

Terminal Cheat Sheet

macOS

The everyday commands — find your way, make folders, move files. Python for Biologists.

Open the terminal

1. Press `Cmd` `Space`, type **Terminal**, hit `Return`
2. (or **Applications** → **Utilities** → **Terminal**)

You'll see a prompt ending in `%` — e.g. `you@mac ~ %`

Find your way

```
pwd          # where am I?
ls           # list files here
ls -l        # long: sizes, dates
ls -a        # include hidden (.files)
cd folder    # go into a folder
cd ..        # go up one level
cd ~         # go home (or just: cd)
clear        # clear the screen (Cmd K)
cat file.txt # show a file's contents
```

Make things

```
mkdir data    # make a folder
mkdir -p a/b/c # make nested folders
touch notes.txt # make an empty file
```

Paths use `/` (forward slash): `cd Documents/data`

Copy · move · delete

```
cp a.txt b.txt # copy a file
cp -r dir1 dir2 # copy a folder
mv a.txt data/  # move a file
mv old.txt new.txt # rename a file
rm file.txt     # delete a file
rm -r folder    # delete a folder
```

Careful: `rm` is permanent — there is no Trash or undo.

Help & shortcuts

```
man ls      # manual (press q to quit)
ls --help   # quick usage (some cmds)
```

`Tab` auto-completes names · `↑` `↓` scroll previous commands

PRO TIP

A nicer terminal — Warp

[warp.dev](#) is a free, modern terminal (same on Mac & Windows) with autocomplete and a built-in AI helper — a teacher, not a crutch. Download it, choose **Skip for now** (no account needed). Every command above works exactly the same in it.