
Subject: Re: Spawning Unix commands from IDL under bash

Posted by [wlandsman](#) on Sun, 12 Jun 2016 01:59:49 GMT

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Wow, bash turns out to be a lot more complicated than tcsh in this case.

Craig is correct (thanks!) that one creates a non-interactive shell when SPAWNING a bash command from IDL. But a non-interactive bash shell doesn't read .bashrc or .bash_profile or *any* file by default. Instead you have to set the environment variable BASH_ENV to point to the file with the alias commands.

But we are still not done because we need to tell bash to expand aliases. I have a vague idea why this is so, but I think my explanation would just come out as hand-waving. Anyway, one has to include the command

shopt -s expand_aliases

in the file containing the aliases.

Some of these tips come from the following post:

<http://stackoverflow.com/questions/1615877/why-aliases-in-a-non-interactive-bash-shell-do-not-work>

--Wayne

On Friday, June 10, 2016 at 2:30:12 PM UTC-4, Craig Markwardt wrote:

> On Friday, June 10, 2016 at 2:20:05 PM UTC-4, wlandsman wrote:

>> I've recently succumbed to peer pressure to switch my (Mac and Linux) shell from tcsh to bash.

>>

>> Everything is working fine except that I do not have access to the aliases defined in my .bash_profile (Mac) or .bashrc (linux) files when spawning from IDL. For example in my .bash_profile file I have

>>

>> alias ll="ls -l"

>>

>> I am able to use this alias at the system prompt but it is not recognized when spawning from the IDL prompt

>>

>> IDL> \$ll (or IDL> spawn,'ll')

>> bash: ll: command not found

>>

>> Note that this is not a PATH problem and IDL> spawn,'ls' does work.

>

> I think you are spawning an interactive non-login shell. See here...

>

> https://www.gnu.org/software/bash/manual/html_node/Bash-Startup-Files.html
>
> So it may depend whether your alias is defined in `.bashrc` or `.bash_profile`.
>
> Craig
