

# How to Combine Files With “CAT” at the Command Line

## Introduction:

When working from a terminal shell, you can use the “cat” command to combine files.

### Simple case of two or a few files:

If you have two files that you wish to merge, file1.txt and file2.txt, you can merge them into a single file with the following command:

```
cat file1.fastq file2.fastq > combined_files_1_2.fastq
```

This can be extended for any number of files that you are willing to type.

### More complicated case of many files in a single folder

If you have many files with the same extension that you need to merge, you can put them in the same folder, navigate to that folder from the terminal shell, and use the following command:

```
cat *.fastq > 1all.fastq
```

The “\*” is a wildcard symbol, so this will merge all files with a .fastq extension into a single file called 1all.fastq. Starting the file with “1” is useful so it appears at the top of the folder. You should obviously not have .fastq files that you do not want to be included in this folder. You can also merge files with any type of extension.