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Rocky Enterprise Linux 9.2 Manual Pages on command 'visudo.8'

\$ man visudo.8

VISUDO(8) BSD System Manager's Manual VISUDO(8)

NAME

visudo ? edit the sudoers file

SYNOPSIS

visudo [-chOPqsV] [[-f] sudoers]

DESCRIPTION

visudo edits the sudoers file in a safe fashion, analogous to vipw(8). visudo locks the sudoers file against multiple simultaneous edits, performs basic validity checks, and checks for syntax errors before installing the edited file. If the sudoers file is currently being edited you will receive a message to try again later.

visudo parses the sudoers file after editing and will not save the changes if there is a syntax error. Upon finding an error, visudo will print a message stating the line number(s) where the error occurred and the user will receive the ?What now?? prompt. At this point the user may enter ?e? to re-edit the sudoers file, ?x? to exit without saving the changes, or ?Q? to quit and save changes. The ?Q? option should be used with extreme caution because if visudo believes there to be a syntax error, so will sudo. If ?e? is typed to edit the sudoers file after a syntax error has been detected, the cursor will be placed on the line where the error occurred (if the editor supports this feature).

There are two sudoers settings that determine which editor visudo will run.

editor A colon (?:?) separated list of editors allowed to be used with visudo. visudo will choose the editor that matches the user's SUDO_EDITOR, VISUAL, or EDITOR environment variable if possible, or the first editor in the list that exists and is executable. Note that sudo does not preserve the SUDO_EDITOR, VISUAL, or EDITOR

environment variables unless they are present in the `env_keep` list or the `env_reset` option is disabled in the `sudoers` file. The default editor path is `/usr/bin/editor` which can be set at compile time via the `--with-editor` configure option.

`env_editor`

If set, `visudo` will use the value of the `SUDO_EDITOR`, `VISUAL`, or `EDITOR` environment variables before falling back on the default editor list. Note that `visudo` is typically run as root so this option may allow a user with `visudo` privileges to run arbitrary commands as root without logging. An alternative is to place a colon-separated list of "safe" editors into the `editor` variable. `visudo` will then only use `SUDO_EDITOR`, `VISUAL`, or `EDITOR` if they match a value specified in `editor`. If the `env_reset` flag is enabled, the `SUDO_EDITOR`, `VISUAL`, and/or `EDITOR` environment variables must be present in the `env_keep` list for the `env_editor` flag to function when `visudo` is invoked via `sudo`. The default value is `on`, which can be set at compile time via the `--with-env-editor` configure option.

The options are as follows:

`-c, --check`

Enable check-only mode. The existing `sudoers` file (and any other files it includes) will be checked for syntax errors. If the path to the `sudoers` file was not specified, `visudo` will also check the file ownership and permissions (see the `-O` and `-P` options). A message will be printed to the standard output describing the status of `sudoers` unless the `-q` option was specified. If the check completes successfully, `visudo` will exit with a value of 0. If an error is encountered, `visudo` will exit with a value of 1.

`-f sudoers, --file=sudoers`

Specify an alternate `sudoers` file location, see below. As of version 1.8.27, the `sudoers` path can be specified without using the `-f` option.

`-h, --help` Display a short help message to the standard output and exit.

`-O, --owner`

Enforce the default ownership (user and group) of the `sudoers` file. In edit mode, the owner of the edited file will be set to the default. In check mode (`-c`), an error will be reported if the owner is incorrect. This option is enabled by default if the `sudoers` file was not specified.

-P, --perms

Enforce the default permissions (mode) of the sudoers file. In edit mode, the permissions of the edited file will be set to the default. In check mode (-c), an error will be reported if the file permissions are incorrect. This option is enabled by default if the sudoers file was not specified.

-q, --quiet

Enable quiet mode. In this mode details about syntax errors are not printed. This option is only useful when combined with the -c option.

-s, --strict

Enable strict checking of the sudoers file. If an alias is referenced but not actually defined or if there is a cycle in an alias, visudo will consider this a syntax error. Note that it is not possible to differentiate between an alias and a host name or user name that consists solely of uppercase letters, digits, and the underscore (?_?) character.

-V, --version

Print the visudo and sudoers grammar versions and exit.

A sudoers file may be specified instead of the default, /etc/sudoers. The temporary file used is the specified sudoers file with ?.tmp? appended to it. In check-only mode only, ?-? may be used to indicate that sudoers will be read from the standard input. Because the policy is evaluated in its entirety, it is not sufficient to check an individual sudoers include file for syntax errors.

Debugging and sudoers plugin arguments

visudo versions 1.8.4 and higher support a flexible debugging framework that is configured via Debug lines in the sudo.conf(5) file.

Starting with sudo 1.8.12, visudo will also parse the arguments to the sudoers plugin to override the default sudoers path name, user-ID, group-ID, and file mode. These arguments, if present, should be listed after the path to the plugin (i.e., after sudoers.so). Multiple arguments may be specified, separated by white space. For example:

```
Plugin sudoers_policy sudoers.so sudoers_mode=0400
```

The following arguments are supported:

`sudoers_file=pathname`

The `sudoers_file` argument can be used to override the default path to the sudoers file.

sudoers_uid=user-ID

The sudoers_uid argument can be used to override the default owner of the sudoers file. It should be specified as a numeric user-ID.

sudoers_gid=group-ID

The sudoers_gid argument can be used to override the default group of the sudoers file. It must be specified as a numeric group-ID (not a group name).

sudoers_mode=mode

The sudoers_mode argument can be used to override the default file mode for the sudoers file. It should be specified as an octal value.

For more information on configuring sudo.conf(5), please refer to its manual.

ENVIRONMENT

The following environment variables may be consulted depending on the value of the editor and env_editor sudoers settings:

SUDO_EDITOR Invoked by visudo as the editor to use

VISUAL Used by visudo if SUDO_EDITOR is not set

EDITOR Used by visudo if neither SUDO_EDITOR nor VISUAL is set

FILES

/etc/sudo.conf Sudo front-end configuration

/etc/sudoers List of who can run what

/etc/sudoers.tmp Default temporary file used by visudo

DIAGNOSTICS

In addition to reporting sudoers syntax errors, visudo may produce the following messages:

sudoers file busy, try again later.

Someone else is currently editing the sudoers file.

/etc/sudoers: Permission denied

You didn't run visudo as root.

you do not exist in the passwd database

Your user-ID does not appear in the system passwd database.

Warning: {User,Runas,Host,Cmnd}_Alias referenced but not defined

Either you are trying to use an undeclared {User,Runas,Host,Cmnd}_Alias or you have a user or host name listed that consists solely of uppercase letters, digits, and the underscore (?_?) character. In the latter case, you can ignore the warnings (sudo will not complain). The message is prefixed with the path name of the sudoers file

and the line number where the undefined alias was used. In -s (strict) mode these are errors, not warnings.

Warning: unused {User,Runas,Host,Cmnd}_Alias

The specified {User,Runas,Host,Cmnd}_Alias was defined but never used. The message is prefixed with the path name of the sudoers file and the line number where the unused alias was defined. You may wish to comment out or remove the unused alias.

Warning: cycle in {User,Runas,Host,Cmnd}_Alias

The specified {User,Runas,Host,Cmnd}_Alias includes a reference to itself, either directly or through an alias it includes. The message is prefixed with the path name of the sudoers file and the line number where the cycle was detected. This is only a warning unless visudo is run in -s (strict) mode as sudo will ignore cycles when parsing the sudoers file.

unknown defaults entry "name"

The sudoers file contains a Defaults setting not recognized by visudo.

SEE ALSO

vi(1), sudo.conf(5), sudoers(5), sudo(8), vipw(8)

AUTHORS

Many people have worked on sudo over the years; this version consists of code written primarily by:

Todd C. Miller

See the CONTRIBUTORS file in the sudo distribution (<https://www.sudo.ws/contributors.html>) for an exhaustive list of people who have contributed to sudo.

CAVEATS

There is no easy way to prevent a user from gaining a root shell if the editor used by visudo allows shell escapes.

BUGS

If you feel you have found a bug in visudo, please submit a bug report at <https://bugzilla.sudo.ws/>

SUPPORT

Limited free support is available via the sudo-users mailing list, see <https://www.sudo.ws/mailman/listinfo/sudo-users> to subscribe or search the archives.

DISCLAIMER

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