

How to Display Hidden Files and Folder Sizes on Linux?

written by sysadmin | 9 July 2025

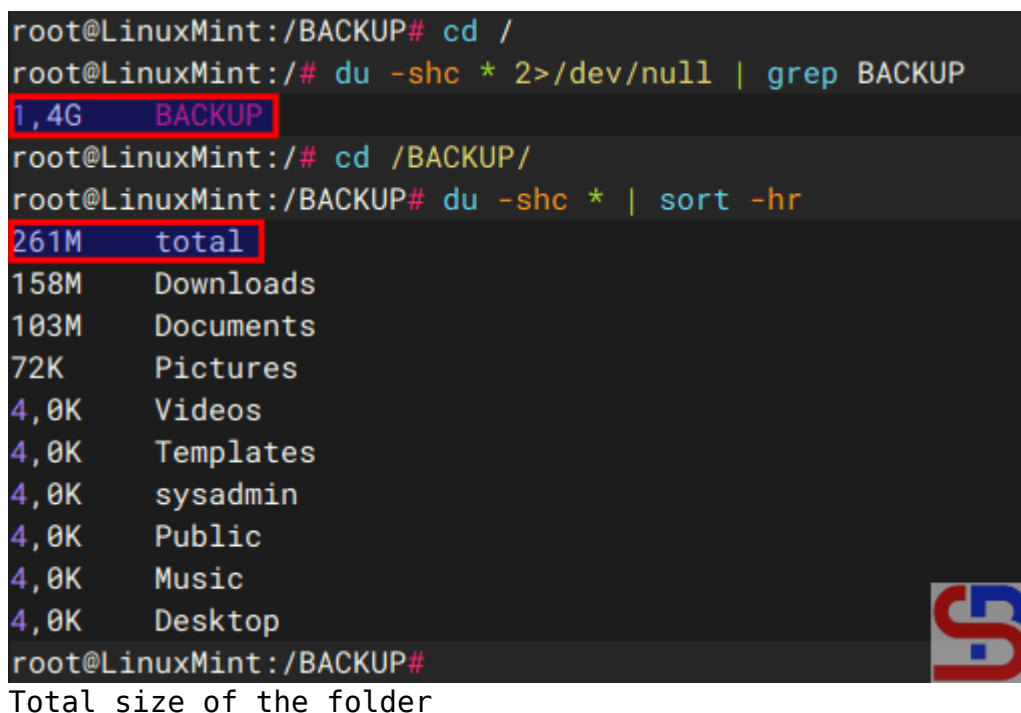
To see the total size of a folder in Linux usually sysadmin uses the command **du -sh***. However, this command has a drawback because it only displays the size of all files and folders visible in the Linux folder but cannot display the size of the files and folders hidden in a Linux folder.

Problem

How to display hidden files and folder sizes on Linux?

Solution

I have a **BACKUP** folder with a total folder size of 1.4GB, but, when I go to the folder and run the command **du -sh ***, it turns out that the size of all the files and folders in the folder is only 261 MB as shown in the image below:

A terminal window screenshot from LinuxMint. The user is in the /BACKUP directory. They run 'du -shc * 2>/dev/null | grep BACKUP' and see '1,4G BACKUP'. Then they run 'du -shc * | sort -hr' and see '261M total' followed by a list of subfolders and their sizes. A red box highlights '1,4G BACKUP' and another red box highlights '261M total'. A logo is in the bottom right corner of the terminal window.

```
root@LinuxMint:/BACKUP# cd /
root@LinuxMint:/# du -shc * 2>/dev/null | grep BACKUP
1,4G BACKUP
root@LinuxMint:/# cd /BACKUP/
root@LinuxMint:/BACKUP# du -shc * | sort -hr
261M total
158M Downloads
103M Documents
72K Pictures
4,0K Videos
4,0K Templates
4,0K sysadmin
4,0K Public
4,0K Music
4,0K Desktop
root@LinuxMint:/BACKUP#
```

Total size of the folder

So there is a difference of 1.1 GB from the total size of the BACKUP folder. The difference is that the **du -sh*** command does not count the hidden files and folders in a Linux folder. To display hidden files and folder sizes on Linux, use the command below:

```
du -shc .[^.]* 2>/dev/null | sort -hr
```

and it will look like in the image below:

```
root@LinuxMint:/BACKUP# du -shc .[^.]* 2>/dev/null | sort -hr
1,1G  total
574M  .config
365M  .cache
103M  .local
42M   .mozilla
84K   .xsession-errors
76K   .pki
28K   .wind
28K   .gnupg
24K   .cert
12K   .shutter
12K   .linuxmint
8,0K  .xsession-errors.old
4,0K  .Xauthority
4,0K  .profile
4,0K  .gtkrc-xfce
4,0K  .gtkrc-2.0
4,0K  .dirc
4,0K  .bashrc
4,0K  .bash_logout
4,0K  .bash_history
0     .sudo_as_admin_successful
0     .ICEauthority
root@LinuxMint:/BACKUP#
```

Total size of the hidden files/folders

As seen in the image above, the command only displays hidden files and directories and shows a total of 1.1 GB of hidden files and folders. If you want to display the size of the entire file or folder, both hidden and visible, use the command below:

```
du -shc * .* 2>/dev/null | sort -hr
```

there will be a display like the image below:

```
root@LinuxMint:/BACKUP# du -shc * .* 2>/dev/null | sort -hr
1,4G  total
574M  .config
365M  .cache
158M  Downloads
103M  .local
103M  Documents
42M   .mozilla
84K   .xsession-errors
76K   .pki
72K   Pictures
28K   .wind
28K   .gnupg
24K   .cert
12K   .shutter
12K   .linuxmint
8,0K  .xsession-errors.old
4,0K  .Xauthority
4,0K  Videos
4,0K  Templates
4,0K  sysadmin
4,0K  Public
4,0K  .profile
4,0K  Music
4,0K  .gtkrc-xfce
4,0K  .gtkrc-2.0
4,0K  .dmrc
4,0K  Desktop
4,0K  .bashrc
4,0K  .bash_logout
4,0K  .bash_history
0     .sudo_as_admin_successful
0     .ICEauthority
```

Total size of all the files/folders

You can see the total size of a file and folder, both visible and hidden, like the image above.

Note

You can view file sizes and directories on Linux by using an application named **ncdu**. To install it, enter the following command:

Ubuntu/Debian

```
sudo apt update  
sudo apt install ncdu
```

RockyLinux/AlmaLinux/CentOS

```
sudo dnf install epel-release  
sudo dnf update  
sudo dnf install ncdu
```

OpenSUSE

```
sudo zypper refresh  
sudo zypper install ncdu
```

Next, choose the folder you wish to view to see the overall size of the files and folders included within. If you want to see the total of all folders in Linux, log in as a root user and type the command below:

```
ncdu -x /
```

then the application will scan and after the scanning process is complete it will display the total size of all folders in Linux as shown in the image below:

```
ncdu 1.19 ~ Use the arrow keys to navigate, press ? for help
--- /BACKUP/sysadmin -----
/..
574,0 MiB [#####] /.config
364,4 MiB [#####] /.cache
157,9 MiB [#####] /Downloads
102,7 MiB [#####] /.local
102,4 MiB [#####] /Documents
41,9 MiB [##] /.mozilla
84,0 KiB [ ] .xsession-errors
76,0 KiB [ ] /.pki
72,0 KiB [ ] /Pictures
28,0 KiB [ ] /.wind
28,0 KiB [ ] /.gnupg
24,0 KiB [ ] /.cert
12,0 KiB [ ] /.linuxmint
12,0 KiB [ ] /.shutter
8,0 KiB [ ] .xsession-errors.old
e 4,0 KiB [ ] /Videos
e 4,0 KiB [ ] /Templates
e 4,0 KiB [ ] /Public
e 4,0 KiB [ ] /Music
e 4,0 KiB [ ] /Desktop
4,0 KiB [ ] .bashrc
4,0 KiB [ ] .profile
4,0 KiB [ ] .gtkrc-xfce
4,0 KiB [ ] .bash_logout
4,0 KiB [ ] .bash_history
4,0 KiB [ ] .Xauthority
4,0 KiB [ ] .dmrc
4,0 KiB [ ] .gtkrc-2.0
0,0 B [ ] .sudo_as_admin_successful
0,0 B [ ] .ICEauthority
```



Total size of all folders in Linux

Please select the folder you want to enter and press the **Enter** key to enter the folder. I choose the BACKUP folder and push the Enter button, it will display like the image below:

```
ncdu 1.14.1 ~ Use the arrow keys to navigate, press ? for help
-- / -----
16.6 GiB [#####] /opt
 9.0 GiB [#####] /var
 4.6 GiB [##] /usr
 2.6 GiB [#] /root
219.2 MiB [ ] /boot
137.6 MiB [ ] /home
 7.2 MiB [ ] /etc
 60.0 KiB [ ] /tmp
 36.0 KiB [ ] /snap
e 16.0 KiB [ ] /lost+found
 8.0 KiB [ ] /.cache
e 4.0 KiB [ ] /temp
e 4.0 KiB [ ] /srv
e 4.0 KiB [ ] /mnt
e 4.0 KiB [ ] /media
@ 0.0 B [ ] libx32
@ 0.0 B [ ] lib64
@ 0.0 B [ ] lib32
@ 0.0 B [ ] sbin
@ 0.0 B [ ] lib
@ 0.0 B [ ] bin
> 0.0 B [ ] /sys
> 0.0 B [ ] /run
> 0.0 B [ ] /proc
> 0.0 B [ ] /dev
```



Enter into the BACKUP folder

The `-x` option in the above command means that he will ignore other mounted filesystems outside where the root filesystem is hosted. If you want to use more options in this application, please read the description using the command below:

`man ncdu`

References

askubuntu.com

unix.stackexchange.com

stackoverflow.com