

NAME

man - display manual pages

SYNOPSIS

man [**-acfhlw**] [**-C file**] [**-M path**] [**-m path**] [**-S subsection**] [[**-s**] *section*] *name* ...

DESCRIPTION

The **man** utility displays the manual pages entitled *name*. Pages may be selected according to a specific category (*section*) or machine architecture (*subsection*).

The options are as follows:

- a** Display all matching manual pages. Normally, only the first page found is displayed.
- C file** Use the specified *file* instead of the default configuration file. This permits users to configure their own manual environment. See *man.conf(5)* for a description of the contents of this file.
- c** Copy the manual page to the standard output instead of using *more(1)* to paginate it. This is done by default if the standard output is not a terminal device.

When using **-c**, most terminal devices are unable to show the markup. To print the output of **man** to the terminal with markup but without using a pager, pipe it to *ul(1)*. To remove the markup, pipe the output to *col(1)* **-b** instead.

- f** A synonym for *whatis(1)*. It searches for *name* in manual page names and displays the header lines from all matching pages. The search is case insensitive and matches whole words only.
- h** Display only the SYNOPSIS lines of the requested manual pages. Implies **-a** and **-c**.
- k** A synonym for *apropos(1)*. Instead of *name*, an expression can be provided using the syntax described in the *apropos(1)* manual. By default, it displays the header lines of all matching pages.
- l** A synonym for *mandoc(1)*. The *name* arguments are interpreted as filenames. No search is done and *file*, *path*, *section*, *subsection*, and **-w** are ignored. This option implies **-a**.

-M path

Override the list of standard directories which **man** searches for manual pages. The supplied *path* must be a colon (':') separated list of directories. This search path may also be set using the environment variable **MANPATH**.

-m *path*

Augment the list of standard directories which **man** searches for manual pages. The supplied *path* must be a colon (':') separated list of directories. These directories will be searched before the standard directories or the directories specified using the **-M** option or the **MANPATH** environment variable.

-S *subsection*

Only show pages for the specified machine(1) architecture. *subsection* is case insensitive.

By default manual pages for all architectures are installed. Therefore this option can be used to view pages for one architecture whilst using another.

This option overrides the **MACHINE** environment variable.

[-s] *section*

Only select manuals from the specified *section*. The currently available sections are:

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | General commands (tools and utilities). |
| 2 | System calls and error numbers. |
| 3 | Library functions. |
| 3p | perl(1) programmer's reference guide. |
| 4 | Device drivers. |
| 5 | File formats. |
| 6 | Games. |
| 7 | Miscellaneous information. |
| 8 | System maintenance and operation commands. |
| 9 | Kernel internals. |

If not specified and a match is found in more than one section, the first match is selected from the following list: 1, 8, 6, 2, 3, 5, 7, 4, 9, 3p.

-w List the pathnames of all matching manual pages instead of displaying any of them.

The options **-IKOTW** are also supported and are documented in **mandoc(1)**. The options **-fkl** are mutually exclusive and override each other.

Guidelines for writing man pages can be found in **mdoc(7)**.

If both a formatted and an unformatted version of the same manual page, for example *cat1/foo.0* and *man1/foo.1*, exist in the same directory, only the unformatted version is used.

ENVIRONMENT

- MACHINE** As some manual pages are intended only for specific architectures, **man** searches any subdirectories, with the same name as the current architecture, in every directory which it searches. Machine specific areas are checked before general areas. The current machine type may be overridden by setting the environment variable **MACHINE** to the name of a specific architecture, or with the **-S** option. **MACHINE** is case insensitive.
- MANPAGER** Any non-empty value of the environment variable **MANPAGER** is used instead of the standard pagination program, **more(1)**. If **less(1)** is used, the interactive **:t** command can be used to go to the definitions of various terms, for example command line options, command modifiers, internal commands, environment variables, function names, preprocessor macros, **errno(2)** values, and some other emphasized words. Some terms may have defining text at more than one place. In that case, the **less(1)** interactive commands **t** and **T** can be used to move to the next and to the previous place providing information about the term last searched for with **:t**.
- MANPATH** The standard search path used by **man** may be changed by specifying a path in the **MANPATH** environment variable. The format of the path is a colon (‘:’) separated list of directories. Invalid paths are ignored. Overridden by **-M**, ignored if **-I** is specified.
- If **MANPATH** begins with a colon, it is appended to the default list; if it ends with a colon, it is prepended to the default list; or if it contains two adjacent colons, the standard search path is inserted between the colons. If none of these conditions are met, it overrides the standard search path.
- PAGER** Specifies the pagination program to use when **MANPAGER** is not defined. If neither **PAGER** nor **MANPAGER** is defined, **more(1)** **-s** is used.

FILES

/etc/man.conf default man configuration file

EXIT STATUS

The **man** utility exits 0 on success, and >0 if an error occurs. See **mandoc(1)** for details.

EXAMPLES

Format a page for pasting extracts into an email message -- avoid printing any UTF-8 characters, reduce the width to ease quoting in replies, and remove markup:

```
$ man -T ascii -O width=65 pledge | col -b
```

Read a typeset page in a PDF viewer:

```
$ MANPAGER=mupdf man -T pdf lpd
```

SEE ALSO

`apropos(1)`, `col(1)`, `mandoc(1)`, `ul(1)`, `whereis(1)`, `man.conf(5)`, `mdoc(7)`

STANDARDS

The **man** utility is compliant with the IEEE Std 1003.1-2008 ("POSIX.1") specification.

The flags **[‐aCcfhIKlMmOSsTWw]**, as well as the environment variables **MACHINE**, **MANPAGER**, and **MANPATH**, are extensions to that specification.

HISTORY

A **man** command first appeared in Version 3 AT&T UNIX.

The **-w** option first appeared in Version 7 AT&T UNIX; **-f** and **-k** in 4BSD; **-M** in 4.3BSD; **-a** in 4.3BSD-Tahoe; **-c** and **-m** in 4.3BSD-Reno; **-h** in 4.3BSD-Net/2; **-C** in NetBSD 1.0; **-s** and **-S** in OpenBSD 2.3; and **-I**, **-K**, **-l**, **-O**, and **-W** in OpenBSD 5.7. The **-T** option first appeared in AT&T System III UNIX and was also added in OpenBSD 5.7.