

Commands

man

Man pages contain not only information about user commands, but also documentation regarding system administration commands, programming interfaces, and more. The content of the manual is divided into sections that are numbered as follows:

SECTION	CONTENTS
1	User Commands
2	Programming interfaces for kernel system calls
3	Programming interfaces to the C library
4	Special files such as device nodes and drivers
5	File formats
6	Games and amusements such as screen-savers
7	Miscellaneous
8	System administration commands

Table 1 - man page organization

However, if we use the -k option with man, we can perform a keyword search as shown below:
man -k passwd

We can further narrow the search with the help of a regular expression:
man -k '^passwd\$'

apropos

With the *apropos*[3](#) command, we can search the list of man page descriptions for a possible match based on a keyword. Although this is a bit crude, it's often helpful for finding a particular command based on the description. Let's take a look at an example. Suppose that we want to partition a hard drive but can't remember the name of the command. We can figure this out with an *apropos* search for "partition".

```
apropos partition
```

which

The *which* command[1](#) searches through the directories that are defined in the *\$PATH* environment variable for a given file name. This variable contains a listing of directories that Kali searches when a command is issued without its path. If a match is found, *which* returns the full path to the file as shown below:

```
kali@kali:~$ echo $PATH
/usr/local/sbin:/usr/local/bin:/usr
/sbin:/usr/bin:/sbin:/bin

kali@kali:~$ which sbd
/usr/bin/sbd
```

locate

The *locate* command[2](#) is the quickest way to find the locations of files and directories in Kali. In order to provide a much shorter search time, *locate* searches a built-in database named *locate.db* rather than the entire hard disk itself. This database is automatically updated on a regular basis by the *cron* scheduler. To manually update the *locate.db* database, you can use the *updatedb* command.

find

The *find* command[3](#) is the most complex and flexible search tool among the three. Mastering its syntax can sometimes be tricky, but its capabilities go beyond a normal file search. The most basic usage of the *find* command is shown in Listing 14, where we perform a recursive search starting from the root file system directory and look for any file that starts with the letters "sbd".

```
kali@kali:~$ sudo find / -name  
sbd*  
/usr/bin/sbd  
/usr/share/doc/sbd  
/usr/share/windows-resources/sbd  
/usr/share/windows-resources  
/sbd/sbd.exe  
/usr/share/windows-resources  
/sbd/sbdbg.exe  
/var/cache/apt/archives  
/sbd_1.37-1kali3_amd64.deb  
/var/lib/dpkg/info/sbd.md5sums  
/var/lib/dpkg/info/sbd.list
```

Listing 14 - Exploring the find command

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