

mv (rename files)

This command is used to “move” (rename) files and directories. Invoke it like so:

```
mv -i SOURCE... DEST
```

This will move all SOURCE files and directories to DEST. The *-i* option (“interactive”) makes *mv* ask for permission before overwriting files. Leave out this option at your own risk! There may be multiple SOURCE files and directories, for example:

```
mv file1 file2 dir1 dir2
```

This will move file1, file2, and dir1 to dir2. *mv* is often used with wildcards, e.g.:

```
mv *.txt somedir
```

This will move all files ending in .txt to somedir. You should be aware of the fact that *mv* does not actually move data in most cases: it *renames* files. When you run *mv file dir*, for example, the content of file is not moved on your hard disk. The data stay where they are, but file is renamed to dir/file. Linux will only relocate the content of file if dir is on another file system, e.g. another disk partition. That's why *mv* can “move” a 5 gigabyte file in a fraction of a second.