

NAME

passwd – the password file

DESCRIPTION

/etc/passwd contains one line for each user account, with seven fields delimited by colons (“:”). These fields are:

- login name
- optional encrypted password
- numerical user ID
- numerical group ID
- user name or comment field
- user home directory
- optional user command interpreter

If the *password* field is a lower-case “x”, then the encrypted password is actually stored in the **shadow**(5) file instead; there *must* be a corresponding line in the */etc/shadow* file, or else the user account is invalid.

The encrypted *password* field may be empty, in which case no password is required to authenticate as the specified login name. However, some applications which read the */etc/passwd* file may decide not to permit *any* access at all if the *password* field is blank.

A *password* field which starts with an exclamation mark means that the password is locked. The remaining characters on the line represent the *password* field before the password was locked.

Refer to **crypt**(3) for details on how this string is interpreted.

If the password field contains some string that is not a valid result of **crypt**(3), for instance ! or *, the user will not be able to use a unix password to log in (but the user may log in the system by other means).

The comment field is used by various system utilities, such as **finger**(1).

The home directory field provides the name of the initial working directory. The **login** program uses this information to set the value of the **\$HOME** environmental variable.

The command interpreter field provides the name of the user's command language interpreter, or the name of the initial program to execute. The **login** program uses this information to set the value of the **\$SHELL** environmental variable. If this field is empty, it defaults to the value */bin/sh*.

FILES

/etc/passwd

User account information.

/etc/shadow

optional encrypted password file

/etc/passwd-

Backup file for */etc/passwd*.

Note that this file is used by the tools of the shadow toolsuite, but not by all user and password management tools.

SEE ALSO

crypt(3), **getent**(1), **getpwnam**(3), **login**(1), **passwd**(1), **pwck**(8), **pwconv**(8), **pwunconv**(8), **shadow**(5), **su**(1), **sulogin**(8).