The Private Internet Access desktop client includes a command-line interface that can be used to control some functionality of the PIA client from scripts.

**Invoking `piactl`**

**Windows**

On Windows, specify the full path to `piactl.exe` or change into the PIA installation directory and invoke it. For example:

```
"C:\Program Files\Private Internet Access\piactl.exe" --help
"C:\Program Files\Private Internet Access\piactl.exe"
connect
```

Or:

```
cd "C:\Program Files\Private Internet Access"
piactl --help
piactl connect
```

We do **not** recommend adding the PIA installation directory to PATH on Windows, as this would also add the DLLs shipped by PIA to PATH.

`piactl` in example commands, substitute the full path on Windows as needed.

**Mac and Linux**

On Mac and Linux, `piactl` is symlinked into `/usr/local/bin` at installation time if possible, so normally `piactl` is sufficient from a command line. For example:

```
piactl --help
piactl connect
```

This requires that:

- There isn't already a file called `piactl` in `/usr/local/bin`
- `/usr/local/bin` is already in your **PATH** (PIA does not alter **PATH**)
- On Linux, the directory `/usr/local/bin` must already exist.
Otherwise, the full path to `piactl` can be used - on Mac: `/Applications/Private Internet Access.app/Contents/MacOS/piactl`; on Linux: `/opt/piavpn/bin/piactl`.

Part 2 will cover the `--help` command to display usage information and Part 3 will cover all other commands.

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- Command Line Interface

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