

**NAME**

mesg – display (or do not display) messages from other users

**SYNOPSIS**

**mesg** [option] [n|y]

**DESCRIPTION**

The **mesg** utility is invoked by a user to control write access others have to the terminal device associated with standard error output. If write access is allowed, then programs such as **talk**(1) and **write**(1) may display messages on the terminal.

Traditionally, write access is allowed by default. However, as users become more conscious of various security risks, there is a trend to remove write access by default, at least for the primary login shell. To make sure your ttys are set the way you want them to be set, **mesg** should be executed in your login scripts.

The **mesg** utility silently exits with error status 2 if not executed on terminal. In this case execute **mesg** is pointless. The command line option **--verbose** forces mesg to print a warning in this situation. This behaviour has been introduced in version 2.33.

**ARGUMENTS**

- n** Disallow messages.
- y** Allow messages to be displayed.

If no arguments are given, **mesg** shows the current message status on standard error output.

**OPTIONS**

- v, --verbose**  
Explain what is being done.
- V, --version**  
Display version information and exit.
- h, --help**  
Display help text and exit.

**EXIT STATUS**

The **mesg** utility exits with one of the following values:

- 0** Messages are allowed.
- 1** Messages are not allowed.
- >1** An error has occurred.

**FILES**

*/dev/[pt]ty[pg]?*

**SEE ALSO**

**login**(1), **talk**(1), **write**(1), **wall**(1), **xterm**(1)

**HISTORY**

A **mesg** command appeared in Version 6 AT&T UNIX.

**AVAILABILITY**

The mesg command is part of the util-linux package and is available from <https://www.kernel.org/pub/linux/utils/util-linux/>.