

NAME

tzfile – timezone information

DESCRIPTION

The timezone information files used by **tzset(3)** are typically found under a directory with a name like */usr/share/zoneinfo*. These files begin with a 44-byte header containing the following fields:

- * The magic four-byte ASCII sequence “TZif” identifies the file as a timezone information file.
- * A byte identifying the version of the file’s format (as of 2017, either an ASCII NUL, or “2”, or “3”).
- * Fifteen bytes containing zeros reserved for future use.
- * Six four-byte integer values written in a standard byte order (the high-order byte of the value is written first). These values are, in order:

tzh_ttisgmtcnt

The number of UT/local indicators stored in the file.

tzh_ttisstdcnt

The number of standard/wall indicators stored in the file.

tzh_leapcnt

The number of leap seconds for which data entries are stored in the file.

tzh_timecnt

The number of transition times for which data entries are stored in the file.

tzh_typecnt

The number of local time types for which data entries are stored in the file (must not be zero).

tzh_charcnt

The number of bytes of time zone abbreviation strings stored in the file.

The above header is followed by the following fields, whose lengths depend on the contents of the header:

- * *tzh_timecnt* four-byte signed integer values sorted in ascending order. These values are written in standard byte order. Each is used as a transition time (as returned by **time(2)**) at which the rules for computing local time change.
- * *tzh_timecnt* one-byte unsigned integer values; each one but the last tells which of the different types of local time types described in the file is associated with the time period starting with the same-indexed transition time and continuing up to but not including the next transition time. (The last time type is present only for consistency checking with the POSIX-style TZ string described below.) These values serve as indices into the next field.
- * *tzh_typecnt* *ttinfo* entries, each defined as follows:

```
struct ttinfo {
    int32_t      tt_gmtoff;
    unsigned char tt_isdst;
    unsigned char tt_abbrind;
};
```

Each structure is written as a four-byte signed integer value for *tt_gmtoff*, in a standard byte order, followed by a one-byte value for *tt_isdst* and a one-byte value for *tt_abbrind*. In each structure, *tt_gmtoff* gives the number of seconds to be added to UT, *tt_isdst* tells whether *tm_isdst* should be set by **localtime(3)** and *tt_abbrind* serves as an index into the array of time zone abbreviation bytes that follow the *ttinfo* structure(s) in the file.

- * *tzh_leapcnt* pairs of four-byte values, written in standard byte order; the first value of each pair gives the nonnegative time (as returned by **time(2)**) at which a leap second occurs; the second gives the *total* number of leap seconds to be applied during the time period starting at the given time. The pairs of values are sorted in ascending order by time. Each transition is for one leap second, either positive or negative;

transitions always separated by at least 28 days minus 1 second.

- * *tz_ttisstdcnt* standard/wall indicators, each stored as a one-byte value; they tell whether the transition times associated with local time types were specified as standard time or wall clock time, and are used when a timezone file is used in handling POSIX-style timezone environment variables.
- * *tz_ttisgmtcnt* UT/local indicators, each stored as a one-byte value; they tell whether the transition times associated with local time types were specified as UT or local time, and are used when a timezone file is used in handling POSIX-style timezone environment variables.

The **localtime(3)** function uses the first standard-time *tinfo* structure in the file (or simply the first *tinfo* structure in the absence of a standard-time structure) if either *tz_timecnt* is zero or the time argument is less than the first transition time recorded in the file.

NOTES

This manual page documents `<tzfile.h>` in the glibc source archive, see *timezone/tzfile.h*.

It seems that *timezone* uses **tzfile** internally, but glibc refuses to expose it to userspace. This is most likely because the standardised functions are more useful and portable, and actually documented by glibc. It may only be in glibc just to support the non-glibc-maintained *timezone* data (which is maintained by some other entity).

Version 2 format

For version-2-format timezone files, the above header and data are followed by a second header and data, identical in format except that eight bytes are used for each transition time or leap second time. (Leap second counts remain four bytes.) After the second header and data comes a newline-enclosed, POSIX-TZ-environment-variable-style string for use in handling instants after the last transition time stored in the file or for all instants if the file has no transitions. The POSIX-style TZ string is empty (i.e., nothing between the newlines) if there is no POSIX representation for such instants. If nonempty, the POSIX-style TZ string must agree with the local time type after the last transition time if present in the eight-byte data; for example, given the string “WETOWEST,M3.5.0,M10.5.0/3” then if a last transition time is in July, the transition’s local time type must specify a daylight-saving time abbreviated “WEST” that is one hour east of UT. Also, if there is at least one transition, time type 0 is associated with the time period from the indefinite past up to but not including the earliest transition time.

Version 3 format

For version-3-format timezone files, the POSIX-TZ-style string may use two minor extensions to the POSIX TZ format, as described in **newtzset(3)**. First, the hours part of its transition times may be signed and range from -167 through 167 instead of the POSIX-required unsigned values from 0 through 24 . Second, DST is in effect all year if it starts January 1 at 00:00 and ends December 31 at 24:00 plus the difference between daylight saving and standard time.

Future changes to the format may append more data.

SEE ALSO

time(2), **localtime(3)**, **tzset(3)**, **tzselect(8)**, **zdump(8)**, **zic(8)**

COLOPHON

This page is part of release 5.05 of the Linux *man-pages* project. A description of the project, information about reporting bugs, and the latest version of this page, can be found at <https://www.kernel.org/doc/man-pages/>.