

cd – change directory

When navigating the filesystem tree, changing your current directory is one of the basic actions.

In Unix, changing your current directory is accomplished by the **cd command**.

cd – change directory in Unix

The **cd** command syntax is very simple: just specify the directory you'd like to navigate to. At any moment of your navigation, feel free to use the [pwd command](#) to confirm your current directory:

```
ubuntu$ pwd
/home/greys
ubuntu$ cd /etc
ubuntu$ pwd
/etc
```

In this example, you can see how initially I was in my home directory, `/home/greys`, and then changed the directory to `/etc`.

cd .. command

In Unix and Unix-like operating systems, each directory contains two special entries:

- file `."` (dot) means the current directory
- file `.."` (two dots) means the parent directory

Using the `..` entry you can change to the parent directory (the one above your current directory), even without knowing the exact name of that parent directory.

For example:

```
ubuntu$ pwd
/home/greys
ubuntu$ cd ..
ubuntu$ pwd
/home
```

cd permission denied

If for some reason you can't change the directory, an error message will be shown:

```
ubuntu$ cd /tmp/protected/
bash: cd: /tmp/protected/: Permission denied
```

As you can probably tell from the error message, the problem is directory permissions. If we use the [ls command](#) to verify access permissions, we can see that in my example the `/tmp/protected` directory belongs to root, and only root can access it:

```
ubuntu$ ls -ald /tmp/protected/
drwxr-xr--  2 root      root          4096 Mar 25 09:36
/tmp/protected/
```

See also

- [Filesystem navigation commands](#)
- [Basic Unix commands](#)
- [ls command](#)