

Bash Glossary

Blank

A space or tab character.

Builtin

A command that is implemented internally by the shell itself, rather than by an executable program somewhere in the file system.

Control Operator

A token that performs a control function. It is a newline or one of the following: '|', '&&', '&', ';', ';;', ';&', ';&', '|', '|&', '(', or ')'.Name

Exit Status

The value returned by a command to its caller. The value is restricted to eight bits, so the maximum value is 255.

Field

A unit of text that is the result of one of the shell expansions. After expansion, when executing a command, the resulting fields are used as the command name and arguments.

Filename

A string of characters used to identify a file.

Job

A set of processes comprising a pipeline, and any processes descended from it, that are all in the same process group.

Job Control

A mechanism by which users can selectively stop (suspend) and restart (resume) execution of processes.

Metacharacter

A character that, when unquoted, separates words. A metacharacter is a space, tab, newline, or one of the following characters: '|', '&', ';', '(', ')', '<', or '>'.Name

A word consisting solely of letters, numbers, and underscores, and beginning with a letter or underscore. Names are used as shell variable and function names. Also referred to as an identifier.

Operator

A control operator or a redirection operator. Operators contain at least one unquoted metacharacter.

POSIX

A family of open system standards based on Unix. Bash is primarily concerned with the Shell and

Utilities portion of the POSIX 1003.1 standard.

Process Group

A collection of related processes each having the same process group ID.

Process Group ID

A unique identifier that represents a process group during its lifetime.

Reserved Word

A word that has a special meaning to the shell.

Return Status

A synonym for exit status.

Signal

A mechanism by which a process may be notified by the kernel of an event occurring in the system.

Special Builtin

A shell builtin command that has been classified as special by the POSIX standard.

Token

A sequence of characters considered a single unit by the shell. It is either a word or an operator.

Word

A sequence of characters treated as a unit by the shell.