

Input Redirection

Just as the output of a command can be redirected to a file, so can the input of a command be redirected from a file. As the greater-than character > is used for output redirection, the less-than character < is used to redirect the input of a command.

The commands that normally take their input from the standard input can have their input redirected from a file in this manner. For example, to count the number of lines in the file users generated above, you can execute the command as follows –

```
$ wc -l users
```

```
2 users
```

```
$
```

Upon execution, you will receive the following output. You can count the number of lines in the file by redirecting the standard input of the wc command from the file users –

```
$ wc -l < users
```

```
2
```

```
$
```

Note that there is a difference in the output produced by the two forms of the wc command. In the first case, the name of the file users is listed with the line count; in the second case, it is not.

In the first case, wc knows that it is reading its input from the file users. In the second case, it only knows that it is reading its input from standard input so it does not display file name.