

Viewing, Creating and Editing files

Creating files

So, in some previous sections, i have used echo command to direct the output into a file. While that could be one of the way to create a file on linux but it is not the ideal one.

Ideally, we use the touch command to perform this task. Let's create a file named passwords.txt

```
touch passwords.txt
```

Editing files

Of course, creating empty files is not very useful unless we can edit them. That's where text editors come into play. Linux offers a wide range of text editors, each with its own strengths and quirks. Some of the popular ones are - nano, vim and emacs.

These all are terminal based editors. Out of three mentioned, nano is the most simplest and beginner friendly, so we will stick to it only in this course. You can try out others also if you want.

To edit a file in nano, its really simple

```
nano passwords.txt
```

When we are done entring the data in the file. We can save and exit nano using Ctrl + Z command. If it asked you to save the buffer. Type Y and then hit enter.

Next, we also some GUI based editors like mousepad and gedit. Mousepad comes pre-installed in kali, so let's look into it.

```
mousepad passwords.txt
```

Viewing the files

Now that we have created and edited our files. Let's see how we can view the contents inside them. If you remember, when i was teaching you about the shadow and passwd files, i used a command to view the contents inside them.

That command was cat or concatenate. Cat is a command which is use to view the contents of a file.

```
cat passwords.txt
```

- We can also use head command to view the top 10 lines of the file. This helps us to quickly view what the file is about without making a mess of our terminal.

```
head passwords.txt
```

head command by default shows only 10 lines. If we want to view more, we can do that with the help of the -n flag. To view top 20 lines of the file.

```
head -n 20 passwords.txt
```

Same if we want to view the last 10 lines of the file. We can do that using the tail command.

```
tail passwords.txt
```

If the file is too large to fit on the screen, we can use the `less` command.

The `less` command allows us to navigate through the file using the arrow keys, search for specific text, and even scroll horizontally if the lines are too wide.

```
less passwords.txt
```
