

Compress Entire Directory to tar archive

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tar files are compressed files that contain all files and folders from a given location. The advantage to using .tar files, other than the obvious (potential) space saving is that you can include all file/folder permissions in the .tar file that would potentially be lost if you were doing a straight copy.

Create .tar File

The basic syntax for tar is quite simple, here is an example:

```
tar -switches xxx.tar.gz ABC
```

There are many switches available for .tar, but the main ones we will be using are:

```
p == preserve permissions  
c == create archive  
v == verbose (print names while making tar)  
z == gzip  
f == tar file name
```

To create a .tar archive, where the file name is archive.tar and the target folder is /home/work we would use the following syntax.

```
tar -pcvzf archive.tar /home/work
```

Decompress .tar File

To decompress the .tar file, we use the same tar command, we must use the same switches if we wish to preserve the file/folder structure and the file/folder permissions (permissions are very important).

To decompress the archive.tar file we created earlier, use the following command:

```
tar -pcvzf archive.tar
```

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