Unix Command Summary:

This is a brief description of the unix commands you should find most useful. The commands you will probably need most immediatly are marked with an astrisk. The others are useful and/or illustrate how employing different options (called flags) can extend or change a command.

Not all unix commands have the exactly same function on different computers, so if you have a question about a command please consult the man pages (use "man commandname") where there is a "complete" description for the command and its options for your computer. You can also obtain "hints" for the names of commands that you might be interested in by using man -k keyword, where keyword is a word you think might be associated with the command you are interested in... doesn't always work, but it is the best first step to finding what you want.

For moving around directories, and finding files:

	Command Syntax	Description/Usage
*	cd	Change directory to $HOME
	cd 'directory name'	Change to directory named 'directory name'
	find . -name file-a -print	Find a file named file-a in any subdirectory, and print the location.
*	ls	Displays all files in directory.
*	ls -l	Displays all files in directory with file's attributes (date created, read/write permissions, etc.)
	ls -t	Displays all files in directory in time order (most recent file first)
	ls -lrt	Displays all files in directory with file's attributes in time order (oldest file first)
*	ls -l file-a*	Displays attributes of ALL files that begin with "file-a".
*	pwd	Displays present working directory.

For reading and writing files, creating and removing directories:

	Command Syntax	Description/Usage
	cat filename	Displays data in named file.
	cat file-a file-b > file-c	Copies file-a and file-b to file-c.
*	cp file-a file-b	Copies file-a to file-b
*	grep value filename	Searches for value in named file and displays found value's line of data.
*	lpr filename	Prints named file to default printer.
*	mkdir	Make a directory.
*	more filename	Displays named file. If the entire screen is full, hit enter and additional lines will be displayed along with the percent value of the program displayed. Hit 'h' for more commands.
*	mv file-a file-b	Moves file-a to file-b. Will replace file-b, if it currently exists.
*	rm filename	Removes named file.
*	rmdir 'directory name'	Removes named directory. Cannot remove directory until all files in that directory are removed.

	tail filename	Displays last 10 lines of named file.
	tail -1 filename	Displays last line of named file.
	tail -r filename	Display file in reverse order. Pipe it to more to read a file "backwards" (ie. tail -r filename | more)

Various applications for editing files and reading email (among a VERY large number available):

	Command Syntax	Description/Usage
*	emacs filename	Edits named file using GNU editor called emacs. Very powerful and popular.
	emacs -nw filename	Edits a file using emacs in the same window that the program is started in. This is very useful if you are NOT on an xterminal.
*	pine	A menu-driven email program that is configurable and probably the easiest to use; recommended text only.
	vi filename	Edits named file using VI editor. Found on nearly every unix platform.
	evince filename	For viewing pdf or postscript files.

Various commands for monitoring the system, and modifying your shell environment:

	Command Syntax	Description/Usage
	echo string	Echoes string value to screen. For example "echo $PATH", prints the value of PATH for your shell.
*	passwd	Used to change passwords. The system prompt you to enter your old password. After you enter that, the system will prompt you to enter your new password. The password must be at least six positions and contain at least two alpha characters and 1 numeric value. After keying in the new password, the system will ask you to re-enter the new password for verification purposes.
*	printenv	Prints all environment variables. Good for checking what a variable like PATH (which is a list of directories your shell searches for executable programs) is set to.
	top	Prints out a list of the heaviest users of CPU time.
*	w	Shows a list of all the users currently logged in.