



# Tech Info Library

## A/UX: Shell Argument Limit

Revised: 9/16/92  
Security: Everyone

A/UX: Shell Argument Limit

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Article Created: 3 April 1989

### Article Change History

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08/27/92 - REVIEWED  
o For technical accuracy.

### TOPIC -----

Some users have tried unsuccessfully to pass large command-line arguments.

### DISCUSSION -----

The problem with the large command line is a shell problem; the shell can't work with the large command line parameters. Passing a large command line to "awk" or to other utilities creates problems. For example, If you try to "echo" a lot of characters (as shown below), it won't work.

```
1 echo '
2 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
3 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
. :::
. ' a lot more X's '
. :::
24 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
25 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
26 '
```

The Korn shell has the same problem, only it allows a much larger number of characters. The Korn shell doesn't dump a core, while "csh" and "sh" do. It seems that the A/UX shells (Bourne, Csh, or Korn) have limitations on the size of their arguments.

The same echo command is successful on a BSD UNIX system.

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Tech Info Library Article Number:3782