

How to display JSON string in a human readable format on Linux

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Question: I have JSON-formatted string. Is there a quick and easy way to display JSON string in a human readable format, preferably from the command line on Linux?

When you are developing a web application, you may often deal with JSON-formatted input/output. When you are inspecting such JSON-formatted data, you may want to see it in a human-readable format (e.g., with proper indentation and line breaks).

In this case, you can use Python's JSON tool. This tool is used to validate and "pretty-print" any JSON-formatted text. It can be invoked with Python interpreter with "-m" option.

For example:

```
$ JSON_STRING='{"name":"Google","location":{"street":"1600 Amphitheatre Parkway","city":"Mountain View","state":"California","country": "US"},"employees":[{"name":"Michael","division":"Engineering"}, {"name":"Laura","division":"HR"}, {"name":"Elise","division":"Marketing"}]}'
$ echo $JSON_STRING | python -mjson.tool
```

```
{
  "employees": [
    {
      "name": "Michael",
      "division": "Engineering",
    },
    {
      "name": "Laura",
      "division": "HR",
    },
    {
      "name": "Elise",
      "division": "Marketing",
    }
  ],
  "location": {
    "street": "1600 Amphitheatre Parkway",
    "city": "Mountain View",
    "state": "California",
    "country": "US",
  },
  "name": "Google"
}
```

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```
$ JSON_STRING='{ "name": "Google", "location": { "street": "1600 Amphitheatre Parkway", "city": "Mountain View", "state": "California", "country": "US" }, "employees": [ { "name": "Michael", "division": "Engineering" }, { "name": "Laura", "division": "HR" }, { "name": "Elise", "division": "Marketing" } ] }'
$ echo $JSON_STRING | python -mjson.tool
{
  "employees": [
    {
      "division": "Engineering",
      "name": "Michael"
    },
    {
      "division": "HR",
      "name": "Laura"
    },
    {
      "division": "Marketing",
      "name": "Elise"
    }
  ],
  "location": {
    "city": "Mountain View",
    "country": "US",
    "state": "California",
    "street": "1600 Amphitheatre Parkway"
  },
  "name": "Google"
}
```

If you are looking to extract individual elements in a JSON-formatted string, you may want to use a more powerful [JSON parsing tool such as jq](#).