Firefox, Acrobat Reader, xv, and so on.

You can stop this happening by starting the program in the “background”. All this means is that as soon as the program has started, the terminal will return to the prompt, allowing you to continue using it while the windowed application is still open. Use an ampersand (“&”) after a command to run it in the background:

```
acroread /public/induction/coversheet.pdf &
```

Try this and note how it is now very easy to open windows for many programs all from the same terminal. You will find this especially useful when you start programming, as you will often need to edit several files at once.

End of Unix Survival Skills Part 1!

As mentioned earlier you need to learn how to edit using vim. You will find the Introduction to Vim on page 73 and now is a good time to get started.
More Unix

In the preceding section “Basic Unix,” you learnt the basics of how to deal with files and directories, how to open, edit and print documents, how to submit assignments or archive them, and some of the basics of Unix file permissions.

If you feel that you have a good grasp of the concepts in the previous section and wish to learn more, this section is for you. Some of the technicalities of Unix are explained in detail, a set of small programs that work well together are introduced and you will learn how to write simple scripts to automate repetitive tasks.

The real story

In the previous section we referred to the “terminal” as the program through which you enter commands. This is a bit of a simplification. In reality there are several programs interacting that you should be aware of.

The program which responds to keyboard input and displays the result in a window is xterm.

The actual program that does the work in interpreting your commands and acting upon them is called a shell. By default, your student account is set up to use a shell called tcsh. There are many other shells around; the other common ones are bash, ksh and zsh. All these shells have the same basic operation, in that you type the name of a program followed by its arguments and hit enter to run it. But a shell can do a lot more than that, as we will see.

If you login to Yallara or Numbat remotely via ssh you will be interacting with the same shell, but xterm will not be running (if you are using Linux then it probably is, but on Windows you are probably using Putty, and Mac OS X users typically use Terminal.app to perform the same function).

Each xterm you run starts another instance of the shell. Each of these instances is called a process. These shells have effectively nothing to do with one another once they are started. This is why changing your working directory in one window doesn’t affect any other windows.
Processes

Every program you start launches a new process. Typing **ps** will show you all the processes you have launched from the current terminal:

```
ps
  PID  TTY       TIME  CMD
 12388 pts/73  0:00  tcsh
 12392 pts/73  0:00  ps
```

The columns are:

- **PID**: A unique process identifier.
- **TTY**: The name of the terminal the process was started from.
- **TIME**: How long the process has been using the CPU. Note that this does not include time spent waiting for user input.
- **CMD**: The name of the program.

To see all the processes you are running on all terminals, use the **-u** option with your username:

```
ps -u joebloggs
```

To see all the processes that all users are running, use the **-e** option. Combining this with the **-f** option shows more details, including the name of the user running the process, when it was started, and the exact command line used to start the process.

```
ps -ef
```

A more useful way to see this information is with the **top** program.

```
top
```

This shows a constantly-updating list of the processes using the most CPU time, and who is running them. It also provides some statistics on the average CPU load and memory usage.

Signals and dealing with crashed applications

When you start working on programming assignments, there will come a time when you write a program that crashes, or hangs, and becomes completely unresponsive. How do you deal with it?

You can send a **signal** to a program while it’s running with the **kill** command.

```
kill 12388
```

The number you specify is the program’s process identifier, or PID, which you obtained using **ps**. By default **kill** will send the **TERM** signal, which requests that an application exit immediately. Normally this will close the application immediately, but it’s possible for an application to crash and become unresponsive to even the TERM signal. In this case you can send it the **KILL** signal, which instructs the operating system to terminate it immediately:

```
kill -KILL 12388
```
If the program is running in the current terminal (as most of your own programs will), you can simply press Control+C. This actually sends the \textit{SIGINT} signal, which is usually enough to terminate a crashed program. It can also be used to stop a program that is working fine, but is producing too much output for you to read. For example:

\begin{verbatim}
ls -R /
\end{verbatim}

will recursively list everything in the file system. Running this to completion would take several minutes and almost all of it will scroll off screen. Hitting Control+C is the easiest way to stop the process and rethink your strategy.

For programs running in their own window, there is an even easier way to kill them:

\begin{verbatim}
xkill
\end{verbatim}

\texttt{xkill} waits for you to click on a window with the mouse, then kills the process that owns that window.

\textbf{Symbolic links}

Did you get sick of typing \texttt{/public/induction/} all the time? You can create a “shortcut” to this directory in your home directory with a \textit{symbolic link}:

\begin{verbatim}
ln -s /public/induction ~/induct
\end{verbatim}

List the contents of your home directory now. \texttt{induct} appears to be a regular directory, but if you \texttt{cd} into it and \texttt{pwd}, you will find yourself in \texttt{/public/induction}.

List the contents of your home directory again, this time with the \texttt{-l} option:

\begin{verbatim}
ls -l
lrwxrwxrwx 1 joebloggs students 15 Feb 11 15:33 /home/j/joebloggs/induct -> /public/induction/
\end{verbatim}

Note the first letter in the permission bits is “l” for \textit{link}. Also note how instead of just printing the filename, the link is shown, including its destination.

The \texttt{ln} command can create symbolic links (also called \textit{symlinks} or \textit{soft links}) to directories or files. The link only points to the destination path; if the target directory or file is moved somewhere else, the symbolic link will be broken and no longer work. Removing a symbolic link is done just as with any regular file:

\begin{verbatim}
rm ~/induct
\end{verbatim}

This has no effect on the target directory.
Hard links

The `ln` command can also create hard links, which point to an actual file (they cannot be made on directories) instead of just the name. This has several consequences:

- If the target file is moved, the hard link will still work.
- If the target is deleted, the hard link will still work – the file won’t actually be truly deleted until there are no more hard links pointing to it.

While this might sound like a great solution, in general hard links are not used as shortcuts. They cannot be used between different file systems (for example, between your home directory and the /tmp directory), and they can cause unpredictable results as it is easy to forget that a file is linked in two or more places.

To create a hard link, use `ln` without the `-s` argument. Their use is strongly discouraged however, and is presented here only so their consequences are known.

Shell quoting and escaping

When the shell (tcsh) interprets your command, one of the things it does is separate the command into the name of the program and a list of arguments. For example, the command

```
turnin -c induct2006 *.syn
```

is split into the program name “turnin”, followed by the arguments “-c”, “induct2006”, “angry.syn”, “confused.syn”, and so on.

What if you have a filename with a space in it? For example, list the contents of /public/induction and look for the file named “My Assignment”. Now try and copy it to your home directory.

```
cp /public/induction/My Assignment ~/
cp: cannot access /public/induction/My Assignment
```

The shell thinks you are trying to copy two separate files. You can put the name of the file in quotation marks to show that it is to be treated as one argument:

```
cp " /public/induction/My Assignment" ~/
```

Alternatively, you can escape the space with a backslash ("\"), which tells the shell not to treat it as an argument separator:

```
cp /public/induction/My\ Assignment ~/
```

You can also escape special characters such as *, ?, and even a backslash, so that they can be included within an argument without being interpreted by the shell.
Introduction to the scripting utilities

Several programs will now be introduced that appear to be quite simple and possibly useless on their own. These programs are present on every Unix-like system and can be used together to build up more complex programs, as you will see shortly. For now, we will run them directly from the shell so we can see what they do.

The **echo** command simply prints its arguments out:

```
echo Hello there
Hello there
```

What if you wanted echo to print the line “2*3=6”? 
```
echo 2*3=6
```
```
echo: No match.
```

Remember that the shell expands the asterisk (“*”) as a globbing operator, and tries to find files in the current directory that match. We must either quote the argument or escape the asterisk:
```
echo "2\*3=6"
```
```
2*3=6
```

The **cat** command reads one or more text files and prints out the contents:

```
cat angry.syn
furious
indignant
irate
ireful
mad
wrathful
```

When run with more than one filename, cat will print their contents one after the other:

```
cat angry.syn happy.syn
furious
indignant
irate
ireful
mad
wrathful
fortunate
lucky
providential
```
Redirecting output to a file

Let's say you wanted a single file that contained all of the data in the synonym files. You could open each one and copy/paste the lines into a new document, but this could take some time.

```
cat *.syn > all.syn
```

The > operator instructs the shell to take the output of the command and write it to a file, instead of printing it to the terminal. Remember that `cat` will read all of the files in its argument list, which in this case is all the synonym files.

The output from `echo` can be treated the same way:

```
echo Hello there > greeting.txt
cat greeting.txt
Hello there
```

You can `append` (add to) a file by using two angle brackets:

```
echo Nice weather today >> greeting.txt
cat greeting.txt
Hello there
Nice weather today
```

Redirecting output to another program

The `sort` program reads lines of text and sorts them alphabetically. You can give it the name of a file to sort, or you can pass it lines directly from another program:

```
cat *.syn | sort
addled
addlepated
confounded
confusional
debilitated
decrepit
defeated
desolate
...
```

The `pipe` operator ("|", located above the enter key) is used to transfer the output from one program to the input of another program.

Remember the `grep` program for searching for text in files? If you don't give it the names of any files, it will search through the input you pass to it:

```
cat *.syn | grep ad
mad
addled
addlepated
muddle-headed
```
The real power in this is that you can then pass the output through another pipe to another program, building arbitrarily long pipes of commands:

```bash
cat *.syn | grep ad | sort
```

```
addled
addlepated
mad
muddle-headed
```

You can think of each command as a filter that processes data and sends it on to the next filter. When there are no more filters, the result is printed out to the terminal (or written to a file, if you choose to redirect it with `>`).

**More scripting utilities**

The `head` and `tail` commands show only the first or last few lines of a file, respectively.

```bash
cat angry.syn
```

```
furious
indignant
irate
ireful
mad
wrathful
```

```
cat angry.syn | head -3
```

```
furious
indignant
irate
```

```
cat angry.syn | tail -1
```

```
wrathful
```

`uniq` reads a file line-by-line and discards adjacent lines that are the same. For example, given a file containing:

```
one
two
two
three
three
three
```

Piping it through `uniq` would result in:

```
one
two
three
```

This is often used in conjunction with `sort` (so that identical lines are moved next to each other) to remove duplicate lines from a file.
**wc** counts lines, words and characters. By default it will show all three, respectively:

```
cat angry.syn | wc
  6       6      44
```

You can also show just the wordcount (**-w**):

```
cat angry.syn | wc -w
  6
```

**cut** works with text data laid out in columns, and extracts one or more columns from the text. Consider the output of **ps**:

```
ps
  PID TTY         TIME CMD
  24618 pts/115     0:00 tcsh
  25773 pts/115     0:00 ps
```

First we note that the delimiter (separator) between the columns is a space character. Now see what happens when we extract the 2nd column:

```
ps | cut -d ' ' -f 2
  25803
  24618
  25802
```

The **-d** option specifies the delimiter to use, in this case a space character. The **-f** option instructs **cut** to save just the 2nd column (it is the second in this case, not the first, because there are some spaces before the first column).

**bc** is a simple calculator. It evaluates any expressions that are passed into its input:

```
echo "2 + 3" | bc
  5
```

Note how we used **echo** to create a line of input that we could pass to **bc**.

**xargs** takes lines of input and turns them into arguments for a command. For example, we can use **find** to return a list of files that match some criteria, and then pass that list to **grep** to search within those files:

```
find ~ -name /*.txt | xargs grep Hello
```

If you did not use xargs in this pipe, grep would have only been searching the filenames, rather than through the files themselves.

The **file** command tries to identify what sort of file a given filename is:

```
file /public/induction/coversheet.pdf
/public/induction/coversheet.pdf: Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) v1.3
```
**Test yourself**

Note that there are several ways to accomplish each of the following tasks. If you can’t think of a solution immediately, try to break down the tasks into small pieces that can each be solved by one of the programs listed above.

- How many files are in the `/usr/bin` directory?
- How many of the files in `/usr/bin` are described by `file` as script files?
- Output just the last two lines of `happy.ant` to a file called `unhappy.txt`.
- Make a symbolic link to the file `/public/induction/My Assignment` in your home directory called “assignment.txt”. Make sure you can now display the contents of the file using the link.
- How many words appear in more than one antonym file?
- (Difficult) How many words in the synonym files also appear in the antonym files?

**The backtick operator**

We have seen how you can pass the output of one program to the input of another with a pipe. You can also pass the output directly as an argument to a program, without using xargs:

```
grep Hello `find ~ -name \*.txt`
```

The `backticks` (```, located in the top-left corner of the keyboard) surround the `find` program and its arguments, then pass the output of that (a list of text files) to `grep` as its last argument.

You can even have pipes inside the backticks, which can make for some pretty complex expressions:

```
etch `cat *.ant | wc -l` - `cat *.syn | wc -l` | bc
```

To understand this, you need to take it piece by piece, starting with the backticks. The first set of backticks surround the command:

```
cat *.ant | wc -l
```

This reads all the antonym files and counts the number of lines in them. If you run this by itself the result is 53. Similarly, the second backtick expression does the same except with the synonym files. So after the backticks have been removed the remaining command is:

```
echo 53 - 39 | bc
```

which just passes the expression to `bc`, which in turn calculates the result. If you managed to solve the last “Test yourself” problem, see if you can now do it in just one line.
Writing shell scripts

A shell script is just a text file that contains a set of commands. When you run the shell script, all the commands in the file get executed almost exactly as if you had run them yourself.

Using nedit or another editor, create a file called “hello.sh” containing the two lines:

```
#!/bin/bash
echo Hello there.
```

The first line of the script is called the hash-bang, and it names the shell you would like to interpret your script. Although we use tcsh as our interactive shell, most people consider bash to be a better scripting shell, which is why we will use it here (although tcsh would work equally well in this case).

To run the script, you first need to make it executable. Do you remember how to set this permission bit?

```
chmod u+x hello.sh
```

We are choosing to set the execute bit (x) only for the owner (u) of the file, but you could also set it for group and others if you wanted to.

To run the script:

```
./hello.sh
Hello there.
```

Why did we need to use the “dot-slash” (/) at the start? To explain that, we need to delve into the world of environment variables...

Environment variables

Type the following command:

```
echo $PWD
/home/j/jbloggs
```

What has happened? Why didn’t it print out “$PWD”? The dollar sign (“$”) is interpreted by the shell as a variable. PWD is a variable that is always defined and always has the current working directory. You can set your own variables in tcsh with the set command:

```
set colour=red
echo $colour
red
```

You can see all the variables, and their current values, by typing just set:

```
set
...
autologout 60
colour red
cwd /home/j/jbloggs
...
```
These variables are used only by tcsh. However, some of these variables are mirrors of the environment variables, and these are used by all processes. To list all the environment variables:

```
setenv
USER=joebloggs
LOGNAME=joebloggs
HOME=/home/j/joebloggs
PATH=/usr/bin:/bin:/usr/local/bin
...
```

Programs such as Firefox use these variables to find your home directory, for example. The PATH environment variable is particularly important. This is a list of directories that contain programs. When you type a command like:

```
ls
```

the shell searches all the directories in PATH for the program named ls. You can find out where ls is actually located with the `which` program:

```
which ls
/usr/bin/ls
```

Going back to the script we wrote earlier, since `hello.sh` is not in one of the PATH directories, we need to specify its exact location:

```
/home/j/joebloggs/hello.sh
```

or just

```
./hello.sh
```

You might be thinking now that it would be a good idea to add "." to the PATH environment variable, to save having to type the "./" in front of scripts you write. In fact, this is a bad idea, and there are good security reasons why "." is specifically not in the PATH.

**Back to writing shell scripts**

Remember the `ps` command? Without any arguments it lists all the processes you are running on from current terminal. But to show the processes from all your terminals you needed to specify your username:

```
ps -u joebloggs
```

Wouldn’t it be nice to have a shell script that does this for us? We’ll start by creating a new file, “processes.sh”, with the following contents:

```
#!/bin/bash
ps -u joebloggs
```

Set the execute permission bit and try and check that it works.

Now, what if your friend wanted a copy of your script to use for themselves? Obviously you would need to change the username, but that would mean having two or more copies of the same script, that do exactly the same thing. Here is a good candidate for using an environment variable we know about:

```
#!/bin/bash
ps -u $USER
```

Echo the value of $USER first to convince yourself it has the right username, then rewrite the script to make it useful for anybody.
Arguments to shell scripts

Now we’ll write something a little more complicated. Remember the `kill` command? You have to specify a process identifier, or PID, to kill a program. Wouldn’t it be nice to be able to specify just the name of the process?

We’ll construct this step by step. First, we’ll use the `ps` command to retrieve a list of all the running processes we own:

```
ps -u $USER
```

```
PID TTY         TIME CMD
24618 pts/115     0:00 tcsh
25773 pts/115     0:00 ps
26110 pts/115     0:15 firefox
```

Next, we want to filter the list so it contains just the name of the program we’re interested in. We can use `grep` to do this:

```
ps -u $USER | grep firefox
```

```
26110 pts/115     0:15 firefox
```

Now we need to extract just the process ID from this line. We have already seen how the `cut` command can do this:

```
ps -u $USER | grep firefox | cut -d ' ' -f 2
```

```
26110
```

Finally we need to pass this number to `kill`. Since `kill` only takes arguments, not standard input, we need to use either backticks or xargs. Either of the following would suffice:

```
ps -u $USER | grep firefox | cut -d ' ' -f 2 | xargs kill
kill `ps -u $USER | grep firefox | cut -d ' ' -f 2`
```

We are almost ready to put it in a script. We would like to make it general enough to be able to kill any process, not just Firefox. In a shell script we have access to the special variables `$1`, `$2`, and so on, which correspond to the arguments passed in on the command line.

In this case we only need the first argument, which takes the place of the word “firefox” in the `grep` command. The final shell script, which we will call “killall.sh”, is:

```
#!/bin/bash
kill `ps -u $USER | grep $1 | cut -d ' ' -f 2`
```

After you save and set the execute permission bits, you can test it out:

```
./killall.sh firefox
```
A teaser of scripting possibilities

The following script loops over all the arguments passed in and calls `dos2unix` on each one. The input and output filenames to `dos2unix` are the same, so it will do the conversion in-place. The `-437` argument passed to `dos2unix` specifies that the files use US ASCII encoding, which suppresses the warning message about keyboard layout (see the `dos2unix` man page for details).

```bash
#!/bin/bash
for f in $*; do
dos2unix -437 $f $f
done
```

If you save this as `d2u.sh` you can then convert a whole lot of DOS files to Unix format at once:

```bash
./d2u.sh *.txt
```
Where to go for more information

This manual represents just a sampler of the programs installed on Yallara and Numbat. Every single program presented has a myriad of options for customising how data is processed and formatted. Shell scripting in bash can be extremely flexible and goes far beyond the material presented here.

Any time you spend learning more about Unix will easily repay itself when you come to do assignments – especially using shell scripts to automate repetitive tasks. The following resources are good starting points for investigating the programs here that interest you.

**Advanced Bash-Scripting Guide**  
http://www.tldp.org/LDP/abs/html/  
Easily the best online tutorial and reference for doing anything and everything with Bash.

**Dave Raggett’s Introduction to HTML**  
http://www.w3.org/MarkUp/Guide/  
If you would like to continue writing your web page, you will need to learn a little HTML.

**Getting Started with awk**  
http://www.cs.hmc.edu/qref awk.html  
Awk is a unique programming language for processing text files as collections of data records, making it easy to manipulate the data, create summaries and perform numerical computations on columns of text.

**Sed – An Introduction and Tutorial**  
Sed is a program installed on all Unix systems. It is extremely useful for modifying text files with simple rules, for example, doing search-and-replace.

**A Tutorial Introduction to GNU Emacs**  
http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/keith/tcl-course/emacs-tutorial.html  
If you *really* don’t like Vim (introduced in the next section), you may find Emacs and xemacs a better choice for you. They have a similar feature-set to Vim and gvim, respectively, but a completely different interface. There are not many people who can comfortably edit a file in both Emacs and Vim!

**Unix man pages**  
As mentioned in the first section, the manual pages (accessible by typing “man <command>” are the definitive reference for everything currently installed. Some man pages are particularly comprehensive and worth at least skimming through:  
- **tcsh**: explains the syntax, configuration files and options.  
- **ls**: ls has many options built-in for formatting and sorting directory listings.  
- **sort**: sort can perform ascending and descending, alphanumeric and numeric, case sensitive or insensitive sorting on multiple columns of text.  
- **fvwm**: although not covered at all in this manual, there are literally hundreds of ways to customise the window manager, including setting up mouse and keyboard shortcuts, creating startup files, changing the desktop background, and so on.

**Vim documentation**  
http://vimdoc.sourceforge.net/htmldoc/usr_toc.html  
http://www.vim.org/tips/index.php  
Vim and gvim are extremely flexible text editors used by the majority of computer science students at RMIT. The next section of this manual will give a very brief introduction, but to really take advantage of Vim you need to find the features that work best for you. The first URL above is the complete Vim documentation; the second is a series of over 1000 tips submitted by users which are particularly useful for seeing just what Vim can do.
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### Equivalent DOS and Unix commands

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Introduction to Vim

Vim is a powerful and flexible text editor used by users of Unix around the world. It can be quite tricky to learn at first, but once mastered it is an invaluable tool when editing configuration files, programming and writing reports. There are so many features of Vim that there is probably not a single person alive who knows them all. Everybody has a set of commands that they use themselves though, and you will need to find out which commands suit you the best.

Vim is an enhanced version of an older text editor called Vi. Both Vim and Vi are text-only; they run directly in the terminal window (also making the suitable for use over an ssh connection).

We recommend using the graphical Vim, gvim, while in the labs. It is exactly the same program, except it runs in a separate window and has mouse support. You can follow this manual using either Vim, Vi, or gvim. Note that gvim is also available for Windows and Mac OS X (see http://www.vim.org), and Vim is already available on every installation of Mac OS X.

Command mode editing

Unlike other text editors you have used, Vim has two modes: command and create. You can only type text while in a create mode. While in command mode you can load and save files, do searches and replacements, import other text files, and so on.

To start Vim:

```
  vim file1.txt
```

If you are in a computer science lab, you will probably prefer gvim:

```
  gvim file1.txt &
```

Remember from the Unix tutorial that the ampersand (“&”) is used so the terminal is still available after starting gvim.

When Vim or gvim starts you will be in command mode with a blank file. To start typing, press i (for “insert”). Type a few sentences of nonsense, then return to command mode by pressing ESC (the escape key). In summary:

- Type i to enter insert mode, where you can type text.
- Press ESC to leave any create mode and enter command mode.

Saving and exiting

To save the file you are working on, in command mode type :w (that’s a colon, followed by a lower-case w for “write”) and hit enter.

To quit, in command mode type :q. You can actually save and quit in one smooth move by typing :wq.

If you try quitting without first saving, Vim will show a warning that the file is not saved. You can override this with :q!, which means “quit, don’t save, I know what I’m doing.”
Help me, what’s going on?

Sometimes a simple typo can make you feel hopelessly lost in Vim as it activates a feature you have never heard of. In almost all cases, you can simply return to command mode by hitting ESC two or three times. Similarly, you can undo the last command or insertion by hitting u (for “undo”).

More creation modes

You have seen i, which starts insertion mode wherever the cursor is. There are a couple of shortcut keys for starting insertion in different places relative to the cursor:

- a begins inserting text just after the cursor.
- A begins inserting text at the end of the line
- I (capital i) begins inserting text at the beginning of the current line.
- o “opens” a new paragraph below the current line.
- O (capital o) “opens” a new paragraph above the current line.

Try each of these now to get a feel for how they work; they can save a lot of time that in any other editor would be spent moving the cursor.

Moving the cursor

Speaking of moving the cursor, Vim has a hundred ways of letting you move the cursor around. Here are just a few (note that with the exception of the first two you need to be in command mode):

- If you are using gvim, you can of course point and click where you want the cursor.
- You can use the arrow keys as with any other text editor to move the cursor around.
- The w and b keys move forward and back one word, respectively.
- The ( and ) keys move to the previous or next sentence.
- The { and } keys move to the previous or next paragraph.
- The 0 (zero) and $ keys move the the start and end of the current line.
- Press Control+U and Control+D to scroll up and down half a page at a time.
- The Page-Up and Page-Down keys scroll up and down a whole page at a time.
- You can move to a specific line-number by typing the number in and pressing G. For example, to go directly to line 48 you would type 48 G. This becomes very useful as you start programming as most errors are reported with the line number on which the error was found.

Moving more

All of the above movement commands can be extended by specifying a number of times to repeat the command. For example, typing 5 w moves the cursor forward 5 words. Typing 3 and then pressing the down arrow moves down three lines.
Deleting text
While typing text in a create mode you can delete straight away as usual with the delete and backspace keys. In command mode you have a few more options:

- Press x to delete the character the cursor is highlighting.
- Press d d (you press it twice) to delete the current line.
- Press d and one of the movement keys listed above to delete that amount. For example, typing d w deletes one word. Typing d 3 ) deletes three sentences.
- Make a selection with the mouse and press d.

Pasting text
Vim does not have separate “delete” and “cut” commands. After you delete something, it is immediately available to be pasted.

- Press p to paste text just after the cursor.
- Press P to paste text just before the cursor.
- An easy way to fix those typos where you swap two letters around (e.g. in “teh”) is to position the cursor at the first of the pair of letters and press x p in succession.
- An easy way to swap two lines of text is to press d d p in succession.

Copying text
Vim calls copying “yanking”. After you have “yanked” some text you can paste it with one of the commands above.

- To yank (copy) the current line, press y y (press y twice).
- As with the delete command, you can use y with a movement. For example, y and the down key copies two lines; y 2 } copies two paragraphs.
- Make a selection with the mouse and press y to copy.

Replacing text
These are shortcuts to deleting text and then inserting new text.

- Press r to replace a single character. For example, pressing r b replaces the character under the cursor with a “b”, and then returns to command mode.
- Press R to replace a lot of text. This enters a create mode where every letter you type overwrites the existing text instead of inserting.
- Press c and a movement to change some text. For example, c w deletes one word and then enters insert mode, perfecting for changing just that word.
- Make a selection with the mouse and press c to delete the whole selection and enter insert mode.
Indenting text

When you start programming you will find that having well-indented source code is invaluable (both for readability and getting reasonable marks on your assignments!).

- To indent the current line, press `>` (the right angle bracket twice).
- To unindent the current line, press `<`.
- You can use `>` or `<` with a movement. For example `< }` will unindent the whole paragraph.
- Make a selection with the mouse and press `<` or `>`.

Searching text

Check that you are in command mode first (press ESC).

- Press `/` (forward-slash) and type the word or phrase to search for and press enter. For example to search for “checker” you would type `/checker` and hit enter.
- To move to the next search result press `n`.
- To move to the previous search result press `N`.
- Note that searches can contain complex regular-expressions. If you don’t know what a regular expression is yet, make some time to find a tutorial. You will love them!
- You can search for occurences of the word the cursor is in simply by pressing `*` (asterisk).

Replacing text

Usually you will want to do a text replacement over an entire file. In command mode, type:

`:s/original/replacement/g`

and hit enter. An explanation of this command follows:

- The colon is used before most complex commands consisting of more than one or two characters.
- The percent sign (“%”) signifies that the command is to act over the entire file. There are ways (not discussed here) of restricting it to just a section of the file.
- The `s` stands for “substitute” and is borrowed from `sed`’s language (see the references at the end of the Unix section of this manual).
- The `/` (forward slashes) separate the original text that you are searching for with the replacement text.
- The `g` option at the end stands for “global”, and instructs Vim to make the replacement for every occurrence of the original text on each line. Without this flag, only the first occurrence on each line is be changed.
- The original text can be a regular expression, and the replacement text can contain back-references into that expression, making for a very flexible substitution scheme. See the Vim manual for examples on usage.
Getting help

Vim’s online help is very comprehensive, sometimes a little too comprehensive. You can access the table of contents by typing:

:help

or search for a particular feature (say, the substitute command described above):

:help :s

Close the help window with:

:q

Vim configuration

You can create a Vim configuration file to store your preferences in your home directory. The file should be called .vimrc (note the full-stop at the start, making it a hidden file). Create this file now with the following contents:

```vim
syntax on
set autoindent
set ts=4 sw=4 et si
set whichwrap+=<,,>,[,[
set backspace=indent,eol,start
set hlsearch
```

These options turn on some nice user-interface features, such as allowing the cursor to move anywhere, highlighting search results, replacing tabs with spaces, automatically indenting source code sensibly, and highlighting source code according to its programming language.

Congratulations!

If you have made it this far you are well on your way to becoming a Vim grand master. Remember that the commands introduced here represent less than 1% of Vim’s functionality. Browse through the tips at [http://www.vim.org](http://www.vim.org) for ways other people are using Vim.
Some offences that will result in the suspension of your account include, but are not limited to:

- Eating or Drinking within the computer laboratories.
- Having a drink bottle on the desk whilst at a terminal/workstation.
- Locking of terminal/workstation (even whilst on a toilet break).
- Use of a non-RMIT web based email service.
- Bypassing of Internet proxies.
- Changing the hardware or software configuration of the terminal/workstation.
- Use of an instant messaging/chat program.
- Use of a peer-to-peer file sharing application.
- Broadcasting of messages to computers and/or system.
- Account sharing.
- Noisy or disruptive behaviour within the computer laboratories.
- Use of mobile phones in computer laboratories.
- Failing to follow RMIT Staff instructions or directions.
- Print queue jumping.
- Viewing, Displaying or Downloading of offensive or illegal material.
- Streaming of Web Radio or Video that is not course related.
- Playing of Games (unless required by course).
- Allowing people into computer laboratories after hours that do not have a valid access card.
- Being in the computer laboratory after hours and not having a valid access card.
- Sleeping in computer laboratories.
- Making inappropriate posts to course/program newsgroups (i.e. for sale items).
- Changing headers in posts to newsgroups to hide identity.

Some offences or repeat offenders will have the matter referred to the Technical Services Manager and/or Program Leader for further action.
Student Timetabling System – STS.

- STS is available online every day between 6.00am and 11.00pm
- On Line help is available within the STS applications
- If you are having trouble logging in to STS, your password may have expired. For further information go to: Manage your password online
- Contact the IT Helpdesk for further assistance
- You must allow at least 48 hours after enrolling into your courses before timetabling into your classes
- For information regarding courses, go to: View Course Timetable
- To create your timetable, go to: Generate a Timetable.
- All courses are currently viewable in ‘Read-only’ context.

Note: Students will be unable to generate a timetable in the STS until the ‘Read-only’ version is replaced by the ‘Go-live’ version.

Semester 2, 2008

Courses will be available to students for timetabling purposes at the times below:

**Business**
- Monday 7 July 2008 at 6.00 am (HE)
- Monday 30 June 2008 at 6.00 am (TAFE)

**Design and Social Context**
- Tuesday 15 July 2008 at 6.00 am (HE)

**Science, Engineering and Technology (SET)**
- Thursday 10 July 2008 at 6.00 am (HE)

The School of Computer Science and Information Technology is part of the SET Portfolio

Note: Students are encouraged to enrol as soon as possible. Students must be enrolled in their course before STS timetable access is available. STS class selection is normally available 48 hours after enrolling.

If you cannot register and classes have started, attend the lectures and choose labs and tutorials that have spaces. You can see this in the View Course Timetable mode. You will have to contact the school running the courses to find out the room location. If it is a Computer Science and Information Technology course, you can see the room and lecturer’s name for courses at www.rmit.edu.au/csit/timetables/

Make sure you read the messages section of STS each time you log in, it will tell you about changes to the timetable and specific rules for your courses.
STS Frequently Asked Questions

How do I log in to the STS?

To log into the STS:

- go to: http://www.rmit.edu.au/students/sts
- click on ‘Generate a Timetable’
- Log in using your student number with an ‘s’ in front, (e.g. s1234567).
  Students who have a letter at the end of their student number are advised not to include the letter in their username (e.g. s9838685)
- Enter you NDS password (default password is your date of birth backwards e.g. 19821103, YYYYMMDD)

If you are unable to log into the STS and have completed your enrolment, our ITS Helpdesk may be able to assist you. You can contact the Helpdesk on any of the following contact details:

Phone: 9925 8888 (Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm)
Email: helpdesk@rmit.edu.au

I have just enrolled, when can I use the STS?

Students who complete their enrolment in person will need to wait approximately 3 days after having completed their enrolment, or until they receive their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) before creating their timetable on the STS.

After enrolling online, students are advised to wait 24 hours, or overnight before attempting to create their timetable online once the STS is available to students. This time is required to allow your enrolment information to be transferred over to the STS.

I have just changed my enrolment, when can I update my timetable on the STS?

If you made the changes to your enrolment in person, by completing forms, you will need to wait up to three days in order to see the changes on the STS. Once you can view the changes to your enrolment on the STS, you will be able to alter your timetable.

If you have varied, or changed your enrolment online, you will need to wait 24 hours or overnight before being able to see the changes to your enrolment on the STS, and before being able to create a timetable for any additional classes.

What do I have to timetable into?

All courses that appear on the STS will need to be timetabled into. If a course has a lecture and a tutorial on the STS, you will be required to timetable into both. After logging into the STS you will be required to read messages posted for classes, courses and programs. These messages may contain information relating to the classes that you are required to timetable into, therefore it is recommended that you read these messages carefully before creating your timetable.

My course(s) do not appear on the STS – what should I do?

If you are enrolled in a course that does not appear on the STS, you need to check that you are correctly enrolled in the course. If you are, contact the School that owns the course for advice on how to obtain timetable information.
for the missing course(s). View/print your enrolment details – you can view and print a statement of your enrolment details at any time using EOL. Log in and go to the Academic History menu or the Enrolment page.

I keep getting an error message – what does it mean?
If you receive the error message ‘Application Web Server Busy’, the cause may be related to the number of students connecting to the system. The STS is able to manage up to 500 concurrent users. Due to the heavy demand for the system at peak periods, you may experience error messages that indicate the server is busy - such as "Application Web Server Busy". If you have already logged in and are in the middle of time-tabling, you will not lose what you have already completed if you encounter this message. We recommend you wait 30 seconds and then refresh the page. Or log out and try again later.

At the times of year the Student Timetabling System is open to students, it is available from 6.00am – 11.30pm daily.

What do the Course/Class messages mean?
Course/Class messages are used to communicate important information to students enrolled in a course, or timetabled into a class. It is important that each time you log into the STS, that you take the time to read any of the messages posted on the STS as there may be important information regarding the way in which you are required to create your timetable.

I have a timetable clash(s), what should I do?
If you have created your timetable and find that you have a clash, try to resolve your clash by moving other classes around, or by selecting another class that does not create a clash. If you are unable to remove the clash, you are required to contact your School to discuss your options, which may require you to alter your enrolment.

If there are a number of students with the same clash as you, your School Timetabler may consider revising the timetable to reduce the number of students affected by the clash. Any changes to the timetable will be communicated to students using email, the STS messages or the DLS.

What can I do if all classes are full?
The first step is to read all of your messages at the start of the STS to ensure that you are required to timetable into the classes that are full. If there is a message stating that the classes are full for a reason that may be corrected shortly, be patient and check the STS regularly as spaces may open up soon after. If there are no messages posted about your class, contact your School for advice on whether there are any other spaces in the class.

How can I view my completed timetable?
To view your timetable, while in the STS, click on the ‘Grid Timetable’ button to view your grid timetable. By clicking on the ‘Printable Preview’ button, another window will open with your timetable that will print whilst keeping its format. Alternatively, you can select the ‘Email Timetable’ button to have your timetable emailed to you.

How do I change my timetable in the future?
To change your timetable after having completed it, you need to log into the STS and select the course that you want to change. By selecting the ‘Swap’ button, your timetable will change to the new time/day selected. Alternatively, to un-timetable yourself from a class, you can select the ‘Un-Timetable’ button, and then select an alternative class by selecting the ‘Add to Timetable’ button.