Shell vs Bash vs Terminal vs TTY vs PTS vs Virtual Console

What is the difference between all of these things? This is a commonly asked question. Many people use them synonymous and many people use them incorrectly.

The obvious difference is this:

A shell is the home of a turtle, bash is what you do to a pinata, a terminal is at the end of an electric wire, tty should be a texting shorthand, pts is the abbreviation for points, and a console is a kind of cabinet. Smile - that was funny.

In terms of Linux:

**Shell** is the wrapper around our connection. Basically it is the shell in which we will type our commands.

**Bash** is the language of our commands that the shell uses. It stands for Bourne Again Shell.

**Terminal** is the program used to open/view the Shell which speaks in the Bash language. Software now does what hardware used to do. Terminal, TTY and Console used to mean pretty much the same thing.

**TTY** stands for teletype. It is our literal input connection that allows us to send commands to a computer. Such as a keyboard, mouse and other serial devices.

**PTS** stands for pseudo-teletype. It is a pseudo input connection that allows us to send commands to a computer. It acts like a physical connection without being directly connected. Such as an SSH connection.

**Virtual Console** allows us to have multiple desktops on one machine. To switch between virtual consoles in a Linux GUI it is ctrl+Alt+Fn (Alt + F7 is the default console).

Let's Begin

Most of your homework will be completed through a terminal and on the Linux computer called scratch.

Instructions to access this machine from any computer are provided in the Canvas page called SSH Connect From Home.

Open a terminal connection to scratch and then Read and Complete the Exercises in the Book

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