

INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD

**ISO/IEC**  
**9945-1**

**IEEE**  
**Std 1003.1**

First edition  
1990-12-07

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**Information technology — Portable Operating  
System Interface (POSIX) —**

**Part 1 :**  
**System Application Program Interface (API)**  
**[C Language]**

*Technologies de l'information — Interface pour la portabilité des systèmes (POSIX) —  
Partie 1 : Interface programme de systèmes d'application (API) [Langage C]*



Reference number  
ISO/IEC 9945-1 : 1990 (E)  
IEEE Std 1003.1-1990

ISBN 1-55937-061-0

Library of Congress Catalog Number 90-084554

Quote in 8.1.2.3 on Returns is taken from X3.159-1989,  
developed under the auspices of the American National Standards  
Accredited Committee X3 Technical Committee X3J11, Computer and  
Business Equipment Manufacturers Association (CBEMA),  
311 First St, N.W., Suite 500, Washington, DC 20001.

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International Standard ISO/IEC 9945-1: 1990

IEEE Std 1003.1-1990

(Revision of IEEE Std 1003.1-1988)

**Information technology—Portable  
Operating System Interface (POSIX)  
Part 1:  
System Application Program Interface  
(API) [C Language]**

Sponsor

**Technical Committee on Operating Systems  
and Application Environments  
of the  
IEEE Computer Society**

Approved September 28, 1990  
IEEE Standards Board

Approved 1990 by the  
**International Organization for Standardization**  
and by the  
**International Electrotechnical Commission**

**Abstract:** ISO/IEC 9945-1: 1990 (IEEE Std 1003.1-1990), *Information technology—Portable Operating System Interface (POSIX)—Part 1: System Application Program Interface (API) [C Language]* is part of the POSIX series of standards for applications and user interfaces to open systems. It defines the applications interface to basic system services for input/output, file system access, and process management. It also defines a format for data interchange. This standard is stated in terms of its C binding.

**Keywords:** API, application portability, C (programming language), data processing, information interchange, open systems, operating system, portable application, POSIX, programming language, system configuration computer interface



Adopted as an International Standard by the  
International Organization for Standardization  
and by the  
International Electrotechnical Commission



Published by  
The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.

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## Foreword

1 ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International  
2 Electrotechnical Commission) together form a system for worldwide stan-  
3 dardization as a whole. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC partici-  
4 pate in the development of International Standards through technical committees  
5 established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of techni-  
6 cal activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual  
7 interest. Other international organizations, governmental and nongovernmental,  
8 in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work.

9 In the field of information technology, ISO and IEC have established a joint techni-  
10 cal committee, ISO/IEC JTC 1. Draft International Standards adopted by the joint  
11 technical committee are circulated to national bodies for approval before their  
12 acceptance as International Standards. They are approved in accordance with  
13 procedures requiring at least 75% approval by the national bodies voting.

14 International Standard ISO/IEC 9945-1: 1990 was prepared by Joint Technical  
15 Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*.

16 ISO/IEC 9945 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Information*  
17 *technology—Portable operating system interface (POSIX)*:

- 18 — *Part 1: System application program interface (API) [C language]*
- 19 — *Part 2: Shell and utilities* (under development)
- 20 — *Part 3: System administration* (under development)

21 Annexes A to E of ISO/IEC 9945-1 are provided for information only.



International Organization for Standardization/International Electrotechnical Commission  
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## Introduction

(This Introduction is not a normative part of ISO/IEC 9945-1 Information technology—Portable operating system interface (POSIX)—Part 1: System application programming interface (API) [C Language], but is included for information only.)

1 The purpose of this part of ISO/IEC 9945 is to define a standard operating system  
2 interface and environment based on the UNIX<sup>1)</sup> Operating System documentation  
3 to support application portability at the source level. This is intended for systems  
4 implementors and applications software developers.

5 Initially,<sup>2)</sup> the focus of this part of ISO/IEC 9945 is to provide standardized ser-  
6 vices via a C language interface. Future revisions are expected to contain bind-  
7 ings for other programming languages as well as for the C language. This will be  
8 accomplished by breaking this part of ISO/IEC 9945 into multiple portions—one  
9 defining core requirements independent of any programming language, and oth-  
10 ers composed of programming language bindings.

11 The core requirements portion will define a set of required services common to  
12 any programming language that can be reasonably expected to form a language  
13 binding to this part of ISO/IEC 9945. These services will be described in terms of  
14 functional requirements and will not define programming language-dependent  
15 interfaces. Language bindings will consist of two major parts. One will contain  
16 the programming language's standardized interface for accessing the core services  
17 defined in the programming language-independent core requirements section of  
18 this part of ISO/IEC 9945. The other will contain a standardized interface for  
19 language-specific services. Any implementation claiming conformance to this part  
20 of ISO/IEC 9945 with any language binding will be required to comply with both  
21 sections of the language binding.

22 Within this document, the term "POSIX.1" refers to this part of ISO/IEC 9945  
23 itself.

### 24 Organization of This Part of ISO/IEC 9945

25 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 is divided into four elements:

- 26 (1) Statement of scope and list of normative references (Section 1)
- 27 (2) Definitions and global concepts (Section 2)
- 28 (3) The various interface facilities (Sections 3 through 9)
- 29 (4) Data interchange format (Section 10)

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30 1) UNIX is a registered trademark of AT&T in the USA and other countries.

31 2) The vertical rules in the right margin depict technical or significant non-editorial changes from  
32 IEEE Std 1003.1-1988 to IEEE Std 1003.1-1990. A vertical rule beside an empty line indicates  
33 deleted text.

34 Most of the sections describe a single service interface. The C Language binding  
35 for the service interface is given in the subclause labeled Synopsis. The Descrip-  
36 tion subclause provides a specification of the operation performed by the service  
37 interface. Some examples may be provided to illustrate the interfaces described.  
38 In most cases there are also Returns and Errors subclauses specifying return  
39 values and possible error conditions. References are used to direct the reader to  
40 other related sections. Additional material to complement sections in this part of  
41 ISO/IEC 9945 may be found in the Rationale and Notes, Annex B. This annex pro-  
42 vides historical perspectives into the technical choices made by the developers of  
43 this part of ISO/IEC 9945. It also provides information to emphasize consequences  
44 of the interfaces described in the corresponding section of this part of  
45 ISO/IEC 9945.

46 Informative annexes are not part of the standard and are provided for information  
47 only. (There is a type of annex called "normative" that is part of a standard and  
48 imposes requirements, but there are currently no such normative annexes in this  
49 part of ISO/IEC 9945.) They are provided for guidance and to help understanding.

50 In publishing this part of ISO/IEC 9945, its developers simply intend to provide a  
51 yardstick against which various operating system implementations can be meas-  
52 ured for conformance. It is *not* the intent of the developers to measure or rate any  
53 products, to reward or sanction any vendors of products for conformance or lack of  
54 conformance to this part of ISO/IEC 9945, or to attempt to enforce this part of  
55 ISO/IEC 9945 by these or any other means. The responsibility for determining the  
56 degree of conformance or lack thereof with this part of ISO/IEC 9945 rests solely  
57 with the individual who is evaluating the product claiming to be in conformance  
58 with this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

## 59 **Base Documents**

60 The various interface facilities described herein are based on the *1984 /usr/group*  
61 *Standard* derived and published by the UniForum (formerly /usr/group) Stan-  
62 dards Committee. The *1984 /usr/group Standard* and this part of ISO/IEC 9945  
63 are largely based on UNIX Seventh Edition, UNIX System III, UNIX System V,  
64 4.2BSD, and 4.3BSD documentation,<sup>3)</sup> but wherever possible, compatibility with  
65 other systems derived from the UNIX operating system, or systems compatible  
66 with that system, has been maintained.

## 67 **Background**

68 The developers of POSIX.1 represent a cross-section of hardware manufacturers,  
69 vendors of operating systems and other software development tools, software  
70 designers, consultants, academics, authors, applications programmers, and oth-  
71 ers. In the course of their deliberations, the developers reviewed related Ameri-  
72 can and international standards, both published and in progress.

73 Conceptually, POSIX.1 describes a set of fundamental services needed for the  
74 efficient construction of application programs. Access to these services has been

---

75 3) The IEEE is grateful to both AT&T and UniForum for permission to use their materials.

76 provided by defining an interface, using the C programming language, that estab-  
77 lishes standard semantics and syntax. Since this interface enables application  
78 writers to write portable applications—it was developed with that goal in mind—  
79 it has been designated POSIX,<sup>4)</sup> an acronym for Portable Operating System  
80 Interface.

81 Although originated to refer to IEEE Std 1003.1-1988, the name POSIX more  
82 correctly refers to a *family* of related standards: IEEE 1003.*n* and the parts of  
83 International Standard ISO/IEC 9945. In earlier editions of the IEEE standard,  
84 the term POSIX was used as a synonym for IEEE Std 1003.1-1988. A preferred  
85 term, POSIX.1, emerged. This maintained the advantages of readability of the  
86 symbol “POSIX” without being ambiguous with the POSIX family of standards.

### 87 Audience

88 The intended audience for ISO/IEC 9945 is all persons concerned with an  
89 industry-wide standard operating system based on the UNIX system. This  
90 includes at least four groups of people:

- 91 (1) Persons buying hardware and software systems;
- 92 (2) Persons managing companies that are deciding on future corporate com-  
93 puting directions;
- 94 (3) Persons implementing operating systems, and especially
- 95 (4) Persons developing applications where portability is an objective.

### 96 Purpose

97 Several principles guided the development of this part of ISO/IEC 9945:

#### 98 Application Oriented

99 The basic goal was to promote portability of application programs across  
100 UNIX system environments by developing a clear, consistent, and unam-  
101 biguous standard for the interface specification of a portable operating  
102 system based on the UNIX system documentation. This part of  
103 ISO/IEC 9945 codifies the common, existing definition of the UNIX sys-  
104 tem. There was no attempt to define a new system interface.

#### 105 Interface, Not Implementation

106 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 defines an interface, not an implementation.  
107 No distinction is made between library functions and system calls: both  
108 are referred to as functions. No details of the implementation of any  
109 function are given (although historical practice is sometimes indicated  
110 in Annex B). Symbolic names are given for constants (such as signals  
111 and error numbers) rather than numbers.

112 4) The name POSIX was suggested by Richard Stallman. It is expected to be pronounced *pahz-icks*,  
113 as in *positive*, not *poh-six*, or other variations. The pronunciation has been published in an  
114 attempt to promulgate a standardized way of referring to a standard operating system interface.

115

## Source, Not Object, Portability

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This part of ISO/IEC 9945 has been written so that a program written and translated for execution on one conforming implementation may also be translated for execution on another conforming implementation. This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not guarantee that executable (object or binary) code will execute under a different conforming implementation than that for which it was translated, even if the underlying hardware is identical. However, few impediments were placed in the way of binary compatibility, and some remarks on this are found in Annex B. See B.1.3.1.1 and B.4.8.

125

## The C Language

126

127

This part of ISO/IEC 9945 is written in terms of the standard C language as specified in the C Standard (2).<sup>5)</sup> See B.1.3 and B.1.1.1.

128

## No Super-User, No System Administration

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135

There was no intention to specify all aspects of an operating system. System administration facilities and functions are excluded from POSIX.1, and functions usable only by the super-user have not been included. Annex B notes several such instances. Still, an implementation of the standard interface may also implement features not in this part of ISO/IEC 9945; see 1.3.1.1. This part of ISO/IEC 9945 is also not concerned with hardware constraints or system maintenance.

136

## Minimal Interface, Minimally Defined

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144

In keeping with the historical design principles of the UNIX system, POSIX.1 is as minimal as possible. For example, it usually specifies only one set of functions to implement a capability. Exceptions were made in some cases where long tradition and many existing applications included certain functions, such as *creat*( ). In such cases, as throughout POSIX.1, redundant definitions were avoided: *creat*( ) is defined as a special case of *open*( ). Redundant functions or implementations with less tradition were excluded.

145

## Broadly Implementable

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147

148

The developers of POSIX.1 endeavored to make all specified functions implementable across a wide range of existing and potential systems, including:

149

150

151

152

- (1) All of the current major systems that are ultimately derived from the original UNIX system code (Version 7 or later)
- (2) Compatible systems that are not derived from the original UNIX system code

153

154

5) The number in braces corresponds to those of the references in 1.2 (or the bibliographic entry in Annex A if the number is preceded by the letter B).

- 155 (3) Emulations hosted on entirely different operating systems  
156 (4) Networked systems  
157 (5) Distributed systems  
158 (6) Systems running on a broad range of hardware

159 No direct references to this goal appear in this part of ISO/IEC 9945, but  
160 some results of it are mentioned in Annex B.

### 161 **Minimal Changes to Historical Implementations**

162 There are no known historical implementations that will not have to  
163 change in some area to conform to this part of ISO/IEC 9945, and in a  
164 few areas POSIX.1 does not exactly match any existing system interface  
165 (for example, see the discussion of O\_NONBLOCK in B.6). Nonetheless,  
166 there is a set of functions, types, definitions, and concepts that form an  
167 interface that is common to most historical implementations. POSIX.1  
168 specifies that common interface and extends it in areas where there has  
169 historically been no consensus, preferably

- 170 (1) By standardizing an interface like one in an historical implemen-  
171 tation; e.g., directories, or;
- 172 (2) By specifying an interface that is readily implementable in terms  
173 of, and backwards compatible with, historical implementations,  
174 such as the extended tar format in 10.1.1, or;
- 175 (3) By specifying an interface that, when added to an historical imple-  
176 mentation, will not conflict with it, like B.6.

177 Required changes to historical implementations have been kept to a  
178 minimum, but they do exist, and Annex B points out some of them.

179 POSIX.1 is specifically not a codification of a particular vendor's product.  
180 It is similar to the UNIX system, but it is not identical to it.

181 It should be noted that implementations will have different kinds of  
182 extensions. Some will reflect "historical usage" and will be preserved for  
183 execution of pre-existing applications. These functions should be con-  
184 sidered "obsolescent" and the standard functions used for new applica-  
185 tions. Some extensions will represent functions beyond the scope of  
186 POSIX.1. These need to be used with careful management to be able to  
187 adapt to future POSIX.1 extensions and/or port to implementations that  
188 provide these services in a different manner.

### 189 **Minimal Changes to Existing Application Code**

190 A goal of POSIX.1 was to minimize additional work for the developers of  
191 applications. However, because every known historical implementation  
192 will have to change at least slightly to conform, some applications will  
193 have to change. Annex B points out the major places where POSIX.1  
194 implies such changes.

195 **Related Standards Activities**

196 Activities to extend this part of ISO/IEC 9945 to address additional requirements  
197 are in progress, and similar efforts can be anticipated in the future.

198 The following areas are under active consideration at this time, or are expected to  
199 become active in the near future:<sup>6)</sup>

- 200 (1) Language-independent service descriptions of this part of ISO/IEC 9945
- 201 (2) C, Ada, and FORTRAN Language bindings to (1)
- 202 (3) Shell and Utility facilities
- 203 (4) Verification testing methods
- 204 (5) Realtime facilities
- 205 (6) Secure/Trusted System considerations
- 206 (7) Network interface facilities
- 207 (8) System Administration
- 208 (9) Graphical User Interfaces
- 209 (10) Profiles describing application- or user-specific combinations of Open Sys-  
210 tems standards for: supercomputing, multiprocessor, and batch exten-  
211 sions; transaction processing; realtime systems; and multiuser systems  
212 based on historical models
- 213 (11) An overall guide to POSIX-based or related Open Systems standards and  
214 profiles

215 Extensions are approved as "amendments" or "revisions" to this document, follow-  
216 ing the IEEE and ISO/IEC Procedures.

217 Approved amendments are published separately until the full document is  
218 reprinted and such amendments are incorporated in their proper positions.

219 If you have interest in participating in the TCOS working groups addressing these  
220 issues, please send your name, address, and phone number to the Secretary, IEEE  
221 Standards Board, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc., P.O. Box  
222 1331, 445 Hoes Lane, Piscataway, NJ 08855-1331, and ask to have this forwarded  
223 to the chairperson of the appropriate TCOS working group. If you have interest in  
224 participating in this work at the international level, contact your ISO/IEC national  
225 body.

---

6) A *Standards Status Report* that lists all current IEEE Computer Society standards projects is available from the IEEE Computer Society, 1730 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20036-1903; Telephone: +1 202 371-0101; FAX: +1 202 728-9614. Working drafts of POSIX standards under development are also available from this office.

IEEE Std 1003.1-1990 was prepared by the 1003.1 Working Group, sponsored by the Technical Committee on Operating Systems and Application Environments of the IEEE Computer Society. At the time this standard was approved, the membership of the 1003.1 Working Group was as follows:

**Technical Committee on Operating Systems  
and Application Environments (TCOS)**

Chair: Luis-Felipe Cabrera

**Standards Subcommittee for TCOS**

Chair: Jim Isaak  
Treasurer: Quin Hahn  
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**1003.1 Working Group Officials**

Chair: Donn Terry  
Vice Chair: Keith Stuck  
Editor: Hal Jespersen  
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Steve Bartels  
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Dave Decot  
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Neguine Navab  
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Lorne Schachter  
Steve Schwarm  
Paul Shaughnessy  
Steve Sommars  
Ravi Tavakley  
Jeff Tofano  
David Willcox  
John Wu

The following persons were members of the 1003.1 Balloting Group that approved the standard for submission to the IEEE Standards Board:

David Chinn	<i>Open Software Foundation Institutional Representative</i>
Michael Lambert	<i>X/Open Institutional Representative</i>
Heinz Lycklama	<i>UniForum Institutional Representative</i>
Shane McCarron	<i>UNIX International Institutional Representative</i>

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Joseph Boykin	Michael J. Karels	Carol Raye
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A. Winsor Brown	M. J. Kirk	Robert Sarr
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Nicholas A. Camillone	John T. Kline	Norman Schneidewind
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Philip H. Enslow	F. C. Lim	Michael W. Vannier
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Charles Hammons	Gary W. Miller	Randall F. Wright
Allen Hankinson	James Moe	Oren Yuen
Steve Head	James W. Moore	Jason Zions
Barry Hedquist		

When the IEEE Standards Board approved this standard on September 28, 1990, it had the following membership:

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# Information technology—Portable operating system interface (POSIX)—Part 1: System application programming interface (API) [C Language]

## Section 1: General

### 1.1 Scope

This part of ISO/IEC 9945 defines a standard operating system interface and environment to support application portability at the source-code level. It is intended to be used by both application developers and system implementors.

This part of ISO/IEC 9945 comprises four major components:

- (1) Terminology, concepts, and definitions and specifications that govern structures, headers, environment variables, and related requirements
- (2) Definitions for system service interfaces and subroutines
- (3) Language-specific system services for the C programming language
- (4) Interface issues, including portability, error handling, and error recovery

The following areas are outside of the scope of this part of ISO/IEC 9945:

- (1) User interface (shell) and associated commands
- (2) Networking protocols and system call interfaces to those protocols
- (3) Graphics interfaces
- (4) Database management system interfaces
- (5) Record I/O considerations

- 17 (6) Object or binary code portability
- 18 (7) System configuration and resource availability
- 19 (8) The behavior of system services on systems supporting concurrency
- 20 within a single process

21 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 describes the external characteristics and facilities that  
22 are of importance to applications developers, rather than the internal construc-  
23 tion techniques employed to achieve these capabilities. Special emphasis is  
24 placed on those functions and facilities that are needed in a wide variety of com-  
25 mercial applications.

26 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 has been defined exclusively at the source-code level.  
27 The objective is that a Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Application source program  
28 can be translated to execute on a conforming implementation.

## 29 1.2 Normative References

30 The following standards contain provisions which, through references in this text,  
31 constitute provisions of this part of ISO/IEC 9945. At the time of publication, the  
32 editions indicated were valid. All standards are subject to revision, and parties to  
33 agreements based on this part of this International Standard are encouraged to  
34 investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the standards  
35 listed below. Members of IEC and ISO maintain registers of currently valid Inter-  
36 national Standards.

- 37 {1} ISO/IEC 646: 1983,<sup>1)</sup> *Information processing—ISO 7-bit coded character set*  
38 *for information interchange.*
- 39 {2} ISO/IEC 9899: ...,<sup>2)</sup> *Information technology—Programming languages—C.*

## 40 1.3 Conformance

### 41 1.3.1 Implementation Conformance

#### 42 1.3.1.1 Requirements

43 A *conforming implementation* shall meet all of the following criteria:

---

44 1) Under revision. (This notation is meant to explicitly reference the 1990 Draft International  
45 Standard version of ISO/IEC 646.)

46 ISO/IEC documents can be obtained from the ISO office, 1, rue de Varembe, Case Postale 56, CH-  
47 1211, Genève 20, Switzerland/Suisse.

48 2) To be approved and published.

- 49           (1) The system shall support all required interfaces defined within this part  
50           of ISO/IEC 9945. These interfaces shall support the functional behavior  
51           described herein.
- 52           (2) The system may provide additional functions or facilities not required by  
53           this part of ISO/IEC 9945. Nonstandard extensions should be identified  
54           as such in the system documentation. Nonstandard extensions, when  
55           used, may change the behavior of functions or facilities defined by this  
56           part of ISO/IEC 9945. The conformance document shall define an  
57           environment in which an application can be run with the behavior  
58           specified by the standard. In no case shall such an environment require  
59           modification of a Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Application.

### 60           1.3.1.2 Documentation

61           A conformance document with the following information shall be available for an  
62           implementation claiming conformance to this part of ISO/IEC 9945. The confor-  
63           mance document shall have the same structure as this part of ISO/IEC 9945, with  
64           the information presented in the appropriately numbered sections, clauses, and  
65           subclauses. The conformance document shall not contain information about  
66           extended facilities or capabilities outside the scope of this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

67           The conformance document shall contain a statement that indicates the full  
68           name, number, and date of the standard that applies. The conformance document  
69           may also list international software standards that are available for use by a Con-  
70           forming POSIX.1 Application. Applicable characteristics where documentation is  
71           required by one of these standards, or by standards of government bodies, may  
72           also be included.

73           The conformance document shall describe the limit values found in the  
74           <limits.h> and <unistd.h> headers, stating values, the conditions under  
75           which those values may change, and the limits of such variations, if any.

76           The conformance document shall describe the behavior of the implementation for  
77           all implementation-defined features defined in this part of ISO/IEC 9945. This  
78           requirement shall be met by listing these features and providing either a specific  
79           reference to the system documentation or providing full syntax and semantics of  
80           these features. The conformance document may specify the behavior of the imple-  
81           mentation for those features where this part of ISO/IEC 9945 states that imple-  
82           mentations may vary or where features are identified as undefined or unspecified.

83           No specifications other than those described in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 shall be  
84           present in the conformance document.

85           The phrases "shall document" or "shall be documented" in this part of  
86           ISO/IEC 9945 mean that documentation of the feature shall appear in the confor-  
87           mance document, as described previously, unless the system documentation is  
88           explicitly mentioned.

89           The system documentation should also contain the information found in the con-  
90           formance document.

### 91 1.3.1.3 Conforming Implementation Options

92 The following symbolic constants, described in the subclauses indicated, reflect  
93 implementation options for this part of ISO/IEC 9945 that could warrant require-  
94 ment by Conforming POSIX.1 Applications, or in specifications of conforming sys-  
95 tems, or both:

96	{NGROUPS_MAX}	Multiple groups option (in 2.8.3)
97	{_POSIX_JOB_CONTROL}	Job control option (in 2.9.3)
98	{_POSIX_CHOWN_RESTRICTED}	Administrative/security option (in 2.9.4)

99 The remaining symbolic constants in 2.9.3 and 2.9.4 are useful for testing pur-  
100 poses and as a guide to applications on the types of behaviors they need to be able  
101 to accommodate. They do not reflect sufficient functional difference to warrant  
102 requirement by Conforming POSIX.1 Applications or to distinguish between con-  
103 forming implementations.

104 In the cases where omission of an option would cause functions described by this  
105 part of ISO/IEC 9945 to not be defined, an implementation shall provide a function  
106 that is callable with the syntax defined in this part of ISO/IEC 9945, even though  
107 in an instance of the implementation the function may always do nothing but  
108 return an error.

### 109 1.3.2 Application Conformance

110 All applications claiming conformance to this part of ISO/IEC 9945 shall use only  
111 language-dependent services for the C programming language described in 1.3.3  
112 and shall fall within one of the following categories:

#### 113 1.3.2.1 Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Application

114 A Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Application is an application that requires only the  
115 facilities described in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 and the applicable language stan-  
116 dards. Such an application shall accept any behavior described in this part of  
117 ISO/IEC 9945 as *unspecified* or *implementation-defined*, and for symbolic con-  
118 stants, shall accept any value in the range permitted by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.  
119 Such applications are permitted to adapt to the availability of facilities whose  
120 availability is indicated by the constants in 2.8 and 2.9.

#### 121 1.3.2.2 Conforming POSIX.1 Application

##### 122 1.3.2.2.1 ISO/IEC Conforming POSIX.1 Application

123 An ISO/IEC Conforming POSIX.1 Application is an application that uses only the  
124 facilities described in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 and approved Conforming  
125 Language bindings for any ISO or IEC standard. Such an application shall  
126 include a statement of conformance that documents all options and limit depen-  
127 dencies, and all other ISO or IEC standards used.

### 128 1.3.2.2.2 <National Body> Conforming POSIX.1 Application

129 A <National Body> Conforming POSIX.1 Application differs from an ISO/IEC Con-  
130 forming POSIX.1 Application in that it also may use specific standards of a single  
131 ISO/IEC member body referred to here as "<National Body>." Such an application  
132 shall include a statement of conformance that documents all options and limit  
133 dependencies, and all other <National Body> standards used.

### 134 1.3.2.3 Conforming POSIX.1 Application Using Extensions

135 A Conforming POSIX.1 Application Using Extensions is an application that differs  
136 from a Conforming POSIX.1 Application only in that it uses nonstandard facilities  
137 that are consistent with this part of ISO/IEC 9945. Such an application shall fully  
138 document its requirements for these extended facilities, in addition to the docu-  
139 mentation required of a Conforming POSIX.1 Application. A Conforming POSIX.1  
140 Application Using Extensions shall be either an ISO/IEC Conforming POSIX.1  
141 Application Using Extensions or a <National Body> Conforming POSIX.1 Applica-  
142 tion Using Extensions (see 1.3.2.2.1 and 1.3.2.2.2).

## 143 1.3.3 Language-Dependent Services for the C Programming Language

144 Parts of ISO/IEC 9899 {2} (hereinafter referred to as the "C Standard {2}") will be  
145 referenced to describe requirements also mandated by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.  
146 The sections of the C Standard {2} referenced to describe requirements for this  
147 part of ISO/IEC 9945 are specified in Section 8. Section 8 also sets forth additions  
148 and amplifications to the referenced sections of the C Standard {2}. Any imple-  
149 mentation claiming conformance to this part of ISO/IEC 9945 with the C Language  
150 Binding shall provide the facilities referenced in Section 8, along with any addi-  
151 tions and amplifications Section 8 requires.

152 Although this part of ISO/IEC 9945 references parts of the C Standard {2} to  
153 describe some of its own requirements, conformance to the C Standard {2} is  
154 unnecessary for conformance to this part of ISO/IEC 9945. Any C language imple-  
155 mentation providing the facilities stipulated in Section 8 may claim conformance;  
156 however, it shall clearly state that its C language does not conform to the  
157 C Standard {2}.

### 158 1.3.3.1 Types of Conformance

159 Implementations claiming conformance to this part of ISO/IEC 9945 with the C  
160 Language Binding shall claim one of two types of conformance—conformance to  
161 POSIX.1, C Language Binding (C Standard Language-Dependent System Sup-  
162 port), or to POSIX.1, C Language Binding (Common-Usage C Language-Dependent  
163 System Support).

### 164 1.3.3.2 C Standard Language-Dependent System Support

165 Implementors shall meet the requirements of Section 8 using for reference the  
166 C Standard {2}. Implementors shall clearly document the version of the  
167 C Standard {2} referenced in fulfilling the requirements of Section 8.

168 Implementors seeking to claim conformance using the C Standard (2) shall claim  
169 conformance to POSIX.1, C Language Binding (C Standard Language-Dependent  
170 System Support).

### 171 **1.3.3.3 Common-Usage C Language-Dependent System Support**

172 Implementors, instead of referencing the C Standard (2), shall provide the rou-  
173 tines and support required in Section 8 using common usage as guidance. Imple-  
174 mentors shall meet all the requirements of Section 8 except where references are  
175 made to the C Standard (2). In places where the C Standard (2) is referenced,  
176 implementors shall provide equivalent support in a manner consistent with com-  
177 mon usage of the C programming language. Implementors shall document, in  
178 Section 8 of the conformance document, all differences between the interface pro-  
179 vided and the interface that would have been provided had the C Standard (2)  
180 been implemented instead of common usage. Implementors shall clearly docu-  
181 ment the version of the C Standard (2) referenced in documenting interface differ-  
182 ences and should issue updates on differences for all new versions of the  
183 C Standard (2).

184

185 Where a function has been introduced by the C Standard (2), and thus there is no  
186 common-usage referent for it, if the function is implemented, it shall be imple-  
187 mented as described in the C Standard (2). If the function is not implemented, it  
188 shall be documented as a difference from the C Standard (2) as required above.

### 189 **1.3.4 Other C Language-Related Specifications**

190 The following rules apply to the usage of C language library functions; each of the  
191 statements in this subclause applies to the detailed function descriptions in Sec-  
192 tions 3 through 9, unless explicitly stated otherwise:

- 193 (1) If an argument to a function has an invalid value (such as a value outside  
194 the domain of the function, or a pointer outside the address space of the  
195 program, or a NULL pointer when that is not explicitly permitted), the  
196 behavior is undefined.
- 197 (2) Any function may also be implemented as a macro in a header. Applica-  
198 tions should use `#undef` to remove any macro definition and ensure that  
199 an actual function is referenced. Applications should also use `#undef`  
200 prior to declaring any function in this part of ISO/IEC 9945.
- 201 (3) Any invocation of a library function that is implemented as a macro shall  
202 expand to code that evaluates each of its arguments only once, fully pro-  
203 tected by parentheses where necessary, so it is generally safe to use arbi-  
204 trary expressions as arguments.
- 205 (4) Provided that a library function can be declared without reference to any  
206 type defined in a header, it is also permissible to declare the function,  
207 either explicitly or implicitly, and use it without including its associated  
208 header.

- 209 (5) If a function that accepts a variable number of arguments is not declared  
210 (explicitly or by including its associated header), the behavior is  
211 undefined.

### 212 1.3.5 Other Language-Related Specifications

213 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 is currently specified in terms of the language defined  
214 by the C Standard [2]. Bindings to other programming languages are being  
215 developed.

216 If conformance to this part of ISO/IEC 9945 is claimed for implementation of any  
217 programming language, the implementation of that language shall support the  
218 use of external symbols distinct to at least 31 bytes in length in the source pro-  
219 gram text. (That is, identifiers that differ at or before the thirty-first byte shall be  
220 distinct.) If a national or international standard governing a language defines a  
221 maximum length that is less than this value, the language-defined maximum  
222 shall be supported. External symbols that differ only by case shall be distinct  
223 when the character set in use distinguishes upper- and lowercase characters and  
224 the language permits (or requires) upper- and lowercase characters to be distinct  
225 in external symbols.

226 Subsequent sections of this part of ISO/IEC 9945 refer only to the C Language.

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## Section 2: Terminology and General Requirements

### 1 2.1 Conventions

2 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 uses the following typographic conventions:

3 (1) The *italic* font is used for:

- 4 — Cross references to defined terms within 1.3, 2.2.1, and 2.2.2; symbolic  
5 parameters that are generally substituted with real values by the  
6 application
- 7 — C language data types and function names (except in function  
8 Synopsis subclauses)
- 9 — Global external variable names

10 (2) The **bold** font is used with a word in all capital letters, such as

11 **PATH**

12 to represent an environment variable, as described in 2.6. It is also used  
13 for the term "NULL pointer."

14 (3) The constant-width (Courier) font is used:

- 15 — For C language data types and function names within function  
16 Synopsis subclauses
- 17 — To illustrate examples of system input or output where exact usage is  
18 depicted
- 19 — For references to utility names and C language headers

20 (4) Symbolic constants returned by many functions as error numbers are  
21 represented as:

22 [ERRNO]

23 See 2.4.

24 (5) Symbolic constants or limits defined in certain headers are represented  
25 as:

26 {LIMIT}

27 See 2.8 and 2.9.

28 In some cases tabular information is presented "inline"; in others it is presented  
29 in a separately labeled table. This arrangement was employed purely for ease of  
30 typesetting and there is no normative difference between these two cases.

31 The conventions listed previously are for ease of reading only. Editorial incon-  
32 sistencies in the use of typography are unintentional and have no normative  
33 meaning in this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

34 NOTES provided as parts of labeled tables and figures are integral parts of this  
35 part of ISO/IEC 9945 (normative). Footnotes and notes within the body of the text  
36 are for information only (informative).

37 Numerical quantities are presented in international style: comma is used as a  
38 decimal sign and units are from the International System (SI).

## 39 2.2 Definitions

### 40 2.2.1 Terminology

41 For the purposes of this part of ISO/IEC 9945, the following definitions apply:

42 **2.2.1.1 conformance document:** A document provided by an implementor that  
43 contains implementation details as described in 1.3.1.2.

44 **2.2.1.2 implementation defined:** An indication that the implementation shall  
45 define and document the requirements for correct program constructs and correct  
46 data of a value or behavior.

47 **2.2.1.3 may:** An indication of an optional feature.

48 With respect to implementations, the word *may* is to be interpreted as an optional  
49 feature that is not required in this part of ISO/IEC 9945, but can be provided.  
50 With respect to Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Applications, the word *may* means  
51 that the optional feature shall not be used.

52 **2.2.1.4 obsolescent:** An indication that a certain feature may be considered for  
53 withdrawal in future revisions of this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

54 Obsolescent features are retained in this version because of their widespread use.  
55 Their use in new applications is discouraged.

56 **2.2.1.5 shall:** An indication of a requirement on the implementation or on  
57 Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Applications, where appropriate.

58 **2.2.1.6 should:**

59 (1) With respect to implementations, an indication of an implementation  
60 recommendation, but not a requirement.

61 (2) With respect to applications, an indication of a recommended program-  
62 ming practice for applications and a requirement for Strictly Conforming  
63 POSIX.1 Applications.

64 **2.2.1.7 supported:** A condition regarding optional functionality.  
65 Certain functionality in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 is optional, but the interfaces to  
66 that functionality are always required. If the functionality is *supported*, the  
67 interfaces work as specified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945 (except that they do not  
68 return the error condition indicated for the unsupported case). If the functional-  
69 ity is not *supported*, the interface shall always return the indication specified for  
70 this situation.

71 **2.2.1.8 system documentation:** All documentation provided with an imple-  
72 mentation, except the conformance document.

73 Electronically distributed documents for an implementation are considered part of  
74 the system documentation.

75 **2.2.1.9 undefined:** An indication that this part of ISO/IEC 9945 imposes no por-  
76 tability requirements on an application's use of an indeterminate value or its  
77 behavior with erroneous program constructs or erroneous data.

78 Implementations (or other standards) may specify the result of using that value or  
79 causing that behavior. An application using such behaviors is using extensions,  
80 as defined in 1.3.2.3.

81 **2.2.1.10 unspecified:** An indication that this part of ISO/IEC 9945 imposes no  
82 portability requirements on applications for correct program constructs or correct  
83 data regarding a value or behavior.

84 Implementations (or other standards) may specify the result of using that value or  
85 causing that behavior. An application requiring a specific behavior, rather than  
86 tolerating any behavior when using that functionality, is using extensions, as  
87 defined in 1.3.2.3.

## 88 **2.2.2 General Terms**

89 For the purposes of this part of ISO/IEC 9945, the following definitions apply:

90 **2.2.2.1 absolute pathname:** See *pathname resolution* in 2.3.6.

91 **2.2.2.2 access mode:** A form of access permitted to a file.

92 **2.2.2.3 address space:** The memory locations that can be referenced by a  
93 process.

94 **2.2.2.4 appropriate privileges:** An implementation-defined means of associat-  
95 ing privileges with a process with regard to the function calls and function call  
96 options defined in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 that need special privileges.

97 There may be zero or more such means.

98 **2.2.2.5 background process:** A process that is a member of a background pro-  
99 cess group.

100 **2.2.2.6 background process group:** Any process group, other than a fore-  
101 ground process group, that is a member of a session that has established a con-  
102 nection with a controlling terminal.

103 **2.2.2.7 block special file:** A file that refers to a device.

104 A block special file is normally distinguished from a character special file by pro-  
105 viding access to the device in a manner such that the hardware characteristics of  
106 the device are not visible.

107 **2.2.2.8 character:** A sequence of one or more bytes representing a single  
108 graphic symbol.

109 NOTE: This term corresponds in the C Standard (2) to the term *multibyte character*, noting that a  
110 single-byte character is a special case of multibyte character. Unlike the usage in the C Standard  
111 (2), *character* here has no necessary relationship with storage space, and *byte* is used when storage  
112 space is discussed.

113 **2.2.2.9 character special file:** A file that refers to a device.

114 One specific type of character special file is a terminal device file, whose access is  
115 defined in 7.1. Other character special files have no structure defined by this part  
116 of ISO/IEC 9945, and their use is unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

117 **2.2.2.10 child process:** See *process* in 2.2.2.62.

118 **2.2.2.11 clock tick:** An interval of time.

119 A number of these occur each second. Clock ticks are one of the units that may be  
120 used to express a value found in type *clock\_t*.

121 **2.2.2.12 controlling process:** The session leader that established the connec-  
122 tion to the controlling terminal.

123 Should the terminal subsequently cease to be a controlling terminal for this ses-  
124 sion, the session leader shall cease to be the controlling process.

125 **2.2.2.13 controlling terminal:** A terminal that is associated with a session.

126 Each session may have at most one controlling terminal associated with it, and a  
127 controlling terminal is associated with exactly one session. Certain input  
128 sequences from the controlling terminal (see 7.1) cause signals to be sent to all  
129 processes in the process group associated with the controlling terminal.

130 **2.2.2.14 current working directory:** See *working directory* in 2.2.2.89.

- 131 **2.2.2.15 device:** A computer peripheral or an object that appears to the applica-  
132 tion as such.
- 133 **2.2.2.16 directory:** A file that contains directory entries.  
134 No two directory entries in the same directory shall have the same name.
- 135 **2.2.2.17 directory entry [link]:** An object that associates a filename with a file.  
136 Several directory entries can associate names with the same file.
- 137 **2.2.2.18 dot:** The filename consisting of a single dot character (.).  
138 See *pathname resolution* in 2.3.6.
- 139 **2.2.2.19 dot-dot:** The filename consisting solely of two dot characters (. .).  
140 See *pathname resolution* in 2.3.6.
- 141 **2.2.2.20 effective group ID:** An attribute of a process that is used in determin-  
142 ing various permissions, including file access permissions, described in 2.3.2.  
143 See *group ID*. This value is subject to change during the process lifetime, as  
144 described in 3.1.2 and 4.2.2.
- 145 **2.2.2.21 effective user ID:** An attribute of a process that is used in determining  
146 various permissions, including file access permissions.  
147 See *user ID*. This value is subject to change during the process lifetime, as  
148 described in 3.1.2 and 4.2.2.
- 149 **2.2.2.22 empty directory:** A directory that contains, at most, directory entries  
150 for dot and dot-dot.
- 151 **2.2.2.23 empty string [null string]:** A character array whose first element is a  
152 null character.
- 153 **2.2.2.24 Epoch:** The time 0 hours, 0 minutes, 0 seconds, January 1, 1970, Coor-  
154 dinated Universal Time.  
155 See *seconds since the Epoch*.
- 156 **2.2.2.25 feature test macro:** A #defined symbol used to determine whether a  
157 particular set of features will be included from a header.  
158 See 2.7.1.
- 159 **2.2.2.26 FIFO special file [FIFO]:** A type of file with the property that data  
160 written to such a file is read on a first-in-first-out basis.

161 Other characteristics of *FIFOs* are described in 5.3.1, 6.4.1, 6.4.2, and 6.5.3.

162 **2.2.2.27 file:** An object that can be written to, or read from, or both.

163 A file has certain attributes, including access permissions and type. File types  
164 include regular file, character special file, block special file, FIFO special file, and  
165 directory. Other types of files may be defined by the implementation.

166 **2.2.2.28 file description:** See *open file description* in 2.2.2.51.

167 **2.2.2.29 file descriptor:** A per-process unique, nonnegative integer used to  
168 identify an open file for the purpose of file access.

169 **2.2.2.30 file group class:** The property of a file indicating access permissions  
170 for a process related to the process's group identification.

171 A process is in the file group class of a file if the process is not in the file owner  
172 class and if the effective group ID or one of the supplementary group IDs of the  
173 process matches the group ID associated with the file. Other members of the class  
174 may be implementation defined.

175 **2.2.2.31 file mode:** An object containing the file permission bits and other  
176 characteristics of a file, as described in 5.6.1.

177 **2.2.2.32 filename:** A name consisting of 1 to {NAME\_MAX} bytes used to name a  
178 file.

179 The characters composing the name may be selected from the set of all character  
180 values excluding the slash character and the null character. The filenames dot  
181 and dot-dot have special meaning; see *pathname resolution* in 2.3.6. A filename is  
182 sometimes referred to as a pathname component.

183 **2.2.2.33 file offset:** The byte position in the file where the next I/O operation  
184 begins.

185 Each open file description associated with a regular file, block special file, or  
186 directory has a file offset. A character special file that does not refer to a terminal  
187 device may have a file offset. There is no file offset specified for a pipe or FIFO.

188 **2.2.2.34 file other class:** The property of a file indicating access permissions for  
189 a process related to the process's user and group identification.

190 A process is in the file other class of a file if the process is not in the file owner  
191 class or file group class.

192 **2.2.2.35 file owner class:** The property of a file indicating access permissions  
193 for a process related to the process's user identification.

194 A process is in the file owner class of a file if the effective user ID of the process  
195 matches the user ID of the file.

196 **2.2.2.36 file permission bits:** Information about a file that is used, along with  
197 other information, to determine if a process has read, write, or execute/search per-  
198 mission to a file.

199 The bits are divided into three parts: owner, group, and other. Each part is used  
200 with the corresponding file class of processes. These bits are contained in the file  
201 mode, as described in 5.6.1. The detailed usage of the file permission bits in  
202 access decisions is described in *file access permissions* in 2.3.2.

203 **2.2.2.37 file serial number:** A per-file system unique identifier for a file.  
204 File serial numbers are unique throughout a file system.

205 **2.2.2.38 file system:** A collection of files and certain of their attributes.  
206 It provides a name space for file serial numbers referring to those files.

207 **2.2.2.39 foreground process:** A process that is a member of a foreground pro-  
208 cess group.

209 **2.2.2.40 foreground process group:** A process group whose member processes  
210 have certain privileges, denied to processes in background process groups, when  
211 accessing their controlling terminal.

212 Each session that has established a connection with a controlling terminal has  
213 exactly one process group of the session as the foreground process group of that  
214 controlling terminal. See 7.1.1.4.

215 **2.2.2.41 foreground process group ID:** The process group ID of the foreground  
216 process group.

217 **2.2.2.42 group ID:** A nonnegative integer, which can be contained in an object of  
218 type *gid\_t*, that is used to identify a group of system users.

219 Each system user is a member of at least one group. When the identity of a group  
220 is associated with a process, a group ID value is referred to as a real group ID, an  
221 effective group ID, one of the (optional) supplementary group IDs, or an (optional)  
222 saved set-group-ID.

223 **2.2.2.43 job control:** A facility that allows users to selectively stop (suspend)  
224 the execution of processes and continue (resume) their execution at a later point.

225 The user typically employs this facility via the interactive interface jointly sup-  
226 plied by the terminal I/O driver and a command interpreter. Conforming imple-  
227 mentations may optionally support job control facilities; the presence of this  
228 option is indicated to the application at compile time or run time by the definition  
229 of the `{_POSIX_JOB_CONTROL}` symbol; see 2.9.

230 **2.2.2.44 link:** See *directory entry* in 2.2.2.17.

231 **2.2.2.45 link count:** The number of directory entries that refer to a particular  
232 file.

233 **2.2.2.46 login:** The unspecified activity by which a user gains access to the  
234 system.

235 Each login shall be associated with exactly one login name.

236 **2.2.2.47 login name:** A user name that is associated with a login.

237 **2.2.2.48 mode:** A collection of attributes that specifies a file's type and its access  
238 permissions.

239 See *file access permissions* in 2.3.2.

240 **2.2.2.49 null string:** See *empty string* in 2.2.2.23.

241 **2.2.2.50 open file:** A file that is currently associated with a file descriptor.

242 **2.2.2.51 open file description:** A record of how a process or group of processes  
243 are accessing a file.

244 Each file descriptor shall refer to exactly one open file description, but an open file  
245 description may be referred to by more than one file descriptor. A file offset, file  
246 status (see Table 6-5), and file access modes (see Table 6-6) are attributes of an  
247 open file description.

248 **2.2.2.52 orphaned process group:** A process group in which the parent of  
249 every member is either itself a member of the group or is not a member of the  
250 group's session.

251 **2.2.2.53 parent directory:**

252 (1) When discussing a given directory, the directory that both contains a  
253 directory entry for the given directory and is represented by the path-  
254 name dot-dot in the given directory.

255 (2) When discussing other types of files, a directory containing a directory  
256 entry for the file under discussion.

257 This concept does not apply to dot and dot-dot.

258 **2.2.2.54 parent process:** See *process* in 2.2.2.62.

259 **2.2.2.55 parent process ID:** An attribute of a new process after it is created by  
260 a currently active process.

261 The parent process ID of a process is the process ID of its creator, for the lifetime  
262 of the creator. After the creator's lifetime has ended, the parent process ID is the  
263 process ID of an implementation-defined system process.

- 264 **2.2.2.56 path prefix:** A pathname, with an optional ending slash, that refers to  
265 a directory.
- 266 **2.2.2.57 pathname:** A string that is used to identify a file.
- 267 A pathname consists of, at most, {PATH\_MAX} bytes, including the terminating  
268 null character. It has an optional beginning slash, followed by zero or more  
269 filenames separated by slashes. If the pathname refers to a directory, it may also  
270 have one or more trailing slashes. Multiple successive slashes are considered to  
271 be the same as one slash. A pathname that begins with two successive slashes  
272 may be interpreted in an implementation-defined manner, although more than  
273 two leading slashes shall be treated as a single slash. The interpretation of the  
274 pathname is described in 2.3.6.
- 275 **2.2.2.58 pathname component:** See *filename* in 2.2.2.32.
- 276 **2.2.2.59 pipe:** An object accessed by one of the pair of file descriptors created by  
277 the *pipe()* function.
- 278 Once created, the file descriptors can be used to manipulate it, and it behaves  
279 identically to a FIFO special file when accessed in this way. It has no name in the  
280 file hierarchy.
- 281 **2.2.2.60 portable filename character set:** The set of characters from which  
282 portable filenames are constructed.
- 283 For a filename to be portable across conforming implementations of this part of  
284 ISO/IEC 9945, it shall consist only of the following characters:
- |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 285 | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |
| 286 | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i | j | k | l | m | n | o | p | q | r | s | t | u | v | w | x | y | z |
| 287 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | . | _ | - |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
- 288 The last three characters are the period, underscore, and hyphen characters,  
289 respectively. The hyphen shall not be used as the first character of a portable  
290 filename. Upper- and lowercase letters shall retain their unique identities  
291 between conforming implementations. In the case of a portable pathname, the  
292 slash character may also be used.
- 293 **2.2.2.61 privilege:** See *appropriate privileges* in 2.2.2.4.
- 294 **2.2.2.62 process:** An address space and single thread of control that executes  
295 within that address space, and its required system resources.
- 296 A process is created by another process issuing the *fork()* function. The process  
297 that issues *fork()* is known as the parent process, and the new process created by  
298 the *fork()* is known as the child process.
- 299 **2.2.2.63 process group:** A collection of processes that permits the signaling of  
300 related processes.

301 Each process in the system is a member of a process group that is identified by a  
302 process group ID. A newly created process joins the process group of its creator.

303 **2.2.2.64 process group ID:** The unique identifier representing a process group  
304 during its lifetime.

305 A process group ID is a positive integer that can be contained in a *pid\_t*. It shall  
306 not be reused by the system until the process group lifetime ends.

307 **2.2.2.65 process group leader:** A process whose process ID is the same as its  
308 process group ID.

309 **2.2.2.66 process group lifetime:** A period of time that begins when a process  
310 group is created and ends when the last remaining process in the group leaves the  
311 group, due either to the end of the last process's process lifetime or to the last  
312 remaining process calling the *setsid()* or *setpgid()* functions.

313 **2.2.2.67 process ID:** The unique identifier representing a process.

314 A process ID is a positive integer that can be contained in a *pid\_t*. A process ID  
315 shall not be reused by the system until the process lifetime ends. In addition, if  
316 there exists a process group whose process group ID is equal to that process ID,  
317 the process ID shall not be reused by the system until the process group lifetime  
318 ends. A process that is not a system process shall not have a process ID of 1.

319 **2.2.2.68 process lifetime:** The period of time that begins when a process is  
320 created and ends when its process ID is returned to the system.

321 After a process is created with a *fork()* function, it is considered active. Its thread  
322 of control and address space exist until it terminates. It then enters an inactive  
323 state where certain resources may be returned to the system, although some  
324 resources, such as the process ID, are still in use. When another process executes  
325 a *wait()* or *waitpid()* function for an inactive process, the remaining resources are  
326 returned to the system. The last resource to be returned to the system is the pro-  
327 cess ID. At this time, the lifetime of the process ends.

328 **2.2.2.69 read-only file system:** A file system that has implementation-defined  
329 characteristics restricting modifications.

330 **2.2.2.70 real group ID:** The attribute of a process that, at the time of process  
331 creation, identifies the group of the user who created the process.

332 See *group ID* in 2.2.2.42. This value is subject to change during the process life-  
333 time, as described in 4.2.2.

334 **2.2.2.71 real user ID:** The attribute of a process that, at the time of process  
335 creation, identifies the user who created the process.

336 See *user ID* in 2.2.2.87. This value is subject to change during the process life-  
337 time, as described in 4.2.2.

338 **2.2.2.72 regular file:** A file that is a randomly accessible sequence of bytes, with  
339 no further structure imposed by the system.

340 **2.2.2.73 relative pathname:** See *pathname resolution* in 2.3.6.

341 **2.2.2.74 root directory:** A directory, associated with a process, that is used in  
342 pathname resolution for pathnames that begin with a slash.

343 **2.2.2.75 saved set-group-ID:** An attribute of a process that allows some flexibil-  
344 ity in the assignment of the effective group ID attribute, when the saved set-user-  
345 ID option is implemented, as described in 3.1.2 and 4.2.2.

346 **2.2.2.76 saved set-user-ID:** An attribute of a process that allows some flexibil-  
347 ity in the assignment of the effective user ID attribute, when the saved set-user-ID  
348 option is implemented, as described in 3.1.2 and 4.2.2.

349 **2.2.2.77 seconds since the Epoch:** A value to be interpreted as the number of  
350 seconds between a specified time and the Epoch.

351 A Coordinated Universal Time name (specified in terms of seconds (*tm\_sec*),  
352 minutes (*tm\_min*), hours (*tm\_hour*), days since January 1 of the year (*tm\_yday*),  
353 and calendar year minus 1900 (*tm\_year*) is related to a time represented as  
354 seconds since the Epoch, according to the expression below.

355 If the year < 1970 or the value is negative, the relationship is undefined. If the  
356 year ≥ 1970 and the value is nonnegative, the value is related to a Coordinated  
357 Universal Time name according to the expression:

$$358 \quad tm\_sec + tm\_min*60 + tm\_hour*3\ 600 + tm\_yday*86\ 400 +$$

$$359 \quad (tm\_year-70)*31\ 536\ 000 + ((tm\_year-69)/4)*86\ 400$$

360 **2.2.2.78 session:** A collection of process groups established for job control  
361 purposes.

362 Each process group is a member of a session. A process is considered to be a  
363 member of the session of which its process group is a member. A newly created  
364 process joins the session of its creator. A process can alter its session membership  
365 (see 4.3.2). Implementations that support the *setpgid()* function (see 4.3.3) can  
366 have multiple process groups in the same session.

367 **2.2.2.79 session leader:** A process that has created a session (see 4.3.2).

368 **2.2.2.80 session lifetime:** The period between when a session is created and the  
369 end of the lifetime of all the process groups that remain as members of the  
370 session.

371 **2.2.2.81 signal:** A mechanism by which a process may be notified of, or affected  
372 by, an event occurring in the system.

373 Examples of such events include hardware exceptions and specific actions by  
374 processes. The term *signal* is also used to refer to the event itself.

375 **2.2.2.82 slash:** The literal character “/”.

376 This character is also known as *solidus* in ISO 8859-1 {B34}.

377 **2.2.2.83 supplementary group ID:** An attribute of a process used in determin-  
378 ing file access permissions.

379 A process has up to {NGROUPS\_MAX} supplementary group IDs in addition to the  
380 effective group ID. The supplementary group IDs of a process are set to the sup-  
381plementary group IDs of the parent process when the process is created. Whether  
382a process's effective group ID is included in or omitted from its list of supplemen-  
383tary group IDs is unspecified.

384 **2.2.2.84 system:** An implementation of this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

385 **2.2.2.85 system process:** An object, other than a process executing an applica-  
386tion, that is defined by the system and has a process ID.

387 **2.2.2.86 terminal [terminal device]:** A character special file that obeys the  
388 specifications of 7.1.

389 **2.2.2.87 user ID:** A nonnegative integer, which can be contained in an object of  
390 type *uid\_t*, that is used to identify a system user.

391 When the identity of a user is associated with a process, a user ID value is  
392referred to as a real user ID, an effective user ID, or an (optional) saved  
393set-user-ID.

394 **2.2.2.88 user name:** A string that is used to identify a user, as described in 9.1.

395 **2.2.2.89 working directory [current working directory]:** A directory, asso-  
396ciated with a process, that is used in pathname resolution for pathnames that do  
397not begin with a slash.

## 398 **2.2.3 Abbreviations**

399 For the purposes of this part of ISO/IEC 9945, the following abbreviations apply:

400 **2.2.3.1 C Standard:** ISO/IEC 9899, *Information technology—Programming*  
401 *languages—C* {2}.

402 **2.2.3.2 IRV:** The International Reference Version coded character set described  
403 in ISO/IEC 646 {1}.

404 **2.2.3.3 POSIX.1:** This part of ISO/IEC 9945.

## 405 **2.3 General Concepts**

406 **2.3.1 extended security controls:** The access control (see *file access permis-*  
407 *sions*) and privilege (see *appropriate privileges* in 2.2.2.4) mechanisms have been  
408 defined to allow implementation-defined extended security controls. These permit  
409 an implementation to provide security mechanisms to implement different secu-  
410 rity policies than described in this part of ISO/IEC 9945. These mechanisms shall  
411 not alter or override the defined semantics of any of the functions in this part of  
412 ISO/IEC 9945.

413 **2.3.2 file access permissions:** The standard file access control mechanism uses  
414 the file permission bits, as described below. These bits are set at file creation by  
415 *open()*, *creat()*, *mkdir()*, and *mkfifo()* and are changed by *chmod()*. These bits are  
416 read by *stat()* or *fstat()*.

417 Implementations may provide *additional* or *alternate* file access control mechan-  
418 isms, or both. An additional access control mechanism shall only further restrict  
419 the access permissions defined by the file permission bits. An alternate access  
420 control mechanism shall:

- 421 (1) Specify file permission bits for the file owner class, file group class, and  
422 file other class of the file, corresponding to the access permissions, to be  
423 returned by *stat()* or *fstat()*.
- 424 (2) Be enabled only by explicit user action, on a per-file basis by the file  
425 owner or a user with the appropriate privilege.
- 426 (3) Be disabled for a file after the file permission bits are changed for that  
427 file with *chmod()*. The disabling of the alternate mechanism need not  
428 disable any additional mechanisms defined by an implementation.

429 Whenever a process requests file access permission for read, write, or  
430 execute/search, if no additional mechanism denies access, access is determined as  
431 follows:

- 432 (1) If a process has the appropriate privilege:
  - 433 (a) If read, write, or directory search permission is requested, access is  
434 granted.
  - 435 (b) If execute permission is requested, access is granted if execute per-  
436 mission is granted to at least one user by the file permission bits or  
437 by an alternate access control mechanism; otherwise, access is  
438 denied.
- 439 (2) Otherwise:
  - 440 (a) The file permission bits of a file contain read, write, and  
441 execute/search permissions for the file owner class, file group class,  
442 and file other class.
  - 443 (b) Access is granted if an alternate access control mechanism is not  
444 enabled and the requested access permission bit is set for the class

445 (file owner class, file group class, or file other class) to which the  
446 process belongs, or if an alternate access control mechanism is  
447 enabled and it allows the requested access; otherwise, access is  
448 denied.

449 **2.3.3 file hierarchy:** Files in the system are organized in a hierarchical struc-  
450 ture in which all of the nonterminal nodes are directories and all of the terminal  
451 nodes are any other type of file. Because multiple directory entries may refer to  
452 the same file, the hierarchy is properly described as a “directed graph.”

453 **2.3.4 filename portability:** Filenames should be constructed from the portable  
454 filename character set because the use of other characters can be confusing or  
455 ambiguous in certain contexts.

456 **2.3.5 file times update:** Each file has three distinct associated time values:  
457 *st\_atime*, *st\_mtime*, and *st\_ctime*. The *st\_atime* field is associated with the times  
458 that the file data is accessed; *st\_mtime* is associated with the times that the file  
459 data is modified; and *st\_ctime* is associated with the times that file status is  
460 changed. These values are returned in the file characteristics structure, as  
461 described in 5.6.1.

462 Any function in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 that is required to read or write file data  
463 or change the file status indicates which of the appropriate time-related fields are  
464 to be “marked for update.” If an implementation of such a function marks for  
465 update a time-related field not specified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945, this shall be  
466 documented, except that any changes caused by pathname resolution need not be  
467 documented. For the other functions in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 (those that are  
468 not explicitly required to read or write file data or change file status, but that in  
469 some implementations happen to do so), the effect is unspecified.

470 An implementation may update fields that are marked for update immediately, or  
471 it may update such fields periodically. When the fields are updated, they are set  
472 to the current time and the update marks are cleared. All fields that are marked  
473 for update shall be updated when the file is no longer open by any process, or  
474 when a *stat()* or *fstat()* is performed on the file. Other times at which updates are  
475 done are unspecified. Updates are not done for files on read-only file systems.

476 **2.3.6 pathname resolution:** Pathname resolution is performed for a process to  
477 resolve a pathname to a particular file in a file hierarchy. There may be multiple  
478 pathnames that resolve to the same file.

479 Each filename in the pathname is located in the directory specified by its prede-  
480 cessor (for example, in the pathname fragment “a/b”, file “b” is located in direc-  
481 tory “a”). Pathname resolution fails if this cannot be accomplished. If the path-  
482 name begins with a slash, the predecessor of the first filename in the pathname is  
483 taken to be the root directory of the process (such pathnames are referred to as  
484 absolute pathnames). If the pathname does not begin with a slash, the predeces-  
485 sor of the first filename of the pathname is taken to be the current working direc-  
486 tory of the process (such pathnames are referred to as “relative pathnames”).

487 The interpretation of a pathname component is dependent on the values of  
488 {NAME\_MAX} and {POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC} associated with the path prefix of that  
489 component. If any pathname component is longer than {NAME\_MAX}, and

490 [\_POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC] is in effect for the path prefix of that component (see 5.7.1),  
491 the implementation shall consider this an error condition. Otherwise, the imple-  
492 mentation shall use the first {NAME\_MAX} bytes of the pathname component.

493 The special filename, dot, refers to the directory specified by its predecessor. The  
494 special filename, dot-dot, refers to the parent directory of its predecessor direc-  
495 tory. As a special case, in the root directory, dot-dot may refer to the root direc-  
496 tory itself.

497 A pathname consisting of a single slash resolves to the root directory of the pro-  
498 cess. A null pathname is invalid.

## 499 2.4 Error Numbers

500 Most functions provide an error number in the external variable *errno*, which is  
501 defined as:

```
502     extern int errno;
```

503 The value of this variable shall be defined only after a call to a function for which  
504 it is explicitly stated to be set and until it is changed by the next function call.  
505 The variable *errno* should only be examined when it is indicated to be valid by a  
506 function's return value. No function defined in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 sets  
507 *errno* to zero to indicate an error.

508 If more than one error occurs in processing a function call, this part of  
509 ISO/IEC 9945 does not define in what order the errors are detected; therefore, any  
510 one of the possible errors may be returned.

511 Implementations may support additional errors not included in this clause, may  
512 generate errors included in this clause under circumstances other than those  
513 described in this clause, or may contain extensions or limitations that prevent  
514 some errors from occurring. The Errors subclause in each function description  
515 specifies which error conditions shall be detected by all implementations and  
516 which may be optionally detected by an implementation. Each implementation  
517 shall document, in the conformance document, situations in which each of the  
518 optional conditions are detected. If no error condition is detected, the action  
519 requested shall be successful. Implementations may contain extensions or limita-  
520 tions that prevent some specified errors from occurring.

521 Implementations may generate error numbers listed in this clause under cir-  
522 cumstances other than those described, if and only if all those error conditions can  
523 always be treated identically to the error conditions as described in this part of  
524 ISO/IEC 9945. Implementations may support additional errors not listed in this  
525 clause, but shall not generate a different error number from one required by this  
526 part of ISO/IEC 9945 for an error condition described in this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

527 The following symbolic names identify the possible error numbers, in the context  
528 of functions specifically defined in this part of ISO/IEC 9945; these general descrip-  
529 tions are more precisely defined in the Errors subclauses of functions that return  
530 them. Only these symbolic names should be used in programs, since the actual  
531 value of an error number is unspecified. All values listed in this clause shall be  
532 unique. The values for these names shall be found in the header <errno.h>.

- 533 The actual values are unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.
- 534 [E2BIG] Arg list too long  
535 The sum of the number of bytes used by the new process image's  
536 argument list and environment list was greater than the system-  
537 imposed limit of {ARG\_MAX} bytes.
- 538 [EACCES] Permission denied  
539 An attempt was made to access a file in a way forbidden by its file  
540 access permissions.
- 541 [EAGAIN] Resource temporarily unavailable  
542 This is a temporary condition, and later calls to the same routine  
543 may complete normally.
- 544 [EBADF] Bad file descriptor  
545 A file descriptor argument was out of range, referred to no open  
546 file, or a read (write) request was made to a file that was only  
547 open for writing (reading).
- 548 [EBUSY] Resource busy  
549 An attempt was made to use a system resource that was not  
550 available at the time because it was being used by a process in a  
551 manner that would have conflicted with the request being made  
552 by this process.
- 553 [ECHILD] No child processes  
554 A *wait()* or *waitpid()* function was executed by a process that had  
555 no existing or unwaited-for child processes.
- 556 [EDEADLK] Resource deadlock avoided  
557 An attempt was made to lock a system resource that would have  
558 resulted in a deadlock situation.
- 559 [EDOM] Domain error  
560 Defined in the C Standard {2}; an input argument was outside the  
561 defined domain of the mathematical function.
- 562 [EEXIST] File exists  
563 An existing file was specified in an inappropriate context; for  
564 instance, as the new link name in a *link()* function.
- 565 [EFAULT] Bad address  
566 The system detected an invalid address in attempting to use an  
567 argument of a call. The reliable detection of this error is imple-  
568 mentation defined; however, implementations that do detect this  
569 condition shall use this value.
- 570 [EFBIG] File too large  
571 The size of a file would exceed an implementation-defined max-  
572 imum file size.
- 573 [EINTR] Interrupted function call  
574 An asynchronous signal (such as SIGINT or SIGQUIT; see the  
575 description of header <signal.h> in 3.3.1) was caught by the  
576 process during the execution of an interruptible function. If the

577		signal handler performs a normal return, the interrupted function call may return this error condition.
578		
579	[EINVAL]	Invalid argument
580		Some invalid argument was supplied. [For example, specifying an undefined signal to a <i>signal()</i> or <i>kill()</i> function].
581		
582	[EIO]	Input/output error
583		Some physical input or output error occurred. This error may be reported on a subsequent operation on the same file descriptor.
584		Any other error-causing operation on the same file descriptor may cause the [EIO] error indication to be lost.
585		
586		
587	[EISDIR]	Is a directory
588		An attempt was made to open a directory with write mode specified.
589		
590	[EMFILE]	Too many open files
591		An attempt was made to open more than the maximum number of {OPEN_MAX} file descriptors allowed in this process.
592		
593	[EMLINK]	Too many links
594		An attempt was made to have the link count of a single file exceed {LINK_MAX}.
595		
596	[ENAMETOOLONG]	Filename too long
597		The size of a pathname string exceeded {PATH_MAX}, or a pathname component was longer than {NAME_MAX} and {_POSIX_NO_TRUNC} was in effect for that file.
598		
599		
600	[ENFILE]	Too many open files in system
601		Too many files are currently open in the system. The system reached its predefined limit for simultaneously open files and temporarily could not accept requests to open another one.
602		
603		
604	[ENODEV]	No such device
605		An attempt was made to apply an inappropriate function to a device; for example, trying to read a write-only device such as a printer.
606		
607		
608	[ENOENT]	No such file or directory
609		A component of a specified pathname did not exist, or the pathname was an empty string.
610		
611	[ENOEXEC]	Exec format error
612		A request was made to execute a file that, although it had the appropriate permissions, was not in the format required by the implementation for executable files.
613		
614		
615	[ENOLCK]	No locks available
616		A system-imposed limit on the number of simultaneous file and record locks was reached, and no more were available at that time.
617		
618		
619	[ENOMEM]	Not enough space
620		The new process image required more memory than was allowed

- 621 by the hardware or by system-imposed memory management  
622 constraints.
- 623 [ENOSPC] No space left on device  
624 During a *write()* function on a regular file, or when extending a  
625 directory, there was no free space left on the device.
- 626 [ENOSYS] Function not implemented  
627 An attempt was made to use a function that is not available in  
628 this implementation.
- 629 [ENOTDIR] Not a directory  
630 A component of the specified pathname existed, but it was not a  
631 directory, when a directory was expected.
- 632 [ENOTEMPTY] Directory not empty  
633 A directory with entries other than dot and dot-dot was supplied  
634 when an empty directory was expected.
- 635 [ENOTTY] Inappropriate I/O control operation  
636 A control function was attempted for a file or a special file for  
637 which the operation was inappropriate.
- 638 [ENXIO] No such device or address  
639 Input or output on a special file referred to a device that did not  
640 exist, or made a request beyond the limits of the device. This  
641 error may also occur when, for example, a tape drive is not online  
642 or a disk pack is not loaded on a drive.
- 643 [EPERM] Operation not permitted  
644 An attempt was made to perform an operation limited to  
645 processes with appropriate privileges or to the owner of a file or  
646 other resource.
- 647 [EPIPE] Broken pipe  
648 A write was attempted on a pipe or FIFO for which there was no  
649 process to read the data.
- 650 [ERANGE] Result too large  
651 Defined in the C Standard {2}; the result of the function was too  
652 large to fit in the available space.
- 653 [EROFS] Read-only file system  
654 An attempt was made to modify a file or directory on a file system  
655 that was read-only at that time.
- 656 [ESPIPE] Invalid seek  
657 An *lseek()* function was issued on a pipe or FIFO.
- 658 [ESRCH] No such process  
659 No process could be found corresponding to that specified by the  
660 given process ID.
- 661 [EXDEV] Improper link  
662 A link to a file on another file system was attempted.

663 **2.5 Primitive System Data Types**

664 Some data types used by the various system functions are not defined as part of  
665 this part of ISO/IEC 9945, but are defined by the implementation. These types are  
666 then defined in the header `<sys/types.h>`, which contains definitions for at  
667 least the types shown in Table 2-1.

668 **Table 2-1 – Primitive System Data Types**

670	Defined	
671	Type	Description
672	<i>dev_t</i>	Used for device numbers.
673	<i>gid_t</i>	Used for group IDs.
674	<i>ino_t</i>	Used for file serial numbers.
675	<i>mode_t</i>	Used for some file attributes, for example file type, file access permissions.
676	<i>nlink_t</i>	Used for link counts.
677	<i>off_t</i>	Used for file sizes.
678	<i>pid_t</i>	Used for process IDs and process group IDs.
679	<i>size_t</i>	As defined in the C Standard (2).
680	<i>ssize_t</i>	Used by functions that return a count of bytes (memory space) or an error indication.
681	<i>uid_t</i>	Used for user IDs.
682		

683 All of the types listed in Table 2-1 shall be arithmetic types; *pid\_t*, *ssize\_t*, and  
684 *off\_t* shall be signed arithmetic types. The type *ssize\_t* shall be capable of storing  
685 values in the range from  $-1$  to  $\{\text{SSIZE\_MAX}\}$ , inclusive. The types *size\_t* and  
686 *ssize\_t* shall also be defined in the header `<unistd.h>`.

687 Additional unspecified type symbols ending in *\_t* may be defined in any header  
688 specified by POSIX.1. The visibility of such symbols need not be controlled by any  
689 feature test macro other than `_POSIX_SOURCE`.

690 **2.6 Environment Description**

691 An array of strings called the *environment* is made available when a process  
692 begins. This array is pointed to by the external variable *environ*, which is defined  
693 as:

```
694 extern char **environ;
```

695 These strings have the form "*name=value*"; *names* shall not contain the character  
696 '='. There is no meaning associated with the order of the strings in the environ-  
697 ment. If more than one string in a process's environment has the same *name*, the  
698 consequences are undefined. The following names may be defined and have the  
699 indicated meaning if they are defined:

700	<b>HOME</b>	The name of the user's initial working directory from the
701		user database (see the description of the header <code>&lt;pwd.h&gt;</code>
702		in 9.2.2).

703	<b>LANG</b>	The name of the locale to use for locale categories when both <b>LC_ALL</b> and the corresponding environment variable (beginning with "LC_") do not specify a locale.
704		
705		
706	<b>LC_ALL</b>	The name of the locale to be used to override any values for locale categories specified by the setting of <b>LANG</b> or any environment variables beginning with "LC_".
707		
708		
709	<b>LC_COLLATE</b>	The name of the locale for collation information.
710	<b>LC_CTYPE</b>	The name of the locale for character classification.
711	<b>LC_MONETARY</b>	The name of the locale containing monetary-related numeric editing information.
712		
713	<b>LC_NUMERIC</b>	The name of the locale containing numeric editing (i.e., radix character) information.
714		
715	<b>LC_TIME</b>	The name of the locale for date/time formatting information.
716		
717	<b>LOGNAME</b>	The login name associated with the current process. The value shall be composed of characters from the portable filename character set.
718		
719		
720		
721		NOTE: An application that requires, or an installation that actually uses, characters outside the portable filename character set would not strictly conform to this part of ISO/IEC 9945. However, it is reasonable to expect that such characters would be used in many countries (recognizing the reduced level of interchange implied by this), and applications or installations should permit such usage where possible. No error is defined by this part of ISO/IEC 9945 for violation of this condition.
722		
723		
724		
725		
726		
727		
728	<b>PATH</b>	The sequence of path prefixes that certain functions apply in searching for an executable file known only by a filename (a pathname that does not contain a slash). The prefixes are separated by a colon (:). When a nonzero-length prefix is applied to this filename, a slash is inserted between the prefix and the filename. A zero-length prefix is a special prefix that indicates the current working directory. It appears as two adjacent colons (: :), as an initial colon preceding the rest of the list, or as a trailing colon following the rest of the list. The list is searched from beginning to end until an executable program by the specified name is found. If the pathname being sought contains a slash, the search through the path prefixes is not performed.
729		
730		
731		
732		
733		
734		
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736		
737		
738		
739		
740		
741		
742	<b>TERM</b>	The terminal type for which output is to be prepared. This information is used by commands and application programs wishing to exploit special capabilities specific to a terminal.
743		
744		
745		

746           **TZ**                   Time zone information. The format of this string is  
747                                   defined in 8.1.1.

748   Environment variable *names* used or created by an application should consist  
749   solely of characters from the portable filename character set. Other characters  
750   may be permitted by an implementation; applications shall tolerate the presence  
751   of such names. Upper- and lowercase letters retain their unique identities and  
752   are not folded together. System-defined environment variable names should  
753   begin with a capital letter or underscore and be composed of only capital letters,  
754   underscores, and numbers.

755   The *values* that the environment variables may be assigned are not restricted  
756   except that they are considered to end with a null byte, and the total space used  
757   to store the environment and the arguments to the process is limited to  
758   {ARG\_MAX} bytes.

759   Other *name=value* pairs may be placed in the environment by manipulating the  
760   *environ* variable or by using *envp* arguments when creating a process (see 3.1.2).

## 761   **2.7 C Language Definitions**

### 762   **2.7.1 Symbols From the C Standard**

763   The following terms and symbols used in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 are defined in  
764   the C Standard {2}: *NULL*, *byte*, *array of char*, *clock\_t*, *header*, *null character*,  
765   *string*, *time\_t*. The type *clock\_t* shall be capable of representing all integer values  
766   from zero to the number of clock ticks in 24 h.

767   The term *NULL pointer* in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 is equivalent to the term *null*  
768   *pointer* used in the C Standard {2}. The symbol *NULL* shall be declared in  
769   <unistd.h> with the same value as required by the C Standard {2}, in addition  
770   to several headers already required by the C Standard {2}.

771   Additionally, the reservation of symbols that begin with an underscore applies:

- 772       (1) All external identifiers that begin with an underscore are reserved.
- 773       (2) All other identifiers that begin with an underscore and either an upper-  
774           case letter or another underscore are reserved.
- 775       (3) If the program defines an external identifier with the same name as a  
776           reserved external identifier, even in a semantically equivalent form, the  
777           behavior is undefined.

778   Certain other namespaces are reserved by the C Standard {2}. These reservations  
779   apply to this part of ISO/IEC 9945 as well. Additionally, the C Standard {2}  
780   requires that it be possible to include a header more than once and that a symbol  
781   may be defined in more than one header. This requirement is also made of  
782   headers for this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

783 **2.7.2 POSIX.1 Symbols**

784 Certain symbols in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 are defined in headers. Some of  
785 those headers could also define other symbols than those defined by this part of  
786 ISO/IEC 9945, potentially conflicting with symbols used by the application. Also,  
787 this part of ISO/IEC 9945 defines symbols that are not permitted by other stan-  
788 dards to appear in those headers without some control on the visibility of those  
789 symbols.

790 Symbols called *feature test macros* are used to control the visibility of symbols  
791 that might be included in a header. Implementations, future versions of this part  
792 of ISO/IEC 9945, and other standards may define additional feature test macros.  
793 Feature test macros shall be defined in the compilation of an application before an  
794 #include of any header where a symbol should be visible to some, but not all,  
795 applications. If the definition of the macro does not precede the #include, the  
796 result is undefined.

797 Feature test macros shall begin with the underscore character (`_`).

798 Implementations may add symbols to the headers shown in Table 2-2, provided  
799 the identifiers for those symbols begin with the corresponding reserved prefixes in  
800 Table 2-2. Similarly, implementations may add symbols to the headers in  
801 Table 2-2 that end in the string indicated as a reserved suffix as long as the  
802 reserved suffix is in that part of the name considered significant by the implemen-  
803 tation. This shall be in addition to any reservations made in the C Standard [2].

804 If any header defined by this part of ISO/IEC 9945 is included, all symbols with  
805 the suffix `_t` are reserved for use by the implementation, both before and after the  
806 #include directive.

807 After the last inclusion of a given header, an application may use any of the sym-  
808 bol classes reserved in Table 2-2 for its own purposes, as long as the requirements  
809 in the note to Table 2-2 are satisfied, noting that the symbol declared in the  
810 header may become inaccessible.

811 Future revisions of this part of ISO/IEC 9945, and other POSIX standards, are  
812 likely to use symbols in these same reserved spaces.

813 In addition, implementations may add members to a structure or union without  
814 controlling the visibility of those members with a feature test macro, as long as a  
815 user-defined macro with the same name cannot interfere with the correct  
816 interpretation of the program.

817 The header `<fcntl.h>` may contain the following symbols in addition to those  
818 specifically required elsewhere in POSIX.1:

819	SEEK_CUR	S_IRUSR	S_ISCHR	S_ISREG	S_IWUSR
820	SEEK_END	S_IRWXG	S_ISDIR	S_ISUID	S_IXGRP
821	SEEK_SET	S_IRWXO	S_ISFIFO	S_IWGRP	S_IXOTH
822	S_IRGRP	S_IRWXU	S_ISGID	S_IWOTH	S_IXUSR
823	S_IROTH	S_ISBLK			

824 In addition, an implementation may define the symbols "cuserid" in `<unistd.h>`  
825 and "L\_cuserid" in `<stdio.h>`.

Table 2-2 - Reserved Header Symbols

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Header	Key	Reserved Prefix	Reserved Suffix
<dirent.h>	1	d_	
<fcntl.h>	1	l_	
	2	F_	
	2	O_	
	2	S_	
<grp.h>	1	gr_	
<limits.h>	1		_MAX
<locale.h>	2	LC_[A-Z]	
<pwd.h>	1	pw_	
<signal.h>	1	sa_	
	2	SIG_	
	2	SA_	
<sys/stat.h>	1	st_	
	2	S_	
<sys/times.h>	1	tms_	
<termios.h>	1	c_	
	2	V_	
	2	I_	
	2	O_	
	2	TC	
	2	B[0-9]	
any POSIX.1 header included	1		_t

853

854

NOTE: The notation "[0-9]" indicates any digit and "[A-Z]" any uppercase character in the portable filename character set. The Key values are:

855

(1) Prefixes and suffixes of symbols that shall not be declared or #defined by the application.

856

(2) Prefixes and suffixes of symbols that shall be preceded in the application with a #undef of that symbol before any other use.

857

858

The following feature test macro is defined:

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Name	Description
_POSIX_SOURCE	When an application includes a header described by POSIX.1, and when this feature test macro is defined according to the preceding rules: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) All symbols required by POSIX.1 to appear when the header is included shall be made visible.</li> <li>(2) Symbols that are explicitly permitted, but not required, by POSIX.1 to appear in that header (including those in reserved namespaces) may be made visible.</li> <li>(3) Additional symbols not required or explicitly permitted by POSIX.1 to be in that header shall not be made visible.</li> </ol>

872 The exact meaning of feature test macros depends on the type of C language sup-  
873 port chosen: C Standard Language-Dependent Support and Common-Usage-  
874 Dependent Support, described in the following two subclauses.

### 875 **2.7.2.1 C Standard Language-Dependent Support**

876 If there are no feature test macros present in a program, the implementation  
877 shall make visible only those identifiers specified as reserved identifiers in the  
878 C Standard {2}, permitting the reservation of symbols and namespace defined in  
879 2.7.1. For each feature test macro present, only the symbols specified by that  
880 feature test macro plus those of the C Standard {2} shall be defined when a header  
881 is included.

### 882 **2.7.2.2 Common-Usage-Dependent Support**

883 If the feature test macro `_POSIX_SOURCE` is not defined in a program, the set of  
884 symbols defined in each header that are beyond the requirements of this part of  
885 ISO/IEC 9945 is unspecified.

886 If `_POSIX_SOURCE` is defined before any header is included, no symbols other  
887 than those from the C Standard {2} and those made visible by feature test macros  
888 defined for the program (including `_POSIX_SOURCE`) will be visible. Symbols from  
889 the namespace reserved for the implementation, as defined by the C Standard {2},  
890 are also permitted. The symbols beginning with two underscores are examples of  
891 this.

892 If `_POSIX_SOURCE` is not defined before any header is included, the behavior is  
893 undefined.

### 894 **2.7.3 Headers and Function Prototypes**

895 Implementations claiming C Standard {2} Language-Dependent Support shall  
896 declare function prototypes for all functions.

897 Implementations claiming Common-Usage C Language-Dependent Support shall  
898 declare the result type for all functions not returning a "plain" *int*.

899 For functions described in the C Standard {2} and included by reference in Section  
900 8 (whether or not they are further described in this part of ISO/IEC 9945), these  
901 prototypes or declarations (if required) shall appear in the headers defined for  
902 them in the C Standard {2}. For other functions in this part of ISO/IEC 9945, the  
903 prototypes or declarations shall appear in the headers listed below. If a function  
904 is defined by this part of ISO/IEC 9945, is not described in the C Standard {2}, and  
905 is not listed below, it shall have its prototype or declaration (if required) appear in  
906 `<unistd.h>`, which shall be `#include`-ed by the application before using any  
907 function declared in it, whether or not it is mentioned in the Synopsis subclause  
908 for that function. The requirements about the visibility of symbols in 2.7.2 shall  
909 be honored.

910	<dirent.h>	<i>opendir()</i> , <i>readdir()</i> , <i>rewinddir()</i> , <i>closedir()</i>
911	<fcntl.h>	<i>open()</i> , <i>creat()</i> , <i>fcntl()</i>
912	<grp.h>	<i>getgrgid()</i> , <i>getgrnam()</i>
913	<pwd.h>	<i>getpwuid()</i> , <i>getpwnam()</i>
914	<setjmp.h>	<i>sigsetjmp()</i> , <i>siglongjmp()</i>
915	<signal.h>	<i>kill()</i> , <i>sigemptyset()</i> , <i>sigfillset()</i> , <i>sigaddset()</i> , <i>sigdelset()</i> ,
916		<i>sigismember()</i> , <i>sigaction()</i> , <i>sigprocmask()</i> , <i>sigpending()</i> ,
917		<i>sigsuspend()</i>
918	<stdio.h>	<i>ctermid()</i> , <i>fileno()</i> , <i>fdopen()</i>
919	<sys/stat.h>	<i>umask()</i> , <i>mkdir()</i> , <i>mkfifo()</i> , <i>stat()</i> , <i>fstat()</i> , <i>chmod()</i>
920	<sys/times.h>	<i>times()</i>
921	<sys/utsname.h>	<i>uname()</i>
922	<sys/wait.h>	<i>wait()</i> , <i>waitpid()</i>
923	<termios.h>	<i>cfgetospeed()</i> , <i>cfsetospeed()</i> , <i>cfgetispeed()</i> , <i>cfsetispeed()</i> ,
924		<i>tcgetattr()</i> , <i>tcsetattr()</i> , <i>tcsendbreak()</i> , <i>tcdrain()</i> ,
925		<i>tcflush()</i> , <i>tcflow()</i>
926	<time.h>	<i>time()</i> , <i>tzset()</i>
927	<utime.h>	<i>utime()</i>

928 The declarations in the headers shall follow the proper form for the C language  
 929 option chosen by the implementation. Additionally, pointer arguments that refer  
 930 to objects not modified by the function being described are declared with *const*  
 931 qualifying the type to which it points. Implementations claiming Common-Usage  
 932 C conformance to this part of ISO/IEC 9945 may ignore the presence of this key-  
 933 word and need not include it in any function declarations. Implementations  
 934 claiming conformance using the C Standard [2] shall use the *const* modifier as  
 935 indicated in the prototypes they provide.

936 Implementations claiming conformance using Common-Usage C may use  
 937 equivalent implementation-defined constructs when *void* is used as a result type  
 938 for a function prototype. They may also use *int* when a function result is declared  
 939 *ssize\_t*.

940 Neither the names of the formal parameters nor their types, as they appear in an  
 941 implementation, are specified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945. The names are used  
 942 within this part of ISO/IEC 9945 as a notational mechanism. However, any  
 943 declaration provided by an implementation shall accept all actual parameter  
 944 types that a declaration lexically identical to one in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 shall  
 945 accept, including the effects of both type conversion and checking for the number  
 946 of arguments implied by the presence of a filled-out prototype. The  
 947 implementation's declaration shall not cause a syntax error if an application pro-  
 948 vides a prototype lexically identical to one in this part of ISO/IEC 9945. It is not a  
 949 requirement that nonconforming parameters to functions that may be used by an  
 950 application be diagnosed by an implementation, except as specifically required by  
 951 this part of ISO/IEC 9945 or the C Standard [2], as applicable. Where the

952 C Standard (2) has a more restrictive requirement for a function defined by that  
953 standard, that requirement shall be honored, and this exception does not apply. |

## 954 2.8 Numerical Limits

955 The following subclauses list magnitude limitations imposed by a specific imple- |  
956 mentation. The braces notation, {LIMIT}, is used in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 to  
957 indicate these values, but the braces are not part of the name.

### 958 2.8.1 C Language Limits

959 The following limits used in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 are defined in the |  
960 C Standard (2): {CHAR\_BIT}, {CHAR\_MAX}, {CHAR\_MIN}, {INT\_MAX}, {INT\_MIN}, |  
961 {LONG\_MAX}, {LONG\_MIN}, {MB\_LEN\_MAX}, {SCHAR\_MAX}, {SCHAR\_MIN},  
962 {SHRT\_MAX}, {SHRT\_MIN}, {UCHAR\_MAX}, {UINT\_MAX}, {ULONG\_MAX},  
963 {USHRT\_MAX}.

### 964 2.8.2 Minimum Values

965 The symbols in Table 2-3 shall be defined in `<limits.h>` with the values shown.  
966 These are symbolic names for the most restrictive value for certain features on a  
967 system conforming to this part of ISO/IEC 9945. Related symbols are defined else-  
968 where in this part of ISO/IEC 9945, which reflect the actual implementation and  
969 which need not be as restrictive. A conforming implementation shall provide  
970 values at least this large. A portable application shall not require a larger value  
971 for correct operation.

### 972 2.8.3 Run-Time Increaseable Values

973 The magnitude limitations in Table 2-4 shall be fixed by specific implementations.

974 A Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Application shall assume that the value supplied  
975 by `<limits.h>` in a specific implementation is the minimum value that pertains  
976 whenever the Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Application is run under that imple-  
977 mentation.<sup>3)</sup> A specific instance of a specific implementation may increase the  
978 value relative to that supplied by `<limits.h>` for that implementation. The  
979 actual value supported by a specific instance shall be provided by the `sysconf()`  
980 function.

---

981 3) In a future revision of this part of ISO/IEC 9945, omitting a symbol defined in this subclause from  
982 `<limits.h>` is expected to indicate that the value is variable.

Table 2-3 – Minimum Values

	Name	Description	Value
983			
984			
985			
986	<code>[_POSIX_ARG_MAX]</code>	The length of the arguments for one of the <i>exec</i> functions, in bytes, including environment data.	4096
987			
988	<code>[_POSIX_CHILD_MAX]</code>	The number of simultaneous processes per real user ID.	6
989			
990	<code>[_POSIX_LINK_MAX]</code>	The value of a file's link count.	8
991	<code>[_POSIX_MAX_CANON]</code>	The number of bytes in a terminal canonical input queue.	255
992			
993	<code>[_POSIX_MAX_INPUT]</code>	The number of bytes for which space will be available in a terminal input queue.	255
994			
995	<code>[_POSIX_NAME_MAX]</code>	The number of bytes in a filename.	14
996	<code>[_POSIX_NGROUPS_MAX]</code>	The number of simultaneous supplementary group IDs per process.	0
997			
998	<code>[_POSIX_OPEN_MAX]</code>	The number of files that one process can have open at one time.	16
999			
1000	<code>[_POSIX_PATH_MAX]</code>	The number of bytes in a pathname.	255
1001	<code>[_POSIX_PIPE_BUF]</code>	The number of bytes that can be written atomically when writing to a pipe.	512
1002			
1003	<code>[_POSIX_SSIZE_MAX]</code>	The value that can be stored in an object of type <i>ssize_t</i> .	32767
1004			
1005	<code>[_POSIX_STREAM_MAX]</code>	The number of streams that one process can have open at one time.	8
1006			
1007	<code>[_POSIX_TZNAME_MAX]</code>	The maximum number of bytes supported for the name of a time zone (not of the TZ variable).	3
1008			
1009			

Table 2-4 – Run-Time Increaseable Values

	Name	Description	Minimum Value
1010			
1011			
1012			
1013	<code>{NGROUPS_MAX}</code>	Maximum number of simultaneous supplementary group IDs per process.	<code>[_POSIX_NGROUPS_MAX]</code>
1014			
1015			

#### 1016 2.8.4 Run-Time Invariant Values (Possibly Indeterminate)

1017 A definition of one of the values in Table 2-5 shall be omitted from the  
 1018 `<limits.h>` on specific implementations where the corresponding value is equal  
 1019 to or greater than the stated minimum, but is indeterminate.

1020 This might depend on the amount of available memory space on a specific  
 1021 instance of a specific implementation. The actual value supported by a specific  
 1022 instance shall be provided by the *sysconf()* function.

1023 **Table 2-5 – Run-Time Invariant Values (Possibly Indeterminate)**

1024	Name	Description	Minimum Value
1025			
1026	{ARG_MAX}	Maximum length of arguments for the <i>exec</i> functions, in bytes, including environment data.	{_POSIX_ARG_MAX}
1027			
1028			
1029	{CHILD_MAX}	Maximum number of simultaneous processes per real user ID.	{_POSIX_CHILD_MAX}
1030			
1031	{OPEN_MAX}	Maximum number of files that one process can have open at any given time.	{_POSIX_OPEN_MAX}
1032			
1033	{STREAM_MAX}	The number of streams that one process can have open at one time. If defined, it shall have the same value as {FOPEN_MAX} from the C Standard (2).	{_POSIX_STREAM_MAX}
1034			
1035			
1036			
1037	{TZNAME_MAX}	The maximum number of bytes supported for the name of a time zone (not of the TZ variable).	{_POSIX_TZNAME_MAX}
1038			
1039			
1040			

1041 **2.8.5 Pathname Variable Values**

1042 The values in Table 2-6 may be constants within an implementation or may vary  
1043 from one pathname to another.

1044 **Table 2-6 – Pathname Variable Values**

1045	Name	Description	Minimum Value
1046			
1047	{LINK_MAX}	Maximum value of a file's link count.	{_POSIX_LINK_MAX}
1048	{MAX_CANON}	Maximum number of bytes in a terminal canonical input line. (See 7.1.1.6.)	{_POSIX_MAX_CANON}
1049			
1050	{MAX_INPUT}	Minimum number of bytes for which space will be available in a terminal input queue; therefore, the maximum number of bytes a portable application may require to be typed as input before reading them.	{_POSIX_MAX_INPUT}
1051			
1052			
1053			
1054			
1055	{NAME_MAX}	Maximum number of bytes in a file name (not a string length; count excludes a terminating null).	{_POSIX_NAME_MAX}
1056			
1057			
1058	{PATH_MAX}	Maximum number of bytes in a pathname (not a string length; count excludes a terminating null).	{_POSIX_PATH_MAX}
1059			
1060			
1061	{PIPE_BUF}	Maximum number of bytes that can be written atomically when writing to a pipe.	{_POSIX_PIPE_BUF}
1062			
1063			

1064 For example, file systems or directories may have different characteristics.

1065 A definition of one of the values from Table 2-6 shall be omitted from  
1066 <limits.h> on specific implementations where the corresponding value is equal  
1067 to or greater than the stated minimum, but where the value can vary depending

1068 on the file to which it is applied. The actual value supported for a specific path-  
1069 name shall be provided by the *pathconf()* function.

## 1070 2.8.6 Invariant Values

1071 The value in Table 2-7 shall not vary in a given implementation. The value in  
1072 that table shall appear in `<limits.h>`.

1073 **Table 2-7 – Invariant Value**

1074	1075	Name	Description	Value
1076	1077	(SSIZE_MAX)	The maximum value that can be stored in an object of type <i>ssize_t</i> .	(_POSIX_SSIZE_MAX)
1078				

## 1079 2.9 Symbolic Constants

1080 A conforming implementation shall have the header `<unistd.h>`. This header  
1081 defines the symbolic constants and structures referenced elsewhere in this part of  
1082 ISO/IEC 9945. The constants defined by this header are shown in the following  
1083 subclauses. The actual values of the constants are implementation defined.

### 1084 2.9.1 Symbolic Constants for the *access()* Function

1085 The constants used by the *access()* function are shown in Table 2-8. The con-  
1086 stants F\_OK, R\_OK, W\_OK, and X\_OK, and the expressions

1087 R\_OK | W\_OK

1088 (where the | represents the bitwise inclusive OR operator),

1089 R\_OK | X\_OK

1090 and

1091 R\_OK | W\_OK | X\_OK

1092 shall all have distinct values.

### 1093 2.9.2 Symbolic Constant for the *lseek()* Function

1094 The constants used by the *lseek()* function are shown in Table 2-9.

**Table 2-8 – Symbolic Constants for the *access()* Function**

1095  
1096  
1097  
1098  
1099  
1100  
1101  
1102

Constant	Description
R_OK	Test for read permission.
W_OK	Test for write permission.
X_OK	Test for execute or search permission.
F_OK	Test for existence of file.

**Table 2-9 – Symbolic Constants for the *lseek()* Function**

1103  
1104  
1105  
1106  
1107  
1108  
1109

Constant	Description
SEEK_SET	Set file offset to <i>offset</i> .
SEEK_CUR	Set file offset to current plus <i>offset</i> .
SEEK_END	Set file offset to EOF plus <i>offset</i> .

1110

### 2.9.3 Compile-Time Symbolic Constants for Portability Specifications

1111  
1112  
1113

The constants in Table 2-10 may be used by the application, at compile time, to determine which optional facilities are present and what actions shall be taken by the implementation.

**Table 2-10 – Compile-Time Symbolic Constants**

1114  
1115  
1116  
1117  
1118  
1119  
1120  
1121  
1122  
1123

Name	Description
{_POSIX_JOB_CONTROL}	If this symbol is defined, it indicates that the implementation supports job control.
{_POSIX_SAVED_IDS}	If defined, each process has a saved set-user-ID and a saved set-group-ID.
{_POSIX_VERSION}	The integer value 199009L. This value shall be used for systems that conform to this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

1124  
1125  
1126  
1127

Although a Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Application can rely on the values compiled from the `<unistd.h>` header to afford it portability on all instances of an implementation, it may choose to interrogate a value at run-time to take advantage of the current configuration. See 4.8.1.

1128

### 2.9.4 Execution-Time Symbolic Constants for Portability Specifications

1129  
1130  
1131  
1132

The constants in Table 2-11 may be used by the application, at execution time, to determine which optional facilities are present and what actions shall be taken by the implementation in some circumstances described by this part of ISO/IEC 9945 as *implementation defined*.

Table 2-11 – Execution-Time Symbolic Constants

1133  
1134  
1135  
  
1136  
1137  
1138  
1139  
1140  
1141  
1142  
1143  
1144  
1145

Name	Description
<code>[_POSIX_CHOWN_RESTRICTED]</code>	The use of the <i>chown()</i> function is restricted to a process with appropriate privileges, and to changing the group ID of a file only to the effective group ID of the process or to one of its supplementary group IDs.
<code>[_POSIX_NO_TRUNC]</code>	Pathname components longer than <code>(NAME_MAX)</code> generate an error.
<code>[_POSIX_VDISABLE]</code>	Terminal special characters defined in 7.1.1.9 can be disabled using this character value, if it is defined. See <i>tcgetattr()</i> and <i>tcsetattr()</i> .

1146 If any of the constants in Table 2-11 are not defined in the header `<unistd.h>`,  
1147 the value varies depending on the file to which it is applied. See 5.7.1.

1148 If any of the constants in Table 2-11 are defined to have value `-1` in the header  
1149 `<unistd.h>`, the implementation shall not provide the option on any file; if any  
1150 are defined to have a value other than `-1` in the header `<unistd.h>`, the imple-  
1151 mentation shall provide the option on all applicable files.

1152 All of the constants in Table 2-11, whether defined in `<unistd.h>` or not, may be  
1153 queried with respect to a specific file using the *pathconf()* or *fpathconf()* functions.

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## Section 3: Process Primitives

1 The functions described in this section perform the most primitive operating system services dealing with processes, interprocess signals, and timers. All attributes of a process that are specified in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 shall remain unchanged by a process primitive unless the description of that process primitive states explicitly that the attribute is changed.

### 6 3.1 Process Creation and Execution

#### 7 3.1.1 Process Creation

8 Function: *fork()*

##### 9 3.1.1.1 Synopsis

10 #include <sys/types.h>  
11 pid\_t fork(void);

##### 12 3.1.1.2 Description

13 The *fork()* function creates a new process. The new process (child process) shall be an exact copy of the calling process (parent process) except for the following:

- 15 (1) The child process has a unique process ID. The child process ID also does not match any active process group ID.
- 17 (2) The child process has a different parent process ID (which is the process ID of the parent process).
- 19 (3) The child process has its own copy of the parent's file descriptors. Each of the child's file descriptors refers to the same open file description with the corresponding file descriptor of the parent.
- 22 (4) The child process has its own copy of the parent's open directory streams (see 5.1.2). Each open directory stream in the child process may share directory stream positioning with the corresponding directory stream of the parent.
- 26 (5) The child process's values of *tms\_utime*, *tms\_stime*, *tms\_cutime*, and *tms\_cstime* are set to zero (see 4.5.2).

28 (6) File locks previously set by the parent are not inherited by the child.  
29 (See 6.5.2.)

30 (7) Pending alarms are cleared for the child process. (See 3.4.1.)

31 (8) The set of signals pending for the child process is initialized to the empty  
32 set. (See 3.3.1.)

33 All other process characteristics defined by this part of ISO/IEC 9945 shall be the  
34 same in the parent and the child processes. The inheritance of process charac-  
35 teristics not defined by this part of ISO/IEC 9945 is unspecified by this part of  
36 ISO/IEC 9945, but should be documented in the system documentation.

37 After *fork()*, both the parent and the child processes shall be capable of executing  
38 independently before either terminates.

### 39 3.1.1.3 Returns

40 Upon successful completion, *fork()* shall return a value of zero to the child process  
41 and shall return the process ID of the child process to the parent process. Both  
42 processes shall continue to execute from the *fork()* function. Otherwise, a value of  
43 -1 shall be returned to the parent process, no child process shall be created, and  
44 *errno* shall be set to indicate the error.

### 45 3.1.1.4 Errors

46 If any of the following conditions occur, the *fork()* function shall return -1 and set  
47 *errno* to the corresponding value:

48 [EAGAIN] The system lacked the necessary resources to create another  
49 process, or the system-imposed limit on the total number of  
50 processes under execution by a single user would be exceeded.

51 For each of the following conditions, if the condition is detected, the *fork()* func-  
52 tion shall return -1 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

53 [ENOMEM] The process requires more space than the system is able to  
54 supply.

### 55 3.1.1.5 Cross-References

56 *alarm()*, 3.4.1; *exec*, 3.1.2; *fcntl()*, 6.5.2; *kill()*, 3.3.2; *times()*, 4.5.2; *wait*, 3.2.1.

## 57 3.1.2 Execute a File

58 Functions: *execl()*, *execv()*, *execle()*, *execve()*, *execlp()*, *execvp()*.

### 59 3.1.2.1 Synopsis

60 `int execl(const char *path, const char *arg, ...);`

61 `int execv(const char *path, char *const argv[]);`

```
62 int execl(const char *path, const char *arg, ...);
63 int execve(const char *path, char *const argv[], char *const envp[]);
64 int execlp(const char *file, const char *arg, ...);
65 int execvp(const char *file, char *const argv[]);
```

### 66 3.1.2.2 Description

67 The *exec* family of functions shall replace the current process image with a new  
68 process image. The new image is constructed from a regular, executable file  
69 called the *new process image file*. There shall be no return from a successful *exec*  
70 because the calling process image is overlaid by the new process image.

71 When a C program is executed as a result of this call, it shall be entered as a C  
72 language function call as follows:

```
73     int main(int argc, char *argv[]);
```

74 where *argc* is the argument count and *argv* is an array of character pointers to  
75 the arguments themselves. In addition, the following variable:

```
76     extern char **environ;
```

77 is initialized as a pointer to an array of character pointers to the environment  
78 strings. The *argv* and *environ* arrays are each terminated by a NULL pointer.  
79 The NULL pointer terminating the *argv* array is not counted in *argc*.

80 The arguments specified by a program with one of the *exec* functions shall be  
81 passed on to the new process image in the corresponding *main()* arguments.

82 The argument *path* points to a pathname that identifies the new process image  
83 file.

84 The argument *file* is used to construct a pathname that identifies the new process  
85 image file. If the *file* argument contains a slash character, the *file* argument shall  
86 be used as the pathname for this file. Otherwise, the path prefix for this file is  
87 obtained by a search of the directories passed as the environment variable **PATH**  
88 (see 2.6). If this environment variable is not present, the results of the search are  
89 implementation defined.

91 The argument *argv* is an array of character pointers to null-terminated strings.  
92 The last member of this array shall be a NULL pointer. These strings constitute  
93 the argument list available to the new process image. The value in *argv*[0] should  
94 point to a filename that is associated with the process being started by one of the  
95 *exec* functions.

96 The *const char \*arg* and subsequent ellipses in the *execl()*, *execlp()*, and *exe-*  
97 *cle()* functions can be thought of as *arg0, arg1, ..., argn*. Together they describe  
98 a list of one or more pointers to null-terminated character strings that represent  
99 the argument list available to the new program. The first argument should point  
100 to a filename that is associated with the process being started by one of the *exec*  
101 functions, and the last argument shall be a NULL pointer. For the *execl()* func-  
102 tion, the environment is provided by following the NULL pointer that shall ter-  
103 minate the list of arguments in the parameter list to *execl()* with an additional

104 parameter, as if it were declared as

105 `char *const envp[]`

106 The argument *envp* to *execve()* and the final argument to *execle()* name an array  
107 of character pointers to null-terminated strings. These strings constitute the  
108 environment for the new process image. The environment array is terminated by  
109 a NULL pointer.

110 For those forms not containing an *envp* pointer [*execl()*, *execv()*, *execlp()*, and  
111 *execvp()*], the environment for the new process image is taken from the external  
112 variable *environ* in the calling process.

113 The number of bytes available for the new process's combined argument and  
114 environment lists is (ARG\_MAX). The implementation shall specify in the system  
115 documentation (see 1.3.1.2) whether any combination of null terminators,  
116 pointers, or alignment bytes are included in this total.

117 File descriptors open in the calling process image remain open in the new process  
118 image, except for those whose close-on-exec flag FD\_CLOEXEC is set (see 6.5.2 and  
119 6.5.1). For those file descriptors that remain open, all attributes of the open file  
120 description, including file locks (see 6.5.2), remain unchanged by this function  
121 call.

122 Directory streams open in the calling process image shall be closed in the new  
123 process image.

124 Signals set to the default action (SIG\_DFL) in the calling process image shall be  
125 set to the default action in the new process image. Signals set to be ignored  
126 (SIG\_IGN) by the calling process image shall be set to be ignored by the new pro-  
127 cess image. Signals set to be caught by the calling process image shall be set to  
128 the default action in the new process image (see 3.3.1).

129 If the set-user-ID mode bit of the new process image file is set (see 5.6.4), the effec-  
130 tive user ID of the new process image is set to the owner ID of the new process  
131 image file. Similarly, if the set-group-ID mode bit of the new process image file is  
132 set, the effective group ID of the new process image is set to the group ID of the  
133 new process image file. The real user ID, real group ID, and supplementary group  
134 IDs of the new process image remain the same as those of the calling process  
135 image. If {\_POSIX\_SAVED\_IDS} is defined, the effective user ID and effective  
136 group ID of the new process image shall be saved (as the *saved set-user-ID* and the  
137 *saved set-group-ID*) for use by the *setuid()* function.

138 The new process image also inherits the following attributes from the calling pro-  
139 cess image:

- 140 (1) Process ID
- 141 (2) Parent process ID
- 142 (3) Process group ID
- 143 (4) Session membership
- 144 (5) Real user ID
- 145 (6) Real group ID

- 146 (7) Supplementary group IDs
- 147 (8) Time left until an alarm clock signal (see 3.4.1)
- 148 (9) Current working directory
- 149 (10) Root directory
- 150 (11) File mode creation mask (see 5.3.3)
- 151 (12) Process signal mask (see 3.3.5)
- 152 (13) Pending signals (see 3.3.6)
- 153 (14) *tms\_utime*, *tms\_stime*, *tms\_cutime*, and *tms\_cstime* (see 4.5.2)

154 All process attributes defined by this part of ISO/IEC 9945 and not specified in this  
 155 subclause (3.1.2) shall be the same in the new and old process images. The inher-  
 156 itance of process characteristics not defined by this part of ISO/IEC 9945 is  
 157 unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945, but should be documented in the system  
 158 documentation.

159 Upon successful completion, the *exec* functions shall mark for update the *st\_atime*  
 160 field of the file. If the *exec* function failed, but was able to locate the *process image*  
 161 *file*, whether the *st\_atime* field is marked for update is unspecified. Should the  
 162 *exec* function succeed, the process image file shall be considered to have been  
 163 *open()*-ed. The corresponding *close()* shall be considered to occur at a time after  
 164 this open, but before process termination or successful completion of a subsequent  
 165 call to one of the *exec* functions.

166 The *argv[]* and *envp[]* arrays of pointers and the strings to which those arrays  
 167 point shall not be modified by a call to one of the *exec* functions, except as a conse-  
 168 quence of replacing the process image.

### 169 3.1.2.3 Returns

170 If one of the *exec* functions returns to the calling process image, an error has  
 171 occurred; the return value shall be *-1*, and *errno* shall be set to indicate the error.

### 172 3.1.2.4 Errors

173 If any of the following conditions occur, the *exec* functions shall return *-1* and set  
 174 *errno* to the corresponding value:

- 175 [E2BIG] The number of bytes used by the argument list and the environ-  
 176 ment list of the new process image is greater than the system-  
 177 imposed limit of {ARG\_MAX} bytes.
- 178 [EACCES] Search permission is denied for a directory listed in the path  
 179 prefix of the new process image file, or the new process image  
 180 file denies execution permission, or the new process image file  
 181 is not a regular file and the implementation does not support  
 182 execution of files of its type.
- 183 [ENAMETOOLONG] The length of the *path* or *file* arguments, or an element of the  
 184

185 environment variable `PATH` prefixed to a file, exceeds  
186 `{PATH_MAX}`, or a pathname component is longer than  
187 `{NAME_MAX}` and `{_POSIX_NO_TRUNC}` is in effect for that file.

188 `[ENOENT]` One or more components of the pathname of the new process  
189 image file do not exist, or the *path* or *file* argument points to an  
190 empty string.

191 `[ENOTDIR]` A component of the path prefix of the new process image file is  
192 not a directory.

193 If any of the following conditions occur, the `execl()`, `execv()`, `execle()`, and `execve()`  
194 functions shall return `-1` and set `errno` to the corresponding value:

195 `[ENOEXEC]` The new process image file has the appropriate access permis-  
196 sion, but is not in the proper format.

197 For each of the following conditions, if the condition is detected, the `exec` functions  
198 shall return `-1` and return the corresponding value in `errno`:

199 `[ENOMEM]` The new process image requires more memory than is allowed  
200 by the hardware or system-imposed memory management con-  
201 straints.

### 202 3.1.2.5 Cross-References

203 `alarm()`, 3.4.1; `chmod()`, 5.6.4; `_exit()`, 3.2.2; `fcntl()`, 6.5.2; `fork()`, 3.1.1; `setuid()`,  
204 4.2.2; `<signal.h>`, 3.3.1; `sigprocmask()`, 3.3.5; `sigpending()`, 3.3.6; `stat()`, 5.6.2;  
205 `<sys/stat.h>`, 5.6.1; `times()`, 4.5.2; `umask()`, 5.3.3; 2.6.

## 206 3.2 Process Termination

207 There are two kinds of process termination:

- 208 (1) *Normal termination* occurs by a return from `main()` or when requested  
209 with the `exit()` or `_exit()` functions.
- 210 (2) *Abnormal termination* occurs when requested by the `abort()` function or  
211 when some signals are received (see 3.3.1).

212 The `exit()` and `abort()` functions shall be as described in the C Standard {2}. Both  
213 `exit()` and `abort()` shall terminate a process with the consequences specified in  
214 3.2.2, except that the status made available to `wait()` or `waitpid()` by `abort()` shall  
215 be that of a process terminated by the `SIGABRT` signal.

216 A parent process can suspend its execution to wait for termination of a child pro-  
217 cess with the `wait()` or `waitpid()` functions.

218 **3.2.1 Wait for Process Termination**219 Functions: *wait()*, *waitpid()*220 **3.2.1.1 Synopsis**

```

221 #include <sys/types.h>
222 #include <sys/wait.h>
223 pid_t wait(int *stat_loc);
224 pid_t waitpid(pid_t pid, int *stat_loc, int options);

```

225 **3.2.1.2 Description**

226 The *wait()* and *waitpid()* functions allow the calling process to obtain status infor-  
 227 mation pertaining to one of its child processes. Various options permit status  
 228 information to be obtained for child processes that have terminated or stopped. If  
 229 status information is available for two or more child processes, the order in which  
 230 their status is reported is unspecified.

231 The *wait()* function shall suspend execution of the calling process until status  
 232 information for one of its terminated child processes is available, or until a signal  
 233 whose action is either to execute a signal-catching function or to terminate the  
 234 process is delivered. If status information is available prior to the call to *wait()*,  
 235 return shall be immediate.

236 The *waitpid()* function shall behave identically to the *wait()* function if the *pid*  
 237 argument has a value of  $-1$  and the *options* argument has a value of zero. Other-  
 238 wise, its behavior shall be modified by the values of the *pid* and *options*  
 239 arguments.

240 The *pid* argument specifies a set of child processes for which status is requested.  
 241 The *waitpid()* function shall only return the status of a child process from this  
 242 set.

- 243 (1) If *pid* is equal to  $-1$ , status is requested for any child process. In this  
 244 respect, *waitpid()* is then equivalent to *wait()*.
- 245 (2) If *pid* is greater than zero, it specifies the process ID of a single child pro-  
 246 cess for which status is requested.
- 247 (3) If *pid* is equal to zero, status is requested for any child process whose  
 248 process group ID is equal to that of the calling process.
- 249 (4) If *pid* is less than  $-1$ , status is requested for any child process whose pro-  
 250 cess group ID is equal to the absolute value of *pid*.

251 The *options* argument is constructed from the bitwise inclusive OR of zero or more  
 252 of the following flags, defined in the header `<sys/wait.h>`:

- |     |           |  |
|-----|-----------|--|
| 253 | WNOHANG   | The <i>waitpid()</i> function shall not suspend execution of the cal-<br>254 ling process if status is not immediately available for one of the<br>255 child processes specified by <i>pid</i> . |
| 256 | WUNTRACED | If the implementation supports job control, the status of any<br>257 child processes specified by <i>pid</i> that are stopped, and whose   |

258 status has not yet been reported since they stopped, shall also  
259 be reported to the requesting process.

260 If *wait()* or *waitpid()* return because the status of a child process is available,  
261 these functions shall return a value equal to the process ID of the child process.  
262 In this case, if the value of the argument *stat\_loc* is not NULL, information shall  
263 be stored in the location pointed to by *stat\_loc*. If and only if the status returned  
264 is from a terminated child process that returned a value of zero from *main()* or  
265 passed a value of zero as the *status* argument to *\_exit()* or *exit()*, the value stored  
266 at the location pointed to by *stat\_loc* shall be zero. Regardless of its value, this  
267 information may be interpreted using the following macros, which are defined in  
268 `<sys/wait.h>` and evaluate to integral expressions; the *stat\_val* argument is the  
269 integer value pointed to by *stat\_loc*.

270 **WIFEXITED(*stat\_val*)**

271 This macro evaluates to a nonzero value if status was returned  
272 for a child process that terminated normally.

273 **WEXITSTATUS(*stat\_val*)**

274 If the value of **WIFEXITED(*stat\_val*)** is nonzero, this macro  
275 evaluates to the low-order 8 bits of the *status* argument that  
276 the child process passed to *\_exit()* or *exit()*, or the value the  
277 child process returned from *main()*.

278 **WIFSIGNALED(*stat\_val*)**

279 This macro evaluates to a nonzero value if status was returned  
280 for a child process that terminated due to the receipt of a signal  
281 that was not caught (see 3.3.1).

282 **WTERMSIG(*stat\_val*)**

283 If the value of **WIFSIGNALED(*stat\_val*)** is nonzero, this macro  
284 evaluates to the number of the signal that caused the termina-  
285 tion of the child process.

286 **WIFSTOPPED(*stat\_val*)**

287 This macro evaluates to a nonzero value if status was returned  
288 for a child process that is currently stopped.

289 **WSTOPSIG(*stat\_val*)**

290 If the value of **WIFSTOPPED(*stat\_val*)** is nonzero, this macro  
291 evaluates to the number of the signal that caused the child pro-  
292 cess to stop.

293 If the information stored at the location pointed to by *stat\_loc* was stored there by  
294 a call to the *waitpid()* function that specified the WUNTRACED flag, exactly  
295 one of the macros **WIFEXITED(\**stat\_loc*)**, **WIFSIGNALED(\**stat\_loc*)**, or  
296 **WIFSTOPPED(\**stat\_loc*)** shall evaluate to a nonzero value. If the information  
297 stored at the location pointed to by *stat\_loc* was stored there by a call to the *wait-*  
298 *pid()* function that did not specify the WUNTRACED flag or by a call to the  
299 *wait()* function, exactly one of the macros **WIFEXITED(\**stat\_loc*)** or  
300 **WIFSIGNALED(\**stat\_loc*)** shall evaluate to a nonzero value.

301 An implementation may define additional circumstances under which *wait()* or  
302 *waitpid()* reports status. This shall not occur unless the calling process or one of  
303 its child processes explicitly makes use of a nonstandard extension. In these  
304 cases, the interpretation of the reported status is implementation defined.

305

### 306 3.2.1.3 Returns

307 If the *wait()* or *waitpid()* functions return because the status of a child process is  
308 available, these functions shall return a value equal to the process ID of the child  
309 process for which status is reported. If the *wait()* or *waitpid()* functions return  
310 due to the delivery of a signal to the calling process, a value of  $-1$  shall be  
311 returned and *errno* shall be set to [EINTR]. If the *waitpid()* function was invoked  
312 with WNOHANG set in *options*, has at least one child process specified by *pid* for  
313 which status is not available, and status is not available for any process specified  
314 by *pid*, a value of zero shall be returned. Otherwise, a value of  $-1$  shall be  
315 returned, and *errno* shall be set to indicate the error.

### 316 3.2.1.4 Errors

317 If any of the following conditions occur, the *wait()* function shall return  $-1$  and set  
318 *errno* to the corresponding value:

319 [ECHILD] The calling process has no existing unwaited-for child  
320 processes.

321 [EINTR] The function was interrupted by a signal. The value of the  
322 location pointed to by *stat\_loc* is undefined.

323 If any of the following conditions occur, the *waitpid()* function shall return  $-1$  and  
324 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

325 [ECHILD] The process or process group specified by *pid* does not exist or  
326 is not a child of the calling process.

327 [EINTR] The function was interrupted by a signal. The value of the  
328 location pointed to by *stat\_loc* is undefined.

329 [EINVAL] The value of the *options* argument is not valid.

### 330 3.2.1.5 Cross-References

331 *exit()*, 3.2.2; *fork()*, 3.1.1; *pause()*, 3.4.2; *times()*, 4.5.2; <signal.h>, 3.3.1.

## 332 3.2.2 Terminate a Process

333 Function: *\_exit()*

334 **3.2.2.1 Synopsis**

335 `void _exit(int status);`

336 **3.2.2.2 Description**

337 The `_exit()` function shall terminate the calling process with the following  
338 consequences:

- 339 (1) All open file descriptors and directory streams in the calling process are  
340 closed.
- 341 (2) If the parent process of the calling process is executing a `wait()` or `wait-`  
342 `pid()`, it is notified of the termination of the calling process and the low  
343 order 8 bits of `status` are made available to it; see 3.2.1.
- 344 (3) If the parent process of the calling process is not executing a `wait()` or  
345 `waitpid()` function, the exit `status` code is saved for return to the parent  
346 process whenever the parent process executes an appropriate subsequent  
347 `wait()` or `waitpid()`.
- 348 (4) Termination of a process does not directly terminate its children. The  
349 sending of a `SIGHUP` signal as described below indirectly terminates chil-  
350 dren in some circumstances. Children of a terminated process shall be  
351 assigned a new parent process ID, corresponding to an implementation-  
352 defined system process.
- 353 (5) If the implementation supports the `SIGCHLD` signal, a `SIGCHLD` signal  
354 shall be sent to the parent process.
- 355 (6) If the process is a controlling process, the `SIGHUP` signal shall be sent to  
356 each process in the foreground process group of the controlling terminal  
357 belonging to the calling process.
- 358 (7) If the process is a controlling process, the controlling terminal associated  
359 with the session is disassociated from the session, allowing it to be  
360 acquired by a new controlling process.
- 361 (8) If the implementation supports job control, and if the exit of the process  
362 causes a process group to become orphaned, and if any member of the  
363 newly orphaned process group is stopped, then a `SIGHUP` signal followed  
364 by a `SIGCONT` signal shall be sent to each process in the newly orphaned  
365 process group.

366 These consequences shall occur on process termination for any reason.

367 **3.2.2.3 Returns**

368 The `_exit()` function cannot return to its caller.

369 **3.2.2.4 Cross-References**

370 `close()`, 6.3.1; `sigaction()`, 3.3.4; `wait`, 3.2.1.

371 **3.3 Signals**372 **3.3.1 Signal Concepts**373 **3.3.1.1 Signal Names**

374 The `<signal.h>` header declares the `sigset_t` type and the `sigaction` structure. It  
375 also defines the following symbolic constants, each of which expands to a distinct  
376 constant expression of the type `void(*)()`, whose value matches no declarable  
377 function.

378	<b>Symbolic</b>	<b>Description</b>
379	<b>Constant</b>	
380	SIG_DFL	Request for default signal handling
381	SIG_IGN	Request that signal be ignored

382 The type `sigset_t` is used to represent sets of signals. It is always an integral or  
383 structure type. Several functions used to manipulate objects of type `sigset_t` are  
384 defined in 3.3.3.

385 The `<signal.h>` header also declares the constants that are used to refer to the  
386 signals that occur in the system. Each of the signals defined by this part of  
387 ISO/IEC 9945 and supported by the implementation shall have distinct, positive  
388 integral values. The value zero is reserved for use as the null signal (see 3.3.2).  
389 An implementation may define additional signals that may occur in the system.

390 The constants shown in Table 3-1 shall be supported by all implementations.

391 The constants shown in Table 3-2 shall be defined by all implementations. How-  
392 ever, implementations that do not support job control are not required to support  
393 these signals. If these signals are supported by the implementation, they shall  
394 behave in accordance with this part of ISO/IEC 9945. Otherwise, the implementa-  
395 tion shall not generate these signals, and attempts to send these signals or to  
396 examine or specify their actions shall return an error condition. See 3.3.2 and  
397 3.3.4.

398 **3.3.1.2 Signal Generation and Delivery**

399 A signal is said to be *generated* for (or sent to) a process when the event that  
400 causes the signal first occurs. Examples of such events include detection of  
401 hardware faults, timer expiration, and terminal activity, as well as the invocation  
402 of the `kill()` function. In some circumstances, the same event generates signals  
403 for multiple processes.

404 Each process has an action to be taken in response to each signal defined by the  
405 system (see 3.3.1.3). A signal is said to be *delivered* to a process when the  
406 appropriate action for the process and signal is taken.

407 During the time between the generation of a signal and its delivery, the signal is  
408 said to be *pending*. Ordinarily, this interval cannot be detected by an application.  
409 However, a signal can be *blocked* from delivery to a process. If the action associ-  
410 ated with a blocked signal is anything other than to ignore the signal, and if that

Table 3-1 – Required Signals

Symbolic Constant	Default Action	Description
SIGABRT	1	Abnormal termination signal, such as is initiated by the <i>abort()</i> function (as defined in the C Standard (2)).
SIGALRM	1	Timeout signal, such as initiated by the <i>alarm()</i> function (see 3.4.1).
SIGFPE	1	Erroneous arithmetic operation, such as division by zero or an operation resulting in overflow.
SIGHUP	1	Hangup detected on controlling terminal (see 7.1.1.10) or death of controlling process (see 3.2.2).
SIGILL	1	Detection of an invalid hardware instruction.
SIGINT	1	Interactive attention signal (see 7.1.1.9).
SIGKILL	1	Termination signal (cannot be caught or ignored).
SIGPIPE	1	Write on a pipe with no readers (see 6.4.2).
SIGQUIT	1	Interactive termination signal (see 7.1.1.9).
SIGSEGV	1	Detection of an invalid memory reference.
SIGTERM	1	Termination signal.
SIGUSR1	1	Reserved as application-defined signal 1.
SIGUSR2	1	Reserved as application-defined signal 2.

NOTE: The default actions are

- 1 Abnormal termination of the process.

Table 3-2 – Job Control Signals

Symbolic Constant	Default Action	Description
SIGCHLD	2	Child process terminated or stopped.
SIGCONT	4	Continue if stopped.
SIGSTOP	3	Stop signal (cannot be caught or ignored).
SIGTSTP	3	Interactive stop signal (see 7.1.1.9).
SIGTTIN	3	Read from control terminal attempted by a member of a background process group (see 7.1.1.4).
SIGTTOU	3	Write to control terminal attempted by a member of a background process group (see 7.1.1.4).

NOTE: The default actions are

- 2 Ignore the signal.
- 3 Stop the process.
- 4 Continue the process if it is currently stopped; otherwise, ignore the signal.

451 signal is generated for the process, the signal shall remain pending until either it  
452 is unblocked or the action associated with it is set to ignore the the signal. If the  
453 action associated with a blocked signal is to ignore the signal, and if that signal is  
454 generated for the process, it is unspecified whether the signal is discarded  
455 immediately upon generation or remains pending.

456 Each process has a *signal mask* that defines the set of signals currently blocked  
457 from delivery to it. The signal mask for a process is initialized from that of its  
458 parent. The *sigaction()*, *sigprocmask()*, and *sigsuspend()* functions control the  
459 manipulation of the signal mask.

460 The determination of which action is taken in response to a signal is made at the  
461 time the signal is delivered, allowing for any changes since the time of generation.  
462 This determination is independent of the means by which the signal was origi-  
463 nally generated. If a subsequent occurrence of a pending signal is generated, it is  
464 implementation defined as to whether the signal is delivered more than once. The  
465 order in which multiple, simultaneously pending signals are delivered to a pro-  
466 cess is unspecified.

467 When any stop signal (SIGSTOP, SIGTSTP, SIGTTIN, SIGTTOU) is generated for a  
468 process, any pending SIGCONT signals for that process shall be discarded. Con-  
469 versely, when SIGCONT is generated for a process, all pending stop signals for  
470 that process shall be discarded. When SIGCONT is generated for a process that is  
471 stopped, the process shall be continued, even if the SIGCONT signal is blocked or  
472 ignored. If SIGCONT is blocked and not ignored, it shall remain pending until it is  
473 either unblocked or a stop signal is generated for the process.

474 An implementation shall document any conditions not specified by this part of  
475 ISO/IEC 9945 under which the implementation generates signals. (See 1.3.1.2.)

### 476 3.3.1.3 Signal Actions

477 There are three types of actions that can be associated with a signal: SIG\_DFL,  
478 SIG\_IGN, or a *pointer to a function*. Initially, all signals shall be set to SIG\_DFL or  
479 SIG\_IGN prior to entry of the *main()* routine (see 3.1.2). The actions prescribed by  
480 these values are as follows:

481 (1) SIG\_DFL — signal-specific default action

482 (a) The default actions for the signals defined in this part of  
483 ISO/IEC 9945 are specified in Table 3-1 and Table 3-2.

484 (b) If the default action is to stop the process, the execution of that pro-  
485 cess is temporarily suspended. When a process stops, a SIGCHLD  
486 signal shall be generated for its parent process, unless the parent  
487 process has set the SA\_NOCLDSTOP flag (see 3.3.4). While a process  
488 is stopped, any additional signals that are sent to the process shall  
489 not be delivered until the process is continued except SIGKILL,  
490 which always terminates the receiving process. A process that is a  
491 member of an orphaned process group shall not be allowed to stop  
492 in response to the SIGTSTP, SIGTTIN, or SIGTTOU signals. In cases  
493 where delivery of one of these signals would stop such a process, the  
494 signal shall be discarded.

495 (c) Setting a signal action to SIG\_DFL for a signal that is pending, and  
496 whose default action is to ignore the signal (for example, SIGCHLD),  
497 shall cause the pending signal to be discarded, whether or not it is  
498 blocked.

499 (2) SIG\_IGN — ignore signal

500 (a) Delivery of the signal shall have no effect on the process. The  
501 behavior of a process is undefined after it ignores a SIGFPE, SIGILL,  
502 or SIGSEGV signal that was not generated by the *kill()* function or  
503 the *raise()* function defined by the C Standard {2}.

504 (b) The system shall not allow the action for the signals SIGKILL or  
505 SIGSTOP to be set to SIG\_IGN.

506 (c) Setting a signal action to SIG\_IGN for a signal that is pending shall  
507 cause the pending signal to be discarded, whether or not it is  
508 blocked.

509 (d) If a process sets the action for the SIGCHLD signal to SIG\_IGN, the  
510 behavior is unspecified.

511 (3) *pointer to a function* — catch signal

512 (a) On delivery of the signal, the receiving process is to execute the  
513 signal-catching function at the specified address. After returning  
514 from the signal-catching function, the receiving process shall  
515 resume execution at the point at which it was interrupted.

516 (b) The signal-catching function shall be entered as a C language func-  
517 tion call as follows:

518 

```
void func (int signo);
```

519 where *func* is the specified signal-catching function and *signo* is the  
520 signal number of the signal being delivered.

521 (c) The behavior of a process is undefined after it returns normally  
522 from a signal-catching function for a SIGFPE, SIGILL, or SIGSEGV  
523 signal that was not generated by the *kill()* function or the *raise()*  
524 function defined by the C Standard {2}.

525 (d) The system shall not allow a process to catch the signals SIGKILL  
526 and SIGSTOP.

527 (e) If a process establishes a signal-catching function for the SIGCHLD  
528 signal while it has a terminated child process for which it has not  
529 waited, it is unspecified whether a SIGCHLD signal is generated to  
530 indicate that child process.

531 (f) When signal-catching functions are invoked asynchronously with  
532 process execution, the behavior of some of the functions defined by  
533 this part of ISO/IEC 9945 is unspecified if they are called from a  
534 signal-catching function. The following table defines a set of func-  
535 tions that shall be reentrant with respect to signals (that is, appli-  
536 cations may invoke them, without restriction, from signal-catching  
537 functions).

538	<code>_exit()</code>	<code>fstat()</code>	<code>read()</code>	<code>sysconf()</code>
539	<code>access()</code>	<code>getegid()</code>	<code>rename()</code>	<code>tcdrain()</code>
540	<code>alarm()</code>	<code>geteuid()</code>	<code>rmdir()</code>	<code>tcflow()</code>
541	<code>cfgetispeed()</code>	<code>getgid()</code>	<code>setgid()</code>	<code>tcflush()</code>
542	<code>cfgetospeed()</code>	<code>getgroups()</code>	<code>setpgid()</code>	<code>tcgetattr()</code>
543	<code>cfsetispeed()</code>	<code>getpgrp()</code>	<code>setsid()</code>	<code>tcgetpgrp()</code>
544	<code>cfsetospeed()</code>	<code>getpid()</code>	<code>setuid()</code>	<code>tcsendbreak()</code>
545	<code>chdir()</code>	<code>getppid()</code>	<code>sigaction()</code>	<code>tcsetattr()</code>
546	<code>chmod()</code>	<code>getuid()</code>	<code>sigaddset()</code>	<code>tcsetpgrp()</code>
547	<code>chown()</code>	<code>kill()</code>	<code>sigdelset()</code>	<code>time()</code>
548	<code>close()</code>	<code>link()</code>	<code>sigemptyset()</code>	<code>times()</code>
549	<code>creat()</code>	<code>lseek()</code>	<code>sigfillset()</code>	<code>umask()</code>
550	<code>dup2()</code>	<code>mkdir()</code>	<code>sigismember()</code>	<code>uname()</code>
551	<code>dup()</code>	<code>mkfifo()</code>	<code>sigpending()</code>	<code>unlink()</code>
552	<code>execle()</code>	<code>open()</code>	<code>sigprocmask()</code>	<code>utime()</code>
553	<code>execve()</code>	<code>pathconf()</code>	<code>sigsuspend()</code>	<code>wait()</code>
554	<code>fcntl()</code>	<code>pause()</code>	<code>sleep()</code>	<code>waitpid()</code>
555	<code>fork()</code>	<code>pipe()</code>	<code>stat()</code>	<code>write()</code>

556 All POSIX.1 functions not in the preceding table and all functions  
557 defined in the C Standard [2] not stated to be callable from a  
558 signal-catching function are considered to be *unsafe* with respect to  
559 signals. In the presence of signals, all functions defined by this part  
560 of ISO/IEC 9945 or by the C Standard [2] shall behave as defined (by  
561 the defining standard) when called from or interrupted by a signal-  
562 catching function, with a single exception: when a signal interrupts  
563 an unsafe function and the signal-catching function calls an unsafe  
564 function, the behavior is undefined.

#### 565 3.3.1.4 Signal Effects on Other Functions

566 Signals affect the behavior of certain functions defined by this part of  
567 ISO/IEC 9945 if delivered to a process while it is executing such a function. If the  
568 action of the signal is to terminate the process, the process shall be terminated  
569 and the function shall not return. If the action of the signal is to stop the process,  
570 the process shall stop until continued or terminated. Generation of a SIGCONT  
571 signal for the process causes the process to be continued, and the original function  
572 shall continue at the point where the process was stopped. If the action of the sig-  
573 nal is to invoke a signal-catching function, the signal-catching function shall be  
574 invoked; in this case, the original function is said to be *interrupted* by the signal.  
575 If the signal-catching function executes a `return`, the behavior of the interrupted  
576 function shall be as described individually for that function. Signals that are  
577 ignored shall not affect the behavior of any function; signals that are blocked shall  
578 not affect the behavior of any function until they are delivered.

579 **3.3.2 Send a Signal to a Process**

580 Function: *kill()*

581 **3.3.2.1 Synopsis**

```
582 #include <sys/types.h>  
583 #include <signal.h>  
584 int kill(pid_t pid, int sig);
```

585 **3.3.2.2 Description**

586 The *kill()* function shall send a signal to a process or a group of processes  
587 specified by *pid*. The signal to be sent is specified by *sig* and is either one from  
588 the list given in 3.3.1.1 or zero. If *sig* is zero (the null signal), error checking is  
589 performed, but no signal is actually sent. The null signal can be used to check the  
590 validity of *pid*.

591 For a process to have permission to send a signal to a process designated by *pid*,  
592 the real or effective user ID of the sending process must match the real or effective  
593 user ID of the receiving process, unless the sending process has appropriate  
594 privileges. If `(_POSIX_SAVED_IDS)` is defined, the saved set-user-ID of the receiv-  
595 ing process shall be checked in place of its effective user ID.

596 If *pid* is greater than zero, *sig* shall be sent to the process whose process ID is  
597 equal to *pid*.

598 If *pid* is zero, *sig* shall be sent to all processes (excluding an unspecified set of sys-  
599 tem processes) whose process group ID is equal to the process group ID of the  
600 sender and for which the process has permission to send a signal.

601 If *pid* is `-1`, the behavior of the *kill()* function is unspecified.

602 If *pid* is negative, but not `-1`, *sig* shall be sent to all processes (excluding an  
603 unspecified set of system processes) whose process group ID is equal to the abso-  
604 lute value of *pid* and for which the process has permission to send a signal.

605 If the value of *pid* causes *sig* to be generated for the sending process, and if *sig* is  
606 not blocked, either *sig* or at least one pending unblocked signal shall be delivered  
607 to the sending process before the *kill()* function returns.

608 If the implementation supports the SIGCONT signal, the user ID tests described  
609 above shall not be applied when sending SIGCONT to a process that is a member  
610 of the same session as the sending process.

611 An implementation that provides extended security controls may impose further  
612 implementation-defined restrictions on the sending of signals, including the null  
613 signal. In particular, the system may deny the existence of some or all of the  
614 processes specified by *pid*.

615 The *kill()* function is successful if the process has permission to send *sig* to any of  
616 the processes specified by *pid*. If the *kill()* function fails, no signal shall be sent.

617 **3.3.2.3 Returns**

618 Upon successful completion, the function shall return a value of zero. Otherwise,  
619 a value of  $-1$  shall be returned and *errno* shall be set to indicate the error.

620 **3.3.2.4 Errors**

621 If any of the following conditions occur, the *kill()* function shall return  $-1$  and set  
622 *errno* to the corresponding value:

- |     |          |  |
|-----|----------|--|
| 623 | [EINVAL] | The value of the <i>sig</i> argument is an invalid or unsupported signal number.         |
| 624 |          |  |
| 625 | [EPERM]  | The process does not have permission to send the signal to any receiving process.        |
| 626 |          |  |
| 627 | [ESRCH]  | No process or process group can be found corresponding to that specified by <i>pid</i> . |
| 628 |          |  |

629 **3.3.2.5 Cross-References**

630 *getpid()*, 4.1.1; *setsid()*, 4.3.2; *sigaction()*, 3.3.4; `<signal.h>`, 3.3.1.

631 **3.3.3 Manipulate Signal Sets**

632 Functions: *sigemptyset()*, *sigfillset()*, *sigaddset()*, *sigdelset()*, *sigismember()*

633 **3.3.3.1 Synopsis**

```
634 #include <signal.h>
635 int sigemptyset(sigset_t *set);
636 int sigfillset(sigset_t *set);
637 int sigaddset(sigset_t *set, int signo);
638 int sigdelset(sigset_t *set, int signo);
639 int sigismember(const sigset_t *set, int signo);
```

640 **3.3.3.2 Description**

641 The *sigsetops* primitives manipulate sets of signals. They operate on data objects  
642 addressable by the application, not on any set of signals known to the system,  
643 such as the set blocked from delivery to a process or the set pending for a process  
644 (see 3.3.1).

645 The *sigemptyset()* function initializes the signal set pointed to by the argument  
646 *set*, such that all signals defined in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 are excluded.

647 The *sigfillset()* function initializes the signal set pointed to by the argument *set*,  
648 such that all signals defined in this part of ISO/IEC 9945 are included.

649 Applications shall call either *sigemptyset()* or *sigfillset()* at least once for each  
650 object of type *sigset\_t* prior to any other use of that object. If such an object is not

651 initialized in this way, but is nonetheless supplied as an argument to any of the  
652 *sigaddset()*, *sigdelset()*, *sigismember()*, *sigaction()*, *sigprocmask()*, *sigpending()*, or  
653 *sigsuspend()* functions, the results are undefined.

654 The *sigaddset()* and *sigdelset()* functions respectively add or delete the individual  
655 signal specified by the value of the argument *signo* to or from the signal set  
656 pointed to by the argument *set*.

657 The *sigismember()* function tests whether the signal specified by the value of the  
658 argument *signo* is a member of the set pointed to by the argument *set*.

### 659 3.3.3.3 Returns

660 Upon successful completion, the *sigismember()* function returns a value of one if  
661 the specified signal is a member of the specified set, or a value of zero if it is not.  
662 Upon successful completion, the other functions return a value of zero. For all of  
663 the above functions, if an error is detected, a value of -1 is returned, and *errno* is  
664 set to indicate the error.

### 665 3.3.3.4 Errors

666 For each of the following conditions, if the condition is detected, the *sigaddset()*,  
667 *sigdelset()*, and *sigismember()* functions shall return -1 and set *errno* to the  
668 corresponding value:

669 [EINVAL] The value of the *signo* argument is an invalid or unsupported  
670 signal number.

### 671 3.3.3.5 Cross-References

672 *sigaction()*, 3.3.4; <signal.h>, 3.3.1; *sigpending()*, 3.3.6; *sigprocmask()*, 3.3.5;  
673 *sigsuspend()*, 3.3.7.

## 674 3.3.4 Examine and Change Signal Action

675 Function: *sigaction()*

### 676 3.3.4.1 Synopsis

```
677 #include <signal.h>  
678 int sigaction(int sig, const struct sigaction *act,  
679             struct sigaction *oact);
```

### 680 3.3.4.2 Description

681 The *sigaction()* function allows the calling process to examine or specify (or both)  
682 the action to be associated with a specific signal. The argument *sig* specifies the  
683 signal; acceptable values are defined in 3.3.1.1.

684 The structure *sigaction*, used to describe an action to be taken, is defined in the

685 header `<signal.h>` to include at least the following members:

686	<b>Member</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Description</b>
687	<u>Type</u>	<u>Name</u>	
688	<code>void (*)()</code>	<code>sa_handler</code>	SIG_DFL, SIG_IGN, or pointer to a function.
689	<code>sigset_t</code>	<code>sa_mask</code>	Additional set of signals to be blocked during execution of signal-catching function.
690			
691	<code>int</code>	<code>sa_flags</code>	Special flags to affect behavior of signal.

692 Implementations may add extensions as permitted in 1.3.1.1, point (2). Adding  
693 extensions to this structure, which might change the behavior of the application  
694 with respect to this standard when those fields in the structure are uninitialized,  
695 also requires that the extensions be enabled as required by 1.3.1.1.

696 If the argument *act* is not NULL, it points to a structure specifying the action to  
697 be associated with the specified signal. If the argument *oact* is not NULL, the  
698 action previously associated with the signal is stored in the location pointed to by  
699 the argument *oact*. If the argument *act* is NULL, signal handling is unchanged by  
700 this function call; thus, the call can be used to enquire about the current handling  
701 of a given signal. The *sa\_handler* field of the *sigaction* structure identifies the  
702 action to be associated with the specified signal. If the *sa\_handler* field specifies a  
703 signal-catching function, the *sa\_mask* field identifies a set of signals that shall be  
704 added to the signal mask of the process before the signal-catching function is  
705 invoked. The SIGKILL and SIGSTOP signals shall not be added to the signal mask  
706 using this mechanism; this restriction shall be enforced by the system without  
707 causing an error to be indicated.

708 The *sa\_flags* field can be used to modify the behavior of the specified signal.

709 The following flag bit, defined in the header `<signal.h>`, can be set in *sa\_flags*:

710	<b>Symbolic</b>	<b>Description</b>
711	<u>Constant</u>	
712	SA_NOCLDSTOP	Do not generate SIGCHLD when children stop.

713 If *sig* is SIGCHLD and the SA\_NOCLDSTOP flag is not set in *sa\_flags*, and the  
714 implementation supports the SIGCHLD signal, a SIGCHLD signal shall be gen-  
715 erated for the calling process whenever any of its child processes stop. If *sig* is  
716 SIGCHLD and the SA\_NOCLDSTOP flag is set in *sa\_flags*, the implementation  
717 shall not generate a SIGCHLD signal in this way.

718 When a signal is caught by a signal-catching function installed by the *sigaction()*  
719 function, a new signal mask is calculated and installed for the duration of the  
720 signal-catching function [or until a call to either the *sigprocmask()* or *sig-*  
721 *suspend()* function is made]. This mask is formed by taking the union of the  
722 current signal mask and the value of the *sa\_mask* for the signal being delivered,  
723 and then including the signal being delivered. If and when the user's signal  
724 handler returns normally, the original signal mask is restored.

725 Once an action is installed for a specific signal, it remains installed until another  
726 action is explicitly requested [by another call to the *sigaction()* function] or until  
727 one of the *exec* functions is called.

728 If the previous action for *sig* had been established by the *signal()* function,  
729 defined in the C Standard {2}, the values of the fields returned in the structure  
730 pointed to by *oact* are unspecified and, in particular, *oact->sv\_handler* is not  
731 necessarily the same value passed to the *signal()* function. However, if a pointer  
732 to the same structure or a copy thereof is passed to a subsequent call to the *sigac-*  
733 *tion()* function via the *act* argument, handling of the signal shall be as if the origi-  
734 nal call to the *signal()* function were repeated.

735 If the *sigaction()* function fails, no new signal handler is installed.

736 It is unspecified whether an attempt to set the action for a signal that cannot be  
737 caught or ignored to SIG\_DFL is ignored or causes an error to be returned with  
738 *errno* set to [EINVAL].

### 739 3.3.4.3 Returns

740 Upon successful completion, a value of zero is returned. Otherwise, a value of -1  
741 is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

### 742 3.3.4.4 Errors

743 If any of the following conditions occur, the *sigaction()* function shall return -1  
744 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

745 [EINVAL] The value of the *sig* argument is an invalid or unsupported sig-  
746 nal number, or an attempt was made to catch a signal that can-  
747 not be caught or to ignore a signal that cannot be ignored. See  
748 3.3.1.1.

749 For each of the following conditions, when the condition is detected and the imple-  
750 mentation treats it as an error, the *sigaction()* function shall return a value of -1  
751 and set *errno* to the corresponding value.

752 [EINVAL] An attempt was made to set the action to SIG\_DFL for a signal  
753 that cannot be caught or ignored (or both).

### 754 3.3.4.5 Cross-References

755 *kill()*, 3.3.2; <signal.h>, 3.3.1; *sigprocmask()*, 3.3.5; *sigsetops*, 3.3.3; *sig-*  
756 *suspend()*, 3.3.7.

## 757 3.3.5 Examine and Change Blocked Signals

758 Function: *sigprocmask()*

### 759 3.3.5.1 Synopsis

760 #include <signal.h>

761 int sigprocmask(int *how*, const sigset\_t \**set*, sigset\_t \**oset*);

762 **3.3.5.2 Description**

763 The *sigprocmask()* function is used to examine or change (or both) the signal  
764 mask of the calling process. If the value of the argument *set* is not NULL, it  
765 points to a set of signals to be used to change the currently blocked set.

766 The value of the argument *how* indicates the manner in which the set is changed  
767 and shall consist of one of the following values, as defined in the header  
768 <signal.h>:

769	<u>Name</u>	<u>Description</u>
770	SIG_BLOCK	The resulting set shall be the union of the current set and 771 the signal set pointed to by the argument <i>set</i> .
772	SIG_UNBLOCK	The resulting set shall be the intersection of the current set 773 and the complement of the signal set pointed to by the argu- 774 ment <i>set</i> .
775	SIG_SETMASK	The resulting set shall be the signal set pointed to by the 776 argument <i>set</i> .

777 If the argument *oset* is not NULL, the previous mask is stored in the space  
778 pointed to by *oset*. If the value of the argument *set* is NULL, the value of the  
779 argument *how* is not significant and the signal mask of the process is unchanged  
780 by this function call; thus, the call can be used to enquire about currently blocked  
781 signals.

782 If there are any pending unblocked signals after the call to the *sigprocmask()*  
783 function, at least one of those signals shall be delivered before the *sigprocmask()*  
784 function returns.

785 It is not possible to block the SIGKILL and SIGSTOP signals; this shall be enforced  
786 by the system without causing an error to be indicated.

787 If any of the SIGFPE, SIGILL, or SIGSEGV signals are generated while they are  
788 blocked, the result is undefined, unless the signal was generated by a call to the  
789 *kill()* function or the *raise()* function defined by the C Standard {2}.

790 If the *sigprocmask()* function fails, the signal mask of the process is not changed  
791 by this function call.

792 **3.3.5.3 Returns**

793 Upon successful completion a value of zero is returned. Otherwise, a value of -1  
794 is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

795 **3.3.5.4 Errors**

796 If any of the following conditions occur, the *sigprocmask()* function shall return -1  
797 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

798 [EINVAL] The value of the *how* argument is not equal to one of the  
799 defined values.

800 **3.3.5.5 Cross-References**

801 *sigaction()*, 3.3.4; `<signal.h>`, 3.3.1; *sigpending()*, 3.3.6; *sigsetops*, 3.3.3; *sig-*  
802 *suspend()*, 3.3.7.

803 **3.3.6 Examine Pending Signals**

804 Function: *sigpending()*

805 **3.3.6.1 Synopsis**

806 `#include <signal.h>`  
807 `int sigpending(sigset_t *set);`

808 **3.3.6.2 Description**

809 The *sigpending()* function shall store the set of signals that are blocked from  
810 delivery and pending for the calling process in the space pointed to by the argu-  
811 ment *set*.

812 **3.3.6.3 Returns**

813 Upon successful completion, a value of zero is returned. Otherwise, a value of -1  
814 is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

815 **3.3.6.4 Errors**

816 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not specify any error conditions that are required  
817 to be detected for the *sigpending()* function. Some errors may be detected under  
818 conditions that are unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

819 **3.3.6.5 Cross-References**

820 `<signal.h>`, 3.3.1; *sigprocmask()*, 3.3.5; *sigsetops*, 3.3.3.

821 **3.3.7 Wait for a Signal**

822 Function: *sigsuspend()*

823 **3.3.7.1 Synopsis**

824 `#include <signal.h>`  
825 `int sigsuspend(const sigset_t *sigmask);`

**826 3.3.7.2 Description**

827 The *sigsuspend()* function replaces the signal mask of the process with the set of  
828 signals pointed to by the argument *sigmask* and then suspends the process until  
829 delivery of a signal whose action is either to execute a signal-catching function or  
830 to terminate the process.

831 If the action is to terminate the process, the *sigsuspend()* function shall not  
832 return. If the action is to execute a signal-catching function, the *sigsuspend()*  
833 shall return after the signal-catching function returns, with the signal mask  
834 restored to the set that existed prior to the *sigsuspend()* call.

835 It is not possible to block those signals that cannot be ignored, as documented in  
836 3.3.1; this shall be enforced by the system without causing an error to be  
837 indicated.

**838 3.3.7.3 Returns**

839 Since the *sigsuspend()* function suspends process execution indefinitely, there is  
840 no successful completion return value. A value of  $-1$  is returned and *errno* is set  
841 to indicate the error.

**842 3.3.7.4 Errors**

843 If any of the following conditions occur, the *sigsuspend()* function shall return  $-1$   
844 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

845 [EINTR] A signal is caught by the calling process, and control is  
846 returned from the signal-catching function.

**847 3.3.7.5 Cross-References**

848 *pause()*, 3.4.2; *sigaction()*, 3.3.4; <signal.h>, 3.3.1; *sigpending()*, 3.3.6; *sigproc-*  
849 *mask()*, 3.3.5; *sigsetops*, 3.3.3.

**850 3.4 Timer Operations**

851 A process can suspend itself for a specific period of time with the *sleep()* function  
852 or suspend itself indefinitely with the *pause()* function until a signal arrives. The  
853 *alarm()* function schedules a signal to arrive at a specific time, so a *pause()*  
854 suspension need not be indefinite.

**855 3.4.1 Schedule Alarm**

856 Function: *alarm()*

857 **3.4.1.1 Synopsis**

858 `unsigned int alarm(unsigned int seconds);`

859 **3.4.1.2 Description**

860 The *alarm()* function shall cause the system to send the calling process a  
861 SIGALRM signal after the number of real-time seconds specified by *seconds* have  
862 elapsed.

863 Processor scheduling delays may cause the process actually not to begin handling  
864 the signal until after the desired time.

865 Alarm requests are not stacked; only one SIGALRM generation can be scheduled  
866 in this manner. If the SIGALRM has not yet been generated, the call will result in  
867 rescheduling the time at which the SIGALRM will be generated.

868 If *seconds* is zero, any previously made *alarm()* request is canceled.

869 **3.4.1.3 Returns**

870 If there is a previous *alarm()* request with time remaining, the *alarm()* function  
871 shall return a nonzero value that is the number of seconds until the previous  
872 request would have generated a SIGALRM signal. Otherwise, the *alarm()* func-  
873 tion shall return zero.

874 **3.4.1.4 Errors**

875 The *alarm()* function is always successful, and no return value is reserved to indi-  
876 cate an error.

877 **3.4.1.5 Cross-References**

878 *exec*, 3.1.2; *fork()*, 3.1.1; *pause()*, 3.4.2; *sigaction()*, 3.3.4; `<signal.h>`, 3.3.1.

879 **3.4.2 Suspend Process Execution**

880 Function: *pause()*

881 **3.4.2.1 Synopsis**

882 `int pause(void);`

883 **3.4.2.2 Description**

884 The *pause()* function suspends the calling process until delivery of a signal whose  
885 action is either to execute a signal-catching function or to terminate the process.

886 If the action is to terminate the process, the *pause()* function shall not return.

887 If the action is to execute a signal-catching function, the *pause()* function shall  
888 return after the signal-catching function returns.

889 **3.4.2.3 Returns**

890 Since the *pause()* function suspends process execution indefinitely, there is no  
891 successful completion return value. A value of -1 is returned and *errno* is set to  
892 indicate the error.

893 **3.4.2.4 Errors**

894 If any of the following conditions occur, the *pause()* function shall return -1 and  
895 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

896 [EINTR] A signal is caught by the calling process, and control is  
897 returned from the signal-catching function.

898 **3.4.2.5 Cross-References**

899 *alarm()*, 3.4.1; *kill()*, 3.3.2; *wait*, 3.2.1; 3.3.1.4.

900 **3.4.3 Delay Process Execution**

901 Function: *sleep()*

902 **3.4.3.1 Synopsis**

903 unsigned int *sleep*(unsigned int *seconds*);

904 **3.4.3.2 Description**

905 The *sleep()* function shall cause the current process to be suspended from execu-  
906 tion until either the number of real-time seconds specified by the argument  
907 *seconds* have elapsed or a signal is delivered to the calling process and its action  
908 is to invoke a signal-catching function or to terminate the process. The suspen-  
909 sion time may be longer than requested due to the scheduling of other activity by  
910 the system.

911 If a SIGALRM signal is generated for the calling process during execution of the  
912 *sleep()* function and the SIGALRM signal is being ignored or blocked from delivery,  
913 it is unspecified whether *sleep()* returns when the SIGALRM signal is scheduled.  
914 If the signal is being blocked, it is also unspecified whether it remains pending  
915 after the *sleep()* function returns or is discarded.

916 If a SIGALRM signal is generated for the calling process during execution of the  
917 *sleep()* function, except as a result of a prior call to the *alarm()* function, and if  
918 the SIGALRM signal is not being ignored or blocked from delivery, it is unspecified  
919 whether that signal has any effect other than causing the *sleep()* function to  
920 return.

921 If a signal-catching function interrupts the *sleep()* function and either examines  
922 or changes the time a SIGALRM is scheduled to be generated, the action associ-  
923 ated with the SIGALRM signal, or whether the SIGALRM signal is blocked from  
924 delivery, the results are unspecified.

925 If a signal-catching function interrupts the *sleep()* function and calls the  
926 *siglongjmp()* or *longjmp()* function to restore an environment saved prior to the  
927 *sleep()* call, the action associated with the SIGALRM signal and the time at which  
928 a SIGALRM signal is scheduled to be generated are unspecified. It is also  
929 unspecified whether the SIGALRM signal is blocked, unless the process's signal  
930 mask is restored as part of the environment (see 8.3.1).

#### 931 **3.4.3.3 Returns**

932 If the *sleep()* function returns because the requested time has elapsed, the value  
933 returned shall be zero. If the *sleep()* function returns due to delivery of a signal,  
934 the value returned shall be the unslept amount (the requested time minus the  
935 time actually slept) in seconds.

#### 936 **3.4.3.4 Errors**

937 The *sleep()* function is always successful, and no return value is reserved to indi-  
938 cate an error.

#### 939 **3.4.3.5 Cross-References**

940 *alarm()*, 3.4.1; *pause()*, 3.4.2; *sigaction()*, 3.3.4.

## Section 4: Process Environment

### 1    **4.1 Process Identification**

#### 2    **4.1.1 Get Process and Parent Process IDs**

3    Functions: *getpid()*, *getppid()*

##### 4    **4.1.1.1 Synopsis**

```
5    #include <sys/types.h>  
6    pid_t getpid(void);  
7    pid_t getppid(void);
```

##### 8    **4.1.1.2 Description**

9    The *getpid()* function returns the process ID of the calling process.

10   The *getppid()* function returns the parent process ID of the calling process.

##### 11   **4.1.1.3 Returns**

12   See 4.1.1.2.

##### 13   **4.1.1.4 Errors**

14   The *getpid()* and *getppid()* functions are always successful, and no return value is  
15   reserved to indicate an error.

##### 16   **4.1.1.5 Cross-References**

17   *exec*, 3.1.2; *fork()*, 3.1.1; *kill()*, 3.3.2.

## 18 4.2 User Identification

### 19 4.2.1 Get Real User, Effective User, Real Group, and Effective Group IDs

20 Functions: *getuid()*, *geteuid()*, *getgid()*, *getegid()*

#### 21 4.2.1.1 Synopsis

```
22 #include <sys/types.h>  
23 uid_t getuid(void);  
24 uid_t geteuid(void);  
25 gid_t getgid(void);  
26 gid_t getegid(void);
```

#### 27 4.2.1.2 Description

28 The *getuid()* function returns the real user ID of the calling process.

29 The *geteuid()* function returns the effective user ID of the calling process.

30 The *getgid()* function returns the real group ID of the calling process.

31 The *getegid()* function returns the effective group ID of the calling process.

#### 32 4.2.1.3 Returns

33 See 4.2.1.2.

#### 34 4.2.1.4 Errors

35 The *getuid()*, *geteuid()*, *getgid()*, and *getegid()* functions are always successful,  
36 and no return value is reserved to indicate an error.

#### 37 4.2.1.5 Cross-References

38 *setuid()*, 4.2.2.

### 39 4.2.2 Set User and Group IDs

40 Functions: *setuid()*, *setgid()*

#### 41 4.2.2.1 Synopsis

```
42 #include <sys/types.h>  
43 int setuid(uid_t uid);  
44 int setgid(gid_t gid);
```

#### 4.2.2.2 Description

If `{_POSIX_SAVED_IDS}` is defined:

- (1) If the process has appropriate privileges, the `setuid()` function sets the real user ID, effective user ID, and the saved set-user-ID to `uid`.
- (2) If the process does not have appropriate privileges, but `uid` is equal to the real user ID or the saved set-user-ID, the `setuid()` function sets the effective user ID to `uid`; the real user ID and saved set-user-ID remain unchanged by this function call.
- (3) If the process has appropriate privileges, the `setgid()` function sets the real group ID, effective group ID, and the saved set-group-ID to `gid`.
- (4) If the process does not have appropriate privileges, but `gid` is equal to the real group ID or the saved set-group-ID, the `setgid()` function sets the effective group ID to `gid`; the real group ID and saved set-group-ID remain unchanged by this function call.

Otherwise:

- (1) If the process has appropriate privileges, the `setuid()` function sets the real user ID and effective user ID to `uid`.
- (2) If the process does not have appropriate privileges, but `uid` is equal to the real user ID, the `setuid()` function sets the effective user ID to `uid`; the real user ID remains unchanged by this function call.
- (3) If the process has appropriate privileges, the `setgid()` function sets the real group ID and effective group ID to `gid`.
- (4) If the process does not have appropriate privileges, but `gid` is equal to the real group ID, the `setgid()` function sets the effective group ID to `gid`; the real group ID remains unchanged by this function call.

Any supplementary group IDs of the calling process remain unchanged by these function calls.

#### 4.2.2.3 Returns

Upon successful completion, a value of zero is returned. Otherwise, a value of `-1` is returned and `errno` is set to indicate the error.

#### 4.2.2.4 Errors

If any of the following conditions occur, the `setuid()` function shall return `-1` and set `errno` to the corresponding value:

- |    |                       |   |
|----|-----------------------|---|
| 78 | <code>[EINVAL]</code> | The value of the <code>uid</code> argument is invalid and not supported by the implementation.  |
| 79 |                       |   |
| 80 | <code>[EPERM]</code>  | The process does not have appropriate privileges and <code>uid</code> does not match the real user ID or, if <code>{_POSIX_SAVED_IDS}</code> is defined, the saved set-user-ID. |
| 81 |                       |   |
| 82 |                       |   |

83 If any of the following conditions occur, the *setgid()* function shall return `-1` and  
84 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

85 [EINVAL] The value of the *gid* argument is invalid and not supported by  
86 the implementation.

87 [EPERM] The process does not have appropriate privileges and *gid* does  
88 not match the real group ID or, if `[_POSIX_SAVED_IDS]` is  
89 defined, the saved set-group-ID.

#### 90 4.2.2.5 Cross-References

91 *exec*, 3.1.2; *getuid()*, 4.2.1.

#### 92 4.2.3 Get Supplementary Group IDs

93 Function: *getgroups()*

##### 94 4.2.3.1 Synopsis

95 `#include <sys/types.h>`

96 `int getgroups(int gidsetsize, gid_t grouplist[]);`

##### 97 4.2.3.2 Description

98 The *getgroups()* function fills in the array *grouplist* with the supplementary group  
99 IDs of the calling process. The *gidsetsize* argument specifies the number of ele-  
100 ments in the supplied array *grouplist*. The actual number of supplementary  
101 group IDs stored in the array is returned. The values of array entries with indices  
102 larger than or equal to the returned value are undefined.

103 As a special case, if the *gidsetsize* argument is zero, *getgroups()* returns the  
104 number of supplemental group IDs associated with the calling process without  
105 modifying the array pointed to by the *grouplist* argument.

##### 106 4.2.3.3 Returns

107 Upon successful completion, the number of supplementary group IDs is returned.  
108 This value is zero if `{NGROUPS_MAX}` is zero. A return value of `-1` indicates  
109 failure, and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

##### 110 4.2.3.4 Errors

111 If any of the following conditions occur, the *getgroups()* function shall return `-1`  
112 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

113 [EINVAL] The *gidsetsize* argument is not equal to zero and is less than  
114 the number of supplementary group IDs.

115 **4.2.3.5 Cross-References**116 *setgid()*, 4.2.2.117 **4.2.4 Get User Name**118 Functions: *getlogin()*119 **4.2.4.1 Synopsis**120 `char *getlogin(void);`121 **4.2.4.2 Description**

122 The *getlogin()* function returns a pointer to a string giving a user name associated  
123 with the calling process, which is the login name associated with the calling  
124 process.

125 If *getlogin()* returns a non-NULL pointer, that pointer points to the name under  
126 which the user logged in, even if there are several login names with the same  
127 user ID.

128

129 **4.2.4.3 Returns**

130 The *getlogin()* function returns a pointer to a string containing the user's login  
131 name, or a NULL pointer if the user's login name cannot be found.

132 The return value from *getlogin()* may point to static data and, therefore, may be  
133 overwritten by each call.

134

135 **4.2.4.4 Errors**

136 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not specify any error conditions that are required  
137 to be detected for the *getlogin()* function. Some errors may be detected under con-  
138 ditions that are unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

139 **4.2.4.5 Cross-References**140 *getpwnam()*, 9.2.2; *getpwuid()*, 9.2.2.

141 **4.3 Process Groups**

142 **4.3.1 Get Process Group ID**

143 Function: *getpgrp()*

144 **4.3.1.1 Synopsis**

145 #include <sys/types.h>  
146 pid\_t getpgrp(void);

147 **4.3.1.2 Description**

148 The *getpgrp()* function returns the process group ID of the calling process.

149 **4.3.1.3 Returns**

150 See 4.3.1.2.

151 **4.3.1.4 Errors**

152 The *getpgrp()* function is always successful, and no return value is reserved to  
153 indicate an error.

154 **4.3.1.5 Cross-References**

155 *setpgid()*, 4.3.3; *setsid()*, 4.3.2; *sigaction()*, 3.3.4.

156 **4.3.2 Create Session and Set Process Group ID**

157 Function: *setsid()*

158 **4.3.2.1 Synopsis**

159 #include <sys/types.h>  
160 pid\_t setsid(void);

161 **4.3.2.2 Description**

162 If the calling process is not a process group leader, the *setsid()* function shall  
163 create a new session. The calling process shall be the session leader of this new  
164 session, shall be the process group leader of a new process group, and shall have  
165 no controlling terminal. The process group ID of the calling process shall be set  
166 equal to the process ID of the calling process. The calling process shall be the only  
167 process in the new process group and the only process in the new session.

168 **4.3.2.3 Returns**

169 Upon successful completion, the *setsid()* function returns the value of the process  
170 group ID of the calling process. Otherwise, a value of -1 is returned and *errno* is  
171 set to indicate the error.

172 **4.3.2.4 Errors**

173 If any of the following conditions occur, the *setsid()* function shall return -1 and  
174 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

175 [EPERM] The calling process is already a process group leader, or the  
176 process group ID of a process other than the calling process  
177 matches the process ID of the calling process.

178 **4.3.2.5 Cross-References**

179 *exec*, 3.1.2; *\_exit()*, 3.2.2; *fork()*, 3.1.1; *getpid()*, 4.1.1; *kill()*, 3.3.2; *setpgid()*, 4.3.3;  
180 *sigaction()*, 3.3.4.

181 **4.3.3 Set Process Group ID for Job Control**

182 Function: *setpgid()*

183 **4.3.3.1 Synopsis**

184 #include <sys/types.h>  
185 int setpgid(pid\_t pid, pid\_t pgid);

186 **4.3.3.2 Description**

187 If `{_POSIX_JOB_CONTROL}` is defined:

188 The *setpgid()* function is used to either join an existing process group or  
189 create a new process group within the session of the calling process. The  
190 process group ID of a session leader shall not change. Upon successful com-  
191 pletion, the process group ID of the process with a process ID that matches  
192 *pid* shall be set to *pgid*. As a special case, if *pid* is zero, the process ID of  
193 the calling process shall be used. Also, if *pgid* is zero, the process ID of the  
194 indicated process shall be used.

195 Otherwise:

196 Either the implementation shall support the *setpgid()* function as described  
197 above or the *setpgid()* function shall fail.

198 **4.3.3.3 Returns**

199 Upon successful completion, the *setpgid()* function returns a value of zero. Other-  
200 wise, a value of -1 is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

#### 201 4.3.3.4 Errors

202 If any of the following conditions occur, the *setpgid()* function shall return *-1* and  
203 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

204 [EACCES] The value of the *pid* argument matches the process ID of a child  
205 process of the calling process, and the child process has success-  
206 fully executed one of the *exec* functions.

207 [EINVAL] The value of the *pgid* argument is less than zero or is not a  
208 value supported by the implementation.

209 [ENOSYS] The *setpgid()* function is not supported by this implementation.

210 [EPERM] The process indicated by the *pid* argument is a session leader.

211 The value of the *pid* argument is valid, but matches the process ID  
212 of a child process of the calling process, and the child process  
213 is not in the same session as the calling process.

214 The value of the *pgid* argument does not match the process ID  
215 of the process indicated by the *pid* argument, and there is no  
216 process with a process group ID that matches the value of the  
217 *pgid* argument in the same session as the calling process.

218 [ESRCH] The value of the *pid* argument does not match the process ID of  
219 the calling process or of a child process of the calling process.

#### 220 4.3.3.5 Cross-References

221 *getpgrp()*, 4.3.1; *setsid()*, 4.3.2; *tcsetpgrp()*, 7.2.4; *exec*, 3.1.2.

### 222 4.4 System Identification

#### 223 4.4.1 Get System Name

224 Function: *uname()*

##### 225 4.4.1.1 Synopsis

226 #include <sys/utsname.h>

227 int *uname*(struct utsname \**name*);

##### 228 4.4.1.2 Description

229 The *uname()* function stores information identifying the current operating system  
230 in the structure pointed to by the argument *name*.

231 The structure *utsname* is defined in the header <sys/utsname.h> and contains  
232 at least the members shown in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1 – *uname()* Structure Members

Member Name	Description
<i>sysname</i>	Name of this implementation of the operating system.
<i>nodename</i>	Name of this node within an implementation-specified communications network.
<i>release</i>	Current release level of this implementation.
<i>version</i>	Current version level of this release.
<i>machine</i>	Name of the hardware type on which the system is running.

Each of these data items is a null-terminated array of *char*.

The format of each member is implementation defined. The system documentation (see 1.3.1.2) shall specify the source and format of each member and may specify the range of values for each member.

The inclusion of the *nodename* member in this structure does not imply that it is sufficient information for interfacing to communications networks.

#### 4.4.1.3 Returns

Upon successful completion, a nonnegative value is returned. Otherwise, a value of  $-1$  is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

#### 4.4.1.4 Errors

This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not specify any error conditions that are required to be detected for the *uname()* function. Some errors may be detected under conditions that are unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

## 4.5 Time

### 4.5.1 Get System Time

Function: *time()*

#### 4.5.1.1 Synopsis

```
#include <time.h>
time_t time(time_t *tloc);
```

262 **4.5.1.2 Description**

263 The *time()* function returns the value of time in seconds since the Epoch.

264 The argument *tloc* points to an area where the return value is also stored. If *tloc*  
 265 is a NULL pointer, no value is stored.

266 **4.5.1.3 Returns**

267 Upon successful completion, *time()* returns the value of time. Otherwise, a value  
 268 of  $((time\_t) - 1)$  is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

269 **4.5.1.4 Errors**

270 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not specify any error conditions that are required  
 271 to be detected for the *time()* function. Some errors may be detected under condi-  
 272 tions that are unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

273 **4.5.2 Get Process Times**

274 Function: *times()*

275 **4.5.2.1 Synopsis**

276 #include <sys/times.h>  
 277 clock\_t times(struct tms \*buffer);

278 **4.5.2.2 Description**

279 The *times()* function shall fill the structure pointed to by *buffer* with time-  
 280 accounting information. The type *clock\_t* and the *tms* structure are defined in  
 281 <sys/times.h>; the *tms* structure shall contain at least the following members:

282	<b>Member</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Description</b>
283	<b>Type</b>	<b>Name</b>	
284	<i>clock_t</i>	<i>tms_utime</i>	User CPU time.
285	<i>clock_t</i>	<i>tms_stime</i>	System CPU time.
286	<i>clock_t</i>	<i>tms_cutime</i>	User CPU time of terminated child processes.
287	<i>clock_t</i>	<i>tms_cstime</i>	System CPU time of terminated child processes.

288 All times are measured in terms of the number of clock ticks used.

289 The times of a terminated child process are included in the *tms\_cutime* and  
 290 *tms\_cstime* elements of the parent when a *wait()* or *waitpid()* function returns the  
 291 process ID of this terminated child. See 3.2.1. If a child process has not waited  
 292 for its terminated children, their times shall not be included in its times.

293 The value *tms\_utime* is the CPU time charged for the execution of user  
 294 instructions.

295 The value *tms\_stime* is the CPU time charged for execution by the system on  
296 behalf of the process.

297 The value *tms\_cutime* is the sum of the *tms\_utimes* and *tms\_cutimes* of the child  
298 processes.

299 The value *tms\_cstime* is the sum of the *tms\_stimes* and *tms\_cstimes* of the child  
300 processes.

### 301 4.5.2.3 Returns

302 Upon successful completion, *times()* shall return the elapsed real time, in clock  
303 ticks, since an arbitrary point in the past (for example, system start-up time).  
304 This point does not change from one invocation of *times()* within the process to  
305 another. The return value may overflow the possible range of type *clock\_t*. If the  
306 *times()* function fails, a value of  $((\text{clock\_t}) - 1)$  is returned and *errno* is set to indi-  
307 cate the error.

### 308 4.5.2.4 Errors

309 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not specify any error conditions that are required  
310 to be detected for the *times()* function. Some errors may be detected under condi-  
311 tions that are unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

### 312 4.5.2.5 Cross-References

313 *exec*, 3.1.2; *fork()*, 3.1.1; *sysconf()*, 4.8.1; *time()*, 4.5.1; *wait()*, 3.2.1.

## 314 4.6 Environment Variables

### 315 4.6.1 Environment Access

316 Function: *getenv()*

#### 317 4.6.1.1 Synopsis

318 #include <stdlib.h>

319 char \*getenv(const char \*name);

#### 320 4.6.1.2 Description

321 The *getenv()* function searches the environment list (see 2.6) for a string of the  
322 form *name=value* and returns a pointer to *value* if such a string is present. If the  
323 specified *name* cannot be found, a NULL pointer is returned.

324 **4.6.1.3 Returns**

325 Upon successful completion, the *getenv()* function returns a pointer to a string  
326 containing the *value* for the specified *name*, or a NULL pointer if the specified  
327 *name* cannot be found. The return value from *getenv()* may point to static data  
328 and, therefore, may be overwritten by each call. Unsuccessful completion shall  
329 result in the return of a NULL pointer.

330 **4.6.1.4 Errors**

331 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not specify any error conditions that are required  
332 to be detected for the *getenv()* function. Some errors may be detected under condi-  
333 tions that are unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

334 **4.6.1.5 Cross-References**

335 3.1.2; 2.6.

336 **4.7 Terminal Identification**

337 **4.7.1 Generate Terminal Pathname**

338 Function: *ctermid()*

339 **4.7.1.1 Synopsis**

340 #include <stdio.h>  
341 char \*ctermid(char \*s);

342 **4.7.1.2 Description**

343 The *ctermid()* function generates a string that, when used as a pathname, refers  
344 to the current controlling terminal for the current process.

345 If the *ctermid()* function returns a pathname, access to the file is not guaranteed.

346 **4.7.1.3 Returns**

347 If *s* is a NULL pointer, the string is generated in an area that may be static (and,  
348 therefore, may be overwritten by each call), the address of which is returned.  
349 Otherwise, *s* is assumed to point to an array of *char* of at least *L\_ctermid* bytes;  
350 the string is placed in this array and the value of *s* is returned. The symbolic con-  
351 stant *L\_ctermid* is defined in <stdio.h> and shall have a value greater than  
352 zero.

353 The *ctermid()* function shall return an empty string if the pathname that would  
354 refer to the controlling terminal cannot be determined or if the function is  
355 unsuccessful.

356 **4.7.1.4 Errors**

357 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not specify any error conditions that are required  
358 to be detected for the *ctermid()* function. Some errors may be detected under con-  
359 ditions that are unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

360 **4.7.1.5 Cross-References**

361 *ttyname()*, 4.7.2.

362 **4.7.2 Determine Terminal Device Name**

363 Functions: *ttyname()*, *isatty()*

364 **4.7.2.1 Synopsis**

365 `char *ttyname(int fdes);`

366 `int isatty(int fdes);`

367 **4.7.2.2 Description**

368 The *ttyname()* function returns a pointer to a string containing a null-terminated  
369 pathname of the terminal associated with file descriptor *fdes*.

370 The return value of *ttyname()* may point to static data that is overwritten by each  
371 call.

372 The *isatty()* function returns 1 if *fdes* is a valid file descriptor associated with a  
373 terminal, zero otherwise.

374 **4.7.2.3 Returns**

375 The *ttyname()* function returns a NULL pointer if *fdes* is not a valid file descrip-  
376 tor associated with a terminal or if the pathname cannot be determined.

377 **4.7.2.4 Errors**

378 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not specify any error conditions that are required  
379 to be detected for the *ttyname()* or *isatty()* functions. Some errors may be  
380 detected under conditions that are unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

## 381 4.8 Configurable System Variables

### 382 4.8.1 Get Configurable System Variables

383 Function: *sysconf()*

#### 384 4.8.1.1 Synopsis

385 #include <unistd.h>  
386 long sysconf(int name);

#### 387 4.8.1.2 Description

388 The *sysconf()* function provides a method for the application to determine the  
389 current value of a configurable system limit or option (*variable*).

390 The *name* argument represents the system variable to be queried. The implemen-  
391 tation shall support all of the variables listed in Table 4-2 and may support oth-  
392 ers. The variables in Table 4-2 come from <limits.h> or <unistd.h> and the  
393 symbolic constants, defined in <unistd.h>, that are the corresponding values  
394 used for *name*.

395 **Table 4-2 – Configurable System Variables**

396	Variable	name Value
397		
398	{ARG_MAX}	{_SC_ARG_MAX}
399	{CHILD_MAX}	{_SC_CHILD_MAX}
400	clock ticks/second	{_SC_CLK_TCK}
401	{NGROUPS_MAX}	{_SC_NGROUPS_MAX}
402	{OPEN_MAX}	{_SC_OPEN_MAX}
403	{STREAM_MAX}	{_SC_STREAM_MAX}
404	{TZNAME_MAX}	{_SC_TZNAME_MAX}
405	{_POSIX_JOB_CONTROL}	{_SC_JOB_CONTROL}
406	{_POSIX_SAVED_IDS}	{_SC_SAVED_IDS}
407	{_POSIX_VERSION}	{_SC_VERSION}
408		

#### 409 4.8.1.3 Returns

410 If *name* is an invalid value, *sysconf()* shall return -1. If the variable correspond-  
411 ing to *name* is associated with functionality that is not supported by the system,  
412 *sysconf()* shall return -1 without changing the value of *errno*.

413 Otherwise, the *sysconf()* function returns the current variable value on the sys-  
414 tem. The value returned shall not be more restrictive than the corresponding  
415 value described to the application when it was compiled with the  
416 implementation's <limits.h> or <unistd.h>. The value shall not change dur-  
417 ing the lifetime of the calling process.

418 **4.8.1.4 Errors**

419 If any of the following conditions occur, the *sysconf()* function shall return -1 and  
420 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

421 [EINVAL] The value of the *name* argument is invalid.

422 **4.8.1.5 Special Symbol {CLK\_TCK}**

423 The special symbol {CLK\_TCK} shall yield the same result as  
424 *sysconf(\_SC\_CLK\_TCK)*. It shall be defined in <time.h>. The symbol  
425 {CLK\_TCK} may be evaluated by the implementation at run time or may be a con-  
426 stant. This special symbol is obsolescent.

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## Section 5: Files and Directories

1 The functions in this section perform the operating system services dealing with  
2 the creation and removal of files and directories and the detection and  
3 modification of their characteristics. They also provide the primary methods a  
4 process will use to gain access to files and directories for subsequent I/O opera-  
5 tions (see Section 6).

### 6 5.1 Directories

#### 7 5.1.1 Format of Directory Entries

8 The header `<dirent.h>` defines a structure and a defined type used by the *direc-*  
9 *tory* routines.

10 The internal format of directories is unspecified.

11 The *readdir()* function returns a pointer to an object of type *struct dirent* that  
12 includes the member:

13	Member	Member	Description
14	Type	Name	
15	<code>char [ ]</code>	<code>d_name</code>	Null-terminated filename

16 The array of *char d\_name* is of unspecified size, but the number of bytes preceding  
17 the terminating null character shall not exceed `{NAME_MAX}`.

#### 18 5.1.2 Directory Operations

19 Functions: *opendir()*, *readdir()*, *rewinddir()*, *closedir()*

##### 20 5.1.2.1 Synopsis

```
21 #include <sys/types.h>
22 #include <dirent.h>
23 DIR *opendir(const char *dirname);
24 struct dirent *readdir(DIR *dirp);
25 void rewinddir(DIR *dirp);
26 int closedir(DIR *dirp);
```

### 27 5.1.2.2 Description

28 The type *DIR*, which is defined in the header `<dirent.h>`, represents a *directory*  
29 *stream*, which is an ordered sequence of all the directory entries in a particular  
30 directory. Directory entries represent files; files may be removed from a directory  
31 or added to a directory asynchronously to the operations described in this sub-  
32 clause (5.1.2). The type *DIR* may be implemented using a file descriptor. In that  
33 case, applications will only be able to open up to a total of `{OPEN_MAX}` files and  
34 directories; see 5.3.1. A successful call to any of the *exec* functions shall close any  
35 directory streams that are open in the calling process.

36 The *opendir()* function opens a directory stream corresponding to the directory  
37 named by the *dirname* argument. The directory stream is positioned at the first  
38 entry.

39 The *readdir()* function returns a pointer to a structure representing the directory  
40 entry at the current position in the directory stream to which *dirp* refers, and  
41 positions the directory stream at the next entry. It returns a `NULL` pointer upon  
42 reaching the end of the directory stream.

43 The *readdir()* function shall not return directory entries containing empty names.  
44 It is unspecified whether entries are returned for dot or dot-dot.

45 The pointer returned by *readdir()* points to data that may be overwritten by  
46 another call to *readdir()* on the same directory stream. This data shall not be  
47 overwritten by another call to *readdir()* on a different directory stream.

48 The *readdir()* function may buffer several directory entries per actual read opera-  
49 tion; the *readdir()* function shall mark for update the *st\_atime* field of the direc-  
50 tory each time the directory is actually read.

51 The *rewinddir()* function resets the position of the directory stream to which *dirp*  
52 refers to the beginning of the directory. It also causes the directory stream to  
53 refer to the current state of the corresponding directory, as a call to *opendir()*  
54 would have done. It does not return a value.

55 If a file is removed from or added to the directory after the most recent call to  
56 *opendir()* or *rewinddir()*, whether a subsequent call to *readdir()* returns an entry  
57 for that file is unspecified.

58 The *closedir()* function closes the directory stream referred to by *dirp* and returns  
59 a value of zero if successful. Otherwise, it returns `-1` indicating an error. Upon  
60 return, the value of *dirp* may no longer point to an accessible object of type *DIR*.  
61 If a file descriptor is used to implement type *DIR*, that file descriptor shall be  
62 closed.

63 If the *dirp* argument passed to any of these functions does not refer to a currently  
64 open directory stream, the effect is undefined.

65 The result of using a directory stream after one of the *exec* family of functions is  
66 undefined. After a call to the *fork()* function, either the parent or the child (but  
67 not both) may continue processing the directory stream using *readdir()* or *rewind-*  
68 *dir()* or both. If both the parent and child processes use these functions, the  
69 result is undefined. Either or both processes may use *closedir()*.

70 **5.1.2.3 Returns**

71 Upon successful completion, *opendir()* returns a pointer to an object of type *DIR*.  
72 Otherwise, a value of *NULL* is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

73 Upon successful completion, *readdir()* returns a pointer to an object of type *struct*  
74 *dirent*. When an error is encountered, a value of *NULL* is returned and *errno* is  
75 set to indicate the error. When the end of the directory is encountered, a value of  
76 *NULL* is returned and *errno* is unchanged by this function call.

77 Upon successful completion, *closedir()* returns a value of zero. Otherwise, a value  
78 of *-1* is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

79 **5.1.2.4 Errors**

80 If any of the following conditions occur, the *opendir()* function shall return a value  
81 of *NULL* and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

82 [EACCES] Search permission is denied for a component of the path prefix |  
83 of *dirname*, or read permission is denied for the directory itself. |

84 [ENAMETOOLONG]  
85 The length of the *dirname* argument exceeds {*PATH\_MAX*}, or a  
86 pathname component is longer than {*NAME\_MAX*} while  
87 [*\_POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC*] is in effect.

88 [ENOENT] The named directory does not exist, or *dirname* points to an |  
89 empty string. |

90 [ENOTDIR] A component of *dirname* is not a directory.

91 For each of the following conditions, when the condition is detected, the *opendir()*  
92 function shall return a value of *NULL* and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

93 [EMFILE] Too many file descriptors are currently open for the process.

94 [ENFILE] Too many file descriptors are currently open in the system.

95 For each of the following conditions, when the condition is detected, the *readdir()*  
96 function shall return a value of *NULL* and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

97 [EBADF] The *dirp* argument does not refer to an open directory stream.

98 For each of the following conditions, when the condition is detected, the *closedir()*  
99 function shall return *-1* and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

100 [EBADF] The *dirp* argument does not refer to an open directory stream.

101 **5.1.2.5 Cross-References**

102 <*dirent.h*>, 5.1.1.

## 103 5.2 Working Directory

### 104 5.2.1 Change Current Working Directory

105 Function: *chdir()*

#### 106 5.2.1.1 Synopsis

107 `int chdir(const char *path);`

#### 108 5.2.1.2 Description

109 The *path* argument points to the pathname of a directory. The *chdir()* function  
110 causes the named directory to become the current working directory, that is, the  
111 starting point for path searches of pathnames not beginning with slash.

112 If the *chdir()* function fails, the current working directory shall remain  
113 unchanged by this function call.

#### 114 5.2.1.3 Returns

115 Upon successful completion, a value of zero is returned. Otherwise, a value of -1  
116 is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

#### 117 5.2.1.4 Errors

118 If any of the following conditions occur, the *chdir()* function shall return -1 and  
119 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

120 [EACCES] Search permission is denied for any component of the path-  
121 name.

122 [ENAMETOOLONG] The *path* argument exceeds (PATH\_MAX) in length, or a path-  
123 name component is longer than (NAME\_MAX) while  
124 { POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC} is in effect.  
125

126 [ENOTDIR] A component of the pathname is not a directory.

127 [ENOENT] The named directory does not exist or *path* is an empty string.

#### 128 5.2.1.5 Cross-References

129 *getcwd()*, 5.2.2.

130 **5.2.2 Get Working Directory Pathname**131 Function: *getcwd()*132 **5.2.2.1 Synopsis**133 `char *getcwd(char *buf, size_t size);`134 **5.2.2.2 Description**

135 The *getcwd()* function copies an absolute pathname of the current working direc-  
136 tory to the array of *char* pointed to by the argument *buf* and returns a pointer to  
137 the result. The *size* argument is the size in bytes of the array of *char* pointed to  
138 by the *buf* argument. If *buf* is a NULL pointer, the behavior of *getcwd()* is  
139 undefined.

140 **5.2.2.3 Returns**

141 If successful, the *buf* argument is returned. A NULL pointer is returned if an  
142 error occurs and the variable *errno* is set to indicate the error. The contents of *buf*  
143 after an error are undefined.

144 **5.2.2.4 Errors**

145 If any of the following conditions occur, the *getcwd()* function shall return a value  
146 of NULL and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

147 [EINVAL] The *size* argument is zero.

148 [ERANGE] The *size* argument is greater than zero but smaller than the  
149 length of the pathname plus 1.

150 For each of the following conditions, if the condition is detected, the *getcwd()* func-  
151 tion shall return a value of NULL and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

152 [EACCES] Read or search permission was denied for a component of the  
153 pathname.

154 **5.2.2.5 Cross-References**155 *chdir()*, 5.2.1.

## 156 5.3 General File Creation

### 157 5.3.1 Open a File

158 Function: *open()*

#### 159 5.3.1.1 Synopsis

```
160 #include <sys/types.h>
161 #include <sys/stat.h>
162 #include <fcntl.h>
163 int open(const char *path, int oflag, ...);
```

#### 164 5.3.1.2 Description

165 The *open()* function establishes the connection between a file and a file descriptor.  
166 It creates an open file description that refers to a file and a file descriptor that  
167 refers to that open file description. The file descriptor is used by other I/O func-  
168 tions to refer to that file. The *path* argument points to a pathname naming a file.

169 The *open()* function shall return a file descriptor for the named file that is the  
170 lowest file descriptor not currently open for that process. The open file description  
171 is new, and therefore the file descriptor does not share it with any other process  
172 in the system. The file offset shall be set to the beginning of the file. The  
173 `FD_CLOEXEC` file descriptor flag associated with the new file descriptor shall be  
174 cleared. The file status flags and file access modes of the open file description  
175 shall be set according to the value of *oflag*. The value of *oflag* is the bitwise  
176 inclusive OR of values from the following list. See 6.5.1 for the definitions of the  
177 symbolic constants. Applications shall specify exactly one of the first three values  
178 (file access modes) below in the value of *oflag*:

179 `O_RDONLY` Open for reading only.  
180 `O_WRONLY` Open for writing only.  
181 `O_RDWR` Open for reading and writing. The result is undefined if this  
182 flag is applied to a FIFO.

183 Any combination of the remaining flags may be specified in the value of *oflag*:

184 `O_APPEND` If set, the file offset shall be set to the end of the file prior to  
185 each write.

186 `O_CREAT` This option requires a third argument, *mode*, which is of type  
187 *mode\_t*. If the file exists, this flag has no effect, except as noted  
188 under `O_EXCL`, below. Otherwise, the file is created; the file's  
189 user ID shall be set to the effective user ID of the process; the  
190 file's group ID shall be set to the group ID of the directory in  
191 which the file is being created or to the effective group ID of the  
192 process. The file permission bits (see 5.6.1) shall be set to the  
193 value of *mode* except those set in the file mode creation mask of  
194 the process (see 5.3.3). When bits in *mode* other than the file  
195 permission bits are set, the effect is unspecified. The *mode*

- 196 argument does not affect whether the file is opened for reading, |  
197 for writing, or for both.
- 198 **O\_EXCL** If **O\_EXCL** and **O\_CREAT** are set, *open()* shall fail if the file  
199 exists. The check for the existence of the file and the creation of  
200 the file if it does not exist shall be atomic with respect to other  
201 processes executing *open()* naming the same filename in the  
202 same directory with **O\_EXCL** and **O\_CREAT** set. If **O\_EXCL** is  
203 set and **O\_CREAT** is not set, the result is undefined. |
- 204 **O\_NOCTTY** If set, and *path* identifies a terminal device, the *open()* function  
205 shall not cause the terminal device to become the controlling  
206 terminal for the process (see 7.1.1.3).
- 207 **O\_NONBLOCK**
- 208 (1) When opening a FIFO with **O\_RDONLY** or **O\_WRONLY** set:  
209 (a) If **O\_NONBLOCK** is set:  
210 An *open()* for reading-only shall return without  
211 delay. An *open()* for writing-only shall return an  
212 error if no process currently has the file open for  
213 reading.  
214 (b) If **O\_NONBLOCK** is clear:  
215 An *open()* for reading-only shall block until a process  
216 opens the file for writing. An *open()* for writing-only  
217 shall block until a process opens the file for reading.
- 218 (2) When opening a block special or character special file that  
219 supports nonblocking opens:  
220 (a) If **O\_NONBLOCK** is set:  
221 The *open()* shall return without waiting for the dev-  
222 ice to be ready or available. Subsequent behavior of  
223 the device is device-specific.  
224 (b) If **O\_NONBLOCK** is clear:  
225 The *open()* shall wait until the device is ready or  
226 available before returning.
- 227 (3) Otherwise, the behavior of **O\_NONBLOCK** is unspecified.
- 228 **O\_TRUNC** If the file exists and is a regular file, and the file is successfully  
229 opened **O\_RDWR** or **O\_WRONLY**, it shall be truncated to zero  
230 length and the mode and owner shall be unchanged by this  
231 function call. **O\_TRUNC** shall have no effect on FIFO special  
232 files or terminal device files. Its effect on other file types is  
233 implementation defined. The result of using **O\_TRUNC** with  
234 **O\_RDONLY** is undefined.
- 235 If **O\_CREAT** is set and the file did not previously exist, upon successful completion  
236 the *open()* function shall mark for update the *st\_atime*, *st\_ctime*, and *st\_mtime*  
237 fields of the file and the *st\_ctime* and *st\_mtime* fields of the parent directory.

238 If `O_TRUNC` is set and the file did previously exist, upon successful completion  
239 the `open()` function shall mark for update the `st_ctime` and `st_mtime` fields of the  
240 file.

### 241 5.3.1.3 Returns

242 Upon successful completion, the function shall open the file and return a nonne-  
243 gative integer representing the lowest numbered unused file descriptor. Other-  
244 wise, it shall return `-1` and shall set `errno` to indicate the error. No files shall be  
245 created or modified if the function returns `-1`.

### 246 5.3.1.4 Errors

247 If any of the following conditions occur, the `open()` function shall return `-1` and set  
248 `errno` to the corresponding value:

- 249 [EACCES] Search permission is denied on a component of the path prefix,  
250 or the file exists and the permissions specified by `oflag` are  
251 denied, or the file does not exist and write permission is denied  
252 for the parent directory of the file to be created, or `O_TRUNC` is  
253 specified and write permission is denied.
- 254 [EEXIST] `O_CREAT` and `O_EXCL` are set and the named file exists.
- 255 [EINTR] The `open()` operation was interrupted by a signal.
- 256 [EISDIR] The named file is a directory, and the `oflag` argument specifies  
257 write or read/write access.
- 258 [EMFILE] Too many file descriptors are currently in use by this process.
- 259 [ENAMETOOLONG] The length of the `path` string exceeds `(PATH_MAX)`, or a path-  
260 name component is longer than `(NAME_MAX)` while  
261 `{_POSIX_NO_TRUNC}` is in effect.
- 262 [ENFILE] Too many files are currently open in the system.
- 263 [ENOENT] `O_CREAT` is not set and the named file does not exist, or  
264 `O_CREAT` is set and either the path prefix does not exist or the  
265 `path` argument points to an empty string.
- 266 [ENOSPC] The directory or file system that would contain the new file can-  
267 not be extended.
- 268 [ENOTDIR] A component of the path prefix is not a directory.
- 269 [ENXIO] `O_NONBLOCK` is set, the named file is a FIFO, `O_WRONLY` is  
270 set, and no process has the file open for reading.
- 271 [EROFS] The named file resides on a read-only file system and either  
272 `O_WRONLY`, `O_RDWR`, `O_CREAT` (if the file does not exist), or  
273 `O_TRUNC` is set in the `oflag` argument.
- 274

275 **5.3.1.5 Cross-References**

276 *close()*, 6.3.1; *creat()*, 5.3.2; *dup()*, 6.2.1; *exec*, 3.1.2; *fcntl()*, 6.5.2; <fcntl.h>,  
277 6.5.1; *lseek()*, 6.5.3; *read()*, 6.4.1; <signal.h>, 3.3.1; *stat()*, 5.6.2;  
278 <sys/stat.h>, 5.6.1; *write()*, 6.4.2; *umask()*, 5.3.3; 3.3.1.4.

279 **5.3.2 Create a New File or Rewrite an Existing One**

280 Function: *creat()*

281 **5.3.2.1 Synopsis**

282 #include <sys/types.h>  
283 #include <sys/stat.h>  
284 #include <fcntl.h>  
285 int creat(const char \*path, mode\_t mode);

286 **5.3.2.2 Description**

287 The function call:

288 `creat(path, mode);`

289 is equivalent to:

290 `open(path, O_WRONLY | O_CREAT | O_TRUNC, mode);`

291 **5.3.2.3 Cross-References**

292 *open()*, 5.3.1; <sys/stat.h>, 5.6.1.

293 **5.3.3 Set File Creation Mask**

294 Function: *umask()*

295 **5.3.3.1 Synopsis**

296 #include <sys/types.h>  
297 #include <sys/stat.h>  
298 mode\_t umask(mode\_t cmask);

299 **5.3.3.2 Description**

300 The *umask()* routine sets the file mode creation mask of the process to *cmask* and  
301 returns the previous value of the mask. Only the file permission bits (see 5.6.1) of  
302 *cmask* are used; the meaning of the other bits is implementation defined.

303 The file mode creation mask of the process is used during *open()*, *creat()*, *mkdir()*,  
304 and *mkfifo()* calls to turn off permission bits in the *mode* argument supplied. Bit  
305 positions that are set in *cmask* are cleared in the mode of the created file.

### 306 5.3.3.3 Returns

307 The file permission bits in the value returned by *umask()* shall be the previous  
308 value of the file mode creation mask. The state of any other bits in that value is  
309 unspecified, except that a subsequent call to *umask()* with that returned value as  
310 *cmask* shall leave the state of the mask the same as its state before the first call,  
311 including any unspecified (by this part of ISO/IEC 9945) use of those bits.

### 312 5.3.3.4 Errors

313 The *umask()* function is always successful, and no return value is reserved to  
314 indicate an error.

### 315 5.3.3.5 Cross-References

316 *chmod()*, 5.6.4; *creat()*, 5.3.2; *mkdir()*, 5.4.1; *mkfifo()*, 5.4.2; *open()*, 5.3.1;  
317 <sys/stat.h>, 5.6.1.

## 318 5.3.4 Link to a File

319 Function: *link()*

### 320 5.3.4.1 Synopsis

321 `int link(const char *existing, const char *new);`

### 322 5.3.4.2 Description

323 The argument *existing* points to a pathname naming an existing file. The argu-  
324 ment *new* points to a pathname naming the new directory entry to be created.  
325 Implementations may support linking of files across file systems. The *link()* func-  
326 tion shall atomically create a new link for the existing file and increment the link  
327 count of the file by one.

328 If the *link()* function fails, no link shall be created, and the link count of the file  
329 shall remain unchanged by this function call.

330 The *existing* argument shall not name a directory unless the user has appropriate  
331 privileges and the implementation supports using *link()* on directories.

332 The implementation may require that the calling process has permission to access  
333 the existing file.

334 Upon successful completion, the *link()* function shall mark for update the *st\_ctime*  
335 field of the file. Also, the *st\_ctime* and *st\_mtime* fields of the directory that con-  
336 tains the new entry are marked for update.

337 **5.3.4.3 Returns**

338 Upon successful completion, *link()* shall return a value of zero. Otherwise, a  
339 value of  $-1$  is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

340 **5.3.4.4 Errors**

341 If any of the following conditions occur, the *link()* function shall return  $-1$  and set  
342 *errno* to the corresponding value:

- 343 [EACCES] A component of either path prefix denies search permission; or  
344 the requested link requires writing in a directory with a mode  
345 that denies write permission; or the calling process does not  
346 have permission to access the existing file, and this is required  
347 by the implementation.
- 348 [EEXIST] The link named by *new* exists.
- 349 [EMLINK] The number of links to the file named by *existing* would exceed  
350 {LINK\_MAX}.
- 351 [ENAMETOOLONG] The length of the *existing* or *new* string exceeds {PATH\_MAX},  
352 or a pathname component is longer than {NAME\_MAX} while  
353 {\_POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC} is in effect.  
354
- 355 [ENOENT] A component of either path prefix does not exist, the file named  
356 by *existing* does not exist, or either *existing* or *new* points to an  
357 empty string.
- 358 [ENOSPC] The directory that would contain the link cannot be extended.
- 359 [ENOTDIR] A component of either path prefix is not a directory.
- 360 [EPERM] The file named by *existing* is a directory, and either the calling  
361 process does not have appropriate privileges or the implemen-  
362 tation prohibits using *link()* on directories.
- 363 [EROFS] The requested link requires writing in a directory on a read-  
364 only file system.
- 365 [EXDEV] The link named by *new* and the file named by *existing* are on  
366 different file systems, and the implementation does not support  
367 links between file systems.

368 **5.3.4.5 Cross-References**

369 *rename()*, 5.5.3; *unlink()*, 5.5.1.

## 370 5.4 Special File Creation

### 371 5.4.1 Make a Directory

372 Function: *mkdir()*

#### 373 5.4.1.1 Synopsis

```
374 #include <sys/types.h>  
375 #include <sys/stat.h>  
376 int mkdir(const char *path, mode_t mode);
```

#### 377 5.4.1.2 Description

378 The *mkdir()* routine creates a new directory with name *path*. The file permission  
379 bits of the new directory are initialized from *mode*. The file permission bits of the  
380 *mode* argument are modified by the file creation mask of the process (see 5.3.3).  
381 When bits in *mode* other than the file permission bits are set, the meaning of  
382 these additional bits is implementation defined.

383 The owner ID of the directory is set to the effective user ID of the process. The  
384 directory's group ID shall be set to the group ID of the directory in which the direc-  
385 tory is being created or to the effective group ID of the process.

386 The newly created directory shall be an empty directory.

387 Upon successful completion, the *mkdir()* function shall mark for update the  
388 *st\_atime*, *st\_ctime*, and *st\_mtime* fields of the directory. Also, the *st\_ctime* and  
389 *st\_mtime* fields of the directory that contains the new entry are marked for  
390 update.

#### 391 5.4.1.3 Returns

392 A return value of zero indicates success. A return value of -1 indicates that an  
393 error has occurred, and an error code is stored in *errno*. No directory shall be  
394 created if the return value is -1.

#### 395 5.4.1.4 Errors

396 If any of the following conditions occur, the *mkdir()* function shall return -1 and  
397 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

- |     |          |  |
|-----|----------|--|
| 398 | [EACCES] | Search permission is denied on a component of the path prefix,<br>399 or write permission is denied on the parent directory of the<br>400 directory to be created. |
| 401 | [EEXIST] | The named file exists.   |
| 402 | [EMLINK] | The link count of the parent directory would exceed<br>403 {LINK_MAX}.   |

- 404 [ENAMETOOLONG]  
405 The length of the *path* argument exceeds {PATH\_MAX}, or a  
406 pathname component is longer than {NAME\_MAX} while  
407 {\_POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC} is in effect.
- 408 [ENOENT] A component of the path prefix does not exist, or the *path* argu-  
409 ment points to an empty string.
- 410 [ENOSPC] The file system does not contain enough space to hold the con-  
411 tents of the new directory or to extend the parent directory of  
412 the new directory.
- 413 [ENOTDIR] A component of the path prefix is not a directory.
- 414 [EROFS] The parent directory of the directory being created resides on a  
415 read-only file system.

#### 416 5.4.1.5 Cross-References

417 *chmod()*, 5.6.4; *stat()*, 5.6.2; <sys/stat.h>, 5.6.1; *umask()*, 5.3.3.

#### 418 5.4.2 Make a FIFO Special File

419 Function: *mkfifo()*

##### 420 5.4.2.1 Synopsis

```
421 #include <sys/types.h>
422 #include <sys/stat.h>
423 int mkfifo(const char *path, mode_t mode);
```

##### 424 5.4.2.2 Description

425 The *mkfifo()* routine creates a new FIFO special file named by the pathname  
426 pointed to by *path*. The file permission bits of the new FIFO are initialized from  
427 *mode*. The file permission bits of the *mode* argument are modified by the file crea-  
428 tion mask of the process (see 5.3.3). When bits in *mode* other than the file permis-  
429 sion bits are set, the effect is implementation defined.

430 The owner ID of the FIFO shall be set to the effective user ID of the process. The  
431 group ID of the FIFO shall be set to the group ID of the directory in which the FIFO  
432 is being created or to the effective group ID of the process.

433 Upon successful completion, the *mkfifo()* function shall mark for update the  
434 *st\_atime*, *st\_ctime*, and *st\_mtime* fields of the file. Also, the *st\_ctime* and *st\_mtime*  
435 fields of the directory that contains the new entry are marked for update.

##### 436 5.4.2.3 Returns

437 Upon successful completion, a value of zero is returned. Otherwise, a value of -1  
438 is returned, no FIFO is created, and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

#### 439 5.4.2.4 Errors

440 If any of the following conditions occur, the *mkfifo()* function shall return -1 and  
441 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

442 [EACCES] Search permission is denied on a component of the path prefix,  
443 or write permission is denied on the parent directory of the file  
444 to be created.

445 [EEXIST] The named file already exists.

446 [ENAMETOOLONG]

447 The length of the *path* string exceeds {PATH\_MAX}, or a path-  
448 name component is longer than {NAME\_MAX} while  
449 {\_POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC} is in effect.

450 [ENOENT] A component of the path prefix does not exist, or the *path* argu-  
451 ment points to an empty string.

452 [ENOSPC] The directory that would contain the new file cannot be  
453 extended, or the file system is out of file allocation resources.

454 [ENOTDIR] A component of the path prefix is not a directory.

455 [EROFS] The named file resides on a read-only file system.

#### 456 5.4.2.5 Cross-References

457 *chmod()*, 5.6.4; *exec*, 3.1.2; *pipe()*, 6.1.1; *stat()*, 5.6.2; <sys/stat.h>, 5.6.1;  
458 *umask()*, 5.3.3.

### 459 5.5 File Removal

#### 460 5.5.1 Remove Directory Entries

461 Function: *unlink()*

##### 462 5.5.1.1 Synopsis

463 `int unlink(const char *path);`

##### 464 5.5.1.2 Description

465 The *unlink()* function shall remove the link named by the pathname pointed to by  
466 *path* and decrement the link count of the file referenced by the link.

467 When the link count of the file becomes zero and no process has the file open, the  
468 space occupied by the file shall be freed and the file shall no longer be accessible.  
469 If one or more processes have the file open when the last link is removed, the link  
470 shall be removed before *unlink()* returns, but the removal of the file contents shall  
471 be postponed until all references to the file have been closed.

472 The *path* argument shall not name a directory unless the process has appropriate  
473 privileges and the implementation supports using *unlink()* on directories. Appli-  
474 cations should use *rmdir()* to remove a directory.

475 Upon successful completion, the *unlink()* function shall mark for update the  
476 *st\_ctime* and *st\_mtime* fields of the parent directory. Also, if the link count of the  
477 file is not zero, the *st\_ctime* field of the file shall be marked for update.

### 478 5.5.1.3 Returns

479 Upon successful completion, a value of zero shall be returned. Otherwise, a value  
480 of  $-1$  shall be returned and *errno* shall be set to indicate the error. If  $-1$  is  
481 returned, the named file shall not be changed by this function call.

### 482 5.5.1.4 Errors

483 If any of the following conditions occur, the *unlink()* function shall return  $-1$  and  
484 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

485 [EACCES] Search permission is denied for a component of the path prefix,  
486 or write permission is denied on the directory containing the  
487 link to be removed.

488 [EBUSY] The directory named by the *path* argument cannot be unlinked  
489 because it is being used by the system or another process and  
490 the implementation considers this to be an error.

491 [ENAMETOOLONG] The length of the *path* argument exceeds {PATH\_MAX}, or a  
492 pathname component is longer than {NAME\_MAX} while  
493 [\_POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC] is in effect.  
494

495 [ENOENT] The named file does not exist, or the *path* argument points to  
496 an empty string.

497 [ENOTDIR] A component of the path prefix is not a directory.

498 [EPERM] The file named by *path* is a directory, and either the calling  
499 process does not have appropriate privileges or the implemen-  
500 tation prohibits using *unlink()* on directories.

501 [EROFS] The directory entry to be unlinked resides on a read-only file  
502 system.

### 503 5.5.1.5 Cross-References

504 *close()*, 6.3.1; *link()*, 5.3.4; *open()*, 5.3.1; *rename()*, 5.5.3; *rmdir()*, 5.5.2.

505 **5.5.2 Remove a Directory**

506 Function: *rmdir()*

507 **5.5.2.1 Synopsis**

508 `int rmdir(const char *path);`

509 **5.5.2.2 Description**

510 The *rmdir()* function removes a directory whose name is given by *path*. The  
511 directory shall be removed only if it is an empty directory.

512 If the named directory is the root directory or the current working directory of any  
513 process, it is unspecified whether the function succeeds or whether it fails and  
514 sets *errno* to [EBUSY].

515 If the link count of the directory becomes zero and no process has the directory  
516 open, the space occupied by the directory shall be freed and the directory shall no  
517 longer be accessible. If one or more processes have the directory open when the  
518 last link is removed, the dot and dot-dot entries, if present, are removed before  
519 *rmdir()* returns and no new entries may be created in the directory, but the direc-  
520 tory is not removed until all references to the directory have been closed.

521 Upon successful completion, the *rmdir()* function shall mark for update the  
522 *st\_ctime* and *st\_mtime* fields of the parent directory.

523 **5.5.2.3 Returns**

524 Upon successful completion, a value of zero shall be returned. Otherwise, a value  
525 of  $-1$  shall be returned and *errno* shall be set to indicate the error. If  $-1$  is  
526 returned, the named directory shall not be changed by this function call.

527 **5.5.2.4 Errors**

528 If any of the following conditions occur, the *rmdir()* function shall return  $-1$  and  
529 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

530 [EACCES] Search permission is denied on a component of the path prefix,  
531 or write permission is denied on the parent directory of the  
532 directory to be removed.

533 [EBUSY] The directory named by the *path* argument cannot be removed  
534 because it is being used by another process and the implemen-  
535 tation considers this to be an error.

536 [EEXIST] or [ENOTEMPTY]  
537 The *path* argument names a directory that is not an empty  
538 directory.

539 [ENAMETOOLONG]  
540 The length of the *path* argument exceeds {PATH\_MAX}, or a  
541 pathname component is longer than {NAME\_MAX} while

- 542                    { \_POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC } is in effect.
- 543       [ENOENT]     The *path* argument names a nonexistent directory or points to  
544                    an empty string.
- 545       [ENOTDIR]    A component of the path is not a directory.
- 546       [EROFS]     The directory entry to be removed resides on a read-only file  
547                    system.

#### 548       **5.5.2.5 Cross-References**

549       *mkdir()*, 5.4.1; *unlink()*, 5.5.1.

#### 550       **5.5.3 Rename a File**

551       Function: *rename()*

##### 552       **5.5.3.1 Synopsis**

553       int *rename*(const char \**old*, const char \**new*);

##### 554       **5.5.3.2 Description**

555       The *rename()* function changes the name of a file. The *old* argument points to the  
556       pathname of the file to be renamed. The *new* argument points to the new path-  
557       name of the file.

558       If the *old* argument and the *new* argument both refer to links to the same existing  
559       file, the *rename()* function shall return successfully and perform no other action.

560       If the *old* argument points to the pathname of a file that is not a directory, the  
561       *new* argument shall not point to the pathname of a directory. If the link named  
562       by the *new* argument exists, it shall be removed and *old* renamed to *new*. In this  
563       case, a link named *new* shall exist throughout the renaming operation and shall  
564       refer either to the file referred to by *new* or *old* before the operation began. Write  
565       access permission is required for both the directory containing *old* and the direc-  
566       tory containing *new*.

567       If the *old* argument points to the pathname of a directory, the *new* argument shall  
568       not point to the pathname of a file that is not a directory. If the directory named  
569       by the *new* argument exists, it shall be removed and *old* renamed to *new*. In this  
570       case, a link named *new* shall exist throughout the renaming operation and shall  
571       refer either to the file referred to by *new* or *old* before the operation began. Thus,  
572       if *new* names an existing directory, it shall be required to be an empty directory.

573       The *new* pathname shall not contain a path prefix that names *old*. Write access  
574       permission is required for the directory containing *old* and the directory contain-  
575       ing *new*. If the *old* argument points to the pathname of a directory, write access  
576       permission may be required for the directory named by *old*, and, if it exists, the  
577       directory named by *new*.

578 If the link named by the *new* argument exists and the link count of the file  
579 becomes zero when it is removed and no process has the file open, the space occu-  
580 pied by the file shall be freed and the file shall no longer be accessible. If one or  
581 more processes have the file open when the last link is removed, the link shall be  
582 removed before *rename()* returns, but the removal of the file contents shall be  
583 postponed until all references to the file have been closed.

584 Upon successful completion, the *rename()* function shall mark for update the  
585 *st\_ctime* and *st\_mtime* fields of the parent directory of each file.

### 586 5.5.3.3 Returns

587 Upon successful completion, a value of zero shall be returned. Otherwise, a value  
588 of  $-1$  shall be returned and *errno* shall be set to indicate the error. If  $-1$  is  
589 returned, neither the file named by *old* nor the file named by *new*, if either exists,  
590 shall be changed by this function call.

### 591 5.5.3.4 Errors

592 If any of the following conditions occur, the *rename()* function shall return  $-1$  and  
593 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

594 [EACCES] A component of either path prefix denies search permission, or  
595 one of the directories containing *old* or *new* denies write per-  
596 missions, or write permission is required and is denied for a  
597 directory pointed to by the *old* or *new* arguments.

598 [EBUSY] The directory named by *old* or *new* cannot be renamed because  
599 it is being used by the system or another process and the imple-  
600 mentation considers this to be an error.

601 [EEXIST] or [ENOTEMPTY]  
602 The link named by *new* is a directory containing entries other  
603 than dot and dot-dot.

604 [EINVAL] The *new* directory pathname contains a path prefix that names  
605 the *old* directory.

606 [EISDIR] The *new* argument points to a directory, and the *old* argument  
607 points to a file that is not a directory.

608 [ENAMETOOLONG]  
609 The length of the *old* or *new* argument exceeds {PATH\_MAX}, or  
610 a pathname component is longer than {NAME\_MAX} while  
611 {\_POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC} is in effect.

612 [EMLINK] The file named by *old* is a directory, and the link count of the  
613 parent directory of *new* would exceed {LINK\_MAX}.

614 [ENOENT] The link named by the *old* argument does not exist, or either  
615 *old* or *new* points to an empty string.

616 [ENOSPC] The directory that would contain *new* cannot be extended.

- 617 [ENOTDIR] A component of either path prefix is not a directory, or the *old*  
618 argument names a directory and the *new* argument names a  
619 nondirectory file.
- 620 [EROFS] The requested operation requires writing in a directory on a  
621 read-only file system.
- 622 [EXDEV] The links named by *new* and *old* are on different file systems,  
623 and the implementation does not support links between file  
624 systems.

### 625 5.5.3.5 Cross-References

626 *link()*, 5.3.4; *rmdir()*, 5.5.2; *unlink()*, 5.5.1.

## 627 5.6 File Characteristics

### 628 5.6.1 File Characteristics: Header and Data Structure

629 The header `<sys/stat.h>` defines the structure *stat*, which includes the  
630 members shown in Table 5-1, returned by the functions *stat()* and *fstat()*.

631 **Table 5-1 – *stat* Structure**

633 Member 634 Type	Member Name	Description
635 <i>mode_t</i>	<i>st_mode</i>	File mode (see 5.6.1.2).
636 <i>ino_t</i>	<i>st_ino</i>	File serial number.
637 <i>dev_t</i>	<i>st_dev</i>	ID of device containing this file.
638 <i>nlink_t</i>	<i>st_nlink</i>	Number of links.
639 <i>uid_t</i>	<i>st_uid</i>	User ID of the owner of the file.
640 <i>gid_t</i>	<i>st_gid</i>	Group ID of the group of the file.
641 <i>off_t</i>	<i>st_size</i>	For regular files, the file size in bytes. For other file types, the use of 642 this field is unspecified.
643 <i>time_t</i>	<i>st_atime</i>	Time of last access.
644 <i>time_t</i>	<i>st_mtime</i>	Time of last data modification.
645 <i>time_t</i>	<i>st_ctime</i>	Time of last file status change.

647 NOTE: File serial number and device ID taken together uniquely identify the file within the system.

648 All of the described members shall appear in the *stat* structure. The structure  
649 members *st\_mode*, *st\_ino*, *st\_dev*, *st\_uid*, *st\_gid*, *st\_atime*, *st\_ctime*, and *st\_mtime*  
650 shall have meaningful values for all file types defined in this part of ISO/IEC 9945.  
651 The value of the member *st\_nlink* shall be set to the number of links to the file.

652 **5.6.1.1 <sys/stat.h> File Types**

653 The following macros shall test whether a file is of the specified type. The value  
 654 *m* supplied to the macros is the value of *st\_mode* from a *stat* structure. The macro  
 655 evaluates to a nonzero value if the test is true, zero if the test is false.

- 656 S\_ISDIR(*m*) Test macro for a directory file.
- 657 S\_ISCHR(*m*) Test macro for a character special file.
- 658 S\_ISBLK(*m*) Test macro for a block special file.
- 659 S\_ISREG(*m*) Test macro for a regular file.
- 660 S\_ISFIFO(*m*) Test macro for a pipe or a FIFO special file.

661 **5.6.1.2 <sys/stat.h> File Modes**

662 The file modes portion of values of type *mode\_t*, such as the *st\_mode* value, are  
 663 bit-encoded with the following masks and bits:

- 664 S\_IRWXU Read, write, search (if a directory), or execute (otherwise) permis-  
 665 sions mask for the file owner class.
- 666 S\_IRUSR Read permission bit for the file owner class.
- 667 S\_IWUSR Write permission bit for the file owner class.
- 668 S\_IXUSR Search (if a directory) or execute (otherwise) per-  
 669 missions bit for the file owner class.
- 670 S\_IRWXG Read, write, search (if a directory), or execute (otherwise) permis-  
 671 sions mask for the file group class.
- 672 S\_IRGRP Read permission bit for the file group class.
- 673 S\_IWGRP Write permission bit for the file group class.
- 674 S\_IXGRP Search (if a directory) or execute (otherwise) per-  
 675 missions bit for the file group class.
- 676 S\_IRWXO Read, write, search (if a directory), or execute (otherwise) permis-  
 677 sions mask for the file other class.
- 678 S\_IROTH Read permission bit for the file other class.
- 679 S\_IWOTH Write permission bit for the file other class.
- 680 S\_IXOTH Search (if a directory) or execute (otherwise) per-  
 681 missions bit for the file other class.
- 682 S\_ISUID Set user ID on execution. The effective user ID of the process  
 683 shall be set to that of the owner of the file when the file is run as  
 684 a program (see *exec*). On a regular file, this bit should be cleared  
 685 on any write.
- 686 S\_ISGID Set group ID on execution. Set effective group ID on the process to  
 687 the group of the file when the file is run as a program (see *exec*).  
 688 On a regular file, this bit should be cleared on any write.

689 The bits defined by S\_IRUSR, S\_IWUSR, S\_IXUSR, S\_IRGRP, S\_IWGRP, S\_IXGRP,  
690 S\_IROTH, S\_IWOTH, S\_IXOTH, S\_ISUID, and S\_ISGID shall be unique. S\_IRWXU  
691 shall be the bitwise inclusive OR of S\_IRUSR, S\_IWUSR, and S\_IXUSR. S\_IRWXG  
692 shall be the bitwise inclusive OR of S\_IRGRP, S\_IWGRP, and S\_IXGRP. S\_IRWXO  
693 shall be the bitwise inclusive OR of S\_IROTH, S\_IWOTH, and S\_IXOTH. Imple-  
694 mentations may OR other implementation-defined bits into S\_IRWXU, S\_IRWXG,  
695 and S\_IRWXO, but they shall not overlap any of the other bits defined in this part  
696 of ISO/IEC 9945. The *file permission bits* are defined to be those corresponding to  
697 the bitwise inclusive OR of S\_IRWXU, S\_IRWXG, and S\_IRWXO.

### 698 5.6.1.3 <sys/stat.h> Time Entries

699 The time-related fields of *struct stat* are as follows:

700     *st\_atime*     Accessed file data, for example, *read()*.  
701     *st\_mtime*     Modified file data, for example, *write()*.  
702     *st\_ctime*     Changed file status, for example, *chmod()*.

703 These times are updated as described in 2.3.5.

704

705 Times are given in seconds since the Epoch.

### 706 5.6.1.4 Cross-References

707 *chmod()*, 5.6.4; *chown()*, 5.6.5; *creat()*, 5.3.2; *exec*, 3.1.2; *link()*, 5.3.4; *mkdir()*,  
708 5.4.1; *mkfifo()*, 5.4.2; *pipe()*, 6.1.1; *read()*, 6.4.1; *unlink()*, 5.5.1; *utime()*, 5.6.6;  
709 *write()*, 6.4.2; *remove()* [C Standard [2]].

## 710 5.6.2 Get File Status

711 Functions: *stat()*, *fstat()*

### 712 5.6.2.1 Synopsis

713 #include <sys/types.h>  
714 #include <sys/stat.h>  
715 int stat(const char \*path, struct stat \*buf);  
716 int fstat(int fildes, struct stat \*buf);

### 717 5.6.2.2 Description

718 The *path* argument points to a pathname naming a file. Read, write, or execute  
719 permission for the named file is not required, but all directories listed in the path-  
720 name leading to the file must be searchable. The *stat()* function obtains informa-  
721 tion about the named file and writes it to the area pointed to by the *buf* argument.

722 Similarly, the *fstat()* function obtains information about an open file known by the  
723 file descriptor *fildes*.

724 An implementation that provides additional or alternate file access control  
725 mechanisms may, under implementation-defined conditions, cause the *stat()* and  
726 *fstat()* functions to fail. In particular, the system may deny the existence of the  
727 file specified by *path*.

728 Both functions update any time-related fields, as described in 2.3.5, before writing  
729 into the *stat* structure.

730 The *buf* is taken to be a pointer to a *stat* structure, as defined in the header  
731 `<sys/stat.h>`, into which information is placed concerning the file.

### 732 5.6.2.3 Returns

733 Upon successful completion, a value of zero shall be returned. Otherwise, a value  
734 of `-1` shall be returned and *errno* shall be set to indicate the error.

### 735 5.6.2.4 Errors

736 If any of the following conditions occur, the *stat()* function shall return `-1` and set  
737 *errno* to the corresponding value:

738 [EACCES] Search permission is denied for a component of the path prefix.

739 [ENAMETOOLONG]

740 The length of the *path* argument exceeds `(PATH_MAX)`, or a  
741 pathname component is longer than `(NAME_MAX)` while  
742 `{_POSIX_NO_TRUNC}` is in effect.

743 [ENOENT] The named file does not exist, or the *path* argument points to  
744 an empty string.

745 [ENOTDIR] A component of the path prefix is not a directory.

746 If any of the following conditions occur, the *fstat()* function shall return `-1` and set  
747 *errno* to the corresponding value:

748 [EBADF] The *fdes* argument is not a valid file descriptor.

### 749 5.6.2.5 Cross-References

750 *creat()*, 5.3.2; *dup()*, 6.2.1; *fcntl()*, 6.5.2; *open()*, 5.3.1; *pipe()*, 6.1.1;  
751 `<sys/stat.h>`, 5.6.1.

## 752 5.6.3 Check File Accessibility

753 Function: *access()*

### 754 5.6.3.1 Synopsis

755 `#include <unistd.h>`

756 `int access(const char *path, int amode);`

757 **5.6.3.2 Description**

758 The *access()* function checks the accessibility of the file named by the pathname  
759 pointed to by the *path* argument for the file access permissions indicated by  
760 *amode*, using the real user ID in place of the effective user ID and the real group  
761 ID in place of the effective group ID.

762 The value of *amode* is either the bitwise inclusive OR of the access permissions to  
763 be checked (R\_OK, W\_OK, and X\_OK) or the existence test (F\_OK). See 2.9.1 for  
764 the description of these symbolic constants.

765 If any access permission is to be checked, each shall be checked individually, as  
766 described in 2.3.2. If the process has appropriate privileges, an implementation  
767 may indicate success for X\_OK even if none of the execute file permission bits are  
768 set.

769 **5.6.3.3 Returns**

770 If the requested access is permitted, a value of zero shall be returned. Otherwise,  
771 a value of -1 shall be returned and *errno* shall be set to indicate the error.

772 **5.6.3.4 Errors**

773 If any of the following conditions occur, the *access()* function shall return -1 and  
774 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

775 [EACCES] The permissions specified by *amode* are denied, or search per-  
776 mission is denied on a component of the path prefix.

777 [ENAMETOOLONG]  
778 The length of the *path* argument exceeds {PATH\_MAX}, or a  
779 pathname component is longer than {NAME\_MAX} while  
780 {\_POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC} is in effect.

781 [ENOENT] The *path* argument points to an empty string or to the name of  
782 a file that does not exist.

783 [ENOTDIR] A component of the path prefix is not a directory.

784 [EROFS] Write access was requested for a file residing on a read-only file  
785 system.

786 For each of the following conditions, if the condition is detected, the *access()* func-  
787 tion shall return -1 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

788 [EINVAL] An invalid value was specified for *amode*.

789 **5.6.3.5 Cross-References**

790 *chmod()*, 5.6.4; *stat()*, 5.6.2; <unistd.h>, 2.9.

791 **5.6.4 Change File Modes**

792 Function: *chmod()*

793 **5.6.4.1 Synopsis**

```
794 #include <sys/types.h>  
795 #include <sys/stat.h>  
796 int chmod(const char *path, mode_t mode);
```

797 **5.6.4.2 Description**

798 The *path* argument shall point to a pathname naming a file. If the effective user  
799 ID of the calling process matches the file owner or the calling process has  
800 appropriate privileges, the *chmod()* function shall set the S\_ISUID, S\_ISGID, and  
801 the file permission bits, as described in 5.6.1, of the named file from the  
802 corresponding bits in the *mode* argument. These bits define access permissions  
803 for the user associated with the file, the group associated with the file, and all oth-  
804 ers, as described in 2.3.2. Additional implementation-defined restrictions may  
805 cause the S\_ISUID and S\_ISGID bits in *mode* to be ignored.

806 If the calling process does not have appropriate privileges, if the group ID of the  
807 file does not match the effective group ID or one of the supplementary group IDs,  
808 and if the file is a regular file, bit S\_ISGID (set group ID on execution) in the mode  
809 of the file shall be cleared upon successful return from *chmod()*.

810 The effect on file descriptors for files open at the time of the *chmod()* function is  
811 implementation defined.

812 Upon successful completion, the *chmod()* function shall mark for update the  
813 *st\_ctime* field of the file.

814 **5.6.4.3 Returns**

815 Upon successful completion, the function shall return a value of zero. Otherwise,  
816 a value of -1 shall be returned and *errno* shall be set to indicate the error. If -1 is  
817 returned, no change to the file mode shall have occurred.

818 **5.6.4.4 Errors**

819 If any of the following conditions occur, the *chmod()* function shall return -1 and  
820 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

- 821 [EACCES] Search permission is denied on a component of the path prefix.
- 822 [ENAMETOOLONG] The length of the *path* argument exceeds {PATH\_MAX}, or a  
823 pathname component is longer than {NAME\_MAX} while  
824 {\_POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC} is in effect.
- 825 [ENOTDIR] A component of the path prefix is not a directory.

- 827 [ENOENT] The named file does not exist or the *path* argument points to an  
828 empty string.
- 829 [EPERM] The effective user ID does not match the owner of the file, and  
830 the calling process does not have the appropriate privileges.
- 831 [EROFS] The named file resides on a read-only file system.

#### 832 5.6.4.5 Cross-References

833 *chown()*, 5.6.5; *mkdir()*, 5.4.1; *mkfifo()*, 5.4.2; *stat()*, 5.6.2; <sys/stat.h>, 5.6.1.

### 834 5.6.5 Change Owner and Group of a File

835 Function: *chown()*

#### 836 5.6.5.1 Synopsis

837 #include <sys/types.h>

838 int chown(const char \**path*, uid\_t *owner*, gid\_t *group*);

#### 839 5.6.5.2 Description

840 The *path* argument points to a pathname naming a file. The user ID and group ID  
841 of the named file are set to the numeric values contained in *owner* and *group*  
842 respectively.

843 Only processes with an effective user ID equal to the user ID of the file or  
844 with appropriate privileges may change the ownership of a file. If  
845 [\_POSIX\_CHOWN\_RESTRICTED] is in effect for *path*:

- 846 (1) Changing the owner is restricted to processes with appropriate  
847 privileges.
- 848 (2) Changing the group is permitted to a process without appropriate  
849 privileges, but with an effective user ID equal to the user ID of the file, if  
850 and only if *owner* is equal to the user ID of the file and *group* is equal  
851 either to the effective group ID of the calling process or to one of its sup-  
852plementary group IDs.

853 If the *path* argument refers to a regular file, the set-user-ID (S\_ISUID) and set-  
854 group-ID (S\_ISGID) bits of the file mode shall be cleared upon successful return  
855 from *chown()*, unless the call is made by a process with appropriate privileges, in  
856 which case it is implementation defined whether those bits are altered. If the  
857 *chown()* function is successfully invoked on a file that is not a regular file, these  
858 bits may be cleared. These bits are defined in 5.6.1.

859 Upon successful completion, the *chown()* function shall mark for update the  
860 *st\_ctime* field of the file.

861 **5.6.5.3 Returns**

862 Upon successful completion, a value of zero shall be returned. Otherwise, a value  
863 of  $-1$  shall be returned and *errno* shall be set to indicate the error. If  $-1$  is  
864 returned, no change shall be made in the owner and group of the file.

865 **5.6.5.4 Errors**

866 If any of the following conditions occur, the *chown()* function shall return  $-1$  and  
867 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

- 868 [EACCES] Search permission is denied on a component of the path prefix.
- 869 [ENAMETOOLONG] The length of the *path* argument exceeds {PATH\_MAX}, or a  
870 pathname component is longer than {NAME\_MAX} while  
871 [\_POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC] is in effect.
- 872
- 873 [ENOTDIR] A component of the path prefix is not a directory.
- 874 [ENOENT] The named file does not exist, or the *path* argument points to  
875 an empty string.
- 876 [EPERM] The effective user ID does not match the owner of the file, or the  
877 calling process does not have appropriate privileges and  
878 [\_POSIX\_CHOWN\_RESTRICTED] indicates that such privilege is  
879 required.
- 880 [EROFS] The named file resides on a read-only file system.

881 For each of the following conditions, if the condition is detected, the *chown()* func-  
882 tion shall return  $-1$  and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

- 883 [EINVAL] The owner or group ID supplied is invalid and not supported by  
884 the implementation.

885 **5.6.5.5 Cross-References**

886 *chmod()*, 5.6.4; <sys/stat.h>, 5.6.1.

887 **5.6.6 Set File Access and Modification Times**

888 Function: *utime()*

889 **5.6.6.1 Synopsis**

890 #include <sys/types.h>  
891 #include <utime.h>  
892 int utime(const char \**path*, const struct utimbuf \**times*);

893 **5.6.6.2 Description**

894 The argument *path* points to a pathname naming a file. The *utime()* function sets  
895 the access and modification times of the named file.

896 If the *times* argument is *NULL*, the access and modification times of the file are  
897 set to the current time. The effective user ID of the process must match the owner  
898 of the file, or the process must have write permission to the file or appropriate  
899 privileges, to use the *utime()* function in this manner.

900 If the *times* argument is not *NULL*, it is interpreted as a pointer to a *utimbuf*  
901 structure, and the access and modification times are set to the values contained in  
902 the designated structure. Only the owner of the file and processes with appropri-  
903 ate privileges shall be permitted to use the *utime()* function in this way.

904 The *utimbuf* structure is defined by the header `<utime.h>` and includes the fol-  
905 lowing members:

906	<u>Member</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Description</u>
907	<u>Type</u>	<u>Name</u>	
908	<i>time_t</i>	<i>actime</i>	Access time
909	<i>time_t</i>	<i>modtime</i>	Modification time

910 The times in the *utimbuf* structure are measured in seconds since the Epoch.

911 Implementations may add extensions as permitted in 1.3.1.1, point (2). Adding  
912 extensions to this structure, which might change the behavior of the application  
913 with respect to this standard when those fields in the structure are uninitialized,  
914 also requires that the extensions be enabled as required by 1.3.1.1.

915 Upon successful completion, the *utime()* function shall mark for update the  
916 *st\_ctime* field of the file.

917 **5.6.6.3 Returns**

918 Upon successful completion, the function shall return a value of zero. Otherwise,  
919 a value of  $-1$  shall be returned, *errno* is set to indicate the error, and the file times  
920 shall not be affected.

921 **5.6.6.4 Errors**

922 If any of the following conditions occur, the *utime()* function shall return  $-1$  and  
923 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

924 [EACCES] Search permission is denied by a component of the path prefix,  
925 or the *times* argument is *NULL* and the effective user ID of the  
926 process does not match the owner of the file and write access is  
927 denied.

928 [ENAMETOOLONG]

929 The length of the *path* argument exceeds {*PATH\_MAX*}, or a  
930 pathname component is longer than {*NAME\_MAX*} while  
931 {*\_POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC*} is in effect.

- 932 [ENOENT] The named file does not exist or the *path* argument points to an  
933 empty string.
- 934 [ENOTDIR] A component of the path prefix is not a directory.
- 935 [EPERM] The *times* argument is not NULL, the effective user ID of the  
936 calling process has write access to the file, but does not match  
937 the owner of the file, and the calling process does not have the  
938 appropriate privileges.
- 939 [EROFS] The *named* file resides on a read-only file system.

#### 940 5.6.6.5 Cross-References

941 <sys/stat.h>, 5.6.1.

### 942 5.7 Configurable Pathname Variables

#### 943 5.7.1 Get Configurable Pathname Variables

944 Functions: *pathconf()*, *fpathconf()*

##### 945 5.7.1.1 Synopsis

946 #include <unistd.h>  
947 long pathconf(const char \**path*, int *name*);  
948 long fpathconf(int *fdes*, int *name*);

##### 949 5.7.1.2 Description

950 The *pathconf()* and *fpathconf()* functions provide a method for the application to  
951 determine the current value of a configurable limit or option (*variable*) that is  
952 associated with a file or directory.

953 For *pathconf()*, the *path* argument points to the pathname of a file or directory.  
954 For *fpathconf()*, the *fdes* argument is an open file descriptor.

955 The *name* argument represents the variable to be queried relative to that file or  
956 directory. The implementation shall support all of the variables listed in  
957 Table 5-2 and may support others. The variables in Table 5-2 come from  
958 <limits.h> or <unistd.h> and the symbolic constants, defined in  
959 <unistd.h>, that are the corresponding values used for *name*.

##### 960 5.7.1.3 Returns

961 If *name* is an invalid value, the *pathconf()* and *fpathconf()* functions shall  
962 return -1.

963 If the variable corresponding to *name* has no limit for the path or file descriptor,  
964 the *pathconf()* and *fpathconf()* functions shall return -1 without changing *errno*.

Table 5-2 – Configurable Pathname Variables

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Variable	name Value	Notes
{LINK_MAX}	{_PC_LINK_MAX}	(1)
{MAX_CANON}	{_PC_MAX_CANON}	(2)
{MAX_INPUT}	{_PC_MAX_INPUT}	(2)
{NAME_MAX}	{_PC_NAME_MAX}	(3), (4)
{PATH_MAX}	{_PC_PATH_MAX}	(4), (5)
{PIPE_BUF}	{_PC_PIPE_BUF}	(6)
{_POSIX_CHOWN_RESTRICTED}	{_PC_CHOWN_RESTRICTED}	(7)
{_POSIX_NO_TRUNC}	{_PC_NO_TRUNC}	(3, 4)
{_POSIX_VDISABLE}	{_PC_VDISABLE}	(2)

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## NOTES:

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- (1) If *path* or *fildev* refers to a directory, the value returned applies to the directory itself.
- (2) If *path* or *fildev* does not refer to a terminal file, it is unspecified whether an implementation supports an association of the variable name with the specified file.
- (3) If *path* or *fildev* refers to a directory, the value returned applies to the filenames within the directory.
- (4) If *path* or *fildev* does not refer to a directory, it is unspecified whether an implementation supports an association of the variable name with the specified file.
- (5) If *path* or *fildev* refers to a directory, the value returned is the maximum length of a relative pathname when the specified directory is the working directory.
- (6) If *path* refers to a FIFO, or *fildev* refers to a pipe or a FIFO, the value returned applies to the referenced object itself. If *path* or *fildev* refers to a directory, the value returned applies to any FIFOs that exist or can be created within the directory. If *path* or *fildev* refers to any other type of file, it is unspecified whether an implementation supports an association of the variable name with the specified file.
- (7) If *path* or *fildev* refers to a directory, the value returned applies to any files defined in this part of ISO/IEC 9945, other than directories, that exist or can be created within the directory.

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If the implementation needs to use *path* to determine the value of *name* and the implementation does not support the association of *name* with the file specified by *path*, or if the process did not have the appropriate privileges to query the file specified by *path*, or *path* does not exist, the *pathconf()* function shall return -1.

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If the implementation needs to use *fildev* to determine the value of *name* and the implementation does not support the association of *name* with the file specified by *fildev*, or if *fildev* is an invalid file descriptor, the *fpathconf()* function shall return -1.

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Otherwise, the *pathconf()* and *fpathconf()* functions return the current variable value for the file or directory without changing *errno*. The value returned shall not be more restrictive than the corresponding value described to the application when it was compiled with the implementation's `<limits.h>` or `<unistd.h>`.

1008 **5.7.1.4 Errors**

1009 If any of the following conditions occur, the *pathconf()* and *fpathconf()* functions  
1010 shall return -1 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

1011 [EINVAL] The value of *name* is invalid.

1012 For each of the following conditions, if the condition is detected, the *pathconf()*  
1013 function shall return -1 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

1014 [EACCES] Search permission is denied for a component of the path prefix.

1015 [EINVAL] The implementation does not support an association of the vari-  
1016 able name with the specified file.

1017 [ENAMETOOLONG]

1018 The length of the *path* argument exceeds {PATH\_MAX}, or a  
1019 pathname component is longer than {NAME\_MAX} while  
1020 [\_POSIX\_NO\_TRUNC] is in effect.

1021 [ENOENT] The named file does not exist, or the *path* argument points to  
1022 an empty string.

1023 [ENOTDIR] A component of the path prefix is not a directory.

1024 For each of the following conditions, if the condition is detected, the *fpathconf()*  
1025 function shall return -1 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

1026 [EBADF] The *fdes* argument is not a valid file descriptor.

1027 [EINVAL] The implementation does not support an association of the vari-  
1028 able name with the specified file.

## Section 6: Input and Output Primitives

1 The functions in this section deal with input and output from files and pipes. |  
2 Functions are also specified that deal with the coordination and management of  
3 file descriptors and I/O activity.

### 4 **6.1 Pipes**

#### 5 **6.1.1 Create an Inter-Process Channel**

6 Function: *pipe()*

##### 7 **6.1.1.1 Synopsis**

8 `int pipe(int fdes[2]);`

##### 9 **6.1.1.2 Description**

10 The *pipe()* function shall create a pipe and place two file descriptors, one each into  
11 the arguments *fdes*[0] and *fdes*[1], that refer to the open file descriptions for  
12 the read and write ends of the pipe. Their integer values shall be the two lowest  
13 available at the time of the *pipe()* function call. The `O_NONBLOCK` and  
14 `FD_CLOEXEC` flags shall be clear on both file descriptors. [The *fcntl()* function  
15 can be used to set these flags.]

16 Data can be written to file descriptor *fdes*[1] and read from file descriptor  
17 *fdes*[0]. A read on file descriptor *fdes*[0] shall access the data written to file  
18 descriptor *fdes*[1] on a first-in-first-out basis.

19 A process has the pipe open for reading if it has a file descriptor open that refers  
20 to the read end, *fdes*[0]. A process has the pipe open for writing if it has a file  
21 descriptor open that refers to the write end, *fdes*[1].

22 Upon successful completion, the *pipe()* function shall mark for update the  
23 *st\_atime*, *st\_ctime*, and *st\_mtime* fields of the pipe.

##### 24 **6.1.1.3 Returns**

25 Upon successful completion, the function shall return a value of zero. Otherwise,  
26 a value of -1 shall be returned and *errno* shall be set to indicate the error.

27 **6.1.1.4 Errors**

28 If any of the following conditions occur, the *pipe()* function shall return *-1* and set  
29 *errno* to the corresponding value:

30 [EMFILE] More than (OPEN\_MAX)-2 file descriptors are already in use by  
31 this process.

32 [ENFILE] The number of simultaneously open files in the system would  
33 exceed a system-imposed limit.

34 **6.1.1.5 Cross-References**

35 *fcntl()*, 6.5.2; *open()*, 5.3.1; *read()*, 6.4.1; *write()*, 6.4.2.

36 **6.2 File Descriptor Manipulation**

37 **6.2.1 Duplicate an Open File Descriptor**

38 Functions: *dup()*, *dup2()*

39 **6.2.1.1 Synopsis**

40 `int dup(int filde);`

41 `int dup2(int filde, int filde2);`

42 **6.2.1.2 Description**

43 The *dup()* and *dup2()* functions provide an alternate interface to the service pro-  
44 vided by the *fcntl()* function using the F\_DUPFD command. The call:

45 `fid = dup (filde);`

46 shall be equivalent to:

47 `fid = fcntl (filde, F_DUPFD, 0);`

48 The call:

49 `fid = dup2 (filde, filde2);`

50 shall be equivalent to:

51 `close (filde2);`

52 `fid = fcntl (filde, F_DUPFD, filde2);`

53 except for the following:

54 (1) If *filde2* is negative or greater than or equal to (OPEN\_MAX), the *dup2()*  
55 function shall return *-1* and *errno* shall be set to [EBADF].

56 (2) If *filde* is a valid file descriptor and is equal to *filde2*, the *dup2()* func-  
57 tion shall return *filde2* without closing it.

- 58 (3) If *filde*s is not a valid file descriptor, *dup2*(*)* shall fail and not close  
59 *filde*s2.
- 60 (4) The value returned shall be equal to the value of *filde*s2 upon successful  
61 completion or shall be -1 upon failure.

### 62 6.2.1.3 Returns

63 Upon successful completion, the function shall return a file descriptor. Other-  
64 wise, a value of -1 shall be returned and *errno* shall be set to indicate the error.

### 65 6.2.1.4 Errors

66 If any of the following conditions occur, the *dup*(*)* function shall return -1 and set  
67 *errno* to the corresponding value:

68 [EBADF] The argument *filde*s is not a valid open file descriptor.

69 [EMFILE] The number of file descriptors would exceed {OPEN\_MAX}.

70 If any of the following conditions occur, the *dup2*(*)* function shall return -1 and  
71 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

72 [EBADF] The argument *filde*s is not a valid open file descriptor, or the  
73 argument *filde*s2 is negative or greater than or equal to  
74 {OPEN\_MAX}.

75 [EINTR] The *dup2*(*)* function was interrupted by a signal.

### 76 6.2.1.5 Cross-References

77 *close*(*)*, 6.3.1; *creat*(*)*, 5.3.2; *exec*, 3.1.2; *fcntl*(*)*, 6.5.2; *open*(*)*, 5.3.1; *pipe*(*)*, 6.1.1.

## 78 6.3 File Descriptor Deassignment

### 79 6.3.1 Close a File

80 Function: *close*(*)*

#### 81 6.3.1.1 Synopsis

82 int *close*(int *filde*s);

#### 83 6.3.1.2 Description

84 The *close*(*)* function shall deallocate (i.e., make available for return by subsequent  
85 *open*(*)*s, etc., executed by the process) the file descriptor indicated by *filde*s. All  
86 outstanding record locks owned by the process on the file associated with the file  
87 descriptor shall be removed (that is, unlocked).

88 If the *close()* function is interrupted by a signal that is to be caught, it shall  
89 return  $-1$  with *errno* set to [EINTR], and the state of *fildev* is unspecified.

90 When all file descriptors associated with a pipe or FIFO special file have been  
91 closed, any data remaining in the pipe or FIFO shall be discarded.

92 When all file descriptors associated with an open file description have been closed,  
93 the open file description shall be freed.

94 If the link count of the file is zero, when all file descriptors associated with the file  
95 have been closed, the space occupied by the file shall be freed and the file shall no  
96 longer be accessible.

### 97 6.3.1.3 Returns

98 Upon successful completion, a value of zero shall be returned. Otherwise, a value  
99 of  $-1$  shall be returned and *errno* shall be set to indicate the error.

### 100 6.3.1.4 Errors

101 If any of the following conditions occur, the *close()* function shall return  $-1$  and  
102 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

103 [EBADF] The *fildev* argument is not a valid file descriptor.

104 [EINTR] The *close* function was interrupted by a signal.

### 105 6.3.1.5 Cross-References

106 *creat()*, 5.3.2; *dup()*, 6.2.1; *exec*, 3.1.2; *fcntl()*, 6.5.2; *fork()*, 3.1.1; *open()*, 5.3.1;  
107 *pipe()*, 6.1.1; *unlink()*, 5.5.1; 3.3.1.4.

## 108 6.4 Input and Output

### 109 6.4.1 Read from a File

110 Function: *read()*

#### 111 6.4.1.1 Synopsis

112 `ssize_t read(int fildev, void *buf, size_t nbyte);`

#### 113 6.4.1.2 Description

114 The *read()* function shall attempt to read *nbyte* bytes from the file associated with  
115 the open file descriptor, *fildev*, into the buffer pointed to by *buf*.

116 If *nbyte* is zero, the *read()* function shall return zero and have no other results.

117 On a regular file or other file capable of seeking, *read()* shall start at a position in  
118 the file given by the file offset associated with *fildev*. Before successful return

- 119 from *read()*, the file offset shall be incremented by the number of bytes actually  
120 read.
- 121 On a file not capable of seeking, the *read()* shall start from the current position.  
122 The value of a file offset associated with such a file is undefined.
- 123 Upon successful completion, the *read()* function shall return the number of bytes  
124 actually read and placed in the buffer. This number shall never be greater than  
125 *nbyte*. The value returned may be less than *nbyte* if the number of bytes left in  
126 the file is less than *nbyte*, if the *read()* request was interrupted by a signal, or if  
127 the file is a pipe (or FIFO) or special file and has fewer than *nbyte* bytes immedi-  
128 ately available for reading. For example, a *read()* from a file associated with a  
129 terminal may return one typed line of data.
- 130 If a *read()* is interrupted by a signal before it reads any data, it shall return -1  
131 with *errno* set to [EINTR].
- 132 If a *read()* is interrupted by a signal after it has successfully read some data,  
133 either it shall return -1 with *errno* set to [EINTR], or it shall return the number of  
134 bytes read. A *read()* from a pipe or FIFO shall never return with *errno* set to  
135 [EINTR] if it has transferred any data.
- 136 No data transfer shall occur past the current end-of-file. If the starting position is  
137 at or after the end-of-file, zero shall be returned. If the file refers to a device spe-  
138 cial file, the result of subsequent *read()* requests is implementation defined.
- 139 If the value of *nbyte* is greater than {SSIZE\_MAX}, the result is implementation  
140 defined.
- 141 When attempting to read from an empty pipe (or FIFO):
- 142 (1) If no process has the pipe open for writing, *read()* shall return zero to  
143 indicate end-of-file.
  - 144 (2) If some process has the pipe open for writing and O\_NONBLOCK is set,  
145 *read()* shall return -1 and set *errno* to [EAGAIN].
  - 146 (3) If some process has the pipe open for writing and O\_NONBLOCK is clear,  
147 *read()* shall block until some data is written or the pipe is closed by all  
148 processes that had the pipe open for writing.
- 149 When attempting to read a file (other than a pipe or FIFO) that supports non-  
150 blocking reads and has no data currently available:
- 151 (1) If O\_NONBLOCK is set, *read()* shall return -1 and set *errno* to [EAGAIN].
  - 152 (2) If O\_NONBLOCK is clear, *read()* shall block until some data becomes  
153 available.
- 154 The use of the O\_NONBLOCK flag has no effect if there is some data available.
- 155 For any portion of a regular file, prior to the end-of-file, that has not been written,  
156 *read()* shall return bytes with value zero.
- 157 Upon successful completion where *nbyte* is greater than zero, the *read()* function  
158 shall mark for update the *st\_atime* field of the file.

159 **6.4.1.3 Returns**

160 Upon successful completion, *read()* shall return an integer indicating the number  
161 of bytes actually read. Otherwise, *read()* shall return a value of  $-1$  and set *errno*  
162 to indicate the error, and the content of the buffer pointed to by *buf* is  
163 indeterminate.

164 **6.4.1.4 Errors**

165 If any of the following conditions occur, the *read()* function shall return  $-1$  and set  
166 *errno* to the corresponding value:

167 [EAGAIN] The *O\_NONBLOCK* flag is set for the file descriptor and the pro-  
168 cess would be delayed in the read operation.

169 [EBADF] The *fildev* argument is not a valid file descriptor open for  
170 reading.

171 [EINTR] The read operation was interrupted by a signal, and either no  
172 data was transferred or the implementation does not report  
173 partial transfer for this file.

174 [EIO] The implementation supports job control, the process is in a  
175 background process group and is attempting to read from its  
176 controlling terminal, and either the process is ignoring or block-  
177 ing the SIGTIN signal or the process group of the process is  
178 orphaned. This error may also be generated when conditions  
179 unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945 occur.

180 **6.4.1.5 Cross-References**

181 *creat()*, 5.3.2; *dup()*, 6.2.1; *fcntl()*, 6.5.2; *lseek()*, 6.5.3; *open()*, 5.3.1; *pipe()*, 6.1.1;  
182 3.3.1.4; 7.1.1.

183 **6.4.2 Write to a File**

184 Function: *write()*

185 **6.4.2.1 Synopsis**

186 `ssize_t write(int fildev, const void *buf, size_t nbyte);`

187 **6.4.2.2 Description**

188 The *write()* function shall attempt to write *nbyte* bytes from the buffer pointed to  
189 by *buf* to the file associated with the open file descriptor, *fildev*.

190 If *nbyte* is zero and the file is a regular file, the *write()* function shall return zero  
191 and have no other results. If *nbyte* is zero and the file is not a regular file, the  
192 results are unspecified.

193 On a regular file or other file capable of seeking, the actual writing of data shall  
194 proceed from the position in the file indicated by the file offset associated with

195 *files*. Before successful return from *write()*, the file offset shall be incremented  
196 by the number of bytes actually written. On a regular file, if this incremented file  
197 offset is greater than the length of the file, the length of the file shall be set to this  
198 file offset.

199 On a file not capable of seeking, the *write()* shall start from the current position.  
200 The value of a file offset associated with such a file is undefined.

201 If the *O\_APPEND* flag of the file status flags is set, the file offset shall be set to the  
202 end of the file prior to each write, and no intervening file modification operation  
203 shall be allowed between changing the file offset and the write operation.

204 If a *write()* requests that more bytes be written than there is room for (for exam-  
205 ple, the physical end of a medium), only as many bytes as there is room for shall  
206 be written. For example, suppose there is space for 20 bytes more in a file before  
207 reaching a limit. A write of 512 bytes would return 20. The next write of a  
208 nonzero number of bytes would give a failure return (except as noted below).

209 Upon successful completion, the *write()* function shall return the number of bytes  
210 actually written to the file associated with *files*. This number shall never be  
211 greater than *nbyte*.

212 If a *write()* is interrupted by a signal before it writes any data, it shall return -1  
213 with *errno* set to [EINTR].

214 If *write()* is interrupted by a signal after it successfully writes some data, either it  
215 shall return -1 with *errno* set to [EINTR], or it shall return the number of bytes  
216 written. A *write()* to a pipe or FIFO shall never return with *errno* set to [EINTR] if  
217 it has transferred any data and *nbyte* is less than or equal to {PIPE\_BUF}.

218 If the value of *nbyte* is greater than {SSIZE\_MAX}, the result is implementation  
219 defined.

220 After a *write()* to a regular file has successfully returned:

221 (1) Any successful *read()* from each byte position in the file that was  
222 modified by that *write()* shall return the data specified by the *write()* for  
223 that position, until such byte positions are again modified.

224 (2) Any subsequent successful *write()* to the same byte position in the file  
225 shall overwrite that file data. The phrase "subsequent successful *write()*"  
226 in the previous sentence is intended to be viewed from a system perspec-  
227 tive [i.e., *read()* followed by a systemwide subsequent *write()*].

228 Write requests to a pipe (or FIFO) shall be handled in the same manner as write  
229 requests to a regular file, with the following exceptions:

230 (1) There is no file offset associated with a pipe, hence each write request  
231 shall append to the end of the pipe.

232 (2) Write requests of {PIPE\_BUF} bytes or less shall not be interleaved with  
233 data from other processes doing writes on the same pipe. Writes of  
234 greater than {PIPE\_BUF} bytes may have data interleaved, on arbitrary  
235 boundaries, with writes by other processes, whether or not the  
236 *O\_NONBLOCK* flag of the file status flags is set.

- 237 (3) If the `O_NONBLOCK` flag is clear, a write request may cause the process  
238 to block, but on normal completion it shall return *nbyte*.
- 239 (4) If the `O_NONBLOCK` flag is set, *write()* requests shall be handled dif- |  
240 ferently, in the following ways: |
- 241 (a) The *write()* function shall not block the process. |
- 242 (b) A write request for `{PIPE_BUF}` or fewer bytes shall either: |
- 243 [1] If there is sufficient space available in the pipe, transfer all |  
244 the data and return the number of bytes requested. |
- 245 [2] If there is not sufficient space available in the pipe, transfer no |  
246 data and return `-1` with *errno* set to `[EAGAIN]`. |
- 247 (c) A write request for more than `{PIPE_BUF}` bytes shall either: |
- 248 [1] When at least one byte can be written, transfer what it can |  
249 and return the number of bytes written. When all data previ- |  
250 ously written to the pipe has been read, it shall transfer at |  
251 least `{PIPE_BUF}` bytes. |
- 252 [2] When no data can be written, transfer no data and return `-1` |  
253 with *errno* set to `[EAGAIN]`. |

254 When attempting to write to a file descriptor (other than a pipe or FIFO) that sup-  
255 ports nonblocking writes and cannot accept the data immediately:

- 256 (1) If the `O_NONBLOCK` flag is clear, *write()* shall block until the data can be  
257 accepted.
- 258 (2) If the `O_NONBLOCK` flag is set, *write()* shall not block the process. If  
259 some data can be written without blocking the process, *write()* shall  
260 write what it can and return the number of bytes written. Otherwise, it  
261 shall return `-1` and *errno* shall be set to `[EAGAIN]`.

262 Upon successful completion where *nbyte* is greater than zero, the *write()* function  
263 shall mark for update the *st\_ctime* and *st\_mtime* fields of the file.

### 264 6.4.2.3 Returns

265 Upon successful completion, *write()* shall return an integer indicating the number  
266 of bytes actually written. Otherwise, it shall return a value of `-1` and set *errno* to  
267 indicate the error.

### 268 6.4.2.4 Errors

269 If any of the following conditions occur, the *write()* function shall return `-1` and  
270 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

- 271 `[EAGAIN]` The `O_NONBLOCK` flag is set for the file descriptor and the pro-  
272 cess would be delayed in the write operation.
- 273 `[EBADF]` The *fdes* argument is not a valid file descriptor open for  
274 writing.

275	[EFBIG]	An attempt was made to write a file that exceeds an
276		implementation-defined maximum file size.
277	[EINTR]	The write operation was interrupted by a signal, and either no
278		data was transferred or the implementation does not report
279		partial transfers for this file.
280	[EIO]	The implementation supports job control, the process is in a
281		background process group and is attempting to write to its con-
282		trolling terminal, TOSTOP is set, the process is neither ignoring
283		nor blocking SIGTTOU signals, and the process group of the pro-
284		cess is orphaned. This error may also be generated when condi-
285		tions unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945 occur.
286	[ENOSPC]	There is no free space remaining on the device containing the
287		file.
288	[EPIPE]	An attempt is made to write to a pipe (or FIFO) that is not open
289		for reading by any process. A SIGPIPE signal shall also be sent
290		to the process.

#### 291 6.4.2.5 Cross-References

292 *creat()*, 5.3.2; *dup()*, 6.2.1; *fcntl()*, 6.5.2; *lseek()*, 6.5.3; *open()*, 5.3.1; *pipe()*, 6.1.1;  
293 3.3.1.4.

### 294 6.5 Control Operations on Files

#### 295 6.5.1 Data Definitions for File Control Operations

296 The header `<fcntl.h>` defines the following *requests* and *arguments* for the  
297 *fcntl()* and *open()* functions. The values within each of the tables within this  
298 clause (Table 6-1 through Table 6-7) shall be unique numbers. In addition, the  
299 values of the entries for *oflag* values, file status flags, and file access modes shall  
300 be unique.

#### 301 6.5.2 File Control

302 Function: *fcntl()*

##### 303 6.5.2.1 Synopsis

```
304 #include <sys/types.h>
305 #include <unistd.h>
306 #include <fcntl.h>
307 int fcntl(int fdes, int cmd, ...);
```

**Table 6-1 – *cmd* Values for *fcntl()***

Constant	Description
F_DUPFD	Duplicate file descriptor.
F_GETFD	Get file descriptor flags.
F_GETLK	Get record locking information.
F_SETFD	Set file descriptor flags.
F_GETFL	Get file status flags.
F_SETFL	Set file status flags.
F_SETLK	Set record locking information.
F_SETLKW	Set record locking information; wait if blocked.

**Table 6-2 – File Descriptor Flags Used for *fcntl()***

Constant	Description
FD_CLOEXEC	Close the file descriptor upon execution of an <i>exec</i> -family function.

**Table 6-3 – *l\_type* Values for Record Locking With *fcntl()***

Constant	Description
F_RDLCK	Shared or read lock.
F_UNLCK	Unlock.
F_WRLCK	Exclusive or write lock.

**Table 6-4 – *oflag* Values for *open()***

Constant	Description
O_CREAT	Create file if it does not exist.
O_EXCL	Exclusive use flag.
O_NOCTTY	Do not assign a controlling terminal.
O_TRUNC	Truncate flag.

**Table 6-5 – File Status Flags Used for *open()* and *fcntl()***

Constant	Description
O_APPEND	Set append mode.
O_NONBLOCK	No delay.

347 **Table 6-6 – File Access Modes Used for *open()* and *fcntl()***

348	Constant	Description
349		
350	O_RDONLY	Open for reading only.
351	O_RDWR	Open for reading and writing.
352	O_WRONLY	Open for writing only.
353		

354 **Table 6-7 – Mask for Use With File Access Modes**

355	Constant	Description
356		
357	O_ACCMODE	Mask for file access modes.
358		

359 **6.5.2.2 Description**

360 The function *fcntl()* provides for control over open files. The argument *fdes* is a  
361 file descriptor.

362 The available values for *cmd* are defined in the header *<fcntl.h>* (see 6.5.1),  
363 which shall include:

364	<b>F_DUPFD</b>	Return a new file descriptor that is the lowest numbered available (i.e., not already open) file descriptor greater than or equal to the third argument, <i>arg</i> , taken as an integer of type <i>int</i> . The new file descriptor refers to the same open file description as the original file descriptor and shares any locks.
365		
366		
367		
368		
369		The FD_CLOEXEC flag associated with the new file descriptor is cleared to keep the file open across calls to the <i>exec</i> family of functions.
370		
371		
372	<b>F_GETFD</b>	Get the file descriptor flags, as defined in Table 6-2, that are associated with the file descriptor <i>fdes</i> . File descriptor flags are associated with a single file descriptor and do not affect other file descriptors that refer to the same file.
373		
374		
375		
376	<b>F_SETFD</b>	Set the file descriptor flags, as defined in Table 6-2, that are associated with <i>fdes</i> to the third argument, <i>arg</i> , taken as type <i>int</i> . If the FD_CLOEXEC flag is zero, the file shall remain open across <i>exec</i> functions; otherwise, the file shall be closed upon successful execution of an <i>exec</i> function.
377		
378		
379		
380		
381	<b>F_GETFL</b>	Get the file status flags, as defined in Table 6-5, and file access modes for the open file description associated with <i>fdes</i> . The file access modes defined in Table 6-6 can be extracted from the return value using the mask O_ACCMODE, which is defined in <i>&lt;fcntl.h&gt;</i> . File status flags and file access modes are associated with the open file description and do not affect other file descriptors that refer to the same file with different open file descriptions.
382		
383		
384		
385		
386		
387		
388		

389        **F\_SETFL**        Set the file status flags, as defined in Table 6-5, for the open file  
390 description associated with *fdes* from the corresponding bits in  
391 the third argument, *arg*, taken as type *int*. Bits corresponding  
392 to the file access modes (as defined in Table 6-6) and the *oflag*  
393 values (as defined in Table 6-4) that are set in *arg* are ignored.  
394 If any bits in *arg* other than those mentioned here are changed  
395 by the application, the result is unspecified.

396 The following commands are available for advisory record locking. Advisory  
397 record locking shall be supported for regular files, and may be supported for other  
398 files.

399        **F\_GETLK**        Get the first lock that blocks the lock description pointed to by  
400 the third argument, *arg*, taken as a pointer to type *struct flock*  
401 (see below). The information retrieved overwrites the information  
402 passed to *fcntl()* in the *flock* structure. If no lock is found  
403 that would prevent this lock from being created, the structure  
404 shall be left unchanged by this function call except for the lock  
405 type, which shall be set to **F\_UNLCK**.

406        **F\_SETLK**        Set or clear a file segment lock according to the lock description  
407 pointed to by the third argument, *arg*, taken as a pointer to  
408 type *struct flock* (see below). **F\_SETLK** is used to establish  
409 shared (or read) locks (**F\_RDLCK**) or exclusive (or write) locks,  
410 (**F\_WRLCK**), as well as to remove either type of lock (**F\_UNLCK**).  
411 **F\_RDLCK**, **F\_WRLCK**, and **F\_UNLCK** are defined by the  
412 `<fcntl.h>` header. If a shared or exclusive lock cannot be set,  
413 *fcntl()* shall return immediately.

414        **F\_SETLKW**       This command is the same as **F\_SETLK** except that if a shared  
415 or exclusive lock is blocked by other locks, the process shall  
416 wait until the request can be satisfied. If a signal that is to be  
417 caught is received while *fcntl()* is waiting for a region, the  
418 *fcntl()* shall be interrupted. Upon return from the signal  
419 handler of the process, *fcntl()* shall return `-1` with *errno* set to  
420 `[EINTR]`, and the lock operation shall not be done.

421 The *flock* structure, defined by the `<fcntl.h>` header, describes an advisory lock.  
422 It includes the members shown in Table 6-8.

423 When a shared lock has been set on a segment of a file, other processes shall be  
424 able to set shared locks on that segment or a portion of it. A shared lock prevents  
425 any other process from setting an exclusive lock on any portion of the protected  
426 area. A request for a shared lock shall fail if the file descriptor was not opened  
427 with read access.

428 An exclusive lock shall prevent any other process from setting a shared lock or an  
429 exclusive lock on any portion of the protected area. A request for an exclusive  
430 lock shall fail if the file descriptor was not opened with write access.

431 The value of *l\_whence* is `SEEK_SET`, `SEEK_CUR`, or `SEEK_END` to indicate that  
432 the relative offset, *l\_start* bytes, will be measured from the start of the file,  
433 current position, or end of the file, respectively. The value of *l\_len* is the number  
434 of consecutive bytes to be locked. If *l\_len* is negative, the result is undefined. The

Table 6-8 – *flock* Structure435  
436  
437  
438  
439  
440  
441  
442  
443  
444

Member Type	Member Name	Description
<i>short</i>	<i>l_type</i>	F_RDLCK, F_WRLCK, or F_UNLCK.
<i>short</i>	<i>l_whence</i>	Flag for starting offset.
<i>off_t</i>	<i>l_start</i>	Relative offset in bytes.
<i>off_t</i>	<i>l_len</i>	Size; if 0, then until EOF.
<i>pid_t</i>	<i>l_pid</i>	Process ID of the process holding the lock, returned with F_GETLK.

445 *l\_pid* field is only used with F\_GETLK to return the process ID of the process hold-  
446 ing a blocking lock. After a successful F\_GETLK request, the value of *l\_whence*  
447 shall be SEEK\_SET.

448 Locks may start and extend beyond the current end of a file, but shall not start or  
449 extend before the beginning of the file. A lock shall be set to extend to the largest  
450 possible value of the file offset for that file if *l\_len* is set to zero. If the *flock struct*  
451 has *l\_whence* and *l\_start* that point to the beginning of the file, and *l\_len* of zero,  
452 the entire file shall be locked.

453 There shall be at most one type of lock set for each byte in the file. Before a suc-  
454 cessful return from an F\_SETLK or an F\_SETLKW request when the calling pro-  
455 cess has previously existing locks on bytes in the region specified by the request,  
456 the previous lock type for each byte in the specified region shall be replaced by the  
457 new lock type. As specified above under the descriptions of shared locks and  
458 exclusive locks, an F\_SETLK or an F\_SETLKW request shall (respectively) fail or  
459 block when another process has existing locks on bytes in the specified region and  
460 the type of any of those locks conflicts with the type specified in the request.

461 All locks associated with a file for a given process shall be removed when a file  
462 descriptor for that file is closed by that process or the process holding that file  
463 descriptor terminates. Locks are not inherited by a child process created using  
464 the *fork()* function.

465 A potential for deadlock occurs if a process controlling a locked region is put to  
466 sleep by attempting to lock the locked region of another process. If the system  
467 detects that sleeping until a locked region is unlocked would cause a deadlock, the  
468 *fcntl()* function shall fail with an [EDEADLK] error.

### 469 6.5.2.3 Returns

470 Upon successful completion, the value returned shall depend on *cmd*. The vari-  
471 ous return values are shown in Table 6-9.

472 Otherwise, a value of -1 shall be returned and *errno* shall be set to indicate the  
473 error.

Table 6-9 – *fcntl()* Return Values

Request	Return Value
F_DUPFD	A new file descriptor.
F_GETFD	Value of the flags defined in Table 6-2, but the return value shall not be negative.
F_SETFD	Value other than -1.
F_GETFL	Value of file status flags and access modes, but the return value shall not be negative.
F_SETFL	Value other than -1.
F_GETLK	Value other than -1.
F_SETLK	Value other than -1.
F_SETLKW	Value other than -1.

6.5.2.4 Errors

If any of the following conditions occur, the *fcntl()* function shall return -1 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

- [EACCES] or [EAGAIN]
 

The argument *cmd* is F\_SETLK, the type of lock (*l\_type*) is a shared lock (F\_RDLCK) or exclusive lock (F\_WRLCK), and the segment of a file to be locked is already exclusive-locked by another process; or the type is an exclusive lock and some portion of the segment of a file to be locked is already shared-locked or exclusive-locked by another process.
- [EBADF]
 

The *fildev* argument is not a valid file descriptor.

The argument *cmd* is F\_SETLK or F\_SETLKW, the type of lock (*l\_type*) is a shared lock (F\_RDLCK), and *fildev* is not a valid file descriptor open for reading.

The argument *cmd* is F\_SETLK or F\_SETLKW, the type of lock (*l\_type*) is an exclusive lock (F\_WRLCK), and *fildev* is not a valid file descriptor open for writing.
- [EINTR]
 

The argument *cmd* is F\_SETLKW, and the function was interrupted by a signal.
- [EINVAL]
 

The argument *cmd* is F\_DUPFD, and the third argument is negative or greater than or equal to {OPEN\_MAX}.

The argument *cmd* is F\_GETLK, F\_SETLK, or F\_SETLKW and the data to which *arg* points is not valid, or *fildev* refers to a file that does not support locking.
- [EMFILE]
 

The argument *cmd* is F\_DUPFD and {OPEN\_MAX} file descriptors are currently in use by this process, or no file descriptors greater than or equal to *arg* are available.
- [ENOLCK]
 

The argument *cmd* is F\_SETLK or F\_SETLKW, and satisfying the lock or unlock request would result in the number of locked regions in the system exceeding a system-imposed limit.

516 For each of the following conditions, if the condition is detected, the *fcntl()* func-  
517 tion shall return  $-1$  and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

518 [EDEADLK] The argument *cmd* is *F\_SETLKW*, and a deadlock condition was  
519 detected.

### 520 6.5.2.5 Cross-References

521 *close()*, 6.3.1; *exec*, 3.1.2; *open()*, 5.3.1; *<fcntl.h>*, 6.5.1; 3.3.1.4.

### 522 6.5.3 Reposition Read/Write File Offset

523 Function: *lseek()*

#### 524 6.5.3.1 Synopsis

```
525 #include <sys/types.h>  
526 #include <unistd.h>  
527 off_t lseek(int fd, off_t offset, int whence);
```

#### 528 6.5.3.2 Description

529 The *fd* argument is an open file descriptor. The *lseek()* function shall set the  
530 file offset for the open file description associated with *fd* as follows:

- 531 (1) If *whence* is *SEEK\_SET*, the offset is set to *offset* bytes.
- 532 (2) If *whence* is *SEEK\_CUR*, the offset is set to its current value plus *offset*  
533 bytes.
- 534 (3) If *whence* is *SEEK\_END*, the offset is set to the size of the file plus *offset*  
535 bytes.

536 The symbolic constants *SEEK\_SET*, *SEEK\_CUR*, and *SEEK\_END* are defined in the  
537 header *<unistd.h>*.

538 Some devices are incapable of seeking. The value of the file offset associated with  
539 such a device is undefined. The behavior of the *lseek()* function on such devices is  
540 implementation defined.

541 The *lseek()* function shall allow the file offset to be set beyond the end of existing  
542 data in the file. If data is later written at this point, subsequent reads of data in  
543 the gap shall return bytes with the value zero until data is actually written into  
544 the gap.

545 The *lseek()* function shall not, by itself, extend the size of a file.

#### 546 6.5.3.3 Returns

547 Upon successful completion, the function shall return the resulting offset location  
548 as measured in bytes from the beginning of the file. Otherwise, it shall return a  
549 value of  $((off\_t) - 1)$ , shall set *errno* to indicate the error, and the file offset shall  
550 remain unchanged by this function call.

551 **6.5.3.4 Errors**

552 If any of the following conditions occur, the *lseek()* function shall return -1 and  
553 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

- 554 [EBADF] The *fildev* argument is not a valid file descriptor.  
555 [EINVAL] The *whence* argument is not a proper value, or the resulting file  
556 offset would be invalid.  
557 [ESPIPE] The *fildev* argument is associated with a pipe or FIFO.

558 **6.5.3.5 Cross-References**

559 *creat()*, 5.3.2; *dup()*, 6.2.1; *fcntl()*, 6.5.2; *open()*, 5.3.1; *read()*, 6.4.1; *sigaction()*,  
560 3.3.4; *write()*, 6.4.2; <unistd.h>, 2.9.

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## Section 7: Device- and Class-Specific Functions

### 1 7.1 General Terminal Interface

2 This section describes a general terminal interface that shall be provided. It shall  
3 be supported on any asynchronous communication ports if the implementation  
4 provides them. It is implementation defined whether this interface supports net-  
5 work connections or synchronous ports or both. The conformance document shall  
6 describe which device types are supported by these interfaces. Certain functions  
7 in this section apply only to the controlling terminal of a process; where this is the  
8 case, it is so noted.

#### 9 7.1.1 Interface Characteristics

##### 10 7.1.1.1 Opening a Terminal Device File

11 When a terminal file is opened, it normally causes the process to wait until a con-  
12 nection is established. In practice, application programs seldom open these files;  
13 they are opened by special programs and become the standard input, output, and  
14 error files of an application.

15 As described in 5.3.1, opening a terminal device file with the `O_NONBLOCK` flag  
16 clear shall cause the process to block until the terminal device is ready and avail-  
17 able. The `CLOCAL` flag can also affect `open()`. See 7.1.2.4.

##### 18 7.1.1.2 Process Groups

19 A terminal may have a foreground process group associated with it. This fore-  
20 ground process group plays a special role in handling signal-generating input  
21 characters, as discussed below in 7.1.1.9.

22 If the implementation supports job control (if `{_POSIX_JOB_CONTROL}` is defined;  
23 see 2.9), command interpreter processes supporting job control can allocate the  
24 terminal to different *jobs*, or process groups, by placing related processes in a sin-  
25 gle process group and associating this process group with the terminal. The fore-  
26 ground process group of a terminal may be set or examined by a process, assum-  
27 ing the permission requirements in this section are met; see 7.2.3 and 7.2.4. The  
28 terminal interface aids in this allocation by restricting access to the terminal by  
29 processes that are not in the foreground process group; see 7.1.1.4.

30 When there is no longer any process whose process ID or process group ID  
31 matches the process group ID of the foreground process group, the terminal shall  
32 have no foreground process group. It is unspecified whether the terminal has a  
33 foreground process group when there is no longer any process whose process

34 group ID matches the process group ID of the foreground process group, but there  
35 is a process whose process ID matches. No actions defined by this part of  
36 ISO/IEC 9945, other than allocation of a controlling terminal as described in  
37 7.1.1.3 or a successful call to *tcsetpgrp()*, shall cause a process group to become  
38 the foreground process group of a terminal.

### 39 7.1.1.3 The Controlling Terminal

40 A terminal may belong to a process as its controlling terminal. Each process of a  
41 session that has a controlling terminal has the same controlling terminal. A ter-  
42 minal may be the controlling terminal for at most one session. The controlling  
43 terminal for a session is allocated by the session leader in an implementation-  
44 defined manner. If a session leader has no controlling terminal and opens a ter-  
45 minal device file that is not already associated with a session without using the  
46 *O\_NOCTTY* option (see 5.3.1), it is implementation defined whether the terminal  
47 becomes the controlling terminal of the session leader. If a process that is not a  
48 session leader opens a terminal file, or the *O\_NOCTTY* option is used on *open()*,  
49 that terminal shall not become the controlling terminal of the calling process.  
50 When a controlling terminal becomes associated with a session, its foreground  
51 process group shall be set to the process group of the session leader.

52 The controlling terminal is inherited by a child process during a *fork()* function  
53 call. A process relinquishes its controlling terminal when it creates a new session  
54 with the *setsid()* function; other processes remaining in the old session that had  
55 this terminal as their controlling terminal continue to have it. Upon the close of  
56 the last file descriptor in the system (whether or not it is in the current session)  
57 associated with the controlling terminal, it is unspecified whether all processes  
58 that had that terminal as their controlling terminal cease to have any controlling  
59 terminal. Whether and how a session leader can reacquire a controlling terminal  
60 after the controlling terminal has been relinquished in this fashion is unspecified.  
61 A process does not relinquish its controlling terminal simply by closing all of its  
62 file descriptors associated with the controlling terminal if other processes con-  
63 tinue to have it open.

64 When a controlling process terminates, the controlling terminal is disassociated  
65 from the current session, allowing it to be acquired by a new session leader. Sub-  
66 sequent access to the terminal by other processes in the earlier session may be  
67 denied, with attempts to access the terminal treated as if modem disconnect had  
68 been sensed.

### 69 7.1.1.4 Terminal Access Control

70 If a process is in the foreground process group of its controlling terminal, read  
71 operations shall be allowed as described in 7.1.1.5. For those implementations  
72 that support job control, any attempts by a process in a background process group  
73 to read from its controlling terminal shall cause its process group to be sent a  
74 *SIGTTIN* signal unless one of the following special cases apply: If the reading pro-  
75 cess is ignoring or blocking the *SIGTTIN* signal, or if the process group of the read-  
76 ing process is orphaned, the *read()* returns *-1* with *errno* set to *[EIO]*, and no sig-  
77 nal is sent. The default action of the *SIGTTIN* signal is to stop the process to  
78 which it is sent. See 3.3.1.1.

79 If a process is in the foreground process group of its controlling terminal, write  
80 operations shall be allowed as described in 7.1.1.8. Attempts by a process in a  
81 background process group to write to its controlling terminal shall cause the pro-  
82 cess group to be sent a SIGTTOU signal unless one of the following special cases  
83 apply: If TOSTOP is not set, or if TOSTOP is set and the process is ignoring or  
84 blocking the SIGTTOU signal, the process is allowed to write to the terminal and  
85 the SIGTTOU signal is not sent. If TOSTOP is set, and the process group of the  
86 writing process is orphaned, and the writing process is not ignoring or blocking  
87 SIGTTOU, the *write()* returns  $-1$  with *errno* set to [EIO], and no signal is sent.

88 Certain calls that set terminal parameters are treated in the same fashion as  
89 write, except that TOSTOP is ignored; that is, the effect is identical to that of ter-  
90 minal writes when TOSTOP is set. See 7.2.

### 91 7.1.1.5 Input Processing and Reading Data

92 A terminal device associated with a terminal device file may operate in full-  
93 duplex mode, so that data may arrive even while output is occurring. Each termi-  
94 nal device file has associated with it an *input queue*, into which incoming data is  
95 stored by the system before being read by a process. The system may impose a  
96 limit, {MAX\_INPUT}, on the number of bytes that may be stored in the input  
97 queue. The behavior of the system when this limit is exceeded is implementation  
98 defined.

99 Two general kinds of input processing are available, determined by whether the  
100 terminal device file is in canonical mode or noncanonical mode. These modes are  
101 described in 7.1.1.6 and 7.1.1.7. Additionally, input characters are processed  
102 according to the *c\_iflag* (see 7.1.2.2) and *c\_lflag* (see 7.1.2.5) fields. Such process-  
103 ing can include *echoing*, which in general means transmitting input characters  
104 immediately back to the terminal when they are received from the terminal. This  
105 is useful for terminals that can operate in full-duplex mode.

106 The manner in which data is provided to a process reading from a terminal device  
107 file is dependent on whether the terminal device file is in canonical or noncanoni-  
108 cal mode.

109 Another dependency is whether the O\_NONBLOCK flag is set by *open()* or *fcntl()*.  
110 If the O\_NONBLOCK flag is clear, then the read request shall be blocked until  
111 data is available or a signal has been received. If the O\_NONBLOCK flag is set,  
112 then the read request shall be completed, without blocking, in one of three ways:

- 113 (1) If there is enough data available to satisfy the entire request, the *read()*  
114 shall complete successfully and return the number of bytes read.
- 115 (2) If there is not enough data available to satisfy the entire request, the  
116 *read()* shall complete successfully, having read as much data as possible,  
117 and return the number of bytes it was able to read.
- 118 (3) If there is no data available, the *read()* shall return  $-1$  with *errno* set to  
119 [EAGAIN].

120 When data is available depends on whether the input processing mode is canoni-  
121 cal or noncanonical. The following subclauses, 7.1.1.6 and 7.1.1.7, describe each  
122 of these input processing modes.

### 123 7.1.1.6 Canonical Mode Input Processing

124 In canonical mode input processing, terminal input is processed in units of lines.  
125 A line is delimited by a newline ('\n') character, an end-of-file (EOF) character, or  
126 an end-of-line (EOL) character. See 7.1.1.9 for more information on EOF and EOL.  
127 This means that a read request shall not return until an entire line has been  
128 typed or a signal has been received. Also, no matter how many bytes are  
129 requested in the read call, at most one line shall be returned. It is not, however,  
130 necessary to read a whole line at once; any number of bytes, even one, may be  
131 requested in a read without losing information.

132 If {MAX\_CANON} is defined for this terminal device, it is a limit on the number of  
133 bytes in a line. The behavior of the system when this limit is exceeded is imple-  
134 mentation defined. If {MAX\_CANON} is not defined, there is no such limit;  
135 see 2.8.5.

136 Erase and kill processing occur when either of two special characters, the ERASE  
137 and KILL characters (see 7.1.1.9), is received. This processing affects data in the  
138 input queue that has not yet been delimited by a newline (NL), EOF, or EOL char-  
139 acter. This undelimited data makes up the current line. The ERASE character  
140 deletes the last character in the current line, if there is any. The KILL character  
141 deletes all data in the current line, if there is any. The ERASE and KILL charac-  
142 ters have no effect if there is no data in the current line. The ERASE and KILL  
143 characters themselves are not placed in the input queue.

### 144 7.1.1.7 Noncanonical Mode Input Processing

145 In noncanonical mode input processing, input bytes are not assembled into lines,  
146 and erase and kill processing does not occur. The values of the MIN and TIME  
147 members of the *c\_cc* array are used to determine how to process the bytes  
148 received.

149 MIN represents the minimum number of bytes that should be received when the  
150 *read()* function successfully returns. TIME is a timer of 0,1 second granularity  
151 that is used to time out short-term or bursty data transmissions. If MIN is  
152 greater than {MAX\_INPUT}, the response to the request is undefined. The four  
153 possible values for MIN and TIME and their interactions are described below.

#### 154 7.1.1.7.1 Case A: MIN > 0, TIME > 0

155 In this case TIME serves as an interbyte timer and is activated after the first byte  
156 is received. Since it is an interbyte timer, it is reset after a byte is received. The  
157 interaction between MIN and TIME is as follows: as soon as one byte is received,  
158 the interbyte timer is started. If MIN bytes are received before the interbyte timer  
159 expires (remember that the timer is reset upon receipt of each byte), the read is  
160 satisfied. If the timer expires before MIN bytes are received, the characters  
161 received to that point are returned to the user. Note that if TIME expires, at least  
162 one byte shall be returned because the timer would not have been enabled unless  
163 a byte was received. In this case (MIN > 0, TIME > 0), the read shall block until  
164 the MIN and TIME mechanisms are activated by the receipt of the first byte or  
165 until a signal is received. If data is in the buffer at the time of the *read()*, the  
166 result shall be as if data had been received immediately after the *read()*.

**167 7.1.1.7.2 Case B: MIN > 0, TIME = 0**

168 In this case, since the value of TIME is zero, the timer plays no role and only MIN  
169 is significant. A pending read is not satisfied until MIN bytes are received (i.e.,  
170 the pending read shall block until MIN bytes are received) or a signal is received.  
171 A program that uses this case to read record-based terminal I/O may block  
172 indefinitely in the read operation.

**173 7.1.1.7.3 Case C: MIN = 0, TIME > 0**

174 In this case, since MIN = 0, TIME no longer represents an interbyte timer. It now  
175 serves as a read timer that is activated as soon as the *read()* function is pro-  
176 cessed. A read is satisfied as soon as a single byte is received or the read timer  
177 expires. Note that in this case if the timer expires, no bytes shall be returned. If  
178 the timer does not expire, the only way the read can be satisfied is if a byte is  
179 received. In this case, the read shall not block indefinitely waiting for a byte; if no  
180 byte is received within TIME\*0,1 seconds after the read is initiated, the *read()*  
181 shall return a value of zero, having read no data. If data is in the buffer at the  
182 time of the *read()*, the timer shall be started as if data had been received immedi-  
183 ately after the *read()*.

**184 7.1.1.7.4 Case D: MIN = 0, TIME = 0**

185 The minimum of either the number of bytes requested or the number of bytes  
186 currently available shall be returned without waiting for more bytes to be input.  
187 If no characters are available, *read()* shall return a value of zero, having read no  
188 data.

**189 7.1.1.8 Writing Data and Output Processing**

190 When a process writes one or more bytes to a terminal device file, they are pro-  
191 cessed according to the *c\_oflag* field (see 7.1.2.3). The implementation may pro-  
192 vide a buffering mechanism; as such, when a call to *write()* completes, all of the  
193 bytes written have been scheduled for transmission to the device, but the  
194 transmission will not necessarily have completed. See also 6.4.2 for the effects of  
195 O\_NONBLOCK on *write()*.

**196 7.1.1.9 Special Characters**

197 Certain characters have special functions on input or output or both. These func-  
198 tions are summarized as follows:

199	INTR	Special character on input and recognized if the ISIG flag (see
200		7.1.2.5) is enabled. It generates a SIGINT signal that is sent to
201		all processes in the foreground process group for which the termi-
202		nal is the controlling terminal. If ISIG is set, the INTR char-
203		acter is discarded when processed.
204	QUIT	Special character on input and recognized if the ISIG flag is
205		enabled. It generates a SIGQUIT signal that is sent to all
206		processes in the foreground process group for which the termi-
207		nal is the controlling terminal. If ISIG is set, the QUIT char-
208		acter is discarded when processed.

209	<b>ERASE</b>	Special character on input and recognized if the ICANON flag is set. It erases the last character in the current line; see 7.1.1.6.
210		The ERASE character shall not erase beyond the start of a line,
211		as delimited by an NL, EOF, or EOL character. If ICANON is
212		set, the ERASE character is discarded when processed.
213		
214	<b>KILL</b>	Special character on input and recognized if the ICANON flag is
215		set. It deletes the entire line, as delimited by a NL, EOF, or
216		EOL character. If ICANON is set, the KILL character is dis-
217		carded when processed.
218	<b>EOF</b>	Special character on input and recognized if the ICANON flag is
219		set. When received, all the bytes waiting to be read are
220		immediately passed to the process, without waiting for a new-
221		line, and the EOF is discarded. Thus, if there are no bytes wait-
222		ing (that is, the EOF occurred at the beginning of a line), a byte
223		count of zero shall be returned from the <i>read()</i> , representing an
224		end-of-file indication. If ICANON is set, the EOF character is
225		discarded when processed.
226	<b>NL</b>	Special character on input and recognized if the ICANON flag is
227		set. It is the line delimiter ('\n').
228	<b>EOL</b>	Special character on input and recognized if the ICANON flag is
229		set. It is an additional line delimiter, like NL.
230	<b>SUSP</b>	Recognized on input if job control is supported (see 7.1.2.6). If
231		the ISIG flag is enabled, receipt of the SUSP character causes a
232		SIGTSTP signal to be sent to all processes in the foreground pro-
233		cess group for which the terminal is the controlling terminal,
234		and the SUSP character is discarded when processed.
235	<b>STOP</b>	Special character on both input and output and recognized if
236		the IXON (output control) or IXOFF (input control) flag is set. It
237		can be used to temporarily suspend output. It is useful with
238		CRT terminals to prevent output from disappearing before it
239		can be read. If IXON is set, the STOP character is discarded
240		when processed.
241	<b>START</b>	Special character on both input and output and recognized if
242		the IXON (output control) or IXOFF (input control) flag is set.
243		Can be used to resume output that has been suspended by a
244		STOP character. If IXON is set, the START character is dis-
245		carded when processed.
246	<b>CR</b>	Special character on input and recognized if the ICANON flag is
247		set; it is the '\r', as denoted in the C Standard {2}. When
248		ICANON and ICRNL are set and IGNCR is not set, this character
249		is translated into a NL and has the same effect as a NL
250		character.
251		The NL and CR characters cannot be changed. It is implementation defined
252		whether the START and STOP characters can be changed. The values for INTR,
253		QUIT, ERASE, KILL, EOF, EOL, and SUSP (job control only), shall be changeable to
254		suit individual tastes.

255 If `[_POSIX_VDISABLE]` is in effect for the terminal file, special character functions  
256 associated with changeable special control characters can be disabled individu-  
257 ally; see 7.1.2.6.

258 If two or more special characters have the same value, the function performed  
259 when that character is received is undefined.

260 A special character is recognized not only by its value, but also by its context; for  
261 example, an implementation may define multibyte sequences that have a mean-  
262 ing different from the meaning of the bytes when considered individually. Imple-  
263 mentations may also define additional single-byte functions. These  
264 implementation-defined multibyte or single-byte functions are recognized only if  
265 the `IEXTEN` flag is set; otherwise, data is received without interpretation, except  
266 as required to recognize the special characters defined in this subclause (7.1.1.9).

#### 267 7.1.1.10 Modem Disconnect

268 If a modem disconnect is detected by the terminal interface for a controlling ter-  
269 minal, and if `CLOCAL` is not set in the `c_cflag` field for the terminal (see 7.1.2.4),  
270 the `SIGHUP` signal is sent to the controlling process associated with the terminal.  
271 Unless other arrangements have been made, this causes the controlling process to  
272 terminate; see 3.2.2. Any subsequent call to the `read()` function shall return the  
273 value zero, indicating end of file. See 6.4.1. Thus, processes that read a terminal  
274 file and test for end-of-file can terminate appropriately after a disconnect. If the  
275 `[EIO]` condition specified in 6.4.1.4 that applies when the implementation supports  
276 job control also exists, it is unspecified whether the EOF condition or the `[EIO]` is  
277 returned. Any subsequent `write()` to the terminal device returns `-1`, with `errno`  
278 set to `[EIO]`, until the device is closed.

#### 279 7.1.1.11 Closing a Terminal Device File

280 The last process to close a terminal device file shall cause any output to be sent to  
281 the device and any input to be discarded. Then, if `HUPCL` is set in the control  
282 modes and the communications port supports a disconnect function, the terminal  
283 device shall perform a disconnect.

### 284 7.1.2 Parameters That Can Be Set

#### 285 7.1.2.1 *termios* Structure

286 Routines that need to control certain terminal I/O characteristics shall do so by  
287 using the *termios* structure as defined in the header `<termios.h>`. The  
288 members of this structure include (but are not limited to) those shown in Table 7-  
289 1.

290 The types `tcflag_t` and `cc_t` shall be defined in the header `<termios.h>`. They  
291 shall be unsigned integral types.

292

Table 7-1 – *termios* Structure

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Member Type	Array Size	Member Name	Description
<i>tcflag_t</i>		<i>c_iflag</i>	Input modes.
<i>tcflag_t</i>		<i>c_oflag</i>	Output modes.
<i>tcflag_t</i>		<i>c_cflag</i>	Control modes.
<i>tcflag_t</i>		<i>c_lflag</i>	Local modes.
<i>cc_t</i>	NCCS	<i>c_cc</i>	Control characters.

303 **7.1.2.2 Input Modes**

304 Values of the *c\_iflag* field, shown in Table 7-2, describe the basic terminal input  
305 control and are composed of the bitwise inclusive OR of the masks shown, which  
306 shall be bitwise distinct. The mask name symbols in this table are defined in  
307 <termios.h>.

Table 7-2 – *termios c\_iflag* Field

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322

Mask Name	Description
BRKINT	Signal interrupt on break.
ICRNLC	Map CR to NL on input.
IGNBRK	Ignore break condition.
IGNCR	Ignore CR.
IGNPAR	Ignore characters with parity errors.
INLCR	Map NL to CR on input.
INPCK	Enable input parity check.
ISTRIP	Strip character.
IXOFF	Enable start/stop input control.
IXON	Enable start/stop output control.
PARMRK	Mark parity errors.

323 In the context of asynchronous serial data transmission, a break condition is  
324 defined as a sequence of zero-valued bits that continues for more than the time to  
325 send one byte. The entire sequence of zero-valued bits is interpreted as a single  
326 break condition, even if it continues for a time equivalent to more than one byte.  
327 In contexts other than asynchronous serial data transmission, the definition of a  
328 break condition is implementation defined.

329 If IGNBRK is set, a break condition detected on input is ignored, that is, not put  
330 on the input queue and therefore not read by any process. If IGNBRK is not set  
331 and BRKINT is set, the break condition shall flush the input and output queues.  
332 If the terminal is the controlling terminal of a foreground process group, the  
333 break condition shall generate a single SIGINT signal to that foreground process  
334 group. If neither IGNBRK nor BRKINT is set, a break condition is read as a single  
335 '\0', or if PARMRK is set, as '\377', '\0', '\0'.

336 If IGNPAR is set, a byte with a framing or parity error (other than break) is  
337 ignored.

338 If PARMRK is set and IGNPAR is not set, a byte with a framing or parity error  
339 (other than break) is given to the application as the three-character sequence  
340 '\377', '\0', *X*, where '\377', '\0' is a two-character flag preceding each sequence  
341 and *X* is the data of the character received in error. To avoid ambiguity in this  
342 case, if ISTRIP is not set, a valid character of '\377' is given to the application as  
343 '\377', '\377'. If neither PARMRK nor IGNPAR is set, a framing or parity error  
344 (other than break) is given to the application as a single character '\0'.

345 If INPCK is set, input parity checking is enabled. If INPCK is not set, input parity  
346 checking is disabled, allowing output parity generation without input parity  
347 errors. Note that whether input parity checking is enabled or disabled is  
348 independent of whether parity detection is enabled or disabled (see 7.1.2.4). If  
349 parity detection is enabled, but input parity checking is disabled, the hardware to  
350 which the terminal is connected shall recognize the parity bit, but the terminal  
351 special file shall not check whether this bit is set correctly or not.

352 If ISTRIP is set, valid input bytes are first stripped to seven bits; otherwise, all  
353 eight bits are processed.

354 If INLCR is set, a received NL character is translated into a CR character. If  
355 IGNCR is set, a received CR character is ignored (not read). If IGNCR is not set  
356 and ICRNL is set, a received CR character is translated into a NL character.

357 If IXON is set, start/stop output control is enabled. A received STOP character  
358 shall suspend output, and a received START character shall restart output. When  
359 IXON is set, START and STOP characters are not read, but merely perform flow  
360 control functions. When IXON is not set, the START and STOP characters are  
361 read.

362 If IXOFF is set, start/stop input control is enabled. The system shall transmit one  
363 or more STOP characters, which are intended to cause the terminal device to stop  
364 transmitting data, as needed to prevent the input queue from overflowing and  
365 causing the undefined behavior described in 7.1.1.5 and shall transmit one or  
366 more START characters, which are intended to cause the terminal device to  
367 resume transmitting data, as soon as the device can continue transmitting data  
368 without risk of overflowing the input queue. The precise conditions under which  
369 STOP and START characters are transmitted are implementation defined.

370 The initial input control value after *open()* is implementation defined.

### 371 7.1.2.3 Output Modes

372 Values of the *c\_oflag* field describe the basic terminal output control and are com-  
373 posed of the bitwise inclusive OR of the following masks, which shall be bitwise  
374 distinct:

375	<u>Mask Name</u>	<u>Description</u>
376	OPOST	Perform output processing.

377 The mask name symbols for the *c\_oflag* field are defined in `<termios.h>`.

378 If OPOST is set, output data is processed in an implementation-defined fashion so  
379 that lines of text are modified to appear appropriately on the terminal device;

380 otherwise, characters are transmitted without change.  
381 The initial output control value after *open()* is implementation defined.

382 **7.1.2.4 Control Modes**

383 Values of the *c\_cflag* field, shown in Table 7-3, describe the basic terminal  
384 hardware control and are composed of the bitwise inclusive OR of the masks  
385 shown, which shall be bitwise distinct; not all values specified are required to be  
386 supported by the underlying hardware. The mask name symbols in this table are  
387 defined in `<termios.h>`.

388 **Table 7-3 – *termios* *c\_cflag* Field**

389	Mask Name	Description
391	CLOCAL	Ignore modem status lines.
392	CREAD	Enable receiver.
393	CSIZE	Number of bits per byte:
394	CS5	5 bits
395	CS6	6 bits
396	CS7	7 bits
397	CS8	8 bits
398	CSTOPB	Send two stop bits, else one.
399	HUPCL	Hang up on last close.
400	PARENB	Parity enable.
401	PARODD	Odd parity, else even.
402		

403 The CSIZE bits specify the byte size in bits for both transmission and reception.  
404 This size does not include the parity bit, if any. If CSTOPB is set, two stop bits are  
405 used; otherwise, one stop bit is used. For example, at 110 baud, two stop bits are  
406 normally used.

407 If CREAD is set, the receiver is enabled; otherwise, no characters shall be  
408 received.

409 If PARENB is set, parity generation and detection is enabled and a parity bit is  
410 added to each character. If parity is enabled, PARODD specifies odd parity if set;  
411 otherwise, even parity is used.

412 If HUPCL is set, the modem control lines for the port shall be lowered when the  
413 last process with the port open closes the port or the process terminates. The  
414 modem connection shall be broken.

415 If CLOCAL is set, a connection does not depend on the state of the modem status  
416 lines. If CLOCAL is clear, the modem status lines shall be monitored.

417 Under normal circumstances, a call to the *open()* function shall wait for the  
418 modem connection to complete. However, if the O\_NONBLOCK flag is set (see  
419 5.3.1) or if CLOCAL has been set, the *open()* function shall return immediately  
420 without waiting for the connection.

421 If the object for which the control modes are set is not an asynchronous serial con-  
422 nection, some of the modes may be ignored; for example, if an attempt is made to

423 set the baud rate on a network connection to a terminal on another host, the baud  
424 rate may or may not be set on the connection between that terminal and the  
425 machine to which it is directly connected.

426 The initial hardware control value after *open()* is implementation defined.

### 427 7.1.2.5 Local Modes

428 Values of the *c\_lflag* field, shown in Table 7-4, describe the control of various func-  
429 tions and are composed of the bitwise inclusive OR of the masks shown, which  
430 shall be bitwise distinct. The mask name symbols in this table are defined in  
431 `<termios.h>`.

432 **Table 7-4 – *termios* *c\_lflag* Field**

433	Mask Name	Description
434		
435	ECHO	Enable echo.
436	ECHOE	Echo ERASE as an error-correcting backspace.
437	ECHOK	Echo KILL.
438	ECHONL	Echo '\n'.
439	ICANON	Canonical input (erase and kill processing).
440	IEXTEN	Enable extended (implementation-defined) functions.
441	ISIG	Enable signals.
442	NOFLSH	Disable flush after interrupt, quit, or suspend.
443	TOSTOP	Send SIGTTOU for background output.
444		

445 If ECHO is set, input characters are echoed back to the terminal. If ECHO is not  
446 set, input characters are not echoed.

447 If ECHOE and ICANON are set, the ERASE character shall cause the terminal to  
448 erase the last character in the current line from the display, if possible. If there is  
449 no character to erase, an implementation may echo an indication that this was  
450 the case or do nothing.

451 If ECHOK and ICANON are set, the KILL character shall either cause the terminal  
452 to erase the line from the display or shall echo the '\n' character after the KILL  
453 character.

454 If ECHONL and ICANON are set, the '\n' character shall be echoed even if ECHO  
455 is not set.

456 If ICANON is set, canonical processing is enabled. This enables the erase and kill  
457 edit functions and the assembly of input characters into lines delimited by NL,  
458 EOF, and EOL, as described in 7.1.1.6.

459 If ICANON is not set, read requests are satisfied directly from the input queue. A  
460 read shall not be satisfied until at least MIN bytes have been received or the  
461 timeout value TIME has expired between bytes. The time value represents tenths  
462 of seconds. See 7.1.1.7 for more details.

463 If ISIG is set, each input character is checked against the special control charac-  
464 ters INTR, QUIT, and SUSP (job control only). If an input character matches one of  
465 these control characters, the function associated with that character is performed.

466 If ISIG is not set, no checking is done. Thus, these special input functions are possible only if ISIG is set.  
467

468 If IEXTEN is set, implementation-defined functions shall be recognized from the input data. It is implementation defined how IEXTEN being set interacts with  
469 ICANON, ISIG, IXON, or IXOFF. If IEXTEN is not set, then implementation-defined  
470 functions shall not be recognized, and the corresponding input characters shall be  
471 processed as described for ICANON, ISIG, IXON, and IXOFF.  
472

473 If NOFLSH is set, the normal flush of the input and output queues associated with the INTR, QUIT, and SUSP (job control only) characters shall not be done.  
474

475 If TOSTOP is set and the implementation supports job control, the signal SIGTTOU is sent to the process group of a process that tries to write to its controlling terminal if it is not in the foreground process group for that terminal. This signal, by  
476 default, stops the members of the process group. Otherwise, the output generated  
477 by that process is output to the current output stream. Processes that are blocking or ignoring SIGTTOU signals are excepted and allowed to produce output, and  
478 the SIGTTOU signal is not sent.  
479  
480  
481

482 The initial local control value after *open()* is implementation defined.

### 483 7.1.2.6 Special Control Characters

484 The special control characters values are defined by the array *c\_cc*. The subscript name and description for each element in both canonical and noncanonical modes are shown in Table 7-5. The subscript name symbols in this table are defined in  
485  
486  
487 <termios.h>.

488 **Table 7-5 - *termios* *c\_cc* Special Control Characters**

	Subscript Usage		Description
	Canonical Mode	Noncanonical Mode	
493	VEOF		EOF character
494	VEOL		EOL character
495	VERASE		ERASE character
496	VINTR	VINTR	INTR character
497	VKILL		KILL character
498		VMIN	MIN value
499	VQUIT	VQUIT	QUIT character
500	VSUSP	VSUSP	SUSP character
501		VTIME	TIME value
502	VSTART	VSTART	START character
503	VSTOP	VSTOP	STOP character

505 The subscript values shall be unique, except that the VMIN and VTIME subscripts may have the same values as the VEOF and VEOL subscripts, respectively.  
506

507 Implementations that do not support job control may ignore the SUSP character value in the *c\_cc* array indexed by the VSUSP subscript.  
508

509 The value of NCCS (the number of elements in the *c\_cc* array) is unspecified by  
510 this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

511 Implementations that do not support changing the START and STOP characters  
512 may ignore the character values in the *c\_cc* array indexed by the VSTART and  
513 VSTOP subscripts when *tcsetattr()* is called, but shall return the value in use  
514 when *tcgetattr()* is called.

515 If `[_POSIX_VDISABLE]` is defined for the terminal device file, and the value of one  
516 of the changeable special control characters (see 7.1.1.9) is `[_POSIX_VDISABLE]`,  
517 that function shall be disabled, that is, no input data shall be recognized as the  
518 disabled special character. If ICANON is not set, the value of `[_POSIX_VDISABLE]`  
519 has no special meaning for the VMIN and VTIME entries of the *c\_cc* array.

520 The initial values of all control characters are implementation defined.

### 521 7.1.2.7 Baud Rate Values

522 The baud rate values specified in Table 7-6 can be set into the *termios* structure  
523 by the baud rate functions in 7.1.3.

524 **Table 7-6 – *termios* Baud Rate Values**

525	Name	Description	Name	Description
526				
527	B0	Hang up	B600	600 baud
528	B50	50 baud	B1200	1200 baud
529	B75	75 baud	B1800	1800 baud
530	B110	110 baud	B2400	2400 baud
531	B134	134.5 baud	B4800	4800 baud
532	B150	150 baud	B9600	9600 baud
533	B200	200 baud	B19200	19 200 baud
534	B300	300 baud	B38400	38 400 baud
535				

### 536 7.1.3 Baud Rate Functions

537 Functions: *cfgetispeed()*, *cfgetospeed()*, *cfsetispeed()*, *cfsetospeed()*

#### 538 7.1.3.1 Synopsis

539 `#include <termios.h>`

540 `speed_t cfgetospeed(const struct termios *termios_p);`

541 `int cfsetospeed(struct termios *termios_p, speed_t speed);`

542 `speed_t cfgetispeed(const struct termios *termios_p);`

543 `int cfsetispeed(struct termios *termios_p, speed_t speed);`

544 **7.1.3.2 Description**

545 The following interfaces are provided for getting and setting the values of the  
546 input and output baud rates in the *termios* structure. The effects on the terminal  
547 device described below do not become effective until the *tcsetattr()* function is suc-  
548 cessfully called, and not all errors are detected until *tcsetattr()* is called as well.

549 The input and output baud rates are represented in the *termios* structure. The  
550 values shown in Table 7-6 are defined. The name symbols in this table are  
551 defined in `<termios.h>`.

552 The type *speed\_t* shall be defined in `<termios.h>` and shall be an unsigned  
553 integral type.

554 The *termios\_p* argument is a pointer to a *termios* structure.

555 The *cfgetospeed()* function shall return the output baud rate stored in the *termios*  
556 structure to which *termios\_p* points.

557 The *cfgetispeed()* function shall return the input baud rate stored in the *termios*  
558 structure to which *termios\_p* points.

559 The *cfsetospeed()* function shall set the output baud rate stored in the *termios*  
560 structure to which *termios\_p* points.

561 The *cfsetispeed()* function shall set the input baud rate stored in the *termios*  
562 structure to which *termios\_p* points.

563 Certain values for speeds that are set in the *termios* structure and passed to  
564 *tcsetattr()* have special meanings. These are discussed under *tcsetattr()*.

565 The *cfgetispeed()* and *cfgetospeed()* functions return exactly the value found in the  
566 *termios* data structure, without interpretation.

567 Both *cfsetispeed()* and *cfsetospeed()* return a value of zero if successful and -1 to  
568 indicate an error. It is unspecified whether these return an error if an un-  
569 reported baud rate is set.

570 **7.1.3.3 Returns**

571 See 7.1.3.2.

572 **7.1.3.4 Errors**

573 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not specify any error conditions that are required  
574 to be detected for the *cfgetispeed()*, *cfgetospeed()*, *cfsetispeed()*, or *cfsetospeed()*  
575 functions. Some errors may be detected under conditions that are unspecified by  
576 this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

577 **7.1.3.5 Cross-References**

578 *tcsetattr()*, 7.2.1.

579 **7.2 General Terminal Interface Control Functions**

580 The functions that are used to control the general terminal function are described  
581 in this clause. If the implementation supports job control, unless otherwise noted  
582 for a specific command, these functions are restricted from use by background  
583 processes. Attempts to perform these operations shall cause the process group to  
584 be sent a SIGTTOU signal. If the calling process is blocking or ignoring SIGTTOU  
585 signals, the process is allowed to perform the operation and the SIGTTOU signal is  
586 not sent.

587 In all the functions, *fildev* is an open file descriptor. However, the functions affect  
588 the underlying terminal file, not just the open file description associated with the  
589 file descriptor.

590 **7.2.1 Get and Set State**

591 Functions: *tcgetattr()*, *tcsetattr()*

592 **7.2.1.1 Synopsis**

```
593 #include <termios.h>
594 int tcgetattr(int fildev, struct termios *termios_p);
595 int tcsetattr(int fildev, int optional_actions,
596             const struct termios * termios_p);
```

597 **7.2.1.2 Description**

598 The *tcgetattr()* function shall get the parameters associated with the object  
599 referred to by *fildev* and store them in the *termios* structure referenced by  
600 *termios\_p*. This function is allowed from a background process; however, the ter-  
601 minal attributes may be subsequently changed by a foreground process. If the  
602 terminal device supports different input and output baud rates, the baud rates  
603 stored in the *termios* structure returned by *tcgetattr()* shall reflect the actual baud  
604 rates, even if they are equal. If differing baud rates are not supported, the rate  
605 returned as the output baud rate shall be the actual baud rate. The rate returned  
606 as the input baud rate shall be either the number zero or the output rate (as one  
607 of the symbolic values). Permitting either behavior is obsolescent.<sup>4)</sup>

608 The *tcsetattr()* function shall set the parameters associated with the terminal  
609 (unless support is required from the underlying hardware that is not available)  
610 from the *termios* structure referenced by *termios\_p* as follows:

- 611 (1) If *optional\_actions* is TCSANOW, the change shall occur immediately.

612 <sup>4)</sup> In a future revision of this part of ISO/IEC 9945, a returned value of zero as the input baud rate  
613 when differing baud rates are not supported may no longer be permitted.

614 (2) If *optional\_actions* is TCSADRAIN, the change shall occur after all output  
615 written to *fildev* has been transmitted. This function should be used  
616 when changing parameters that affect output.

617 (3) If *optional\_actions* is TCSAFLUSH, the change shall occur after all output  
618 written to the object referred to by *fildev* has been transmitted, and all  
619 input that has been received, but not read, shall be discarded before the  
620 change is made.

621 The symbolic constants for the values of *optional\_actions* are defined in  
622 `<termios.h>`.

623 The zero baud rate, B0, is used to terminate the connection. If B0 is specified as  
624 the output baud rate when *tcsetattr()* is called, the modem control lines shall no  
625 longer be asserted. Normally, this will disconnect the line.

626 If the input baud rate is equal to the numeral zero in the *termios* structure when  
627 *tcsetattr()* is called, the input baud rate will be changed by *tcsetattr()* to the same  
628 value as that specified by the value of the output baud rate, exactly as if the input  
629 rate had been set to the output rate by *cfsetispeed()*. This usage of zero is  
630 obsolescent.

631 The *tcsetattr()* function shall return success if it was able to perform any of the  
632 requested actions, even if some of the requested actions could not be performed.  
633 It shall set all the attributes that the implementation does support as requested  
634 and leave all the attributes not supported by the hardware unchanged. If no part  
635 of the request can be honored, it shall return `-1` and set *errno* to `[EINVAL]`. If the  
636 input and output baud rates differ and are a combination that is not supported,  
637 neither baud rate is changed. A subsequent call to *tcgetattr()* shall return the  
638 actual state of the terminal device [reflecting both the changes made and not  
639 made in the previous *tcsetattr()* call]. The *tcsetattr()* function shall not change the  
640 values in the *termios* structure whether or not it actually accepts them.

641 The *termios* structure may have additional fields not defined by this part of  
642 ISO/IEC 9945. The effect of the *tcsetattr()* function is undefined if the value of the  
643 *termios* structure pointed to by *termios\_p* was not derived from the result of a call  
644 to *tcgetattr()* on *fildev*; a Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Application shall modify  
645 only fields and flags defined by this part of ISO/IEC 9945 between the call to  
646 *tcgetattr()* and *tcsetattr()*, leaving all other fields and flags unmodified.

647 No actions defined by this part of ISO/IEC 9945, other than a call to *tcsetattr()* or a  
648 close of the last file descriptor in the system associated with this terminal device,  
649 shall cause any of the terminal attributes defined by this part of ISO/IEC 9945 to  
650 change.

### 651 7.2.1.3 Returns

652 Upon successful completion, a value of zero is returned. Otherwise, a value of `-1`  
653 is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

654 **7.2.1.4 Errors**

655 If any of the following conditions occur, the *tcgetattr()* function shall return -1  
656 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

657 [EBADF] The *fildev* argument is not a valid file descriptor.

658 [ENOTTY] The file associated with *fildev* is not a terminal.

659 If any of the following conditions occur, the *tcsetattr()* function shall return -1 and  
660 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

661 [EBADF] The *fildev* argument is not a valid file descriptor.

662 [EINTR] A signal interrupted the *tcsetattr()* function.

663 [EINVAL] The *optional\_actions* argument is not a proper value, or an  
664 attempt was made to change an attribute represented in the  
665 *termios* structure to an unsupported value.

666 [ENOTTY] The file associated with *fildev* is not a terminal.

667 **7.2.1.5 Cross-References**

668 <termios.h>, 7.1.2.

669 **7.2.2 Line Control Functions**

670 Functions: *tcsendbreak()*, *tcdrain()*, *tcflush()*, *tcflow()*

671 **7.2.2.1 Synopsis**

672 #include <termios.h>

673 int tcsendbreak(int *fildev*, int *duration*);

674 int tcdrain(int *fildev*);

675 int tcflush(int *fildev*, int *queue\_selector*);

676 int tcflow(int *fildev*, int *action*);

677 **7.2.2.2 Description**

678 If the terminal is using asynchronous serial data transmission, the *tcsendbreak()*  
679 function shall cause transmission of a continuous stream of zero-valued bits for a  
680 specific duration. If *duration* is zero, it shall cause transmission of zero-valued  
681 bits for at least 0,25 seconds and not more than 0,5 seconds. If *duration* is not  
682 zero, it shall send zero-valued bits for an implementation-defined period of time.

683 If the terminal is not using asynchronous serial data transmission, it is imple-  
684 mentation defined whether the *tcsendbreak()* function sends data to generate a  
685 break condition (as defined by the implementation) or returns without taking any  
686 action.

687 The *tcdrain()* function shall wait until all output written to the object referred to  
688 by *fildev* has been transmitted.

689 Upon successful completion, the *tcflush()* function shall have discarded any data  
690 written to the object referred to by *fildes* but not transmitted, or data received, but  
691 not read, depending on the value of *queue\_selector*:

- 692 (1) If *queue\_selector* is TCIFLUSH, it shall flush data received, but not read.
- 693 (2) If *queue\_selector* is TCOFLUSH, it shall flush data written, but not  
694 transmitted.
- 695 (3) If *queue\_selector* is TCIOFLUSH, it shall flush both data received but not  
696 read and data written but not transmitted.

697 The *tcflow()* function shall suspend transmission or reception of data on the object  
698 referred to by *fildes*, depending on the value of *action*:

- 699 (1) If *action* is TCOOFF, it shall suspend output.
- 700 (2) If *action* is TCOON, it shall restart suspended output.
- 701 (3) If *action* is TCIOFF, the system shall transmit a STOP character, which is  
702 intended to cause the terminal device to stop transmitting data to the  
703 system. (See the description of IXOFF in 7.1.2.2.)
- 704 (4) If *action* is TCION, the system shall transmit a START character, which is  
705 intended to cause the terminal device to start transmitting data to the  
706 system. (See the description of IXOFF in 7.1.2.2.)

707 The symbolic constants for the values of *queue\_selector* and *action* are defined in  
708 `<termios.h>`.

709 The default on the opening of a terminal file is that neither its input nor its out-  
710 put is suspended.

### 711 7.2.2.3 Returns

712 Upon successful completion, a value of zero is returned. Otherwise, a value of -1  
713 is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

### 714 7.2.2.4 Errors

715 If any of the following conditions occur, the *tcsendbreak()* function shall return -1  
716 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

- |     |          |  |
|-----|----------|--|
| 717 | [EBADF]  | The <i>fildes</i> argument is not a valid file descriptor. |
| 718 | [ENOTTY] | The file associated with <i>fildes</i> is not a terminal.  |

719 If any of the following conditions occur, the *tcdrain()* function shall return -1 and  
720 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

- |     |          |  |
|-----|----------|--|
| 721 | [EBADF]  | The <i>fildes</i> argument is not a valid file descriptor. |
| 722 | [EINTR]  | A signal interrupted the <i>tcdrain()</i> function.        |
| 723 | [ENOTTY] | The file associated with <i>fildes</i> is not a terminal.  |

724 If any of the following conditions occur, the *tcflush()* function shall return -1 and  
725 set *errno* to the corresponding value:

- 726 [EBADF] The *fdes* argument is not a valid file descriptor.
- 727 [EINVAL] The *queue\_selector* argument is not a proper value.
- 728 [ENOTTY] The file associated with *fdes* is not a terminal.
- 729 If any of the following conditions occur, the *tcflow()* function shall return  $-1$  and  
730 set *errno* to the corresponding value:
- 731 [EBADF] The *fdes* argument is not a valid file descriptor.
- 732 [EINVAL] The *action* argument is not a proper value.
- 733 [ENOTTY] The file associated with *fdes* is not a terminal.

### 734 7.2.2.5 Cross-References

735 <termios.h>, 7.1.2.

### 736 7.2.3 Get Foreground Process Group ID

737 Function: *tcgetpgrp()*

#### 738 7.2.3.1 Synopsis

739 #include <sys/types.h>  
740 pid\_t tcgetpgrp(int *fdes*);

#### 741 7.2.3.2 Description

742 If `[_POSIX_JOB_CONTROL]` is defined:

- 743 (1) The *tcgetpgrp()* function shall return the value of the process group ID of  
744 the foreground process group associated with the terminal.
- 745 (2) The *tcgetpgrp()* function is allowed from a process that is a member of a  
746 background process group; however, the information may be subse-  
747 quently changed by a process that is a member of a foreground process  
748 group.

749 Otherwise:

750 The implementation shall either support the *tcgetpgrp()* function as  
751 described above or the *tcgetpgrp()* call shall fail.

#### 752 7.2.3.3 Returns

753 Upon successful completion, *tcgetpgrp()* returns the process group ID of the fore-  
754 ground process group associated with the terminal. If there is no foreground pro-  
755 cess group, *tcgetpgrp()* shall return a value greater than 1 that does not match  
756 the process group ID of any existing process group. Otherwise, a value of  $-1$  is  
757 returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

758 **7.2.3.4 Errors**

759 If any of the following conditions occur, the *tcgetpgrp()* function shall return *-1*  
760 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

- 761 [EBADF] The *fildev* argument is not a valid file descriptor.  
762 [ENOSYS] The *tcgetpgrp()* function is not supported in this implementa-  
763 tion.  
764 [ENOTTY] The calling process does not have a controlling terminal, or the  
765 file is not the controlling terminal.

766 **7.2.3.5 Cross-References**

767 *setsid()*, 4.3.2; *setpgid()*, 4.3.3; *tcsetpgrp()*, 7.2.4.

768 **7.2.4 Set Foreground Process Group ID**

769 Function: *tcsetpgrp()*

770 **7.2.4.1 Synopsis**

771 #include <sys/types.h>  
772 int tcsetpgrp(int *fildev*, pid\_t *pgrp\_id*);

773 **7.2.4.2 Description**

774 If `{_POSIX_JOB_CONTROL}` is defined:

775 If the process has a controlling terminal, the *tcsetpgrp()* function shall set  
776 the foreground process group ID associated with the terminal to *pgrp\_id*.  
777 The file associated with *fildev* must be the controlling terminal of the call-  
778 ing process, and the controlling terminal must be currently associated with  
779 the session of the calling process. The value of *pgrp\_id* must match a pro-  
780 cess group ID of a process in the same session as the calling process.

781 Otherwise:

782 The implementation shall either support the *tcsetpgrp()* function as  
783 described above, or the *tcsetpgrp()* call shall fail.

784 **7.2.4.3 Returns**

785 Upon successful completion, *tcsetpgrp()* returns a value of zero. Otherwise, a  
786 value of *-1* is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

787 **7.2.4.4 Errors**

788 If any of the following conditions occur, the *tcsetpgrp()* function shall return *-1*  
789 and set *errno* to the corresponding value:

790	[EBADF]	The <i>fdes</i> argument is not a valid file descriptor.
791	[EINVAL]	The value of the <i>pgrp_id</i> argument is not supported by the implementation.
792		
793	[ENOSYS]	The <i>tcsetpgrp()</i> function is not supported in this implementation.
794		
795	[ENOTTY]	The calling process does not have a controlling terminal, or the file is not the controlling terminal, or the controlling terminal is no longer associated with the session of the calling process.
796		
797		
798	[EPERM]	The value of <i>pgrp_id</i> is a value supported by the implementation, but does not match the process group ID of a process in the same session as the calling process.
799		
800		

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## Section 8: Language-Specific Services for the C Programming Language

### 1 8.1 Referenced C Language Routines

2 The functions listed below are described in the indicated sections of the  
3 C Standard {2}. POSIX.1 with the C Language Binding comprises these functions,  
4 the extensions to them described in this clause, and the rest of the requirements  
5 stipulated in this part of ISO/IEC 9945. The functions appended with plus signs  
6 (+) have requirements beyond those set forth in the C Standard {2}. Any imple-  
7 mentation claiming conformance to POSIX.1 with the C Language Binding shall  
8 comply with the requirements outlined in this clause, the requirements stipulated  
9 in the rest of this part of ISO/IEC 9945, and the requirements in the indicated sec-  
10 tions of the C Standard {2}.

11 For requirements concerning conformance to this clause, see 1.3.3 and its  
12 subclauses.

#### 13 4.2 Diagnostics

14 Functions: assert.

#### 15 4.3 Character Handling

16 Functions: isalnum, isalpha, iscntrl, isdigit, isgraph, islower, isprint,  
17 ispunct, isspace, isupper, isxdigit, tolower, toupper.

#### 18 4.4 Localization

19 Functions: setlocale+.

#### 20 4.5 Mathematics

21 Functions: acos, asin, atan, atan2, cos, sin, tan, cosh, sinh, tanh, exp,  
22 frexp, ldexp, log, log10, modf, pow, sqrt, ceil, fabs, floor, fmod.

#### 23 4.6 Non-Local Jumps

24 Functions: setjmp, longjmp.

#### 25 4.9 Input/Output

26 Functions: clearerr, fclose, feof, ferror, fflush, fgetc, fgets, fopen, fputc,  
27 fputs, fread, freopen, fseek, ftell, fwrite, getc, getchar, gets, perror,  
28 printf, fprintf, sprintf, putc, putchar, puts, remove, rename+, rewind,  
29 scanf, fscanf, sscanf, setbuf, tmpfile, tmpnam, ungetc.

#### 30 4.10 General Utilities

31 Functions: abs, atof, atoi, atol, rand, srand, calloc, free, malloc, realloc,  
32 abort+, exit, getenv+, bsearch, qsort.

#### 33 4.11 String Handling

34 Functions: strcpy, strncpy, strcat, strncat, strcmp, strncmp, strchr,  
35 strcspn, strpbrk, strchr, strspn, strstr, strtok, strlen.

36 4.12 Date and Time

37 Functions: *time*, *asctime*, *ctime+*, *gmtime+*, *localtime+*, *mktime+*,  
38 *strftime+*.

39 Systems conforming to this part of ISO/IEC 9945 shall make no distinction  
40 between the “text streams” and the “binary streams” described in the  
41 C Standard [2].

42 For the *fseek()* function, if the specified position is beyond end-of-file, the conse-  
43 quences described in *lseek()* (see 6.5.3) shall occur.

44 The EXIT\_SUCCESS macro, as used by the *exit()* function, shall evaluate to a  
45 value of zero. Similarly, the EXIT\_FAILURE macro shall evaluate to a nonzero  
46 value.

47 The relationship between a time in seconds since the Epoch used as an argument  
48 to *gmtime()* and the *tm* structure (defined in *<time.h>*) is that the result shall be  
49 as specified in the expression given in the definition of *seconds since the Epoch* in  
50 2.2.2.77, where the names in the structure and in the expression correspond. If  
51 the time zone UCT0 is in effect, this shall also be true for *localtime()* and  
52 *mktime()*.

53 8.1.1 Extensions to Time Functions

54 The contents of the environment variable named TZ (see 2.6) shall be used by the  
55 functions *ctime()*, *localtime()*, *strftime()*, and *mktime()* to override the default  
56 time zone. The value of TZ has one of the two forms (spaces inserted for clarity):

57 :characters

58 or:

59 *std offset dst offset , rule*

60 If TZ is of the first format (i.e., if the first character is a colon), the characters fol-  
61 lowing the colon are handled in an implementation-defined manner.

62 The expanded format (for all TZs whose value does not have a colon as the first  
63 character) is as follows:

64 *stdoffset[dstoffset][, start[/time], end[/time]]*

65 Where:

66 *std* and *dst* Indicates no less than three, nor more than {TZNAME\_MAX},  
67 bytes that are the designation for the standard (*std*) or summer  
68 (*dst*) time zone. Only *std* is required; if *dst* is missing, then sum-  
69 mer time does not apply in this locale. Upper- and lowercase  
70 letters are explicitly allowed. Any characters except a leading  
71 colon (:) or digits, the comma (,), the minus (-), the plus (+), and  
72 the null character are permitted to appear in these fields, but  
73 their meaning is unspecified.

74 *offset* Indicates the value one must add to the local time to arrive at  
75 Coordinated Universal Time. The *offset* has the form:

76  $hh[:mm[:ss]]$

77 The minutes (*mm*) and seconds (*ss*) are optional. The hour (*hh*)  
78 shall be required and may be a single digit. The *offset* following  
79 *std* shall be required. If no *offset* follows *dst*, summer time is  
80 assumed to be one hour ahead of standard time. One or more  
81 digits may be used; the value is always interpreted as a decimal  
82 number. The hour shall be between zero and 24, and the  
83 minutes (and seconds)—if present—between zero and 59. Use of  
84 values outside these ranges causes undefined behavior. If pre-  
85 ceded by a “-”, the time zone shall be east of the Prime Meri-  
86 dian; otherwise it shall be west (which may be indicated by an  
87 optional preceding “+”).

88 *rule* Indicates when to change to and back from summer time. The  
89 *rule* has the form:

90  $date/time, date/time$

91 where the first *date* describes when the change from standard to  
92 summer time occurs and the second *date* describes when the  
93 change back happens. Each *time* field describes when, in  
94 current local time, the change to the other time is made.

95 The format of *date* shall be one of the following:

96 *Jn* The Julian day *n* ( $1 \leq n \leq 365$ ). Leap days shall not be  
97 counted. That is, in all years—including leap years—  
98 February 28 is day 59 and March 1 is day 60. It is  
99 impossible to explicitly refer to the occasional  
100 February 29.

101 *n*. The zero-based Julian day ( $0 \leq n \leq 365$ ). Leap days  
102 shall be counted, and it is possible to refer to  
103 February 29.

104 *Mm.n.d*  
105 The  $d^{\text{th}}$  day ( $0 \leq d \leq 6$ ) of week *n* of month *m* of the  
106 year ( $1 \leq n \leq 5$ ,  $1 \leq m \leq 12$ , where week 5 means “the  
107 last *d* day in month *m*” which may occur in either the  
108 fourth or the fifth week). Week 1 is the first week in  
109 which the  $d^{\text{th}}$  day occurs. Day zero is Sunday.

110 The *time* has the same format as *offset* except that no leading  
111 sign (“-” or “+”) shall be allowed. The default, if *time* is not  
112 given, shall be 02:00:00.

113 Whenever *ctime()*, *strptime()*, *mkttime()*, or *localtime()* is called, the time zone  
114 names contained in the external variable *tzname* shall be set as if the *tzset()* func-  
115 tion had been called.

116 Applications are explicitly allowed to change TZ and have the changed TZ apply  
117 to themselves.

## 118 8.1.2 Extensions to *setlocale()* Function

119 Function: *setlocale()*

### 120 8.1.2.1 Synopsis

```
121 #include <locale.h>  
122 char *setlocale(int category, const char *locale);
```

### 123 8.1.2.2 Description

124 The *setlocale()* function sets, changes, or queries the locale of the process accord-  
125 ing to the values of the *category* and the *locale* arguments. The possible values for  
126 *category* include:

```
127     LC_CTYPE  
128     LC_COLLATE  
129     LC_TIME  
130     LC_NUMERIC  
131     LC_MONETARY  
132     Implementation-defined additional categories
```

133 For POSIX.1 systems, environment variables are defined that correspond to the  
134 named categories above and that have the same spelling.

135 The value *LC\_ALL* for *category* names all of the categories of the locale of the pro-  
136 cess; *LC\_ALL* is a special constant, not a category. There is an environment vari-  
137 able *LC\_ALL* with the semantics noted below.

138 The *locale* argument is a pointer to a character string that can be an explicit  
139 string, a NULL pointer, or a null string.

140 When *locale* is an explicit string, the contents of the string are implementation  
141 defined except for the value "C". The value "C" for *locale* specifies the minimal  
142 environment for C-language translation. If *setlocale()* is not invoked, the "C"  
143 locale shall be the locale of the process. The locale name "POSIX" shall be recog-  
144 nized. It shall provide the same semantics as the C locale for those functions  
145 defined within this part of ISO/IEC 9945 or by the C Standard [2]. Extensions or  
146 refinements to the POSIX locale beyond those provided by the C locale may be  
147 included in future revisions, and other parts of ISO/IEC 9945 are expected to add  
148 to the requirements of the POSIX locale.

149 When *locale* is a NULL pointer the locale of the process is queried according to the  
150 value of *category*. The content of the string returned is unspecified.

151 When *locale* is a null string, the *setlocale()* function takes the name of the new  
152 locale for the specified category from the environment as determined by the first  
153 condition met below:

- 154 (1) If *LC\_ALL* is defined in the environment and is not null, the value of  
155 *LC\_ALL* is used.
- 156 (2) If there is a variable defined in the environment with the same name as  
157 the category and that is not null, the value specified by that environment  
158 variable is used.

159 (3) If **LANG** is defined in the environment and is not null, the value of **LANG**  
160 is used.

161 If the resulting value is a supported locale, *setlocale()* sets the specified category  
162 of the locale of the process to that value and returns the value specified below. If  
163 the value does not name a supported locale (and is not null), *setlocale()* returns a  
164 **NULL** pointer, and the locale of the process is not changed by this function call. If  
165 no nonnull environment variable is present to supply a value, it is implementa-  
166 tion defined whether *setlocale()* sets the specified category of the locale of the pro-  
167 cess to a systemwide default value or to "C" or to "POSIX". The possible actual  
168 values of the environment variables are implementation defined and should  
169 appear in the system documentation.

170 Setting all of the categories of the locale of the process is similar to successively  
171 setting each individual category of the locale of the process, except that all error  
172 checking is done before any actions are performed. To set all the categories of the  
173 locale of the process, *setlocale()* is invoked as:

```
174 setlocale(LC_ALL, "");
```

175 In this case, *setlocale()* first verifies that the values of all the environment vari-  
176 ables it needs according to the precedence above indicate supported locales. If the  
177 value of any of these environment-variable searches yields a locale that is not sup-  
178 ported (and nonnull), the *setlocale()* function returns a **NULL** pointer and the  
179 locale of the process is not changed. If all environment variables name supported  
180 locales, *setlocale()* then proceeds as if it had been called for each category, using  
181 the appropriate value from the associated environment variable or from the  
182 implementation-defined default if there is no such value.

### 183 8.1.2.3 Returns

184 A successful call to *setlocale()* returns a string that corresponds to the locale set.  
185 The string returned is such that "a subsequent call with that string and its associ-  
186 ated category will restore that part of the process's locale" (C Standard {2}). The  
187 string returned shall not be modified by the process, but may be overwritten by a  
188 subsequent call to the *setlocale()* function. This string is not required to be the  
189 value of the environment variable used, if one was used.

## 190 8.2 C Language Input/Output Functions

191 This clause describes input/output functions of the C Standard {2} and their  
192 interactions with other functions defined by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

193 All functions specified in the C Standard {2} as operating on a *file name* shall  
194 operate on a *pathname*. All functions specified in the C Standard {2} as creating a  
195 file shall do so as if they called the *creat()* function with a value appropriate to the  
196 C language function for the *path* argument and a value of

```
197 S_IRUSR|S_IWUSR|S_IRGRP|S_IWGRP|S_IROTH|S_IWOTH
```

198 for the *mode* argument.

199 The type *FILE* and the terms *file position indicator* and *stream* are those defined  
200 by the C Standard {2}.

201 A stream is considered local to a single process. After a *fork()* call, each of the  
202 parent and child have distinct streams that share an open file description.

### 203 8.2.1 Map a Stream Pointer to a File Descriptor

204 Function: *fileno()*

#### 205 8.2.1.1 Synopsis

```
206 #include <stdio.h>
207 int fileno(FILE *stream);
```

#### 208 8.2.1.2 Description

209 The *fileno()* function returns the integer file descriptor associated with the *stream*  
210 (see 5.3.1).

211 The following symbolic values in the `<unistd.h>` header (see 2.9) define the file  
212 descriptors that shall be associated with the C language *stdin*, *stdout*, and *stderr*  
213 when the application is started:

214	<u>Name</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Value</u>
215	STDIN_FILENO	Standard input value, <i>stdin</i> .	0
216	STDOUT_FILENO	Standard output value, <i>stdout</i> .	1
217	STDERR_FILENO	Standard error value, <i>stderr</i> .	2

218 At entry to *main()*, these streams shall be in the same state as if they had just  
219 been opened with *fdopen()* called with a mode consistent with that required by  
220 the C Standard {2} and the file descriptor described above.

#### 221 8.2.1.3 Returns

222 See 8.2.1.2. If an error occurs, a value of `-1` is returned and *errno* is set to indi-  
223 cate the error.

#### 224 8.2.1.4 Errors

225 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not specify any error conditions that are required  
226 to be detected for the *fileno()* function. Some errors may be detected under condi-  
227 tions that are unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

#### 228 8.2.1.5 Cross-References

229 *open()*, 5.3.1.

230 **8.2.2 Open a Stream on a File Descriptor**231 Function: *fdopen()*232 **8.2.2.1 Synopsis**

233 #include &lt;stdio.h&gt;

234 FILE \*fdopen(int *fdes*, const char \**type*);235 **8.2.2.2 Description**236 The *fdopen()* routine associates a stream with a file descriptor.237 The *type* argument is a character string having one of the following values:

238	"r"	Open for reading.
239	"w"	Open for writing.
240	"a"	Open for writing at end-of-file.
241	"r+"	Open for update (reading and writing).
242	"w+"	Open for update (reading and writing).
243	"a+"	Open for update (reading and writing) at end-of-file.

244 The meaning of these flags is exactly as specified by the C Standard [2] for  
 245 *open()*, except that "w" and "w+" do not cause truncation of the file. Additional  
 246 values for the *type* argument may be defined by an implementation.

247 The application shall ensure that the mode of the stream is allowed by the mode  
 248 of the open file.

249 The file position indicator associated with the new stream is set to the position  
 250 indicated by the file offset associated with the file descriptor. The error indicator  
 251 and end-of-file indicator for the stream shall be cleared.

252

253 **8.2.2.3 Returns**

254 If successful, the *fdopen()* function returns a pointer to a stream. Otherwise, a  
 255 NULL pointer is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

256 **8.2.2.4 Errors**

257 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not specify any error conditions that are required  
 258 to be detected for the *fdopen()* function. Some errors may be detected under con-  
 259 ditions that are unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

260 **8.2.2.5 Cross-References**261 *open()*, 5.3.1; *fopen()* [C Standard [2]].

### 262 8.2.3 Interactions of Other *FILE*-Type C Functions

263 A single open file description can be accessed both through streams and through  
264 file descriptors. Either a file descriptor or a stream will be called a *handle* on the  
265 open file description to which it refers; an open file description may have several  
266 handles.

267 Handles can be created or destroyed by user action without affecting the underly-  
268 ing open file description. Some of the ways to create them include *fcntl()*, *dup()*,  
269 *fdopen()*, *fileno()*, and *fork()* (which duplicates existing ones into new processes).  
270 They can be destroyed by at least *fclose()*, *close()*, and the *exec* functions (which  
271 close some file descriptors and destroy streams).

272 A file descriptor that is never used in an operation that could affect the file offset  
273 [for example *read()*, *write()*, or *lseek()*] is not considered a handle in this discus-  
274 sion, but could give rise to one [as a consequence of *fdopen()*, *dup()*, or *fork()*, for  
275 example]. This exception does include the file descriptor underlying a stream,  
276 whether created with *fopen()* or *fdopen()*, as long as it is not used directly by the  
277 application to affect the file offset. [The *read()* and *write()* functions implicitly  
278 affect the file offset; *lseek()* explicitly affects it.]

279 The result of function calls involving any one handle (the *active handle*) are  
280 defined elsewhere in this part of ISO/IEC 9945, but if two or more handles are  
281 used, and any one of them is a stream, their actions shall be coordinated as  
282 described below. If this is not done, the result is undefined.

283 A handle that is a stream is considered to be closed when either an *fclose()* or *freo-*  
284 *pen()* is executed on it [the result of *freopen()* is a new stream for this discussion,  
285 which cannot be a handle on the same open file description as its previous value]  
286 or when the process owning that stream terminates with *exit()* or *abort()*. A file  
287 descriptor is closed by *close()*, *\_exit()*, or by one of the *exec* functions when  
288 `FD_CLOEXEC` is set on that file descriptor.

289 For a handle to become the active handle, the actions below must be performed  
290 between the last other use of the first handle (the current active handle) and the  
291 first other use of the second handle (the future active handle). The second handle  
292 then becomes the active handle. All activity by the application affecting the file  
293 offset on the first handle shall be suspended until it again becomes the active han-  
294 dle. (If a stream function has as an underlying function that affects the file offset,  
295 the stream function will be considered to affect the file offset. The underlying  
296 functions are described below.)

297 The handles need not be in the same process for these rules to apply. Note that  
298 after a *fork()*, two handles exist where one existed before. The application shall  
299 assure that, if both handles will ever be accessed, that they will both be in a state  
300 where the other could become the active handle first. The application shall  
301 prepare for a *fork()* exactly as if it were a change of active handle. [If the only  
302 action performed by one of the processes is one of the *exec* functions or *\_exit()* (not  
303 *exit()*), the handle is never accessed in that process.]

304 (1) For the first handle, the first applicable condition below shall apply.  
305 After the actions required below are taken, the handle may be closed if it  
306 is still open.

- 307 (a) If it is a file descriptor, no action is required.
- 308 (b) If the only further action to be performed on any handle to this open  
309 file description is to close it, no action need be taken.
- 310 (c) If it is a stream that is unbuffered, no action need be taken.
- 311 (d) If it is a stream that is line-buffered and the last character written  
312 to the stream was a newline [that is, as if a *putc(' \n')* was the  
313 most recent operation on that stream], no action need be taken.
- 314 (e) If it is a stream that is open for writing or append (but not also open  
315 for reading), either an *fflush()* shall occur or the stream shall be  
316 closed.
- 317 (f) If the stream is open for reading and it is at the end of the file  
318 [*feof()* is true], no action need be taken.
- 319 (g) If the stream is open with a mode that allows reading and the  
320 underlying open file description refers to a device that is capable of  
321 seeking, either an *fflush()* shall occur or the stream shall be closed.
- 322 (h) Otherwise, the result is undefined.
- 323 (2) For the second handle: if any previous active handle has called a func-  
324 tion that explicitly changed the file offset, except as required above for  
325 the first handle, the application shall perform an *lseek()* or an *fseek()* (as  
326 appropriate to the type of the handle) to an appropriate location.
- 327 (3) If the active handle ceases to be accessible before the requirements on the  
328 first handle above have been met, the state of the open file description  
329 becomes undefined. This might occur, for example, during a *fork()* or an  
330 *\_exit()*.
- 331 (4) The *exec* functions shall be considered to make inaccessible all streams  
332 that are open at the time they are called, independent of what streams or  
333 file descriptors may be available to the new process image.
- 334 (5) Implementations shall assure that an application, even one consisting of  
335 several processes, shall yield correct results (no data is lost or duplicated  
336 when writing, all data is written in order, except as requested by seeks)  
337 when the rules above are followed, regardless of the sequence of handles  
338 used. If the rules above are not followed, the result is unspecified. When  
339 these rules are followed, it is implementation defined whether, and under  
340 what conditions, all input is seen exactly once.
- 341 (6) Each function that operates on a stream is said to have zero or more  
342 *underlying functions*. This means that the stream function shares cer-  
343 tain traits with the underlying functions, but does not require that there  
344 be any relation between the implementations of the stream function and  
345 its underlying functions.
- 346 (7) Also, in the subclauses below, additional requirements on the standard  
347 I/O routines, beyond those in the C Standard [2], are given.

348 **8.2.3.1 *fopen()***

349 The *fopen()* function shall allocate a file descriptor as *open()* does.

350 The underlying function is *open()*.

351 **8.2.3.2 *fclose()***

352 The *fclose()* function shall perform a *close()* on the file descriptor that is associ-  
353 ated with the *FILE* stream. It shall also mark for update the *st\_ctime* and  
354 *st\_mtime* fields of the underlying file, if the stream was writable, and if buffered  
355 data had not been written to the file yet.

356 The underlying functions are *write()* and *close()*.

357

358 **8.2.3.3 *freopen()***

359 The *freopen()* function has the properties of both *fclose()* and *fopen()*.

360 **8.2.3.4 *fflush()***

361 The *fflush()* function shall mark for update the *st\_ctime* and *st\_mtime* fields of the  
362 underlying file if the stream was writable and if buffered data had not been writ-  
363 ten to the file yet.

364 The underlying functions are *write()* and *lseek()*.

365

366 **8.2.3.5 *fgetc()*, *fgets()*, *fread()*, *getc()*, *getchar()*, *gets()*, *scanf()*, *fscanf()***

367 These functions may mark the *st\_atime* field for update. The *st\_atime* field shall  
368 be marked for update by the first successful execution of one of these functions  
369 that returns data not supplied by a prior call to *ungetc()*.

370 The underlying functions are *read()* and *lseek()*.

371 **8.2.3.6 *fputc()*, *fputs()*, *fwrite()*, *putc()*, *putchar()*, *puts()*, *printf()*,  
372 *fprintf()***

373 The *st\_ctime* and *st\_mtime* fields of the file shall be marked for update between  
374 the successful execution of one of these functions and the next successful comple-  
375 tion of a call to either *fflush()* or *fclose()* on the same stream or a call to *exit()* or  
376 *abort()*.

377 The underlying functions are *write()* and *lseek()*.

378 If *fwrite()* writes greater than zero bytes, but fewer than requested, the error indi-  
379 cator for the stream shall be set. If the underlying *write()* reports an error, *errno*  
380 shall not be modified by *fwrite()*, and the error indicator for the stream shall be  
381 set.

382 If the implementation provides the *vprintf()* and *vsprintf()* functions from the C  
383 Standard [2], they also shall meet the constraints specified in this part of  
384 ISO/IEC 9945 for (respectively) *printf()* and *fprintf()*.

#### 385 **8.2.3.7 *fseek()*, *rewind()***

386 These functions shall mark the *st\_ctime* and *st\_mtime* fields of the file for update  
387 if the stream was writable and if buffered data had not yet been written to the  
388 file.

389 The underlying functions are *lseek()* and *write()*.

390 If the most recent operation, other than *ftell()*, on a given stream is *fflush()*, the  
391 file offset in the underlying open file description shall be adjusted to reflect the  
392 location specified by the *fseek()*.

#### 393 **8.2.3.8 *perror()***

394 The *perror()* function shall mark the file associated with the standard error  
395 stream as having been written (*st\_ctime*, *st\_mtime* marked for update) at some  
396 time between its successful completion and *exit()*, *abort()*, or the completion of  
397 *fflush()* or *fclose()* on *stderr*.

#### 398 **8.2.3.9 *tmpfile()***

399 The *tmpfile()* function shall allocate a file descriptor as *fopen()* does.

#### 400 **8.2.3.10 *ftell()***

401 The underlying function is *lseek()*. The result of *ftell()* after an *fflush()* shall be  
402 the same as the result before the *fflush()*. If the stream is opened in append mode  
403 or if the *O\_APPEND* flag is set as a consequence of dealing with other handles on  
404 the file, the result of *ftell()* on that stream is unspecified.

#### 405 **8.2.3.11 Error Reporting**

406 If any of the functions above return an error indication, the value of *errno* shall be  
407 set to indicate the error condition. If that error condition is one that this part of  
408 ISO/IEC 9945 specifies to be detected by one of the corresponding underlying func-  
409 tions, the value of *errno* shall be the same as the value specified for the underly-  
410 ing function.

#### 411 **8.2.3.12 *exit()*, *abort()***

412 The *exit()* function shall have the effect of *fclose()* on every open stream, with the  
413 properties of *fclose()* as described above. The *abort()* function shall also have  
414 these effects if the call to *abort()* causes process termination, but shall have no  
415 effect on streams otherwise. The C Standard [2] specifies the conditions where  
416 *abort()* does or does not cause process termination. For the purposes of that  
417 specification, a signal that is blocked shall not be considered caught.

## 418 8.2.4 Operations on Files — the *remove()* Function

419 The *remove()* function shall have the same effect on file times as *unlink()*.

## 420 8.3 Other C Language Functions

### 421 8.3.1 Nonlocal Jumps

422 Functions: *sigsetjmp()*, *siglongjmp()*

#### 423 8.3.1.1 Synopsis

```
424 #include <setjmp.h>
425 int sigsetjmp(sigjmp_buf env, int savemask);
426 void siglongjmp(sigjmp_buf env, int val);
```

#### 427 8.3.1.2 Description

428 The *sigsetjmp()* macro shall comply with the definition of the *setjmp()* macro in  
429 the C Standard {2}. If the value of the *savemask* argument is not zero, the *sig-*  
430 *setjmp()* function shall also save the current signal mask of the process (see 3.3.1)  
431 as part of the calling environment.

432 The *siglongjmp()* function shall comply with the definition of the *longjmp()* func-  
433 tion in the C Standard {2}. If and only if the *env* argument was initialized by a  
434 call to the *sigsetjmp()* function with a nonzero *savemask* argument, the  
435 *siglongjmp()* function shall restore the saved signal mask.

#### 436 8.3.1.3 Cross-References

437 *sigaction()*, 3.3.4; <signal.h>, 3.3.1; *sigprocmask()*, 3.3.5; *sigsuspend()*, 3.3.7.

### 438 8.3.2 Set Time Zone

439 Function: *tzset()*

#### 440 8.3.2.1 Synopsis

```
441 #include <time.h>
442 void tzset(void);
```

#### 443 8.3.2.2 Description

444 The *tzset()* function uses the value of the environment variable **TZ** to set time  
445 conversion information used by *localtime()*, *ctime()*, *strftime()*, and *mktime()*. If  
446 **TZ** is absent from the environment, implementation-defined default time-zone  
447 information shall be used.

448 The *tzset()* function shall set the external variable *tzname*:  
449       extern char \**tzname*[2] = {"*std*", "*dst*"};  
450 where *std* and *dst* are as described in 8.1.1.

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## Section 9: System Databases

### 1     **9.1 System Databases**

2     The routines described in this section allow an application to access the two sys-  
3     tem databases that are described below.

4     The *group* database contains the following information for each group:

- 5         (1) Group name
- 6         (2) Numerical group ID
- 7         (3) List of all users allowed in the group

8     The *user* database contains the following information for each user:

- 9         (1) User name
- 10        (2) Numerical user ID
- 11        (3) Numerical group ID
- 12        (4) Initial working directory
- 13        (5) Initial user program

14     If the initial user program field is null, the system default is used.

15     If the initial working directory field is null, the interpretation of that field is  
16     implementation defined.

17     These databases may contain other fields that are unspecified by this part of  
18     ISO/IEC 9945.

19 **9.2 Database Access**

20 **9.2.1 Group Database Access**

21 Functions: *getgrgid()*, *getgrnam()*

22 **9.2.1.1 Synopsis**

```
23 #include <sys/types.h>
24 #include <grp.h>
25 struct group *getgrgid(gid_t gid);
26 struct group *getgrnam(const char *name);
```

27 **9.2.1.2 Description**

28 The *getgrgid()* and *getgrnam()* routines both return pointers to an object of type  
29 *struct group* containing an entry from the group database with a matching *gid* or  
30 *name*. This structure, which is defined in *<grp.h>*, includes the members shown  
31 in Table 9-1.

32 **Table 9-1 – group Structure**

Member Type	Member Name	Description
<i>char *</i>	<i>gr_name</i>	The name of the group.
<i>gid_t</i>	<i>gr_gid</i>	The numerical group ID.
<i>char **</i>	<i>gr_mem</i>	A null-terminated vector of pointers to the individual member names.

40 **9.2.1.3 Returns**

41 A NULL pointer is returned on error or if the requested entry is not found.  
42 The return values may point to static data that is overwritten by each call.

43 **9.2.1.4 Errors**

44 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not specify any error conditions that are required  
45 to be detected for the *getgrgid()* or *getgrnam()* functions. Some errors may be  
46 detected under conditions that are unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

47 **9.2.1.5 Cross-References**

48 *getlogin()*, 4.2.4.

49 **9.2.2 User Database Access**50 Functions: *getpwuid()*, *getpwnam()*51 **9.2.2.1 Synopsis**

```

52 #include <sys/types.h>
53 #include <pwd.h>
54 struct passwd *getpwuid(uid_t uid);
55 struct passwd *getpwnam(const char *name);

```

56 **9.2.2.2 Description**

57 The *getpwuid()* and *getpwnam()* functions both return a pointer to an object of  
 58 type *struct passwd* containing an entry from the user database with a matching  
 59 *uid* or *name*. This structure, which is defined in *<pwd.h>*, includes the members  
 60 shown in Table 9-2.

61 **Table 9-2 – *passwd* Structure**

62	Member	Member	Description
63	Type	Name	
64			
65	<i>char *</i>	<i>pw_name</i>	User name.
66	<i>uid_t</i>	<i>pw_uid</i>	User ID number.
67	<i>gid_t</i>	<i>pw_gid</i>	Group ID number.
68	<i>char *</i>	<i>pw_dir</i>	Initial Working Directory.
69	<i>char *</i>	<i>pw_shell</i>	Initial User Program.
70			

71

72 **9.2.2.3 Returns**

73 A NULL pointer is returned on error or if the requested entry is not found.

74 The return values may point to static data that is overwritten on each call.

75 **9.2.2.4 Errors**

76 This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not specify any error conditions that are required  
 77 to be detected for the *getpwuid()* or *getpwnam()* functions. Some errors may be  
 78 detected under conditions that are unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

79 **9.2.2.5 Cross-References**80 *getlogin()*, 4.2.4.

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## Section 10: Data Interchange Format

### 1 10.1 Archive/Interchange File Format

2 A conforming system shall provide a mechanism to copy files from a medium to  
3 the file hierarchy and copy files from the file hierarchy to a medium using the  
4 interchange formats described here. This part of ISO/IEC 9945 does not define  
5 this mechanism.

6 When this mechanism is used to copy files from the medium by a process without  
7 appropriate privileges, the protection information (ownership and access permis-  
8 sions) shall be set in the same fashion that *creat()* would when given the *mode*  
9 argument matching the file permissions supplied by the *mode* field of the  
10 extended *tar* format or the *c\_mode* field of the extended *cpio* format. A process  
11 with appropriate privileges shall restore the ownership and the permissions  
12 exactly as recorded on the medium, except that the symbolic user and group IDs  
13 are used for the *tar* format, as described in 10.1.1.

14 The *format-creating utility* is used to translate from the file system to the formats  
15 defined in this clause. The *format-reading utility* is used to translate from the for-  
16 mats defined in this clause to a file system. The interface to these utilities,  
17 including their name or names, is implementation defined.

18 The headers of these formats are defined to use characters represented in  
19 ISO/IEC 646 (1); however, no restrictions are placed on the contents of the files  
20 themselves. The data in a file may be binary data or text represented in any for-  
21 mat available to the user. When these formats are used to transfer text at the  
22 source level, all characters shall be represented in ISO/IEC 646 (1) International  
23 Reference Version (IRV).

24 The media format and the frames on the media in which the data appear are  
25 unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.

26 NOTE: Guidelines are given in Annex B.

#### 27 10.1.1 Extended *tar* Format

28 An extended *tar* archive tape or file contains a series of blocks. Each block is a  
29 fixed-size block of 512 bytes (see below). Although this format may be thought of  
30 as being stored on 9-track industry-standard 12,7 mm (0,5 in) magnetic tape,  
31 other types of transportable media are not excluded. Each file archived is  
32 represented by a header block that describes the file, followed by zero or more  
33 blocks that give the contents of the file. At the end of the archive file are two  
34 blocks filled with binary zeroes, interpreted as an end-of-archive indicator.

35 The blocks may be grouped for physical I/O operations. Each group of  $n$  blocks  
36 (where  $n$  is set by the application utility creating the archive file) may be written  
37 with a single *write()* operation. On magnetic tape, the result of this write is a sin-  
38 gle tape record. The last group of blocks is always at the full size, so blocks after  
39 the two zero blocks contain undefined data.

40 The header block is structured as shown in Table 10-1. All lengths and offsets are  
41 in decimal.

42 **Table 10-1 – tar Header Block**

43	Field Name	Byte Offset	Length (in bytes)
44			
45	<i>name</i>	0	100
46	<i>mode</i>	100	8
47	<i>uid</i>	108	8
48	<i>gid</i>	116	8
49	<i>size</i>	124	12
50	<i>mtime</i>	136	12
51	<i>chksum</i>	148	8
52	<i>typeflag</i>	156	1
53	<i>linkname</i>	157	100
54	<i>magic</i>	257	6
55	<i>version</i>	263	2
56	<i>uname</i>	265	32
57	<i>gname</i>	297	32
58	<i>devmajor</i>	329	8
59	<i>devminor</i>	337	8
60	<i>prefix</i>	345	155
61			

62 Symbolic constants used in the header block are defined in the header <tar.h>  
63 as follows:

```

64 #define TMAGIC "ustar" /* ustar and a null */
65 #define TMAGLEN 6
66 #define TVERSION "00" /* 00 and no null */
67 #define TVERSLEN 2

68 /* Values used in typeflag field */
69 #define REGTYPE '0' /* Regular file */
70 #define AREGTYPE '\0' /* Regular file */
71 #define LNKTYPE '1' /* Link */
72 #define SYMTYPE '2' /* Reserved */
73 #define CHRTYPE '3' /* Character special */
74 #define BLKTYPE '4' /* Block special */
75 #define DIRTYPE '5' /* Directory */
76 #define FIFOTYPE '6' /* FIFO special */
77 #define CONTTYPE '7' /* Reserved */

78 /* Bits used in the mode field - values in octal */
79 #define TSUID 04000 /* Set UID on execution */
80 #define TSGID 02000 /* Set GID on execution */
81 #define TSVTX 01000 /* Reserved */
82 /* File permissions */

```

```

83 #define TUREAD    00 400    /* Read by owner */
84 #define TUWRITE  00 200    /* Write by owner */
85 #define TUEXEC   00 100    /* Execute/Search by owner */
86 #define TGREAD   00 040    /* Read by group */
87 #define TGWRITE  00 020    /* Write by group */
88 #define TGEXEC   00 010    /* Execute/Search by group */
89 #define TOREAD   00 004    /* Read by other */
90 #define TOWRITE  00 002    /* Write by other */
91 #define TOEXEC   00 001    /* Execute/Search by other */

```

92 All characters are represented in the coded character set of ISO/IEC 646 (1). For  
93 maximum portability between implementations, names should be selected from  
94 characters represented by the portable filename character set as 8-bit characters  
95 with most significant bit zero. If an implementation supports the use of charac-  
96 ters outside the portable filename character set in names for files, users, and  
97 groups, one or more implementation-defined encodings of these characters shall  
98 be provided for interchange purposes. However, the format-reading utility shall  
99 never create file names on the local system that cannot be accessed via the func-  
100 tions described previously in this part of ISO/IEC 9945; see 5.3.1, 5.6.2, 5.2.1,  
101 6.5.2, and 5.1.2. If a file name is found on the medium that would create an  
102 invalid file name, the implementation shall define if the data from the file is  
103 stored on the file hierarchy and under what name it is stored. A format-reading  
104 utility may choose to ignore these files as long as it produces an error indicating  
105 that the file is being ignored.

106 Each field within the header block is contiguous; that is, there is no padding used.  
107 Each character on the archive medium is stored contiguously.

108 The fields *magic*, *uname*, and *gname* are null-terminated character strings. The  
109 fields *name*, *linkname*, and *prefix* are null-terminated character strings except  
110 when all characters in the array contain nonnull characters including the last  
111 character. The *version* field is two bytes containing the characters "00" (zero-  
112 zero). The *typeflag* contains a single character. All other fields are leading zero-  
113 filled octal numbers using digits from ISO/IEC 646 (1) IRV. Each numeric field is  
114 terminated by one or more space or null characters.

115 The *name* and the *prefix* fields produce the pathname of the file. The hierarchical  
116 relationship of the file is retained by specifying the pathname as a path prefix,  
117 and a slash character and filename as the suffix. A new pathname is formed, if  
118 *prefix* is not an empty string (its first character is not null), by concatenating  
119 *prefix* (up to the first null character), a slash character, and *name*; otherwise,  
120 *name* is used alone. In either case, *name* is terminated at the first null character.  
121 If *prefix* is an empty string, it is simply ignored. In this manner, pathnames of at  
122 most 256 characters can be supported. If a pathname does not fit in the space  
123 provided, the format-creating utility shall notify the user of the error, and no  
124 attempt shall be made by the format-creating utility to store any part of the file—  
125 header or data—on the medium.

126 The *linkname* field, described below, does not use the *prefix* to produce a path-  
127 name. As such, a *linkname* is limited to 100 characters. If the name does not fit  
128 in the space provided, the format-creating utility shall notify the user of the error,  
129 and the utility shall not attempt to store the link on the medium.

130 The *mode* field provides 9 bits specifying file permissions and 3 bits to specify the  
131 set UID, set GID, and TSVTX modes. Values for these bits were defined previously.  
132 When appropriate privilege is required to set one of these mode bits, and the user  
133 restoring the files from the archive does not have the appropriate privilege, the  
134 mode bits for which the user does not have appropriate privilege shall be ignored.  
135 Some of the mode bits in the archive format are not mentioned elsewhere in this  
136 part of ISO/IEC 9945. If the implementation does not support those bits, they may  
137 be ignored.

138 The *uid* and *gid* fields are the user and group ID of the owner and group of the  
139 file, respectively.

140 The *size* field is the size of the file in bytes. If the *typeflag* field is set to specify a  
141 file to be of type LNKTYPE or SYMTYPE, the *size* field shall be specified as zero. If  
142 the *typeflag* field is set to specify a file of type DIRTYPE, the *size* field is inter-  
143 preted as described under the definition of that record type. No data blocks are  
144 stored for LNKTYPE, SYMTYPE, or DIRTYPE. If the *typeflag* field is set to  
145 CHRTYPE, BLKTYPE, or FIFOTYPE, the meaning of the *size* field is unspecified by  
146 this part of ISO/IEC 9945, and no data blocks are stored on the medium. Addition-  
147 ally, for FIFOTYPE, the *size* field shall be ignored when reading. If the *typeflag*  
148 field is set to any other value, the number of blocks written following the header  
149 is  $(size+511)/512$ , ignoring any fraction in the result of the division.

150 The *mtime* field is the modification time of the file at the time it was archived. It  
151 is the ISO/IEC 646 {1} representation of the octal value of the modification time  
152 obtained from the *stat()* function.

153 The *chksum* field is the ISO/IEC 646 {1} IRV representation of the octal value of  
154 the simple sum of all bytes in the header block. Each 8-bit byte in the header is  
155 treated as an unsigned value. These values are added to an unsigned integer, ini-  
156 tialized to zero, the precision of which shall be no less than 17 bits. When calcu-  
157 lating the checksum, the *chksum* field is treated as if it were all blanks.

158 The *typeflag* field specifies the type of file archived. If a particular implementa-  
159 tion does not recognize the type, or the user does not have appropriate privilege to  
160 create that type, the file shall be extracted as if it were a regular file if the file  
161 type is defined to have a meaning for the size field that could cause data blocks to  
162 be written on the medium (see the previous description for *size*). If conversion to  
163 an ordinary file occurs, the format-reading utility shall produce an error indicat-  
164 ing that the conversion took place. All of the *typeflag* fields are coded in  
165 ISO/IEC 646 {1} IRV:

166 '0' Represents a regular file. For backward compatibility, a *typeflag*  
167 value of binary zero (' \0') should be recognized as meaning a regu-  
168 lar file when extracting files from the archive. Archives written  
169 with this version of the archive file format shall create regular files  
170 with a *typeflag* value of ISO/IEC 646 {1} IRV '0'.

171 '1' Represents a file linked to another file, of any type, previously  
172 archived. Such files are identified by each file having the same dev-  
173 ice and file serial number. The linked-to name is specified in the  
174 *linkname* field with a null terminator if it is less than 100 bytes in  
175 length.

- 176 '2' Reserved to represent a link to another file, of any type, whose device or file serial number differs. This is provided for systems that support linked files whose device or file serial numbers differ, and should be treated as a type '1' file if this extension does not exist.
- 177
- 178
- 179
- 180 '3', '4' Represent character special files and block special files respectively. In this case the *devmajor* and *devminor* fields shall contain information defining the device, the format of which is unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945. Implementations may map the device specifications to their own local specification or may ignore the entry.
- 181
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- 186 '5' Specifies a directory or subdirectory. On systems where disk allocation is performed on a directory basis, the *size* field shall contain the maximum number of bytes (which may be rounded to the nearest disk block allocation unit) that the directory may hold. A *size* field of zero indicates no such limiting. Systems that do not support limiting in this manner should ignore the *size* field.
- 187
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- 192 '6' Specifies a FIFO special file. Note that the archiving of a FIFO file archives the existence of this file and not its contents.
- 193
- 194 '7' Reserved to represent a file to which an implementation has associated some high performance attribute. Implementations without such extensions should treat this file as a regular file (type '0').
- 195
- 196
- 197 'A' - 'Z' The letters A through Z are reserved for custom implementations. All other values are reserved for specification in future revisions of this part of ISO/IEC 9945.
- 198
- 199

200 The *magic* field is the specification that this archive was output in this archive format. If this field contains *TMAGIC*, the *uname* and *gname* fields shall contain the ISO/IEC 646 (1) IRV representation of the owner and group of the file respectively (truncated to fit, if necessary). When the file is restored by a privileged, protection-preserving version of the utility, the password and group files shall be scanned for these names. If found, the user and group IDs contained within these files shall be used rather than the values contained within the *uid* and *gid* fields.

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207 The encoding of the header is designed to be portable across machines.

#### 208 10.1.1.1 Cross-References

209 <grp.h>, 9.2.1; <pwd.h>, 9.2.2; <sys/stat.h>, 5.6.1; *stat()*, 5.6.2;

210 <unistd.h>, 2.9.

#### 211 10.1.2 Extended *cpio* Format

212 The byte-oriented *cpio* archive format is a series of entries, each comprised of a header that describes the file, the name of the file, and then the contents of the file.

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215 An archive may be recorded as a series of fixed-size blocks of bytes. This blocking shall be used only to make physical I/O more efficient. The last group of blocks is always at the full size.

216

217

218 For the byte-oriented `cpio` archive format, the individual entry information must  
 219 be in the order indicated and described by Table 10-2.

220 **Table 10-2 – Byte-Oriented `cpio` Archive Entry**

Header			
Field Name	Length (in bytes)	Interpreted as	
<i>c_magic</i>	6	Octal number	
<i>c_dev</i>	6	Octal number	
<i>c_ino</i>	6	Octal number	
<i>c_mode</i>	6	Octal number	
<i>c_uid</i>	6	Octal number	
<i>c_gid</i>	6	Octal number	
<i>c_nlink</i>	6	Octal number	
<i>c_rdev</i>	6	Octal number	
<i>c_mtime</i>	11	Octal number	
<i>c_namesize</i>	6	Octal number	
<i>c_filesize</i>	11	Octal number	
File Name			
Field Name	Length	Interpreted as	
<i>c_name</i>	<i>c_namesize</i>	Pathname string	
File Data			
Field Name	Length	Interpreted as	
<i>c_filedata</i>	<i>c_filesize</i>	Data	

242 **10.1.2.1 `cpio` Header**

243 For each file in the archive, a header as defined previously shall be written. The  
 244 information in the header fields shall be written as streams of ISO/IEC 646 {1}  
 245 characters interpreted as octal numbers. The octal numbers are extended to the  
 246 necessary length by appending ISO/IEC 646 {1} IRV zeros at the most-significant-  
 247 digit end of the number; the result is written to the stream of bytes most-  
 248 significant-digit first. The fields shall be interpreted as follows:

- 249 (1) *c\_magic* shall identify the archive as being a transportable archive by  
 250 containing the magic bytes as defined by MAGIC (070707).
- 251 (2) *c\_dev* and *c\_ino* shall contain values that uniquely identify the file within  
 252 the archive (i.e., no files shall contain the same pair of *c\_dev* and *c\_ino*  
 253 values unless they are links to the same file). The values shall be deter-  
 254 mined in an unspecified manner.
- 255 (3) *c\_mode* shall contain the file type and access permissions as defined in  
 256 Table 10-3.
- 257 (4) *c\_uid* shall contain the user ID of the owner.
- 258 (5) *c\_gid* shall contain the group ID of the group.

Table 10-3 – Values for *cpio c\_mode* Field

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## File Permissions

Name	Value	Indicates
C_IRUSR	000 400	Read by owner.
C_IWUSR	000 200	Write by owner.
C_IXUSR	000 100	Execute by owner.
C_IRGRP	000 040	Read by group.
C_IWGRP	000 020	Write by group.
C_IXGRP	000 010	Execute by group.
C_IROTH	000 004	Read by others.
C_IWOTH	000 002	Write by others.
C_IXOTH	000 001	Execute by others.
C_ISUID	004 000	Set <i>uid</i> .
C_ISGID	002 000	Set <i>gid</i> .
C_ISVTX	001 000	Reserved.

## File Type

Name	Value	Indicates
C_ISDIR	040 000	Directory.
C_ISFIFO	010 000	FIFO.
C_ISREG	0100 000	Regular file.
C_ISBLK	060 000	Block special file.
C_ISCHR	020 000	Character special file.
C_ISCTG	0110 000	Reserved.
C_ISLNK	0120 000	Reserved.
C_ISSOCK	0140 000	Reserved.

(6) *c\_nlink* shall contain the number of links referencing the file at the time the archive was created.

(7) *c\_rdev* shall contain implementation-defined information for character or block special files.

(8) *c\_mtime* shall contain the latest time of modification of the file at the time the archive was created.

(9) *c\_namesize* shall contain the length of the pathname, including the terminating null byte.

(10) *c\_filesiz*e shall contain the length of the file in bytes. This is the length of the data section following the header structure.

### 10.1.2.2 *cpio* File Name

*c\_name* shall contain the pathname of the file. The length of this field in bytes is the value of *c\_namesize*. If a file name is found on the medium that would create an invalid pathname, the implementation shall define if the data from the file is stored on the file hierarchy and under what name it is stored.

301 All characters are represented in ISO/IEC 646 {1} IRV. For maximum portability  
302 between implementations, names should be selected from characters represented  
303 by the portable filename character set as 8-bit characters most significant bit zero.  
304 If an implementation supports the use of characters outside the portable filename  
305 character set in names for files, users, and groups, one or more implementation-  
306 defined encodings of these characters shall be provided for interchange purposes.  
307 However, the format-reading utility shall never create file names on the local sys-  
308 tem that cannot be accessed via the functions described previously in this part of  
309 ISO/IEC 9945; see *open()*, *stat()*, *chdir()*, *fcntl()*, and *opendir()*. If a file name is  
310 found on the medium that would create an invalid file name, the implementation  
311 shall define if the data from the file is stored on the local file system and under  
312 what name it is stored. A format-reading utility may choose to ignore these files  
313 as long as it produces an error indicating that the file is being ignored.

### 314 10.1.2.3 *cpio* File Data

315 Following *c\_name*, there shall be *c\_filesize* bytes of data. Interpretation of such  
316 data shall occur in a manner dependent on the file. If *c\_filesize* is zero, no data  
317 shall be contained in *c\_filedata*.

### 318 10.1.2.4 *cpio* Special Entries

319 FIFO special files, directories, and the trailer are recorded with *c\_filesize* equal to  
320 zero. For other special files, *c\_filesize* is unspecified by this part of ISO/IEC 9945.  
321 The header for the next file entry in the archive shall be written directly after the  
322 last byte of the file entry preceding it. A header denoting the file name  
323 "TRAILER!!!" shall indicate the end of the archive; the contents of bytes in the  
324 last block of the archive following such a header are undefined.

### 325 10.1.2.5 *cpio* Values

326 Values needed by the *cpio* archive format are described in Table 10-3.

327 C\_ISDIR, C\_ISFIFO, and C\_ISREG shall be supported on a system conforming to  
328 this part of ISO/IEC 9945; additional values defined previously are reserved for  
329 compatibility with existing systems. Additional file types may be supported; how-  
330 ever, such files should not be written on archives intended for transport to port-  
331 able systems.

332 C\_ISVTX, C\_ISCTG, C\_ISLNK, and C\_ISSOCK have been reserved by this part of  
333 ISO/IEC 9945 to retain compatibility with some existing implementations.

334 When restoring from an archive:

- 335 (1) If the user does not have the appropriate privilege to create a file of the  
336 specified type, the format-interpreting utility shall ignore the entry and  
337 issue an error to the standard error output.
- 338 (2) Only regular files have data to be restored. Presuming a regular file  
339 meets any selection criteria that might be imposed on the format-reading  
340 utility by the user, such data shall be restored.

341 (3) If a user does not have appropriate privilege to set a particular mode flag,  
342 the flag shall be ignored. Some of the mode flags in the archive format  
343 are not mentioned elsewhere in this part of ISO/IEC 9945. If the imple-  
344 mentation does not support those flags, they may be ignored.

#### 345 10.1.2.6 Cross-References

346 <grp.h>, 9.2.1; <pwd.h>, 9.2.2; <sys/stat.h>, 5.6.1; *chmod()*, 5.6.4; *link()*,  
347 5.3.4; *mkdir()*, 5.4.1; *read()*, 6.4.1; *stat()*, 5.6.2.

#### 348 10.1.3 Multiple Volumes

349 It shall be possible for data represented by the Archive/Interchange File Format  
350 to reside in more than one file.

351 The format is considered a stream of bytes. An end-of-file (or equivalently an  
352 end-of-media) condition may occur between any two bytes of the logical byte  
353 stream. If this condition occurs, the byte following the end-of-file will be the first  
354 byte on the next file. The format-reading utility shall, in an implementation-  
355 defined manner, determine what file to read as the next file.

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## Annex A (informative) Bibliography

1 This Annex contains lists of related open systems standards and suggested read-  
2 ing on historical implementations and application programming

### 3 A.1 Related Open Systems Standards

#### 4 A.1.1 Networking Standards

- 5 {B1} ISO 7498: 1984, *Information processing systems—Open Systems Inter-*  
6 *connection—Basic Reference Model.*<sup>1)</sup>
- 7 {B2} ISO 8072: 1986, *Information processing systems—Open Systems Inter-*  
8 *connection—Transport service definition.*
- 9 {B3} ISO/IEC 8073: 1988, *Information processing systems—Open Systems Inter-*  
10 *connection—Connection oriented transport protocol specification.*<sup>2)</sup>
- 11 {B4} ISO 8326: 1987, *Information processing systems—Open Systems Inter-*  
12 *connection—Basic connection oriented session service definition.*
- 13 {B5} ISO 8327: 1987, *Information processing systems—Open Systems Inter-*  
14 *connection—Basic connection oriented session protocol definition.*
- 15 {B6} ISO 8348: 1987, *Information processing systems—Data communications—*  
16 *Network service definition.*
- 17 {B7} ISO 8473: 1988, *Information processing systems—Data communications—*  
18 *Protocol for providing the connectionless-mode network service.*
- 19 {B8} ISO 8571: 1988, *Information processing systems—Open Systems Inter-*  
20 *connection—File Transfer, Access and Management.*

21 1) ISO documents can be obtained from the ISO office, 1, rue de Varembe, Case Postale 56, CH-1211,  
22 Genève 20, Switzerland/Suisse.

23 2) IEC documents can be obtained from the IEC office, 3, rue de Varembe, Case Postale 131, CH-  
24 1211, Genève 20, Switzerland/Suisse.

- 25 [B9] ISO 8649: 1988, *Information processing systems—Open Systems Inter-*  
26 *connection—Service definition for the Association Control Service Element.*
- 27 [B10] ISO 8650: 1988, *Information processing systems—Open Systems Inter-*  
28 *connection—Protocol specification for the Association Control Service Ele-*  
29 *ment.*
- 30 [B11] ISO 8802-2: 1989 [IEEE Std 802.2-1989 (ANSI)], *Information processing*  
31 *systems—Local area networks—Part 2: Logical link control.*
- 32 [B12] ISO 8802-3: 1989 [IEEE Std 802.3-1988 (ANSI)], *Information processing*  
33 *systems—Local area networks—Part 3: Carrier sense multiple access with*  
34 *collision detection (CSMA/CD) access method and physical layer*  
35 *specifications.*
- 36 [B13] ISO/IEC 8802-4: 1990 [IEEE Std 802.4-1990 (ANSI)], *Information*  
37 *technology—Local area networks—Part 4: Token-passing bus access method*  
38 *and physical layer specifications.*
- 39 [B14] ISO 8802-5: ... (IEEE 802.5-1989), *Information technology—Local area*  
40 *networks—Part 5: Token ring access method and physical layer*  
41 *specifications.*
- 42 [B15] ISO 8822: 1988, *Information processing systems—Open Systems Inter-*  
43 *connection—Connection oriented presentation service definition.*
- 44 [B16] ISO 8823: 1988, *Information processing systems—Open Systems Inter-*  
45 *connection—Connection oriented presentation protocol specification.*
- 46 [B17] ISO 8831: 1989, *Information processing systems—Open Systems Inter-*  
47 *connection—Job transfer and manipulation concepts and services.*
- 48 [B18] ISO 8832: 1989, *Information processing systems—Open Systems Inter-*  
49 *connection—Specification of the basic class protocol for job transfer and*  
50 *manipulation.*
- 51 [B19] CCITT Recommendation X.25, *Interface between data terminal equipment*  
52 *(DTE) and data circuit-terminating equipment (DCT) for terminals operating*  
53 *in the packet mode and connected to public data networks by dedicated cir-*  
54 *cuit.*<sup>3)</sup>
- 55 [B20] CCITT Recommendation X.212, *Information processing systems—Data*  
56 *communication—Data link service definition for Open Systems Interconnec-*  
57 *tion.*

58 3) CCITT documents can be obtained from the CCITT General Secretariat, International  
59 Telecommunications Union, Sales Section, Place des Nations, CH-1211, Genève 20,  
60 Switzerland/Suisse.

61 **A.1.2 Language Standards**

- 62 [B21] ISO 1539: 1980, *Programming languages—FORTRAN.*
- 63 [B22] ISO 1989: 1985, *Programming Languages—COBOL.*
- 64 [B23] ISO 8652: 1987, *Programming Languages—Ada.*
- 65 [B24] ANSI X3.113-1987<sup>4</sup>, *Information systems—Programming language—FULL*
- 66 *BASIC.*
- 67 [B25] ANSI/IEEE 770X3.97-1983, *Standard Pascal Computer Programming*
- 68 *Language.*
- 69 [B26] ANSI/MDC X11.1-1984, *Programming Language MUMPS.*

70 **A.1.3 Graphics Standards**

- 71 [B27] ISO 7942: 1985, *Information processing systems—Computer graphics—*
- 72 *Graphical Kernel System (GKS) functional description.*
- 73 [B28] ISO 8632: 1987, *Information processing systems—Computer graphics—*
- 74 *Metafile for the storage and transfer of picture description information.*
- 75 [B29] ISO/IEC 9592: 1989 (ANSI X3.144-1988), *Information processing systems—*
- 76 *Computer graphics—Programmer's hierarchical interactive graphics system*
- 77 *(PHIGS).*

78 **A.1.4 Database Standards**

- 79 [B30] ISO 8907: 1987, *Database Language—NDL.*
- 80 [B31] ISO 9075: 1987, *Database Language—SQL.*

81 **A.2 Other Standards**

- 82 [B32] ISO 639: 1988, *Code for the representation of names of languages.*
- 83 [B33] ISO 3166: 1988, *Code for the representation of names of countries.*
- 84 [B34] ISO 8859-1: 1987, *Information Processing—8-bit single-byte coded graphic*
- 85 *character sets—Part 1: Latin alphabet No. 1.*
- 86 [B35] ISO 9127: 1988, *Information processing systems—User documentation and*
- 87 *cover information for consumer software packages.*
- 88 [B36] ISO/IEC 9945-2: ..., <sup>5</sup> *Information technology—Portable operating system*
- 89 *interface (POSIX)—Part 2: Shell and utilities.*

90 4) ANSI documents can be obtained from the Sales Department, American National Standards

91 Institute, 1430 Broadway, New York, NY 10018.

92 5) To be approved and published.

- 93 {B37} ISO/IEC 10646: ..., <sup>6)</sup> *Information processing—Multiple octet coded charac-*  
94 *ter set.*
- 95 {B38} IEEE Std 100-1988, *IEEE Standard Dictionary of Electrical and Electronics*  
96 *Terms.*

### 97 **A.3 Historical Documentation and Introductory Texts**

- 98 {B39} American Telephone and Telegraph Company. *System V Interface*  
99 *Definition (SVID), Issues 2 and 3.* Morristown, NJ: UNIX Press, 1986,  
100 1989.<sup>7)</sup>
- 101 {B40} American Telephone and Telegraph Company. *UNIX System III*  
102 *Programmer's Manual.* Greensboro, NC: Western Electric Company,  
103 October 1981.
- 104 {B41} American Telephone and Telegraph Company. *UNIX Time Sharing System:*  
105 *UNIX Programmer's Manual.* 7th ed. Murray Hill, NJ: Bell Telephone  
106 Laboratories, January 1979.
- 107 {B42} "The UNIX System."<sup>8)</sup> *AT&T Bell Laboratories Technical Journal.* vol. 63 (8  
108 Part 2), October 1984.
- 109 {B43} "UNIX Time-Sharing System."<sup>9)</sup> *Bell System Technical Journal.* vol. 57 (6  
110 Part 2), July-August 1978.
- 111 {B44} Bach, Maurice J. *The Design of the UNIX Operating System.* Englewood  
112 Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1987.
- 113 {B45} Harbison, Samuel P. and Steele, Guy L. *C: A Reference Manual.* Engle-  
114 wood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1987.
- 115 {B46} Kernighan, Brian W. and Ritchie, Dennis M. *The C Programming*  
116 *Language.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1978.
- 117 {B47} Kernighan, Brian W. and Pike, Rob. *The UNIX Programming Environment.*  
118 Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984.
- 119 {B48} Leffler, Samuel J., McKusick, Marshall Kirk, Karels, Michael J., Quarter-  
120 man, John S., and Stettner, Armando. *The Design and Implementation of*  
121 *the 4.3BSD UNIX Operating System.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1988.
- 122 {B49} McGilton, Henry and Morgan, Rachel. *Introducing the UNIX System.* New  
123 York: McGraw-Hill (BYTE Books), 1983.

124 <sup>6)</sup> To be approved and published.

125 <sup>7)</sup> This is one of several documents that represent an industry specification in an area related to  
126 POSIX.1. The creators of such documents may be able to identify newer versions that may be  
127 interesting.

128 <sup>8)</sup> This entire edition is devoted to the UNIX system.

129 <sup>9)</sup> This entire edition is devoted to the UNIX time-sharing system.

- 130 {B50} Organick, Elliot I. *The Multics System: An Examination of Its Structure*.  
131 Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1972.
- 132 {B51} Quarterman, John S., Silberschatz, Abraham, and Peterson, James L.  
133 "4.2BSD and 4.3BSD as Examples of the UNIX System." *ACM Computing*  
134 *Surveys*. vol. 17 (4), December 1985, pp. 379-418.
- 135 {B52} Ritchie, Dennis M. "Reflections on Software Research." *Communications*  
136 *of the ACM*. vol. 27 (8), August 1984, pp. 758-760. ACM Turing Award Lec-  
137 ture.
- 138 {B53} Ritchie, Dennis. "The Evolution of the UNIX Time-Sharing System." *AT&T*  
139 *Bell Laboratories Technical Journal*. vol. 63 (8), October 1984, pp.  
140 1577-1593.
- 141 {B54} Ritchie, D. M. and Thompson, K. "The UNIX Time-Sharing System." *Com-*  
142 *munications of the ACM*. vol. 7 (7), July 1974, pp. 365-375. This is the ori-  
143 ginal paper, which describes Version 6.
- 144 {B55} Ritchie, D. M. and Thompson, K. "The UNIX Time-Sharing System." *Bell*  
145 *System Technical Journal*. vol. 57 (6 Part 2), July-August 1978, pp.  
146 1905-1929. This is a revised version and describes Version 7.
- 147 {B56} Ritchie, Dennis M. "Unix: A Dialectic." *Winter 1987 USENIX Association*  
148 *Conference Proceedings, Washington, D.C.*, pp. 29-34. Berkeley, CA:  
149 USENIX Association, January 1987.
- 150 {B57} Rochkind, Marc J. *Advanced UNIX Programming*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ:  
151 Prentice-Hall, 1985.
- 152 {B58} University of California at Berkeley—Computer Science Research Group.  
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154 The Regents of the University of California, April 1986.
- 155 {B59} /usr/group Standards Committee. *1984 /usr/group Standard*. Santa  
156 Clara, CA: UniForum, 1984.
- 157 {B60} X/Open Company, Ltd. *X/Open Portability Guide, Issue 2*. Amsterdam:  
158 Elsevier Science Publishers, 1987.
- 159 {B61} X/Open Company, Ltd. *X/Open Portability Guide, Issue 3*. Englewood  
160 Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1989.

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## Annex B (informative)

### Rationale and Notes

1 The Annex is being published as an informative part of POSIX.1 to assist in the  
2 process of review. It contains historical information concerning the contents of  
3 POSIX.1 and why features were included or discarded. It also contains notes of  
4 interest to application programmers on recommended programming practices,  
5 emphasizing the consequences of some aspects of POSIX.1 that may not be  
6 immediately apparent.<sup>1)</sup>

#### 7 B.1 Scope and Normative References

##### 8 B.1.1 Scope

9 This Rationale focuses primarily on additions, clarifications, and changes made to  
10 the UNIX system, from which POSIX.1 was derived. It is not a rationale for the  
11 UNIX system as a whole, since the goal of POSIX.1's developers was to codify exist-  
12 ing practice, not design a new operating system. No attempt is made in this  
13 Rationale to defend the pre-existing structure of UNIX systems. It is primarily  
14 deviations from existing practice, as codified in the base documents, that are  
15 explained or justified here.

16 Material that is "outside the scope" or otherwise not addressed by this part of  
17 ISO/IEC 9945 is implicitly "unspecified." It may be included in an implementa-  
18 tion, and thus the implementation does provide a specification for it. The term  
19 "implementation-defined" has a specific meaning in POSIX.1 and is not a synonym  
20 for "defined (or specified) by the implementation."

21 The Rationale discusses some UNIX system features that were *not* adopted into  
22 POSIX.1. Many of these are features that are popular in some UNIX system imple-  
23 mentations, so that a user of those implementations might question why they do  
24 not appear in POSIX.1. This Rationale should provide the appropriate answers.

---

25 1) The material in this annex is derived in part from copyrighted draft documents developed under  
26 the sponsorship of UniForum, as part of an ongoing program of that association to support the  
27 POSIX standards program efforts.

28 There are choices allowed by POSIX.1 for some details of the interface  
29 specification; some of these are specifiable optional subsets of POSIX.1. See B.2.9.

30 Although the services POSIX.1 provides have been defined in the C language, the  
31 concept of providing fundamental, standardized services should not be restricted  
32 only to programs of a particular programming language. The possibility of imple-  
33 menting interfaces in alternate programming languages inspired the term  
34 *POSIX.1 with the C Language Binding*. The word *Binding* refers to the binding of  
35 a conceptual set of services and a standardized C interface that establishes rules  
36 and syntax for accessing them. Future international standards are expected to  
37 separate the C language binding from the language-independent services of  
38 POSIX.1 and to include bindings for other programming languages.

39 The C Standard (2) will be the basis for functional definitions of core services that  
40 are independent of programming languages. POSIX.1 as it stands now can be  
41 thought of as a C Language Binding. Sections 1 through 7, and 9, correspond  
42 roughly to the C language implementation of what will be defined in the program-  
43 ming language-independent core services portion of POSIX.1; Section 8  
44 corresponds to the C language-specific portion.

45 The criteria used to choose the programming language-independent core services  
46 may be different from those expected. The core services represent services that  
47 are common to those programming languages likely to form language bindings to  
48 POSIX.1—the greatest common denominator. They are not chosen to reflect the  
49 most important system services of an ideal operating system. For this reason,  
50 some fundamental system services are not included in the language-independent  
51 core. As an example, memory management routines would at first seem to be a  
52 core service—they are an absolutely fundamental system service. They must,  
53 however, be included in language-specific portions of POSIX.1 because program-  
54 ming languages such as FORTRAN have traditionally not provided memory  
55 management. Categorizing memory management as a core service would impose  
56 unreasonable requirements for FORTRAN implementations.

57 Any programming language traditionally supporting memory management should  
58 include those routines in the language-dependent portions of their bindings.  
59 Work will be done at a later time to standardize the classes of functions that must  
60 be included in the language-dependent portions of language bindings if those  
61 functions have been traditionally implemented for that language. This will  
62 ensure that certain classes of critical functions, such as memory management,  
63 will not be excluded from any applicable language binding; see B.1.3.3.

64 POSIX.1 is not a tutorial on the use of the specified interface, nor is this Rationale.  
65 However, the Rationale includes some references to well-regarded historical docu-  
66 mentation on the UNIX System in A.3.

### 67 **B.1.1.1 POSIX.1 and the C Standard**

68 Some C language functions and definitions were handled by POSIX.1, but most  
69 were handled by the C Standard (2). The general guideline is that POSIX.1  
70 retained responsibility for operating-system specific functions, while the  
71 C Standard (2) defined C library functions. See also B.2.7 and B.8.

72 There are several areas in which the two standards differ philosophically:

- 73 (1) *Function parameter type lists.* These appear in the syntax of the  
74 C Standard {2}. In this version of POSIX.1, the parameter lists were res-  
75 tated in terms of these function prototypes. There were two major rea-  
76 sons for making this change from IEEE Std 1003.1-1988: the use of the  
77 C Standard {2} was rapidly becoming more widespread, and implemen-  
78 tors were experiencing difficulties with some of the function prototypes  
79 where guidance was not provided in POSIX.1. (The modifier `const` pro-  
80 vided the most difficulty.) Specific guidance and permission remains in  
81 POSIX.1 for translation to common-usage C.
- 82 (2) *Single vs. multiple processes.* The C Standard {2} specifies a language  
83 that can be used on single-process operating systems and as a freestand-  
84 ing base for the implementation of operating systems or other stand-  
85 alone programs. However, the POSIX.1 interface is that of a multiprocess  
86 timesharing system. Thus, POSIX.1 has to take multiple processes into  
87 account in places where the C Standard {2} does not mention processes at  
88 all, such as `kill()`. See also B.1.3.1.1.
- 89 (3) *Single vs. multiple operating system environments.* The C Standard {2}  
90 specifies a language that may be useful on more than one operating sys-  
91 tem and thus has means of tailoring itself to the particular current  
92 environment. POSIX.1 is an operating system interface specification and  
93 thus by definition is only concerned with one operating system environ-  
94 ment, even though it has been carefully written to be broadly implement-  
95 able (see Broadly Implementable in the Introduction) in terms of various  
96 underlying operating systems. See also B.1.3.1.1.
- 97 (4) *Translation vs. execution environment.* POSIX.1 is primarily concerned  
98 with the C Standard {2} *execution environment*, leaving the *translation*  
99 *environment* to the C Standard {2}. See also B.1.3.1.1.
- 100 (5) *Hosted vs. freestanding implementations.* All POSIX.1 implementations  
101 are hosted in the sense of the C Standard {2}. See also the remarks on  
102 conformance in the Introduction.
- 103 (6) *Text vs. binary file modes.* The C Standard {2} defines *text* and *binary*  
104 modes for a file. But the POSIX.1 interface and historical implementa-  
105 tions related to it make no such distinction, and all functions defined by  
106 POSIX.1 treat files as if these modes were identical. (It should not be  
107 stated that POSIX.1 files are either *text* or *binary*.) The definitions in the  
108 C Standard {2} were written so that this interpretation is possible. In  
109 particular, *text* mode files are not required to end with a line separator,  
110 which also means that they are not required to include a line separator  
111 at all.

112 Furthermore, there is a basic difference in approach between the Rationale  
113 accompanying the C Standard {2} and this Rationale Annex. The C Standard {2}  
114 Rationale, a separate document, addresses almost all changes as differences from  
115 the Base Documents of the C Standard {2}, usually either Kernighan and Ritchie  
116 {B46} or the 1984 */usr/group Standard* {B59}. This Rationale cannot do that,  
117 since there are many more variants of (and Base Documents for) the operating  
118 system interface than for the C language. The most noticeable aspect of this

119 difference is that the C Standard {2} Rationale identifies “QUIET CHANGES” from  
120 the Base Documents. This Annex cannot include such markings, since a quiet  
121 change from one historical implementation may correspond exactly to another his-  
122 torical implementation, and may be very noticeable to an application written for  
123 yet another.

124 The following subclauses justify the inclusion or omission of various C language  
125 functions in POSIX.1 or the C Standard {2}.

#### 126 **B.1.1.1.1 Solely by POSIX.1**

127 These return parameters from the operating system environment: *ctermid()*,  
128 *ttyname()*, and *isatty()*.

129 The *fileno()* and *fdopen()* functions map between C language stream pointers and  
130 POSIX.1 file descriptors.

#### 131 **B.1.1.1.2 Solely by the C Standard**

132 There are many functions that are useful with the operating system interface and  
133 are required for conformance with POSIX.1, but that are properly part of the  
134 C Language. These are listed in 8.1, which also notes which functions are defined  
135 by both POSIX.1 and the C Standard {2}. Certain terms defined by the C Standard  
136 {2} are incorporated by POSIX.1 in 2.7.

137 Some routines were considered too specialized to be included in POSIX.1. These  
138 include *bsearch()* and *qsort()*.

#### 139 **B.1.1.1.3 By Neither POSIX.1 Nor the C Standard**

140 Some functions were considered of marginal utility and problematical when inter-  
141 national character sets were considered: *\_toupper()*, *\_tolower()*, *toascii()*, and  
142 *isascii()*.

143 Although *malloc()* and *free()* are in the C Standard {2} and are required by 8.1 of  
144 POSIX.1, neither *brk()* nor *sbrk()* occur in either standard (although they were in  
145 the 1984 */usr/group Standard* [B59]), because POSIX.1 is designed to provide the  
146 basic set of functions required to write a Conforming POSIX.1 Application; the  
147 underlying implementation of *malloc()* or *free()* is not an appropriate concern for  
148 POSIX.1.

#### 149 **B.1.1.1.4 Base by POSIX.1, Additions by the C Standard**

150 Since the C Standard {2} does not depend on POSIX.1 in any way, there are no  
151 items in this category.

#### 152 **B.1.1.1.5 Base by the C Standard, Additions by POSIX.1**

153 The C Standard {2} has to define *errno* if only because examining that variable  
154 offers the only way to determine when some mathematics routines fail. But  
155 POSIX.1 uses it more extensively and adds some semantics to it in 2.4, which also  
156 defines some values for it.

157 Many numerical limits used by the C Standard {2} were incorporated by POSIX.1  
158 in 2.8, and some new ones were added, all to be found in the header `<limits.h>`.

159 The C Standard {2} provides *signal()*, a minimal functionality for interrupts. The  
160 POSIX.1 definition replaces this with an elaborate mechanism that deals with  
161 multiple processes and is reliable when signals come from outside sources.

162 The *time()* function is used by the C Standard {2}, but POSIX.1 further specifies  
163 the time value.

164 The *getenv()* function is referenced in 2.6 and 3.1.2 and is also defined by the  
165 C Standard {2}.

166 The *rename()* function is extended to further specify its behavior when the new  
167 filename already exists or either argument refers to a directory.

168 The *setlocale()* function and the handling of time zones were further specified to  
169 take advantage of the POSIX environment.

170 The standard-I/O functions were specified in terms of their relationship to file  
171 descriptors and the relationship between multiple processes.

#### 172 B.1.1.1.6 Related Functions by Both

173 The C Standard {2} definition of *compliance* and the POSIX.1 definition of *confor-*  
174 *mance* are similar, although the latter notes certain potential hardware  
175 limitations.

176 POSIX.1 defined a portable filename character set in 2.2.2 that is like the  
177 C Standard {2} identifier character set. However, POSIX.1 did not allow upper-  
178 and lowercase characters to be considered equivalent. See *filename portability* in  
179 2.3.4.

180 The *exit()* function is defined only by the C Standard {2} because it refers to clos-  
181 ing streams, and that subject, as well as *fclose()* itself, is defined almost entirely  
182 by the C Standard {2}. But POSIX.1 defined *\_exit()*, which also adds semantics to  
183 *exit()*. This allows POSIX.1 to omit references to the C Standard {2} *atexit()*  
184 function.

185 POSIX.1 defined *kill()*, while the C Standard {2} defined *raise()*, which is similar  
186 except that it does not have a process ID argument, since the language defined by  
187 the C Standard {2} does not incorporate the idea of multiple processes.

188 The new functions *sigsetjmp()* and *siglongjmp()* were added to provide similar  
189 functions to the C Standard {2} *setjmp()* and *longjmp()* that additionally save and  
190 restore signal state.

#### 191 B.1.2 Normative References

192 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

### 193 **B.1.3 Conformance**

194 These conformance definitions are descended from those of *conforming implemen-*  
195 *tation*, *conforming application*, and *conforming portable application* of early  
196 drafts, but were changed to clarify

- 197 (1) Extensions, options, and limits;
- 198 (2) Relations among the three terms, and;
- 199 (3) Relations between POSIX.1 and the C Standard (2).

#### 200 **B.1.3.1 Implementation Conformance**

201 These definitions allow application developers to know what to depend on in an  
202 implementation.

203 There is no definition of a *strictly conforming implementation*; that would be an  
204 implementation that provides *only* those facilities specified by POSIX.1 with no  
205 extensions whatsoever. This is because no actual operating system implementa-  
206 tion can exist without system administration and initialization facilities that are  
207 beyond the scope of POSIX.1.

##### 208 **B.1.3.1.1 Requirements**

209 The word “support” is used, rather than “provide,” in order to allow an implemen-  
210 tation that has no resident software development facilities, but that supports the  
211 execution of a *Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Application*, to be a *conforming imple-*  
212 *mentation*. See also B.1.1.1.

##### 213 **B.1.3.1.2 Documentation**

214 The conforming documentation is required to use the same numbering scheme as  
215 POSIX.1 for purposes of cross referencing. This requirement is consistent with  
216 and supplements the verification test assertions being developed by other POSIX  
217 groups. All options that an implementation chooses shall be reflected in  
218 `<limits.h>` and `<unistd.h>`.

219 Note that the use of “may” in terms of where conformance documents record  
220 where implementations may vary implies that it is not required to describe those  
221 features identified as undefined or unspecified.

222 Other aspects of systems must be evaluated by purchasers for suitability. Many  
223 systems incorporate buffering facilities, maintaining updated data in volatile  
224 storage and transferring such updates to nonvolatile storage asynchronously.  
225 Various exception conditions, such as a power failure or a system crash, can cause  
226 this data to be lost. The data may be associated with a file that is still open, with  
227 one that has been closed, with a directory, or with any other internal system data  
228 structures associated with permanent storage. This data can be lost, in whole or  
229 part, so that only careful inspection of file contents could determine that an  
230 update did not occur.

231 Also, interrelated file activities, where multiple files and/or directories are  
232 updated, or where space is allocated or released in the file system structures, can  
233 leave inconsistencies in the relationship between data in the various files and

234 directories, or in the file system itself. Such inconsistencies can break applica-  
235 tions that expect updates to occur in a specific sequence, so that updates in one  
236 place correspond with related updates in another place.

237 For example, if a user creates a file, places information in the file, and then  
238 records this action in another file, a system or power failure at this point followed  
239 by restart may result in a state in which the record of the action is permanently  
240 recorded, but the file created (or some of its information) has been lost. The  
241 consequences of this to the user may be undesirable. For a user on such a system,  
242 the only safe action may be to require the system administrator to have a policy  
243 that requires, after any system or power failure, that the entire file system must  
244 be restored from the most recent backup copy (causing all intervening work to be  
245 lost).

246 The characteristics of each implementation will vary in this respect and may or  
247 may not meet the requirements of a given application or user. Enforcement of  
248 such requirements is beyond the scope of POSIX.1. It is up to the purchaser to  
249 determine what facilities are provided in an implementation that affect the expo-  
250 sure to possible data or sequence loss and also what underlying implementation  
251 techniques and/or facilities are provided that reduce or limit such loss or its  
252 consequences.

#### 253 **B.1.3.1.3 Conforming Implementation Options**

254 Within POSIX.1 there are some symbolic constants that, if defined, indicate that a  
255 certain option is enabled. Other symbolic constants exist in POSIX.1 for other rea-  
256 sons. This clause helps clarify which constants are related to true "options" and  
257 which are related more to the behavior of differing systems.

258 To accommodate historical implementations where there were distinct semantics  
259 in certain situations, but where one was not clearly better or worse than another,  
260 early drafts of POSIX.1 permitted either of (typically) two options using "may." At  
261 the request of the working group developing test assertions, this was changed to  
262 be specified by formal options with flags. It quickly became obvious that these  
263 would be treated as options that could be selected by a purchaser, when the intent  
264 of the developers of POSIX.1 was to allow either behavior (or both, in some cases)  
265 to conform to the standard, and to constrain the application to accommodate  
266 either. Thus, these options were removed and the phrase "An implementation  
267 may either" introduced to replace the option. Where this phrase is used, it indi-  
268 cates that an application shall tolerate either behavior.

269 It is intended that all conforming applications shall tolerate either behavior and  
270 that only in the most exceptional of circumstances (driven by technical need)  
271 should a purchaser specify only one behavior. Backwards compatibility is not con-  
272 sidered exceptional, as this is not consistent with the intent of POSIX.1: to pro-  
273 mote the portability of applications (and the development of portable  
274 applications).

275 An application can tolerate these behaviors either by ignoring the differences (if  
276 they are irrelevant to the application) or by taking an action to assure a known  
277 state. It might be that that action would be redundant on some implementations.

278 Validation programs, which are applications in this sense, could either report the  
279 actual result found or simply ignore the difference. In no case should either

280 acceptable behavior be treated as an error. This may complicate the validation  
281 slightly, but is more consistent with the intent of this permissible variation in  
282 behavior.

283 In certain circumstances, the behavior may vary for a given process. For exam-  
284 ple, in the presence of networked file systems, whether or not dot and dot-dot are  
285 present in the directory may vary with the directory being searched, and the pro-  
286 gram would only be portable if it tolerated, but did not require, the presence of  
287 these entries in a directory.

288 In situations like this, it is typically easier to simply ignore dot and dot-dot if they  
289 are found than to try to determine if they should be expected or not.

### 290 **B.1.3.2 Application Conformance**

291 These definitions guide users or adaptors of applications in determining on which  
292 implementations an application will run and how much adaptation would be  
293 required to make it run on others. These three definitions are modeled after  
294 related ones in the C Standard (2).

295 POSIX.1 occasionally uses the expressions *portable application* or *conforming*  
296 *application*. As they are used, these are synonyms for any of these three terms.  
297 The differences between the three classes of application conformance relate to the  
298 requirements for other standards, or, in the case of the Conforming POSIX.1 Appli-  
299 cation Using Extensions, to implementation extensions. When one of the less  
300 explicit expressions is used, it should be apparent from the context of the discus-  
301 sion which of the more explicit names is appropriate.

#### 302 **B.1.3.2.1 Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Application**

303 This definition is analogous to that of a C Standard (2) *conforming program*.

304 The major difference between a *Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Application* and a  
305 C Standard (2) *strictly conforming program* is that the latter is not allowed to use  
306 features of POSIX.1 that are not in the C Standard (2).

#### 307 **B.1.3.2.2 Conforming POSIX.1 Application**

308 Examples of *<National Bodies>* include ANSI, BSI, and AFNOR.

#### 309 **B.1.3.2.3 Conforming POSIX.1 Application Using Extensions**

310 Due to possible requirements for configuration or implementation characteristics  
311 in excess of the specifications in 2.8 or related to the hardware (such as array size  
312 or file space), not every Conforming POSIX.1 Application Using Extensions will  
313 run on every conforming implementation.

### 314 **B.1.3.3 Language-Dependent Services for the C Programming Language**

315 POSIX.1 is, for historical reasons, both a specification of an operating system  
316 interface and a C binding for that specification. It is clear that these need to be  
317 separated into unique entities, but the urgency of getting the initial standard out,  
318 and the fact that C is the *de facto* primary language on systems similar to the

319 UNIX system, makes this a necessary and workable situation.  
320 Nevertheless, work will be done on language bindings, beyond that for C before  
321 the specification and the current binding are separated. Language bindings for  
322 languages other than C should not model themselves too closely on the C binding  
323 and in the process pick up various idiosyncrasies of C.

324 Where functionality is duplicated in POSIX.1 [e.g., *open()* and *creat()*] there is no  
325 reason for that duplication to be carried forward into another language. On the  
326 other hand, some languages have functionality already in them that is essentially  
327 the same as that provided in POSIX.1. In this case, a mapping between the func-  
328 tionality in that language and the underlying functionality in POSIX.1 is a better  
329 choice than mimicking the C binding.

330 Since C has no syntax for I/O, and I/O is a large fraction of POSIX.1, the paradigm  
331 of functions has been used. This may not be appropriate to another language.  
332 For example, FORTRAN's REWIND statement is a candidate to map onto a special  
333 case of *lseek()*, and its SEEK statement may completely cover for *lseek()*. If this is  
334 the case, there is no reason to provide SUBROUTINES with the same functionality.  
335 In the more general case, file descriptors and FORTRAN's logical unit numbers  
336 may have a useful mapping. FORTRAN's ERR= option in I/O operations might  
337 replace returning -1; the whole concept of errors might be handled differently.

338 As was done with C, it is not unreasonable for other language bindings to specify  
339 some areas that are undefined or unspecified by the underlying language stan-  
340 dard or that are permissible as extensions. This may, in fact, solve some difficult  
341 problems.

342 Using as much as possible of the target language in the binding enhances porta-  
343 bility. If a program wishes to use some POSIX.1 capabilities, and these are bound  
344 to the language statements rather than appearing as additional procedure or  
345 function calls, and the program does in fact conform to the language standard  
346 while using those functions, it will port to a larger range of systems than one that  
347 is obligated to use procedure or function calls introduced specifically for the bind-  
348 ing to POSIX.1 to do the same thing.

349 A program that requires the POSIX.1 capabilities that are not bound to the stan-  
350 dard language directly (as above) has no chance to be portable outside the POSIX.1  
351 environment. It does not matter whether the extension is syntactic or a new func-  
352 tion; it still will not port without effort. Given this, it seems unreasonable not to  
353 consider language extensions when determining how best to map the functionality  
354 of POSIX.1 into a particular language binding. For example, a new statement  
355 similar to READ, which loads the values from a call like *stat()*, might be the best  
356 solution for reading the data lists returned as structures in C into a list of FOR-  
357 TRAN variables.

358 No attempt to mimic *printf()* or *scanf()* (or the rest of the C Standard (2) func-  
359 tions) should be made; the equivalent functions in the language should be used.  
360 (Formatted READ and WRITE in FORTRAN, *read/readln* and *write/writeln*  
361 in Pascal, for example.)

362 There is an inherent special relationship between an operating system standard  
363 and a language standard. It is unlikely that standards for other kinds of features  
364 (such as graphics) will bind directly to statements in a general purpose language.

365 However, an operating system standard should provide the services required by a  
366 language. This is an unusual situation, and the tendency to use only new func-  
367 tions and procedures when creating a binding should be examined carefully. (A  
368 one-to-one binding in all cases is probably not possible, but bindings such as those  
369 for standard I/O in Section 8 may be possible.)

370 Binding directly to the language, where possible, should be encouraged both by  
371 making maximal use of the mapping between the operating system and the  
372 language that naturally exists and, where appropriate, by having the languages  
373 request changes to the operating system to facilitate such a mapping. (A future  
374 inclusion of a truncate function, specifically for the FORTRAN ENDFILE state-  
375 ment, but that is also generally useful, is a good example.)

376 Part of the job of creating a binding is choosing names for functions that are intro-  
377 duced, and these will need to be appropriate for that language. It is possible to  
378 use other than the most restrictive form of a name, since, as discussed previously,  
379 using these functions inherently makes the application not portable to systems  
380 that are not POSIX.1, and if POSIX.1 conformant systems typically accept names  
381 that the lowest-common-denominator system will not, there is no reason to *a*  
382 *priori* exclude such names. (The specific example is C, where it is typically “non-  
383 UNIX” systems that limit external identifiers to six characters.)

384 See B.1.1 for additional information about C bindings.

#### 385 **B.1.3.3.1 Types of Conformance**

386 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

#### 387 **B.1.3.3.2 C Standard Language-Dependent System Support**

388 The issue of “namespace pollution” needs to be understood in this context. See  
389 B.2.7.2.

#### 390 **B.1.3.3.3 Common-Usage C Language-Dependent System Support**

391 The issue of “namespace pollution” needs to be understood in this context. See  
392 B.2.7.2.

#### 393 **B.1.3.4 Other C Language-Related Specifications**

394 The information concerning the use of library functions was adapted from a  
395 description in the C Standard [2]. Here is an example of how an application pro-  
396 gram can protect itself from library functions that may or may not be macros,  
397 rather than true functions:

398 The *atoi()* function may be used in any of several ways:

- 399 (1) By use of its associated header (possibly generating a macro expansion)

```
400     #include <stdlib.h>  
401     /* ... */  
402     i = atoi(str);
```

- 403 (2) By use of its associated header (assuredly generating a true function call)

```

404         #include <stdlib.h>
405         #undef atoi
406         /* ... */
407         i = atoi(str);

```

```

408         or

```

```

409         #include <stdlib.h>
410         /* ... */
411         i = (atoi) (str);

```

412 (3) By explicit declaration

```

413         extern int atoi (const char *);
414         /* ... */
415         i = atoi(str);

```

416 (4) By implicit declaration

```

417         /* ... */
418         i = atoi(str);

```

419 (Assuming no function prototype is in scope. This is not allowed by the  
420 C Standard {2} for functions with variable arguments; furthermore,  
421 parameter type conversion "widening" is subject to different rules in this  
422 case.)

423 Note that the C Standard {2} reserves names starting with '' for the compiler.  
424 Therefore, the compiler could, for example, implement an intrinsic, built-in func-  
425 tion *\_asm\_builtin\_atoi()*, which it recognized and expanded into inline assembly  
426 code. Then, in *<stdlib.h>*, there could be the following:

```

427         #define atoi(X) _asm_builtin_atoi(X)

```

428 The user's "normal" call to *atoi()* would then be expanded inline, but the imple-  
429 mentor would also be required to provide a callable function named *atoi()* for use  
430 when the application requires it; for example, if its address is to be stored in a  
431 function pointer variable.

### 432 B.1.3.5 Other Language-Related Specifications

433 It is intended that "long" identifiers and multibase linkage would be supported on  
434 POSIX.1 systems for all languages, including C. This is where that condition is  
435 stated. The portion of the sentence about "if such extensions are" is included to  
436 permit languages that have an absolute maximum, or an absolute requirement of  
437 case folding, to be conformant.

438 The requirement for longer names is included for several reasons:

- 439 (1) Most systems similar to POSIX.1 are already conformant.
- 440 (2) Many existing language standards restrict the length of names to accom-  
441 modate existing systems that cannot be modified to allow longer names.  
442 However, those systems are not expected to be POSIX.1 conformant, for  
443 other reasons.

444 (3) Many historical applications rely on such long names.

445 (4) Future languages (such as FORTRAN 88) are likely to require it.

446 Specific to FORTRAN 77 (B21), that standard permits long names, and this part of  
447 ISO/IEC 9945 requires that FORTRAN implementations running on POSIX.1 sup-  
448 port long names. The requirements of case distinction and length are considered  
449 orthogonal, but both are required if both are permitted by the language. Note  
450 that a language can be conformant to POSIX.1 even though a binding does not  
451 exist, because an application need not step outside the language standard to write  
452 a useful program.

453 This requirement permits the use of reasonable-length names in a POSIX.1 bind-  
454 ing to a language such as FORTRAN. Clearly nothing prohibits a program that  
455 does conform to the FORTRAN minima to compile and run on POSIX.1.

456 It is within the constraints of POSIX.1 to specify the behavior of the language pro-  
457 cessors and linker, consistent with the language, as it is a specification for an exe-  
458 cution environment. This is different than a package such as GKS (B27), which  
459 can reasonably be expected to be ported to a system that enforces the language  
460 minima.

461 It might be argued that this specification is appropriate to the language binding  
462 committees for POSIX generally, rather than specifically to POSIX.1. That argu-  
463 ment misses the intent. The intent is to require that the linker and other code  
464 that handles "object code" (a concept not formally defined in POSIX.1) are able to  
465 support long names. This requirement, being one that spans all languages,  
466 belongs in the specification standard, rather than tied to any one language. Note  
467 that it is also somewhat permissive, in that if the language is unable to deal with  
468 long names it is permitted not to require them, but it does remove the argument  
469 that "the loader might not permit long names, so [a specific] language binding  
470 should not force the issue."

471 A strictly conforming application for a given language could not use any exten-  
472 sions outside of POSIX.1 for that language (regardless of the underlying operating  
473 system). An application will strictly conform to POSIX.1 if it conforms to the  
474 language using additional interfaces from that language's binding to POSIX.1.

## 475 B.2 Definitions and General Requirements

### 476 B.2.1 Conventions

477 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

478 **B.2.2 Definitions**479 **B.2.2.1 Terminology**

480 The meanings specified in POSIX.1 for the words *shall*, *should*, and *may* are man-  
481 dated by ISO/IEC directives.

482 In this Rationale, the words *shall*, *should*, and *may* are sometimes used to illus-  
483 trate similar usages in the standard. However, the Rationale itself does not  
484 specify anything regarding implementations or applications.

485 **conformance document:** As a practical matter, the conformance document is  
486 effectively part of the system documentation. They are distinguished by POSIX.1  
487 so that they can be referred to distinctly.

488 **implementation defined:** This definition is analogous to that of the  
489 C Standard [2] and, together with *undefined* and *unspecified*, provides a range of  
490 specification of freedom allowed to the interface implementor.

491 **may:** The use of *may* has been limited as much as possible, due both to confu-  
492 sion stemming from its ordinary English meaning and to objections regarding the  
493 desirability of having as few options as possible and those as clearly specified as  
494 possible.

495 **shall:** Declarative sentences are sometimes used in POSIX.1 as if they included  
496 the word *shall*, and facilities thus specified are no less required. For example, the  
497 two statements:

498 (1) The *foo()* function shall return zero

499 (2) The *foo()* function returns zero

500 are meant to be exactly equivalent. It is expected that a future version of POSIX.1  
501 will be rewritten to use the "shall" form more consistently.

502 **should:** In POSIX.1, the word *should* does not usually apply to the implementa-  
503 tion, but rather to the application. Thus, the important words regarding imple-  
504 mentations are *shall*, which indicates requirements, and *may*, which indicates  
505 options.

506 **obsolescent:** The term *obsolescent* was preferred over *deprecated* to represent  
507 functionality that should not be used in new work. The term *obsolescent* is more  
508 intuitive and reduced the possibility of misunderstanding in the intended context.

509 **supported:** An example of this concept is the *setpgid()* function. If the imple-  
510 mentation does not support the optional job control feature, it nevertheless has to  
511 provide a function named *setpgid()*, even though its only ability is that of return-  
512 ing [ENOSYS].

513 **system documentation:** The system documentation should normally describe  
514 the whole of the implementation, including any extensions provided by the imple-  
515 mentation. Such documents normally contain information at least as detailed as  
516 the POSIX.1 specifications. Few requirements are made on the system documen-  
517 tation, but the term is needed to avoid a dangling pointer where the conformance  
518 document is permitted to point to the system documentation.

519 **undefined:** See *implementation defined*.

520 **unspecified:** See *implementation defined*.

521 The definitions for *unspecified* and *undefined* appear nearly identical at first  
522 examination, but are not. *Unspecified* means that a conforming program may  
523 deal with the unspecified behavior, and it should not care what the outcome is.  
524 *Undefined* says that a conforming program should not do it because no definition  
525 is provided for what it does (and implicitly it would care what the outcome was if  
526 it tried it). It is important to remember, however, that if the syntax permits the  
527 statement at all, it must have some outcome in a real implementation.

528 Thus, the terms *undefined* and *unspecified* apply to the way the application  
529 should think about the feature. In terms of the implementation it is always  
530 “defined”—there is always some result, even if it is an error. The implementation  
531 is free to choose the behavior it prefers.

532 This also implies that an implementation, or another standard, could specify or  
533 define the result in a useful fashion. The terms apply to POSIX.1 specifically.

534 The term *implementation defined* implies requirements for documentation that  
535 are not required for *undefined* (or *unspecified*). Where there is no need for a con-  
536 forming program to know the definition, the term *undefined* is used, even though  
537 *implementation defined* could also have been used in this context. There could be  
538 a fourth term, specifying “POSIX.1 does not say what this does; it is acceptable to  
539 define it in an implementation, but it does not need to be documented,” and  
540 *undefined* would then be used very rarely for the few things for which any  
541 definition is not useful.

542 In many places POSIX.1 is silent about the behavior of some possible construct.  
543 For example, a variable may be defined for a specified range of values and  
544 behaviors are described for those values; nothing is said about what happens if  
545 the variable has any other value. That kind of silence can imply an error in the  
546 standard, but it may also imply that the standard was intentionally silent and  
547 that any behavior is permitted. There is a natural tendency to infer that if the  
548 standard is silent, a behavior is prohibited. That is not the intent. Silence is  
549 intended to be equivalent to the term *unspecified*.

#### 550 **B.2.2.2 General Terms**

551 Many of these definitions are necessarily circular, and some of the terms (such as  
552 *process*) are variants of basic computing science terms that are inherently hard to  
553 define. Some are defined by context in the prose topic descriptions of the general  
554 concepts in 2.3, but most appear in the alphabetical glossary format of the terms  
555 in 2.2.2.

556 Some definitions must allow extension to cover terms or facilities that are not  
557 explicitly mentioned in POSIX.1. For example, the definition of *file* must permit  
558 interpretation to include streams, as found in the Eighth Edition (a research ver-  
559 sion of the UNIX system). The use of abstract intermediate terms (such as *object*  
560 in place of, or in addition to, *file*) has mostly been avoided in favor of careful  
561 definition of more traditional terms.

562 Some terms in the following list of notes do not appear in POSIX.1; these are  
563 marked prefixed with an asterisk (\*). Many of them have been specifically  
564 excluded from POSIX.1 because they concern system administration, implementa-  
565 tion, or other issues that are not specific to the programming interface. Those are  
566 marked with a reason, such as "implementation defined."

567 **appropriate privileges:** One of the fundamental security problems with many  
568 historical UNIX systems has been that the privilege mechanism is monolithic—a  
569 user has either no privileges or *all* privileges. Thus, a successful "trojan horse"  
570 attack on a privileged process defeats all security provisions. Therefore, POSIX.1  
571 allows more granular privilege mechanisms to be defined. For many historical  
572 implementations of the UNIX system, the presence of the term *appropriate*  
573 *privileges* in POSIX.1 may be understood as a synonym for *super-user* (UID 0).  
574 However, future systems will undoubtedly emerge where this is not the case and  
575 each discrete controllable action will have *appropriate privileges* associated with  
576 it. Because this mechanism is *implementation defined*, it must be described in  
577 the conformance document. Although that description affects several parts of  
578 POSIX.1 where the term *appropriate privilege* is used, because the term *implemen-*  
579 *tation defined* only appears here, the description of the entire mechanism and its  
580 effects on these other sections belongs in clause 2.3 of the conformance document.  
581 This is especially convenient for implementations with a single mechanism that  
582 applies in all areas, since it only needs to be described once.

583 **clock tick:** The C Standard [2] defines a similar interval for use by the *clock()*  
584 function. There is no requirement that these intervals be the same. In historical  
585 implementations these intervals are different. Currently only the *times()* function  
586 uses values stated in terms of clock ticks, although other functions might use  
587 them in the future.

588 **controlling terminal:** The question of which of possibly several special files  
589 referring to the terminal is meant is not addressed in POSIX.1.

590

591 **\*device number:** The concept is handled in *stat()* as *ID of device*.

592 **directory:** The format of the directory file is implementation defined and differs  
593 radically between System V and 4.3BSD. However, routines (derived from  
594 4.3BSD) for accessing directories are provided in 5.1.2 and certain constraints on  
595 the format of the information returned by those routines are made in 5.1.1.

596 **directory entry:** Throughout the document, the term *link* is used [about the  
597 *link()* function, for example] in describing the objects that point to files from  
598 directories.

599 **dot:** The symbolic name *dot* is carefully used in POSIX.1 to distinguish the work-  
600 ing directory filename from a period or a decimal point.

601 **dot-dot:** Historical implementations permit the use of these filenames without  
602 their special meanings. Such use precludes any meaningful use of these  
603 filenames by a Conforming POSIX.1 Application. Therefore, such use is considered  
604 an extension, the use of which makes an implementation nonconforming. See also  
605 B.2.3.7.

606 **Epoch:** Historically, the origin of UNIX system time was referred to as “00:00:00  
607 GMT, January 1, 1970.” Greenwich Mean Time is actually not a term ack-  
608 knowledged by the international standards community; therefore, this term,  
609 *Epoch*, is used to abbreviate the reference to the actual standard, Coordinated  
610 Universal Time. The concept of leap seconds is added for precision; at the time  
611 POSIX.1 was published, 14 leap seconds had been added since January 1, 1970.  
612 These 14 seconds are ignored to provide an easy and compatible method of com-  
613 puting time differences.

614 Most systems’ notion of “time” is that of a continuously increasing value, so this  
615 value should increase even during leap seconds. However, not only do most sys-  
616 tems not keep track of leap seconds, but most systems are probably not synchron-  
617 ized to any standard time reference. Therefore, it is inappropriate to require that  
618 a time represented as seconds since the Epoch precisely represent the number of  
619 seconds between the referenced time and the Epoch.

620 It is sufficient to require that applications be allowed to treat this time as if it  
621 represented the number of seconds between the referenced time and the Epoch. It  
622 is the responsibility of the vendor of the system, and the administrator of the sys-  
623 tem, to ensure that this value represents the number of seconds between the  
624 referenced time and the Epoch as closely as necessary for the application being  
625 run on that system.

626 It is important that the interpretation of time names and *seconds since the Epoch*  
627 values be consistent across conforming systems. That is, it is important that all  
628 conforming systems interpret “536 457 599 seconds since the Epoch” as 59  
629 seconds, 59 minutes, 23 hours 31 December 1986, regardless of the accuracy of  
630 the system’s idea of the current time. The expression is given to assure a con-  
631 sistent interpretation, not to attempt to specify the calendar. The relationship  
632 between *tm\_yday* and the day of week, day of month, and month is presumed to  
633 be specified elsewhere and is not given in POSIX.1.

634 Consistent interpretation of *seconds since the Epoch* can be critical to certain  
635 types of distributed applications that rely on such timestamps to synchronize  
636 events. The accrual of leap seconds in a time standard is not predictable. The  
637 number of leap seconds since the Epoch will likely increase. POSIX.1 is more con-  
638 cerned about the synchronization of time between applications of astronomically  
639 short duration. These concerns are expected to become more critical in the future.

640 Note that *tm\_yday* is zero-based, not one-based, so the day number in the exam-  
641 ple above is 364. Note also that the division is an integer division (discarding  
642 remainder) as in the C language.

643 Note also that in Section 8, the meaning of *gmtime()*, *localtime()*, and *mktime()* is  
644 specified in terms of this expression. However, the C Standard [2] computes  
645 *tm\_yday* from *tm\_mday*, *tm\_mon*, and *tm\_year* in *mktime()*. Because it is stated  
646 as a (bidirectional) relationship, not a function, and because the conversion  
647 between month-day-year and day-of-year dates is presumed well known and is  
648 also a relationship, this is not a problem.

649 Note that the expression given will fail after the year 2099. Since the issue of  
650 *time\_t* overflowing a 32-bit integer occurs well before that time, both of these will  
651 have to be addressed in revisions to POSIX.1.

- 652 **FIFO special file:** See *pipe* in B.2.2.2.
- 653 **file:** It is permissible for an implementation-defined file type to be nonreadable  
654 or nonwritable.
- 655 **file classes:** These classes correspond to the historical sets of permission bits.  
656 The classes are general to allow implementations flexibility in expanding the  
657 access mechanism for more stringent security environments. Note that a process  
658 is in one and only one class, so there is no ambiguity.
- 659 **filename:** At the present time, the primary responsibility for truncating  
660 filenames containing multibyte characters must reside with the application.  
661 Some industry groups involved in internationalization believe that in the future  
662 the responsibility must reside with the kernel. For the moment, a clearer under-  
663 standing of the implications of making the kernel responsible for truncation of  
664 multibyte file names is needed.
- 665 Character level truncation was not adopted because there is no support in  
666 POSIX.1 that advises how the kernel distinguishes between single and multibyte  
667 characters. Until that time, it must be incumbent upon application writers to  
668 determine where multibyte characters must be truncated.
- 669 **file system:** Historically the meaning of this term has been overloaded with two  
670 meanings: that of the complete file hierarchy and that of a mountable subset of  
671 that hierarchy; i.e., a mounted file system. POSIX.1 uses the term *file system* in  
672 the second sense, except that it is limited to the scope of a process (and a process's  
673 root directory). This usage also clarifies the domain in which a file serial number  
674 is unique.
- 675 **\*group file:** Implementation defined; see B.9.
- 676 **\*historical implementations:** This refers to previously existing implementa-  
677 tions of programming interfaces and operating systems that are related to the  
678 interface specified by POSIX.1. See also "Minimal Changes to Historical Imple-  
679 mentations" in the Introduction.
- 680 **\*hosted implementation:** This refers to a POSIX.1 implementation that is  
681 accomplished through interfaces from the POSIX.1 services to some alternate form  
682 of operating system kernel services. Note that the line between a hosted imple-  
683 mentation and a native implementation is blurred, since most implementations  
684 will provide some services directly from the kernel and others through some  
685 indirect path. [For example, *fopen()* might use *open()*; or *mkfifo()* might use  
686 *mknod().*] There is no necessary relationship between the type of implementation  
687 and its correctness, performance, and/or reliability.
- 688 **\*implementation:** The term is generally used instead of its synonym, *system*,  
689 to emphasize the consequences of decisions to be made by system implementors.  
690 Perhaps if no options or extensions to POSIX.1 were allowed, this usage would not  
691 have occurred.
- 692 The term *specific implementation* is sometimes used as a synonym for *implemen-*  
693 *tation*. This should not be interpreted too narrowly; both terms can represent a  
694 relatively broad group of systems. For example, a hardware vendor could market  
695 a very wide selection of systems that all used the same instruction set, with some  
696 systems desktop models and others large multiuser minicomputers. This wide

697 range would probably share a common POSIX.1 operating system, allowing an  
698 application compiled for one to be used on any of the others; this is a *[specific]*  
699 *implementation*.

700 However, that wide range of machines probably has some differences between the  
701 models. Some may have different clock rates, different file systems, different  
702 resource limits, different network connections, etc., depending on their sizes or  
703 intended usages. Even on two identical machines, the system administrators may  
704 configure them differently. Each of these different systems is known by the term  
705 *a specific instance of a specific implementation*. This term is only used in the por-  
706 tions of POSIX.1 dealing with run-time queries: *sysconf()* and *pathconf()*.

707 **\*incomplete pathname:** Absolute pathname has been adequately defined.

708 **job control:** In order to understand the job-control facilities in POSIX.1 it is use-  
709 ful to understand how they are used by a job-control-cognizant shell to create the  
710 user interface effect of job control.

711 While the job-control facilities supplied by POSIX.1 can, in theory, support dif-  
712 ferent types of interactive job-control interfaces supplied by different types of  
713 shells, there is historically one particular interface that is most common (provided  
714 by BSD C Shell). This discussion describes that interface as a means of illustrat-  
715 ing how the POSIX.1 job-control facilities can be used.

716 Job control allows users to selectively stop (suspend) the execution of processes  
717 and continue (resume) their execution at a later point. The user typically employs  
718 this facility via the interactive interface jointly supplied by the terminal I/O driver  
719 and a command interpreter (shell).

720 The user can launch jobs (command pipelines) in either the foreground or back-  
721 ground. When launched in the foreground, the shell waits for the job to complete  
722 before prompting for additional commands. When launched in the background,  
723 the shell does not wait, but immediately prompts for new commands.

724 If the user launches a job in the foreground and subsequently regrets this, the  
725 user can type the suspend character (typically set to control-Z), which causes the  
726 foreground job to stop and the shell to begin prompting for new commands. The  
727 stopped job can be continued by the user (via special shell commands) either as a  
728 foreground job or as a background job. Background jobs can also be moved into  
729 the foreground via shell commands.

730 If a background job attempts to access the login terminal (controlling terminal), it  
731 is stopped by the terminal driver and the shell is notified, which, in turn, notifies  
732 the user. [Terminal access includes *read()* and certain terminal control functions  
733 and conditionally includes *write()*.] The user can continue the stopped job in the  
734 foreground, thus allowing the terminal access to succeed in an orderly fashion.  
735 After the terminal access succeeds, the user can optionally move the job into the  
736 background via the suspend character and shell commands.

### 737 *Implementing Job Control Shells*

738 The interactive interface described previously can be accomplished using the  
739 POSIX.1 job-control facilities in the following way.

740 The key feature necessary to provide job control is a way to group processes into  
741 jobs. This grouping is necessary in order to direct signals to a single job and also

742 to identify which job is in the foreground. (There is at most one job that is in the  
743 foreground on any controlling terminal at a time.)

744 The concept of *process groups* is used to provide this grouping. The shell places  
745 each job in a separate process group via the *setpgid()* function. To do this, the  
746 *setpgid()* function is invoked by the shell for each process in the job. It is actually  
747 useful to invoke *setpgid()* twice for each process: once in the child process, after  
748 calling *fork()* to create the process, but before calling one of the *exec* functions to  
749 begin execution of the program, and once in the parent shell process, after calling  
750 *fork()* to create the child. The redundant invocation avoids a race condition by  
751 ensuring that the child process is placed into the new process group before either  
752 the parent or the child relies on this being the case. The *process group ID* for the  
753 job is selected by the shell to be equal to the *process ID* of one of the processes in  
754 the job. Some shells choose to make one process in the job be the parent of the  
755 other processes in the job (if any). Other shells (e.g., the C Shell) choose to make  
756 themselves the parent of all processes in the pipeline (job). In order to support  
757 this latter case, the *setpgid()* function accepts a process group ID parameter since  
758 the correct process group ID cannot be inherited from the shell. The shell itself is  
759 considered to be a job and is the sole process in its own process group.

760 The shell also controls which job is currently in the foreground. A foreground and  
761 background job differ in two ways: the shell waits for a foreground command to  
762 complete (or stop) before continuing to read new commands, and the terminal I/O  
763 driver inhibits terminal access by background jobs (causing the processes to stop).  
764 Thus, the shell must work cooperatively with the terminal I/O driver and have a  
765 common understanding of which job is currently in the foreground. It is the user  
766 who decides which command should be currently in the foreground, and the user  
767 informs the shell via shell commands. The shell, in turn, informs the terminal I/O  
768 driver via the *tcsetpgrp()* function. This indicates to the terminal I/O driver the  
769 process group ID of the foreground process group (job). When the current fore-  
770 ground job either stops or terminates, the shell places itself in the foreground via  
771 *tcsetpgrp()* before prompting for additional commands. Note that when a job is  
772 created the new process group begins as a background process group. It requires  
773 an explicit act of the shell via *tcsetpgrp()* to move a process group (job) into the  
774 foreground.

775 When a process in a job stops or terminates, its parent (e.g., the shell) receives  
776 synchronous notification by calling the *waitpid()* function with the WUNTRACED  
777 flag set. Asynchronous notification is also provided when the parent establishes a  
778 signal handler for SIGCHLD and does not specify the SA\_NOCLDSTOP flag. Usu-  
779 ally all processes in a job stop as a unit since the terminal I/O driver always sends  
780 job-control stop signals to all processes in the process group.

781 To continue a stopped job, the shell sends the SIGCONT signal to the process  
782 group of the job. In addition, if the job is being continued in the foreground, the  
783 shell invokes *tcsetpgrp()* to place the job in the foreground before sending  
784 SIGCONT. Otherwise, the shell leaves itself in the foreground and reads addi-  
785 tional commands.

786 There is additional flexibility in the POSIX.1 job-control facilities that allows devi-  
787 ations from the typical interface. Clearing the TOSTOP terminal flag (see 7.1.2.5)  
788 allows background jobs to perform *write()* functions without stopping. The same  
789 effect can be achieved on a per-process basis by having a process set the signal  
790 action for SIGTTOU to SIG\_IGN.

791 Note that the terms *job* and *process group* can be used interchangeably. A login  
792 session that is not using the job control facilities can be thought of as a large col-  
793 lection of processes that are all in the same job (process group). Such a login ses-  
794 sion may have a partial distinction between foreground and background  
795 processes; that is, the shell may choose to wait for some processes before continu-  
796 ing to read new commands and may not wait for other processes. However, the  
797 terminal I/O driver will consider all these processes to be in the foreground since  
798 they are all members of the same process group.

799 In addition to the basic job-control operations already mentioned, a job-control-  
800 cognizant shell needs to perform the following actions:

801 When a foreground (not background) job stops, the shell must sample and  
802 remember the current terminal settings so that it can restore them later when it  
803 continues the stopped job in the foreground [via the *tcgetattr()* and *tcsetattr()*  
804 functions].

805 Because a shell itself can be spawned from a shell, it must take special action to  
806 ensure that subshells interact well with their parent shells.

807 A subshell can be spawned to perform an interactive function (prompting the ter-  
808 minal for commands) or a noninteractive function (reading commands from a file).  
809 When operating noninteractively, the job-control shell will refrain from perform-  
810 ing the job-control specific actions described above. It will behave as a shell that  
811 does not support job control. For example, all *jobs* will be left in the same process  
812 group as the shell, which itself remains in the process group established for it by  
813 its parent. This allows the shell and its children to be treated as a single job by a  
814 parent shell, and they can be affected as a unit by terminal keyboard signals.

815 An interactive subshell can be spawned from another job-control-cognizant shell  
816 in either the foreground or background. (For example, from the C Shell, the user  
817 can execute the command, *csch &*.) Before the subshell activates job control by  
818 calling *setpgid()* to place itself in its own process group and *tcsetpgrp()* to place its  
819 new process group in the foreground, it needs to ensure that it has already been  
820 placed in the foreground by its parent. (Otherwise, there could be multiple job-  
821 control shells that simultaneously attempt to control mediation of the terminal.)  
822 To determine this, the shell retrieves its own process group via *getpgrp()* and the  
823 process group of the current foreground job via *tcgetpgrp()*. If these are not equal,  
824 the shell sends SIGTTIN to its own process group, causing itself to stop. When  
825 continued later by its parent, the shell repeats the process-group check. When  
826 the process groups finally match, the shell is in the foreground and it can proceed  
827 to take control. After this point, the shell ignores all the job-control stop signals  
828 so that it does not inadvertently stop itself.

### 829 *Implementing Job Control Applications*

830 Most applications do not need to be aware of job-control signals and operations;  
831 the intuitively correct behavior happens by default. However, sometimes an  
832 application can inadvertently interfere with normal job-control processing, or an  
833 application may choose to overtly effect job control in cooperation with normal  
834 shell procedures.

835 An application can inadvertently subvert job-control processing by “blindly” alter-  
836 ing the handling of signals. A common application error is to learn how many

837 signals the system supports and to ignore or catch them all. Such an application  
838 makes the assumption that it does not know what this signal is, but knows the  
839 right handling action for it. The system may initialize the handling of job-control  
840 stop signals so that they are being ignored. This allows shells that do not support  
841 job control to inherit and propagate these settings and hence to be immune to stop  
842 signals. A job-control shell will set the handling to the default action and pro-  
843 pagate this, allowing processes to stop. In doing so, the job-control shell is taking  
844 responsibility for restarting the stopped applications. If an application wishes to  
845 catch the stop signals itself, it should first determine their inherited handling  
846 states. If a stop signal is being ignored, the application should continue to ignore  
847 it. This is directly analogous to the recommended handling of SIGINT described in  
848 the UNIX Programmer's Manual (B41).

849 If an application is reading the terminal and has disabled the interpretation of  
850 special characters (by clearing the ISIG flag), the terminal I/O driver will not send  
851 SIGTSTP when the suspend character is typed. Such an application can simulate  
852 the effect of the suspend character by recognizing it and sending SIGTSTP to its  
853 process group as the terminal driver would have done. Note that the signal is  
854 sent to the process group, not just to the application itself; this ensures that other  
855 processes in the job also stop. (Note also that other processes in the job could be  
856 children, siblings, or even ancestors.) Applications should not assume that the  
857 suspend character is control-Z (or any particular value); they should retrieve the  
858 current setting at startup.

### 859 *Implementing Job Control Systems*

860 The intent in adding 4.2BSD-style job control functionality was to adopt the neces-  
861 sary 4.2BSD programmatic interface with only minimal changes to resolve syntac-  
862 tic or semantic conflicts with System V or to close recognized security holes. The  
863 goal was to maximize the ease of providing both conforming implementations and  
864 Conforming POSIX.1 Applications.

865 Discussions of the changes can be found in the clauses that discuss the specific  
866 interfaces. See B.3.2.1, B.3.2.2, B.3.3.1.1, B.3.3.2, B.3.3.4, B.4.3.1, B.4.3.3,  
867 B.7.1.1.4, and B.7.2.4.

868 It is only useful for a process to be affected by job-control signals if it is the des-  
869 cendant of a job-control shell. Otherwise, there will be nothing that continues the  
870 stopped process. Because a job-control shell is allowed, but not required, by  
871 POSIX.1, an implementation must provide a mechanism that shields processes  
872 from job-control signals when there is no job-control shell. The usual method is  
873 for the system initialization process (typically called *init*), which is the ancestor  
874 of all processes, to launch its children with the signal handling action set to  
875 SIG\_IGN for the signals SIGTSTP, SIGTTIN, and SIGTTOU. Thus, all login shells  
876 start with these signals ignored. If the shell is not job-control cognizant, then it  
877 should not alter this setting and all its descendants should inherit the same  
878 ignored settings. At the point where a job-control shell is launched, it resets the  
879 signal handling action for these signals to be SIG\_DFL for its children and (by  
880 inheritance) their descendants. Also, shells that are not job-control cognizant will  
881 not alter the process group of their descendants or of their controlling terminal;  
882 this has the effect of making all processes be in the foreground (assuming the  
883 shell is in the foreground). While this approach is valid, POSIX.1 added the con-  
884 cept of orphaned process groups to provide a more robust solution to this problem.

885 All processes in a session managed by a shell that is not job-control cognizant are  
886 in an orphaned process group and are protected from stopping.

887 POSIX.1 does not specify how controlling terminal access is affected by a user log-  
888 ging out (that is, by a controlling process terminating). 4.2BSD uses the  
889 *vhangup()* function to prevent any access to the controlling terminal through file  
890 descriptors opened prior to logout. System V does not prevent controlling termi-  
891 nal access through file descriptors opened prior to logout (except for the case of  
892 the special file, */dev/tty*). Some implementations choose to make processes  
893 immune from job control after logout (that is, such processes are always treated  
894 as if in the foreground); other implementations continue to enforce  
895 foreground/background checks after logout. Therefore, a Conforming POSIX.1  
896 Application should not attempt to access the controlling terminal after logout  
897 since such access is unreliable. If an implementation chooses to deny access to a  
898 controlling terminal after its controlling process exits, POSIX.1 requires a certain  
899 type of behavior (see 7.1.1.3).

900 **\*kernel:** See *system call*.

901 **\*library routine:** See *system call*.

902 **\*logical device:** Implementation defined.

903 **\*mount point:** The directory on which a *mounted file system* is mounted. This  
904 term, like *mount()* and *umount()*, was not included because it was implementa-  
905 tion defined.

906 **\*mounted file system:** See *file system*.

907 **\*native implementation:** This refers to an implementation of POSIX.1 that  
908 interfaces directly to an operating-system kernel. See also *hosted implementation*  
909 and *cooperating implementation*. A similar concept is a native UNIX system,  
910 which would be a kernel derived from one of the original UNIX system products.

911 **open file description:** An *open file description*, as it is currently named,  
912 describes how a file is being accessed. What is currently called a *file descriptor* is  
913 actually just an identifier or "handle"; it does not actually describe anything.

914 The following alternate names were discussed:

915 For *open file description*:

916 *open instance*, *file access description*, *open file information*, and *file*  
917 *access information*.

918 For *file descriptor*:

919 *file handle*, *file number* [c.f., *fileno()*]. Some historical implementations  
920 use the term *file table entry*.

921 **orphaned process group:** Historical implementations have a concept of an  
922 orphaned process, which is a process whose parent process has exited. When job  
923 control is in use, it is necessary to prevent processes from being stopped in  
924 response to interactions with the terminal after they no longer are controlled by a  
925 job-control-cognizant program. Because signals generated by the terminal are  
926 sent to a process group and not to individual processes, and because a signal may  
927 be provoked by a process that is not orphaned, but sent to another process that is  
928 orphaned, it is necessary to define an orphaned process group. The definition

929 assumes that a process group will be manipulated as a group and that the job-  
930 control-cognizant process controlling the group is outside of the group and is the  
931 parent of at least one process in the group [so that state changes may be reported  
932 via *waitpid()*]. Therefore, a group is considered to be controlled as long as at least  
933 one process in the group has a parent that is outside of the process group, but  
934 within the session.

935 This definition of orphaned process groups ensures that a session leader's process  
936 group is always considered to be orphaned, and thus it is prevented from stopping  
937 in response to terminal signals.

938 **\*passwd file:** Implementation defined; see B.9.

939 **parent directory:** There may be more than one directory entry pointing to a  
940 given directory in some implementations. The wording here identifies that  
941 exactly one of those is the parent directory. In 2.3.6, *dot-dot* is identified as the  
942 way that the unique directory is identified. (That is, the parent directory is the  
943 one to which *dot-dot* points.) In the case of a remote file system, if the same file  
944 system is mounted several times, it would appear as if they were distinct file sys-  
945 tems (with interesting synchronization properties).

946 **pipe:** It proved convenient to define a *pipe* as a special case of a *FIFO* even  
947 though historically the latter was not introduced until System III and does not  
948 exist at all in 4.3BSD.

949 **portable filename character set:** The encoding of this character set is not  
950 specified—specifically, ASCII is not required. But the implementation must pro-  
951 vide a unique character code for each of the printable graphics specified by  
952 POSIX.1. See also B.2.3.5.

953 Situations where characters beyond the portable filename character set (or histor-  
954 ically ASCII or ISO/IEC 646 (1)) would be used (in a context where the portable  
955 filename character set or ISO/IEC 646 (1) is required by POSIX.1) are expected to  
956 be common. Although such a situation renders the use technically noncompliant,  
957 mutual agreement among the users of an extended character set will make such  
958 use portable between those users. Such a mutual agreement could be formalized  
959 as an optional extension to POSIX.1. (Making it required would eliminate too  
960 many possible systems, as even those systems using ISO/IEC 646 (1) as a base  
961 character set extend their character sets for Western Europe and the rest of the  
962 world in different ways.)

963 Nothing in POSIX.1 is intended to preclude the use of extended characters where  
964 interchange is not required or where mutual agreement is obtained. It has been  
965 suggested that in several places “should” be used instead of “shall.” Because (in  
966 the worst case) use of any character beyond the portable filename character set  
967 would render the program or data not portable to all possible systems, no exten-  
968 sions are permitted in this context.

969 **regular file:** POSIX.1 does not intend to preclude the addition of structuring  
970 data (e.g., record lengths) in the file, as long as such data is not visible to an  
971 application that uses the features described in POSIX.1.

972 **root directory:** This definition permits the operation of *chroot()*, even though  
973 that function is not in POSIX.1. See also *file hierarchy*.

- 974 **\*root file system:** Implementation defined.
- 975 **\*root of a file system:** Implementation defined. See *mount point*.
- 976 **seconds since the Epoch:** The formula here is not precisely correct for leap  
977 centuries. See the discussion for *Epoch* for further details.
- 978 **signal:** The definition implies a double meaning for the term. Although a signal  
979 is an event, common usage implies that a signal is an identifier of the class of  
980 event.
- 981 **\*system call:** The distinction between a *system call* and a *library routine* is an  
982 implementation detail that may differ between implementations and has thus  
983 been excluded from POSIX.1. See “Interface, Not Implementation” in the Intro-  
984 duction.
- 985 **\*super-user:** This concept, with great historical significance to UNIX system  
986 users, has been replaced with the notion of *appropriate privileges*.

### 987 B.2.2.3 Abbreviations

988 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

## 989 B.2.3 General Concepts

990 **B.2.3.1 extended security controls:** Allowing an implementation to define  
991 extended security controls enables the use of POSIX.1 in environments that  
992 require different or more rigorous security than that provided in POSIX.1. Exten-  
993 sions are allowed in two areas: privilege and file access permissions. The seman-  
994 tics of these areas have been defined to permit extensions with reasonable, but  
995 not exact, compatibility with all existing practices. For example, the elimination  
996 of the super-user definition precludes identifying a process as privileged or not by  
997 virtue of its effective user ID.

998 **B.2.3.2 file access permissions:** A process should not try to anticipate the  
999 result of an attempt to access data by *a priori* use of these rules. Rather, it should  
1000 make the attempt to access data and examine the return value (and possibly  
1001 *errno* as well), or use *access()*. An implementation may include other security  
1002 mechanisms in addition to those specified in POSIX.1, and an access attempt may  
1003 fail because of those additional mechanisms, even though it would succeed accord-  
1004 ing to the rules given in this subclause. (For example, the user's security level  
1005 might be lower than that of the object of the access attempt.) The optional supple-  
1006 mentary group IDs provide another reason for a process to not attempt to antici-  
1007 pate the result of an access attempt.

1008 **B.2.3.3 file hierarchy:** Though the file hierarchy is commonly regarded to be a  
1009 tree, POSIX.1 does not define it as such for three reasons:

- 1010 (1) Links may join branches.
- 1011 (2) In some network implementations, there may be no single absolute root  
1012 directory. See *pathname resolution*.

1013 (3) With symbolic links (found in 4.3BSD), the file system need not be a tree  
1014 or even a directed acyclic graph.

1015 **B.2.3.4 file permissions:** Examples of implementation-defined constraints that  
1016 may deny access are mandatory labels and access control lists.

1017 **B.2.3.5 filename portability:** Historically, certain filenames have been  
1018 reserved. This list includes core, /etc/passwd, etc. Portable applications  
1019 should avoid these.

1020 Most historical implementations prohibit case folding in filenames; i.e., treating  
1021 upper- and lowercase alphabetic characters as identical. However, some consider  
1022 case folding desirable:

1023 — For user convenience

1024 — For ease of implementation of the POSIX.1 interface as a hosted system on  
1025 some popular operating systems, which is compatible with the goal of mak-  
1026 ing the POSIX.1 interface broadly implementable (see “Broadly Implement-  
1027 able” in the Introduction)

1028 Variants such as maintaining case distinctions in filenames, but ignoring them in  
1029 comparisons, have been suggested. Methods of allowing escaped characters of the  
1030 case opposite the default have been proposed

1031 Many reasons have been expressed for not allowing case folding, including:

1032 (1) No solid evidence has been produced as to whether case sensitivity or  
1033 case insensitivity is more convenient for users.

1034 (2) Making case insensitivity a POSIX.1 implementation option would be  
1035 worse than either having it or not having it, because

1036 (a) More confusion would be caused among users.

1037 (b) Application developers would have to account for both cases in their  
1038 code.

1039 (c) POSIX.1 implementors would still have other problems with native  
1040 file systems, such as short or otherwise constrained filenames or  
1041 pathnames, and the lack of hierarchical directory structure.

1042 (3) Case folding is not easily defined in many European languages, both  
1043 because many of them use characters outside the USASCII alphabetic set,  
1044 and because

1045 (a) In Spanish, the digraph ll is considered to be a single letter, the  
1046 capitalized form of which may be either Ll or LL, depending on con-  
1047 text.

1048 (b) In French, the capitalized form of a letter with an accent may or  
1049 may not retain the accent depending on the country in which it is  
1050 written.

1051 (c) In German, the sharp ess may be represented as a single character  
1052 resembling a Greek beta ( $\beta$ ) in lowercase, but as the digraph ss in  
1053 uppercase.

- 1054 (d) In Greek, there are several lowercase forms of some letters; the one  
1055 to use depends on its position in the word. Arabic has similar rules.
- 1056 (4) Many East Asian languages, including Japanese, Chinese, and Korean,  
1057 do not distinguish case and are sometimes encoded in character sets that  
1058 use more than one byte per character.
- 1059 (5) Multiple character codes may be used on the same machine simultane-  
1060 ously. There are several ISO character sets for European alphabets. In  
1061 Japan, several Japanese character codes are commonly used together,  
1062 sometimes even in filenames; this is evidently also the case in China. To  
1063 handle case insensitivity, the kernel would have to at least be able to dis-  
1064 tinguish for which character sets the concept made sense.
- 1065 (6) The file system implementation historically deals only with bytes, not  
1066 with characters, except for slash and the null byte.
- 1067 (7) The purpose of POSIX.1 is to standardize the common, existing definition  
1068 (see "Application Oriented" in the Introduction) of the UNIX system pro-  
1069 gramming interface, not to change it. Mandating case insensitivity  
1070 would make all historical implementations nonstandard.
- 1071 (8) Not only the interface, but also application programs would need to  
1072 change, counter to the purpose of having minimal changes to existing  
1073 application code.
- 1074 (9) At least one of the original developers of the UNIX system has expressed  
1075 objection in the strongest terms to either requiring case insensitivity or  
1076 making it an option, mostly on the basis that POSIX.1 should not hinder  
1077 portability of application programs across related implementations in  
1078 order to allow compatibility with unrelated operating systems.

1079 Two proposals were entertained regarding case folding in filenames:

- 1080 — Remove all wording that previously permitted case folding.  
1081 Rationale: Case folding is inconsistent with portable filename character set  
1082 definition and filename definition (all characters except slash and null). No  
1083 known implementations allowing all characters except slash and null also  
1084 do case folding.
- 1085 — Change "though this practice is not recommended:" to "although this prac-  
1086 tice is strongly discouraged."  
1087 Rationale: If case folding must be included in POSIX.1, the wording should  
1088 be stronger to discourage the practice.

1089 The consensus selected the first proposal. Otherwise, a portable application  
1090 would have to assume that case folding would occur when it was not wanted, but  
1091 that it would not occur when it was wanted.

1092 **B.2.3.6 file times update:** This subclause reflects the actions of historical  
1093 implementations. The times are not updated immediately, but are only marked  
1094 for update by the functions. An implementation may update these times  
1095 immediately.

1096 The accuracy of the time update values is intentionally left unspecified so that  
1097 systems can control the bandwidth of a possible covert channel.

1098 The wording was carefully chosen to make it clear that there is no requirement  
1099 that the conformance document contain information that might incidentally affect  
1100 file update times. Any function that performs pathname resolution might update  
1101 several *st\_atime* fields. Functions such as *getpwnam()* and *getgrnam()* might  
1102 update the *st\_atime* field of some specific file or files. It is intended that these are  
1103 not required to be documented in the conformance document, but they should  
1104 appear in the system documentation.

1105 **B.2.3.7 pathname resolution:** What the filename dot-dot refers to relative to  
1106 the root directory is implementation defined. In Version 7 it refers to the root  
1107 directory itself; this is the behavior mentioned in the standard. In some  
1108 networked systems the construction */. . /hostname/* is used to refer to the root  
1109 directory of another host, and POSIX.1 permits this behavior.

1110 Other networked systems use the construct *//hostname* for the same purpose;  
1111 i.e., a double initial slash is used. There is a potential problem with existing  
1112 applications that create full pathnames by taking a trunk and a relative path-  
1113 name and making them into a single string separated by */*, because they can  
1114 accidentally create networked pathnames when the trunk is */*. This practice is  
1115 not prohibited because such applications can be made to conform by simply  
1116 changing to use *//* as a separator instead of */*:

1117 (1) If the trunk is */*, the full path name will begin with *///* (the initial */* and  
1118 the separator *//*). This is the same as */*, which is what is desired. (This  
1119 is the general case of making a relative pathname into an absolute one by  
1120 prefixing with *///* instead of */*.)

1121 (2) If the trunk is */A*, the result is */A//...*; since nonleading sequences of  
1122 two or more slashes are treated as a single slash, this is equivalent to the  
1123 desired */A/...*

1124 (3) If the trunk is *//A*, the implementation-defined semantics will apply.  
1125 (The multiple slash rule would apply.)

1126 Application developers should avoid generating pathnames that start with *“//”*.  
1127 Implementations are strongly encouraged to avoid using this special interpreta-  
1128 tion since a number of applications currently do not follow this practice and may  
1129 inadvertently generate *“//...”*.

1130 The term root directory is only defined in POSIX.1 relative to the process. In some  
1131 implementations, there may be no absolute root directory. The initialization of  
1132 the root directory of a process is implementation defined.

## 1133 B.2.4 Error Numbers

1134 The definition of *errno* in POSIX.1 is stricter than that in the C Standard {2}. The  
1135 C Standard {2} merely requires that it be an assignable *lvalue*. The POSIX.1  
1136 *extern int errno* meets that requirement and supports historical usage as well.

1137 Checking the value of *errno* alone is not sufficient to determine the existence or  
1138 type of an error, since it is not required that a successful function call clear *errno*.  
1139 The variable *errno* should only be examined when the return value of a function  
1140 indicates that the value of *errno* is meaningful. In that case, the function is  
1141 required to set the variable to something other than zero.

1142 A successful function call may set the value of *errno* to zero, or to any other value  
1143 (except where specifically prohibited; see B.5.4.1). But it is meaningless to do so,  
1144 since the value of *errno* is undefined except when the description of a function  
1145 explicitly states that it is set, and no function description states that it should be  
1146 set on a successful call. Most functions in most implementations do not change  
1147 *errno* on successful completion. Exceptions are *isatty()* and *ptrace()*. The latter is  
1148 not in POSIX.1, but is widely implemented and clears *errno* when called. The  
1149 value of *errno* is not defined unless all signal handlers that use functions that  
1150 could change *errno* save and restore it.

1151 POSIX.1 requires (in the Errors subclauses of function descriptions) certain error  
1152 values to be set in certain conditions because many existing applications depend  
1153 on them. Some error numbers, such as [EFAULT], are entirely implementation  
1154 defined and are noted as such in their description in 2.4. This subclause other-  
1155 wise allows wide latitude to the implementation in handling error reporting.

1156 Some of the Errors clauses in POSIX.1 have two subclauses. The first:

1157 "If any of the following conditions occur, the *foo()* function shall  
1158 return -1 and set *errno* to the corresponding value."

1159 could be called the "mandatory" subclause. The second:

1160 "For each of the following conditions, when the condition is detected,  
1161 the *foo()* function shall return -1 and set *errno* to the corresponding  
1162 value."

1163 could be informally known as the "optional" subclause. This latter subclause has  
1164 evolved in meaning over time. In early drafts, it was only used for error condi-  
1165 tions that could not be detected by certain hardware configurations, such as the  
1166 [EFAULT] error, as described below. The subclause recently has also added condi-  
1167 tions associated with optional system behavior, such as job control errors.  
1168 Attempting to infer the quality of an implementation based on whether it detects  
1169 such conditions is not useful.

1170 Following each one-word symbolic name for an error, there is a one-line tag,  
1171 which is followed by a description of the error. The one-line tag is merely a  
1172 mnemonic or historical referent and is not part of the specification of the error.  
1173 Many programs print these tags on the standard error stream [often by using the  
1174 C Standard {2} *perror()* function] when the corresponding errors are detected, but  
1175 POSIX.1 does not require this action.

1176 [EFAULT] Most historical implementations do not catch an error and set  
1177 *errno* when an invalid address is given to the functions *wait()*,  
1178 *time()*, or *times()*. Some implementations cannot reliably detect  
1179 an invalid address. And most systems that detect invalid  
1180 addresses will do so only for a system call, not for a library  
1181 routine.

- 1182 [EINTR] POSIX.1 prohibits conforming implementations from restarting  
1183 interrupted system calls. However, it does not require that  
1184 [EINTR] be returned when another legitimate value may be  
1185 substituted; e.g., a partial transfer count when *read()* or *write()*  
1186 are interrupted. This is only given when the signal catching  
1187 function returns normally as opposed to returns by mechanisms  
1188 like *longjmp()* or *siglongjmp()*.
- 1189 [ENOMEM] The term *main memory* is not used in POSIX.1 because it is  
1190 implementation defined.
- 1191 [ENOTTY] The symbolic name for this error is derived from a time when  
1192 device control was done by *ioctl()* and that operation was only  
1193 permitted on a terminal interface. The term "TTY" is derived  
1194 from *teletypewriter*, the devices to which this error originally  
1195 applied.
- 1196 [EPIPE] This condition normally generates the signal SIGPIPE; the error  
1197 is returned if the signal does not terminate the process.
- 1198 [EROFS] In historical implementations, attempting to *unlink()* or  
1199 *rmdir()* a mount point would generate an [EBUSY] error. An  
1200 implementation could be envisioned where such an operation  
1201 could be performed without error. In this case, if *either* the  
1202 directory entry or the actual data structures reside on a read-  
1203 only file system, [EROFS] is the appropriate error to generate.  
1204 (For example, changing the link count of a file on a read-only  
1205 file system could not be done, as is required by *unlink()*, and  
1206 thus an error should be reported.)
- 1207 Two error numbers, [EDOM] and [ERANGE], were added to this subclause pri-  
1208 marily for consistency with the C Standard {2}.

### 1209 B.2.5 Primitive System Data Types

1210 The requirement that additional types defined in this subclause end in "\_t" was  
1211 prompted by the problem of namespace pollution (see B.2.7.2). It is difficult to  
1212 define a type (where that type is not one defined by POSIX.1) in one header file  
1213 and use it in another without adding symbols to the namespace of the program.  
1214 To allow implementors to provide their own types, all POSIX.1 conforming applica-  
1215 tions are required to avoid symbols ending in "\_t", which permits the implementor  
1216 to provide additional types. Because a major use of types is in the definition of  
1217 structure members, which can (and in many cases must) be added to the struc-  
1218 tures defined in POSIX.1, the need for additional types is compelling.

1219 The types such as *ushort* and *ulong*, which are in common usage, are not defined  
1220 in POSIX.1 (although *ushort\_t* would be permitted as an extension). They can be  
1221 added to `<sys/types.h>` using a feature test macro (see 2.7.2). A suggested  
1222 symbol for these is `_SYSIII`. Similarly, the types like *u\_short* would probably be  
1223 best controlled by `_BSD`.

1224 Some of these symbols may appear in other headers; see 2.7.

1225	<i>dev_t</i>	This type may be made large enough to accommodate host-locality considerations of networked systems.
1226		
1227		This type must be arithmetic. Earlier drafts allowed this to be nonarithmetic (such as a structure) and provided a <i>samefile()</i> function for comparison.
1228		
1229		
1230	<i>gid_t</i>	Some implementations had separated <i>gid_t</i> from <i>uid_t</i> before POSIX.1 was completed. It would be difficult for them to coalesce them when it was unnecessary. Additionally, it is quite possible that user IDs might be different than group IDs because the user ID might wish to span a heterogeneous network, where the group ID might not.
1231		
1232		
1233		
1234		
1235		
1236		For current implementations, the cost of having a separate <i>gid_t</i> will be only lexical.
1237		
1238	<i>mode_t</i>	This type was chosen so that implementations could choose the appropriate integral type, and for compatibility with the C Standard [2]. 4.3BSD uses <i>unsigned short</i> and the SVID uses <i>ushort</i> , which is the same. Historically, only the low-order sixteen bits are significant.
1239		
1240		
1241		
1242		
1243	<i>nlink_t</i>	This type was introduced in place of <i>short</i> for <i>st_nlink</i> (see 5.6.1) in response to an objection that <i>short</i> was too small.
1244		
1245	<i>off_t</i>	This type is used only in <i>lseek()</i> , <i>fcntl()</i> , and <code>&lt;sys/stat.h&gt;</code> . Many implementations would have difficulties if it were defined as anything other than <i>long</i> . Requiring an integral type limits the capabilities of <i>lseek()</i> to four gigabytes. See the description of <i>bread()</i> in B.6.4. Also, the C Standard [2] supplies routines that use larger types: see <i>fgetpos()</i> and <i>fsetpos()</i> in B.6.5.3.
1246		
1247		
1248		
1249		
1250		
1251	<i>pid_t</i>	The inclusion of this symbol was controversial because it is tied to the issue of the representation of a process ID as a number. From the point of view of a portable application, process IDs should be “magic cookies” <sup>2)</sup> that are produced by calls such as <i>fork()</i> , used by calls such as <i>waitpid()</i> or <i>kill()</i> , and not otherwise analyzed (except that the sign is used as a flag for certain operations).
1252		
1253		
1254		
1255		
1256		
1257		
1258		The concept of a {PID_MAX} value interacted with this in early drafts. Treating process IDs as an opaque type both removes the requirement for {PID_MAX} and allows systems to be more flexible in providing process IDs that span a large range of values, or a small one.
1259		
1260		
1261		
1262		

1263 2) An historical term meaning: “An opaque object, or token, of determinate size, whose significance  
1264 is known only to the entity which created it. An entity receiving such a token from the  
1265 generating entity may only make such use of the ‘cookie’ as is defined and permitted by the  
1266 supplying entity.”

- 1267 Since the values in *uid\_t*, *gid\_t*, and *pid\_t* will be numbers generally, and potentially both large in magnitude and sparse, applications that are based on arrays of objects of this type are unlikely to be fully portable in any case. Solutions that treat them as magic cookies will be portable.
- 1268
- 1269
- 1270
- 1271
- 1272 {CHILD\_MAX} precludes the possibility of a "toy implementation," where there would only be one process.
- 1273
- 1274 *ssize\_t* This is intended to be a signed analog of *size\_t*. The wording is such that an implementation may either choose to use a longer type or simply to use the signed version of the type that underlies *size\_t*. All functions that return *ssize\_t* [*read()* and *write()*] describe as "implementation defined" the result of an input exceeding {SSIZE\_MAX}. It is recognized that some implementations might have *ints* that are smaller than *size\_t*. A portable application would be constrained not to perform I/O in pieces larger than {SSIZE\_MAX}, but a portable application using extensions would be able to use the full range if the implementation provided an extended range, while still having a single type-compatible interface.
- 1275
- 1276
- 1277
- 1278
- 1279
- 1280
- 1281
- 1282
- 1283
- 1284
- 1285
- 1286 The symbols *size\_t* and *ssize\_t* are also required in `<unistd.h>` to minimize the changes needed for calls to *read()* and *write()*. Implementors are reminded that it must be possible to include both `<sys/types.h>` and `<unistd.h>` in the same program (in either order) without error.
- 1287
- 1288
- 1289
- 1290
- 1291 *uid\_t* Before the addition of this type, the data types used to represent these values varied throughout early drafts. The `<sys/stat.h>` header defined these values as type *short*, the `<passwd.h>` file (now `<pwd.h>` and `<grp.h>`) used an *int*, and *getuid()* returned an *int*. In response to a strong objection to the inconsistent definitions, all the types were switched to *uid\_t*.
- 1292
- 1293
- 1294
- 1295
- 1296
- 1297
- 1298 In practice, those historical implementations that use varying types of this sort can typedef *uid\_t* to *short* with no serious consequences.
- 1299
- 1300
- 1301 The problem associated with this change concerns object compatibility after structure size changes. Since most implementations will define *uid\_t* as a *short*, the only substantive change will be a reduction in the size of the *passwd* structure. Consequently, implementations with an overriding concern for object compatibility can pad the structure back to its current size. For that reason, this problem was not considered critical enough to warrant the addition of a separate type to POSIX.1.
- 1302
- 1303
- 1304
- 1305
- 1306
- 1307
- 1308
- 1309 The types *uid\_t* and *gid\_t* are magic cookies. There is no {UID\_MAX} defined by POSIX.1, and no structure imposed on *uid\_t* and *gid\_t* other than that they be positive arithmetic types. (In fact, they could be *unsigned char*.) There is no maximum or minimum specified for the number of distinct user or group IDs.
- 1310
- 1311
- 1312
- 1313
- 1314

1315 **B.2.6 Environment Description**

1316 The variable *environ* is not intended to be declared in any header, but rather to be  
1317 declared by the user for accessing the array of strings that is the environment.  
1318 This is the traditional usage of the symbol. Putting it into a header could break  
1319 some programs that use the symbol for their own purposes.

1320 **LC\_\*** The description of the environment variable names starting  
1321 with the characters "LC\_" acknowledges the fact that the inter-  
1322 faces presented in the current version of POSIX.1 are not com-  
1323 plete and may be extended as new international functionality is  
1324 required. In the C Standard {2}, names preceded by "LC\_" are  
1325 reserved in the name space for future categories.

1326 To avoid name clashes, new categories and environment vari-  
1327 ables are divided into two classifications: implementation  
1328 independent and implementation dependent.

1329 Implementation-independent names will have the following  
1330 format:

1331 **LC\_NAME**

1332 where *NAME* is the name of the new category and environment  
1333 variable. Capital letters must be used for implementation-  
1334 independent names.

1335 Implementation-dependent names must be in lowercase letters,  
1336 as below:

1337 **LC\_name**

1338 **PATH** Many historical implementations of the Bourne shell do not  
1339 interpret a trailing colon to represent the current working  
1340 directory and are thus nonconforming. The C Shell and the  
1341 KornShell conform to POSIX.1 on this point. The usual name of  
1342 dot may also be used to refer to the current working directory.

1343 **TZ** See 8.1.1 for an explanation of the format.

1344 **LOGNAME** 4.3BSD uses the environment variable **USER** for this purpose.  
1345 In most implementations, the value of such a variable is easily  
1346 forged, so security-critical applications should rely on other  
1347 means of determining user identity. **LOGNAME** is required to  
1348 be constructed from the portable filename character set for rea-  
1349 sons of interchange. No diagnostic condition is specified for  
1350 violating this rule, and no requirement for enforcement exists.  
1351 The intent of the requirement is that if extended characters are  
1352 used, the "guarantee" of portability implied by a standard is  
1353 voided. (See also B.2.2.2.)

1354 The following environment variables have been used historically as indicated.  
1355 However, such use was either so variant as to not be amenable to standardization  
1356 or to be relevant only to other facilities not specified in POSIX.1, and they have  
1357 therefore been excluded. They may or may not be included in future POSIX stan-  
1358 dards. Until then, writers of conforming applications should be aware that

1359 details of the use of these variables are likely to vary in different contexts.

1360     **IFS**            Characters used as field separators.

1361     **MAIL**         System mailer information.

1362     **PS1**          Prompting string for interactive programs.

1363     **PS2**          Prompting string for interactive programs.

1364     **SHELL**        The shell command interpreter name.

## 1365     **B.2.7 C Language Definitions**

1366     The construct `<name.h>` for headers is also taken from the C Standard {2}.

### 1367     **B.2.7.1 Symbols From the C Standard**

1368     The reservation of identifiers is paraphrased from the C Standard {2}. The text is  
1369 included because it needs to be part of POSIX.1, regardless of possible changes in  
1370 future versions of the C Standard {2}. The reservation of other namespaces is par-  
1371 ticularly for `<errno.h>`.

1372     These identifiers may be used by implementations, particularly for feature test  
1373 macros. Implementations should not use feature test macro names that might be  
1374 reasonably used by a standard.

1375     The requirement for representing the number of clock ticks in 24 h refers to the  
1376 interval defined by POSIX.1, not to the interval defined by the C Standard {2}.

1377     Including headers more than once is a reasonably common practice, and it should  
1378 be carried forward from the C Standard {2}. More significantly, having definitions  
1379 in more than one header is explicitly permitted. Where the potential declaration  
1380 is "benign" (the same definition twice) the declaration can be repeated, if that is  
1381 permitted by the compiler. (This is usually true of macros, for example.) In those  
1382 situations where a repetition is not benign (e.g., typedefs), conditional compilation  
1383 must be used. The situation actually occurs both within the C Standard {2} and  
1384 within POSIX.1: `time_t` should be in `<sys/types.h>`, and the C Standard {2}  
1385 mandates that it be in `<time.h>`. POSIX.1 requires using `<sys/types.h>` with  
1386 `<time.h>` because of the common-usage environment.

### 1387     **B.2.7.2 POSIX.1 Symbols**

1388     This subclause addresses the issue of "namespace pollution." The C Standard {2}  
1389 requires that the namespace beyond what it reserves not be altered except by  
1390 explicit action of the application writer. This subclause defines the actions to add  
1391 the POSIX.1 symbols for those headers where both the C Standard {2} and POSIX.1  
1392 need to define symbols. Where there are nonoverlapping uses of headers, there is  
1393 no problem.

1394     The list of symbols defined in the C Standard {2} is summarized in the rationale  
1395 associated with Annex C.

1396     Implementors should note that the requirement on type conversion disallows

1397 using an older declaration as a prototype and in effect requires that the number of  
1398 arguments in the prototype match that given in POSIX.1.

1399 When headers are used to provide symbols, there is a potential for introducing  
1400 symbols that the application writer cannot predict. Ideally, each header should  
1401 only contain one set of symbols, but this is not practical for historical reasons.  
1402 Thus, the concept of feature test macros is included. This is done in a general  
1403 manner because it is expected that future additions to POSIX.1 and other related  
1404 standards will have this same problem. (Future standards not constrained by  
1405 historical practice should avoid the problem by using new header files rather than  
1406 using ones already extant.)

1407 This idea is split into two subclauses: 2.7.2.1 covers the case of the C Standard  
1408 {2} conformant systems, where the requirements of the C Standard {2} are that  
1409 unless specifically requested the application will not see any other symbols, and  
1410 "Common Usage," where the default set of symbols is not well controlled and  
1411 backwards compatibility is an issue.

1412 The common usage case is the more difficult to define. In the C Standard {2} case,  
1413 each feature test macro simply adds to the possible symbols. In common usage,  
1414 `_POSIX_SOURCE` is a special case in that it reduces the set to the sum of the  
1415 C Standard {2} and POSIX.1. (The developers of the C Standard {2} will determine  
1416 if they want a similar macro to limit the features to just the C Standard {2}; the  
1417 wording permits this because under those circumstances `_POSIX_SOURCE` would  
1418 be just another ordinary feature test macro. The only order requirement is  
1419 "before headers.")

1420 If `_POSIX_SOURCE` is not defined in a common-usage environment, the user  
1421 presumably gets the same results as in previous releases. Some applications may  
1422 today be conformant without change, so they would continue to compile as long as  
1423 common usage is provided. When the C Standard {2} is the default they will have  
1424 to change (unless they are already C Standard {2} conformant), but this can be  
1425 done gradually.

1426 Note that the net result of defining `_POSIX_SOURCE` at the beginning of a pro-  
1427 gram is in either case the same: the implementation-defined symbols are only  
1428 visible if they are requested. (But if `_POSIX_SOURCE` is not used, the implemen-  
1429 tation default, which is probably backwards compatible, determines their  
1430 visibility.)

1431 The area of namespace pollution versus additions to structures is difficult because  
1432 of the macro structure of C. The following discussion summarizes all the various  
1433 problems with and objections to the issue.

1434 Note the phrase "user defined macro." Users are not permitted to define macro  
1435 names (or any other name) beginning with `_[A-Z_]`. Thus, the conflict cannot  
1436 occur for symbols reserved to the vendor's namespace, and the permission to add  
1437 fields automatically applies, without qualification, to those symbols.

- 1438 (1) Data structures (and unions) need to be defined in headers by implemen-  
1439 tations to meet certain requirements of POSIX.1 and the C Standard {2}.
- 1440 (2) The structures defined by POSIX.1 are typically minimal, and any practi-  
1441 cal implementation would wish to add fields to these structures either to  
1442 hold additional related information or for backwards compatibility (or

- 1443 both). Future standards (and de facto standards) would also wish to add  
1444 to these structures. Issues of field alignment make it impractical (at  
1445 least in the general case) to simply omit fields when they are not defined  
1446 by the particular standard involved.
- 1447 Struct *dirent* is an example of such a minimal structure (although one  
1448 could argue about whether the other fields need visible names). The  
1449 *st\_rdev* field of most implementations' *stat* structure is a common exam-  
1450 ple where extension is needed and where a conflict could occur.
- 1451 (3) Fields in structures are in an independent namespace, so the addition of  
1452 such fields presents no problem to the C language itself in that such  
1453 names cannot interact with identically named user symbols because  
1454 access is qualified by the specific structure name.
- 1455 (4) There is an exception to this: macro processing is done at a lexical level.  
1456 Thus, symbols added to a structure might be recognized as user-provided  
1457 macro names at the location where the structure is declared. This only  
1458 can occur if the user-provided name is declared as a macro before the  
1459 header declaring the structure is included. The user's use of the name  
1460 after the declaration cannot interfere with the structure because the sym-  
1461 bol is hidden and only accessible through access to the structure.  
1462 Presumably, the user would not declare such a macro if there was an  
1463 intention to use that field name.
- 1464 (5) Macros from the same or a related header might use the additional fields  
1465 in the structure, and those field names might also collide with user mac-  
1466 ros. Although this is a less frequent occurrence, since macros are  
1467 expanded at the point of use, no constraint on the order of use of names  
1468 can apply.
- 1469 (6) An "obvious" solution of using names in the reserved namespace and  
1470 then redefining them as macros when they should be visible does not  
1471 work because this has the effect of exporting the symbol into the general  
1472 namespace. For example, given a (hypothetical) system-provided header  
1473 <h.h>, and two parts of a C program in a.c and b.c:
- 1474 In header <h.h>:
- ```
1475 struct foo {
1476     int __i;
1477 }
1478 #ifdef _FEATURE_TEST
1479 #define i __i;
1480 #endif
```
- 1481 In file a.c:
- ```
1482 #include h.h
1483 extern int i;
1484 ...
```
- 1485 In file b.c:

1486           extern int i;  
1487           ...

1488           The symbol that the user thinks of as *i* in both files has an external  
1489           name of "`__i`" in *a.c*; the same symbol *i* in *b.c* has an external name  
1490           "*i*" (ignoring any hidden manipulations the compiler might perform on  
1491           the names). This would cause a mysterious name resolution problem  
1492           when *a.o* and *b.o* are linked.

1493           Simply avoiding definition then causes alignment problems in the  
1494           structure.

1495           A structure of the form

```
1496           struct foo {  
1497                 union {  
1498                     int __i;  
1499                 #ifdef _FEATURE_TEST  
1500                     int i;  
1501                 #endif  
1502                 } __ii;  
1503           }
```

1504           does not work because the name of the logical field *i* is "`__ii.i`", and  
1505           introduction of a macro to restore the logical name immediately reintroduces  
1506           the problem discussed previously (although its manifestation  
1507           might be more immediate because a syntax error would result if a recursive  
1508           macro did not cause it to fail first).

1509           (7) A more workable solution would be to declare the structure:

```
1510           struct foo {  
1511                 #ifdef _FEATURE_TEST  
1512                     int i;  
1513                 #else  
1514                     int __i;  
1515                 #endif  
1516           }
```

1517           However, if a macro (particularly one required by a standard) is to be  
1518           defined that uses this field, two must be defined: one that uses *i*, the  
1519           other that uses `__i`. If more than one additional field is used in a macro  
1520           and they are conditional on distinct combinations of features, the complexity  
1521           goes up as  $2^n$ .

1522           All this leaves a difficult situation: vendors must provide very complex headers to  
1523           deal with what is conceptually simple and safe: adding a field to a structure. It is  
1524           the possibility of user-provided macros with the same name that makes this  
1525           difficult.

1526           Several alternatives were proposed that involved constraining the user's access to  
1527           part of the namespace available to the user (as specified by the C Standard {2}).  
1528           In some cases, this was only until all the headers had been included. There were  
1529           two proposals discussed that failed to achieve consensus:

- 1530 — Limiting it for the whole program.
- 1531 — Restricting the use of identifiers containing only uppercase letters until  
1532 after all system headers had been included. It was also pointed out that  
1533 because macros might wish to access fields of a structure (and macro  
1534 expansion occurs totally at point of use) restricting names in this way  
1535 would not protect the macro expansion, and thus the solution was  
1536 inadequate.
- 1537 It was finally decided that reservation of symbols would occur, but as constrained.
- 1538 The current wording also allows the addition of fields to a structure, but requires  
1539 that user macros of the same name not interfere. This allows vendors to either:
- 1540 — Not create the situation [do not extend the structures with user-accessible  
1541 names or use the solution in (7) above] or
- 1542 — Extend their compilers to allow some way of adding names to structures  
1543 and macros safely.
- 1544 There are at least two ways that the compiler might be extended: add new  
1545 preprocessor directives that turn off and on macro expansion for certain symbols  
1546 (without changing the value of the macro) and a function or lexical operation that  
1547 suppresses expansion of a word. The latter seems more flexible, particularly  
1548 because it addresses the problem in macros as well as in declarations.
- 1549 The following seems to be a possible implementation extension to the C language  
1550 that will do this: any token that during macro expansion is found to be preceded  
1551 by three # symbols shall not be further expanded in exactly the same way as  
1552 described for macros that expand to their own name as in section 3.8.3.4 of the  
1553 C Standard (2). A vendor may also wish to implement this as an operation that is  
1554 lexically a function, which might be implemented as
- ```
1555     #define __safe_name(x) ###x
```
- 1556 Using a function notation would insulate vendors from changes in standards until  
1557 such a functionality is standardized (if ever). Standardization of such a function  
1558 would be valuable because it would then permit third parties to take advantage of  
1559 it portably in software they may supply.
- 1560 The symbols that are “explicitly permitted, but not required by this part of  
1561 ISO/IEC 9945” include those classified below. (That is, the symbols classified  
1562 below might, but are not required to, be present when `_POSIX_SOURCE` is  
1563 defined.)
- 1564 — Symbols in 2.8 and 2.9 that are defined to indicate support for options or  
1565 limits that are constant at compile-time.
- 1566 — Symbols in the namespace reserved for the implementation by the  
1567 C Standard (2).
- 1568 — Symbols in a namespace reserved for a particular type of extension (e.g.,  
1569 type names ending with `_t` in `<sys/types.h>`).
- 1570 — Additional members of structures or unions whose names do not reduce the  
1571 namespace reserved for applications (see B.2.7.2).

1572 The phrase “when that header is included” was chosen to allow any fine structure  
1573 of auxiliary headers the implementor may choose to use, as long as the net result  
1574 is as required.

1575 There are several common environments available today where a feature test  
1576 macro would be useful to applications programmers during the transition to  
1577 standard-conforming environments from certain common historical environments.  
1578 The symbols in Table B-1, derived from common porting bases and industry  
1579 specifications are suggested.

1580 **Table B-1 – Suggested Feature Test Macros**

| 1581 | Symbol                  | Description                              |
|------|-------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 1582 | <code>_V7</code>        | Version 7                                |
| 1583 | <code>_BSD</code>       | General BSD systems                      |
| 1584 | <code>_BSD4_2</code>    | 4.2BSD                                   |
| 1585 | <code>_BSD4_3</code>    | 4.3BSD                                   |
| 1586 | <code>_SYSIII</code>    | System III                               |
| 1587 | <code>_SYSV</code>      | System V.1, V.2                          |
| 1588 | <code>_SYSV3</code>     | System V.3                               |
| 1589 | <code>_XPGn</code>      | X/Open Portability Guide, Issue <i>n</i> |
| 1590 | <code>_USR_GROUP</code> | The 1984 /usr/group standard             |
| 1591 |                         |                                          |
| 1592 |                         |                                          |

1593 Only symbols that are actually in the porting base or industry specification should  
1594 be enabled by these symbols.

1595 Feature test macros for implementation extensions will also probably be required.  
1596 Quite a few of these are traditionally available, but are in violation of the intent of  
1597 namespace pollution control. These can be made conforming simply by prefixing  
1598 them with an underscore. Symbols beginning with “\_POSIX” are strongly  
1599 discouraged, as they will probably be used by later revisions of POSIX.1.

1600 The environment for compilation has traditionally been fairly portable in histori-  
1601 cal systems, but during the transition to the C Standard (2) there will be confu-  
1602 sion about how to specify that a C Standard (2) compiler is expected, as considera-  
1603 tions of backwards compatibility will constrain many implementors from provid-  
1604 ing a conformant environment replacing the traditional one. This concern has  
1605 more to do with the issues of namespace than with the syntax of the language  
1606 accepted, which is highly compatible.

1607 For systems that are sufficiently similar to traditional UNIX systems for this to  
1608 make sense, it is suggested that if a compilation line of the form

1609 `cc -D__STDC__ ...`

1610 is provided, that the system provide an environment that is conformant with the  
1611 C Standard (2), at least with respect to namespace.

1612 It was decided to use feature test macros, rather than the inclusion of a header,  
1613 both because `<unistd.h>` was already in use and would itself have this problem,  
1614 and because the underlying mechanism would probably have been this anyway,  
1615 but in a less flexible fashion.

1616 POSIX.1 requires that headers be included in all cases, although it is not directly  
1617 clear from the text at this point in the standard. If a function does not need any  
1618 special types, then it must be declared in `<unistd.h>`, as stated here. If it does  
1619 require something special, then it has an associated header, and the program will  
1620 not compile without that header.

### 1621 **B.2.7.3 Headers and Function Prototypes**

1622 The statement that names need not be carried forward literally exists for several  
1623 reasons. These include the fact that some vendors may historically use other  
1624 names and that the names are irrelevant to application portability. More impor-  
1625 tantly, because of the pervasive nature of C macros, a declaration of the form:

```
1626     kill (pid_t pid, int sig);
```

1627 could be seriously undermined by a (perfectly valid) user declaration of the form:

```
1628     #define pid statusstruct.pidinfo
```

### 1629 **B.2.8 Numerical Limits**

1630 This subclause clarifies the scope and mutability of several classes of limits.

#### 1631 **B.2.8.1 C Language Limits**

1632 See also 2.7 and B.1.1.1.

1633 [CHAR\_MIN] It is possible to tell if the implementation supports native char-  
1634 character comparison as signed or unsigned by comparing this limit  
1635 to zero.

1636 [WORD\_BIT] This limit has been omitted, as it is not referenced elsewhere in  
1637 POSIX.1.

1638 No limits are given in `<limits.h>` for floating point values because none of the  
1639 functions in POSIX.1 use floating point values, and all the functions that do that  
1640 are imported from the C Standard (2) by 8.1, as are the limits that apply to the  
1641 floating point values associated with them.

1642 Though limits to the addresses to system calls were proposed, they were not  
1643 included in POSIX.1 because it is not clear how to implement them for the range of  
1644 systems being considered, and no complete proposal was ever received. Limits  
1645 regarding hardware register characteristics were similarly proposed and not  
1646 attempted.

#### 1647 **B.2.8.2 Minimum Values**

1648 There has been confusion about the minimum maxima, and when that is under-  
1649 stood there is still a concern about providing ways to allocate storage based on the  
1650 symbols. This is particularly true for those in 2.8.4 where an indeterminate value  
1651 will leave the programmer with no symbol upon which to fall back.

1652 Providing explicit symbols for the minima (from the implementor's point of view,  
1653 or maxima from the the application's point of view) helps to resolve possible

1654 confusion. Symbols are still provided for the actual value, and it is expected that  
1655 many applications will take advantage of these larger values, but they need not  
1656 do so unless it is to their advantage. Where the values in this subclause are ade-  
1657 quate for the application, it should use them. These are given symbolically both  
1658 because it is easier to understand and because the values of these symbols could  
1659 change between revisions of POSIX.1. Arguments to “good programming practice”  
1660 also apply.

### 1661 **B.2.8.3 Run-Time Inceasable Values**

1662 The heading of the far-right column of the table is given as “Minimum Value”  
1663 rather than “Value” in order to emphasize that the numbers given in that column  
1664 are minimal for the actual values a specific implementation is permitted to define  
1665 in its `<limits.h>`. The values in the actual `<limits.h>` define, in turn, the  
1666 maximum amount of a given resource that a Conforming POSIX.1 Application can  
1667 depend on finding when translated to execute on that implementation. A Con-  
1668 forming POSIX.1 Application Using Extensions must function correctly even if the  
1669 value given in `<limits.h>` is the minimum that is specified in POSIX.1. (The  
1670 application may still be written so that it performs more efficiently when a larger  
1671 value is found in `<limits.h>`.) A conforming implementation must provide at  
1672 least as much of a particular resource as that given by the value in POSIX.1. An  
1673 implementation that cannot meet this requirement (a “toy implementation”) can-  
1674 not be a conforming implementation.

### 1675 **B.2.8.4 Run-Time Invariant Values (Possibly Indeterminate)**

1676 {CHILD\_MAX} This name can be misleading. This limit applies to all  
1677 processes in the system with the same user ID, regardless of  
1678 ancestry.

### 1679 **B.2.8.5 Pathname Variable Values**

1680 {MAX\_INPUT} Since the only use of this limit is in relation to terminal input  
1681 queues, it mentions them specifically. This limit was originally  
1682 named {MAX\_CHAR}. Application writers should use  
1683 {MAX\_INPUT} primarily as an indication of the number of bytes  
1684 that can be written as a single unit by one Conforming POSIX.1  
1685 Application Using Extensions communicating with another via  
1686 a terminal device. It is not implied that input lines received  
1687 from terminal devices always contain {MAX\_INPUT} bytes or  
1688 fewer: an application that attempts to read more than  
1689 {MAX\_INPUT} bytes from a terminal may receive more than  
1690 {MAX\_INPUT} bytes.

1691 It is not obvious that {MAX\_INPUT} is of direct value to the  
1692 application writer. The existence of such a value (whatever it  
1693 may be) is directly of use in understanding how the tty driver  
1694 works (particularly with respect to flow control and dropped  
1695 characters). The value can be determined by finding out when  
1696 flow control takes effect (see the description of IXOFF in  
1697 7.1.2.2).

1698 Understanding that the limit exists and knowing its magnitude  
1699 is important to making certain classes of applications work  
1700 correctly. It is unlikely to be used in an application, but its  
1701 presence makes POSIX.1 clearer.

1702 **[PATH\_MAX]** A Conforming POSIX.1 Application or Conforming POSIX.1  
1703 Application Using Extensions that, for example, compiles to use  
1704 different algorithms depending on the value of **[PATH\_MAX]**  
1705 should use code such as:

```
1706 #if defined(PATH_MAX) && PATH_MAX < 512
1707     ...
1708 #else
1709 #if defined(PATH_MAX) /* PATH_MAX >= 512 */
1710     ...
1711 #else /* PATH_MAX indeterminate */
1712     ...
1713 #endif
1714 #endif
```

1715 This is because the value tends to be very large or indeter-  
1716 minate on most historical implementations (it is arbitrarily  
1717 large on System V). On such systems there is no way to quan-  
1718 tify the limit, and it seems counterproductive to include an  
1719 artificially small fixed value in `<limits.h>` in such cases.

## 1720 **B.2.9 Symbolic Constants**

### 1721 **B.2.9.1 Symbolic Constants for the *access()* Function**

1722 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

### 1723 **B.2.9.2 Symbolic Constants for the *lseek()* Function**

1724 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

### 1725 **B.2.9.3 Compile-Time Symbolic Constants for Portability Specifications**

1726 The purpose of this material is to allow an application developer to have a chance  
1727 to determine whether a given application would run (or run well) on a given  
1728 implementation. To this purpose has been added that of simplifying development  
1729 of verification suites for POSIX.1. The constants given here were originally pro-  
1730 posed for a separate file, `<posix.h>`, but it was decided that they should appear  
1731 in `<unistd.h>` along with other symbolic constants.

### 1732 **B.2.9.4 Execution-Time Symbolic Constants for Portability Specifications**

1733 Without the addition of `{_POSIX_NO_TRUNC}` and `{_PC_NO_TRUNC}` to this list,  
1734 POSIX.1 says nothing about the effect of a pathname component longer than  
1735 `{NAME_MAX}`. There are only two effects in common use in implementations:  
1736 truncation or an error. It is desirable to limit allowable behavior to these two

1737 cases. It is also desirable to permit applications to determine what an  
1738 implementation's behavior is because services that are available with one  
1739 behavior may be impractical to provide with the other. However, since the  
1740 behavior may vary from one file system to another, it may be necessary to use  
1741 *pathconf()* to resolve it.

## 1742 **B.3 Process Primitives**

1743 Consideration was given to enumerating all characteristics of a process defined by  
1744 POSIX.1 and describing each function in terms of its effects on those characteris-  
1745 tics, rather than English text. This is quite different from any known descriptions  
1746 of historical implementations, and it was not certain that this could be done ade-  
1747 quately and completely enough to produce a usable standard. Providing such  
1748 descriptions in addition to the text was also considered. This was not done  
1749 because it would provide at best two redundant descriptions, and more likely two  
1750 descriptions with subtle inconsistencies.

### 1751 **B.3.1 Process Creation and Execution**

1752 Running a new program takes two steps. First the existing process (the parent)  
1753 calls the *fork()* function, producing a new process (the child), which is a copy of  
1754 itself. One of these processes (normally, but not necessarily, the child) then calls  
1755 one of the *exec* functions to overlay itself with a copy of the new process image.

1756 If the new program is to be run synchronously (the parent suspends execution  
1757 until the child completes), the parent process then uses either the *wait()* or *wait-*  
1758 *pid()* function. If the new program is to be run asynchronously, it does not suffice  
1759 to simply omit the *wait()* or *waitpid()* call, because after the child terminates it  
1760 continues to hold some resources until it is waited for. A common way to produce  
1761 ("spawn") a descendant process that does not need to be waited on is to *fork()* to  
1762 produce a child and *wait()* on the child. The child *fork()*s again to produce a  
1763 grandchild. The child then exits and the parent's *wait()* returns. The grandchild  
1764 is thus disinherited by its grandparent.

1765 A simpler method (from the programmer's point of view) of spawning is to do

```
1766     system("something &");
```

1767 However, this depends on features of a process (the shell) that are outside the  
1768 scope of POSIX.1, although they are currently being addressed by the working  
1769 group preparing ISO/IEC 9945-2 {B36}.

#### 1770 **B.3.1.1 Process Creation**

1771 Many historical implementations have timing windows where a signal sent to a  
1772 process group (e.g., an interactive SIGINT) just prior to or during execution of  
1773 *fork()* is delivered to the parent following the *fork()* but not to the child because  
1774 the *fork()* code clears the child's set of pending signals. POSIX.1 does not require,  
1775 or even permit, this behavior. However, it is pragmatic to expect that problems of  
1776 this nature may continue to exist in implementations that appear to conform to

1777 POSIX.1 and pass available verification suites. This behavior is only a conse-  
1778 quence of the implementation failing to make the interval between signal genera-  
1779 tion and delivery totally invisible. From the application's perspective, a *fork()*  
1780 should appear atomic. A signal that is generated prior to the *fork()* should be  
1781 delivered prior to the *fork()*. A signal sent to the process group after the *fork()*  
1782 should be delivered to both parent and child. The implementation might actually  
1783 initialize internal data structures corresponding to the child's set of pending sig-  
1784 nals to include signals sent to the process group during the *fork()*. Since the  
1785 *fork()* call can be considered as atomic from the application's perspective, the set  
1786 would be initialized as empty and such signals would have arrived after the  
1787 *fork()*. See also B.3.3.1.2.

1788 One approach that has been suggested to address the problem of signal inheri-  
1789 tance across *fork()* is to add an [EINTR] error, which would be returned when a  
1790 signal is detected during the call. While this is preferable to losing signals, it was  
1791 not considered an optimal solution. Although it is not recommended for this pur-  
1792 pose, such an error would be an allowable extension for an implementation.

1793 The [ENOMEM] error value is reserved for those implementations that detect and  
1794 distinguish such a condition. This condition occurs when an implementation  
1795 detects that there is not enough memory to create the process. This is intended  
1796 to be returned when [EAGAIN] is inappropriate because there can never be enough  
1797 memory (either primary or secondary storage) to perform the operation. Because  
1798 *fork()* duplicates an existing process, this must be a condition where there is  
1799 sufficient memory for one such process, but not for two. Many historical imple-  
1800 mentations actually return [ENOMEM] due to temporary lack of memory, a case  
1801 that is not generally distinct from [EAGAIN] from the perspective of a portable  
1802 application.

1803 Part of the reason for including the optional error [ENOMEM] is because the SVID  
1804 (B39) specifies it and it should be reserved for the error condition specified there.  
1805 The condition is not applicable on many implementations.

1806 IEEE Std 1003.1-1988 neglected to require concurrent execution of the parent and  
1807 child of *fork()*. A system that single-threads processes was clearly not intended  
1808 and is considered an unacceptable, "toy implementation" of POSIX.1. The only  
1809 objection anticipated to the phrase "executing independently" is testability, but  
1810 this assertion should be testable. Such tests require that both the parent and  
1811 child can block on a detectable action of the other, such as a write to a pipe or a  
1812 signal. An interactive exchange of such actions should be possible for the system  
1813 to conform to the intent of POSIX.1.

1814 The [EAGAIN] error exists to warn applications that such a condition might occur.  
1815 Whether it will occur or not is not in any practical sense under the control of the  
1816 application because the condition is usually a consequence of the user's use of the  
1817 system, not of the application's code. Thus, no application can or should rely upon  
1818 its occurrence under any circumstances, nor should the exact semantics of what  
1819 concept of "user" is used be of concern to the application writer. Validation writ-  
1820 ers should be cognizant of this limitation.

1821 **B.3.1.2 Execute a File**

1822 Early drafts of POSIX.1 required that the value of *argc* passed to *main()* be “one or  
1823 greater.” This was driven by the same requirement in drafts of the C Standard  
1824 (2). In fact, historical implementations have passed a value of zero when no argu-  
1825 ments are supplied to the caller of the *exec* functions. This requirement was  
1826 removed from the C Standard (2) and subsequently removed from POSIX.1 as well.  
1827 The POSIX.1 wording, in particular the use of the word “should,” requires a  
1828 Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Application (see 1.3.3) to pass at least one argument  
1829 to the *exec* function, thus guaranteeing that *argc* be one or greater when invoked  
1830 by such an application. In fact, this is good practice, since many existing applica-  
1831 tions reference *argv*[0] without first checking the value of *argc*.

1832 The requirement on a Strictly Conforming POSIX.1 Application also states that  
1833 the value passed as the first argument be a filename associated with the process  
1834 being started. Although some existing applications pass a pathname rather than  
1835 a filename in some circumstances, a filename is more generally useful, since the  
1836 common usage of *argv*[0] is in printing diagnostics. In some cases the filename  
1837 passed is not the actual filename of the file; for example, many implementations  
1838 of the *login* utility use a convention of prefixing a hyphen (-) to the actual  
1839 filename, which indicates to the command interpreter being invoked that it is a  
1840 “login shell.”

1841 Some systems can *exec* shell scripts. This functionality is outside the scope of  
1842 POSIX.1, since it requires standardization of the command interpreter language of  
1843 the script and/or where to find a command interpreter. These fall in the domain  
1844 of the shell and utilities standard, currently under development as ISO/IEC 9945-2  
1845 (B36). However, it is important that POSIX.1 neither require nor preclude any  
1846 reasonable implementation of this behavior. In particular, the description of the  
1847 [ENOEXEC] error is intended to permit discretion to implementations on whether  
1848 to give this error for shell scripts.

1849 One common historical implementation is that the *execl()*, *execv()*, *execle()*, and  
1850 *execve()* functions return an [ENOEXEC] error for any file not recognizable as exe-  
1851 cutable, including a shell script. When the *execlp()* and *execvp()* functions  
1852 encounter such a file, they assume the file to be a shell script and invoke a known  
1853 command interpreter to interpret such files. These implementations of *execvp()*  
1854 and *execlp()* only give the [ENOEXEC] error in the rare case of a problem with the  
1855 command interpreter’s executable file. Because of these implementations the  
1856 [ENOEXEC] error is not mentioned for *execlp()* or *execvp()*, although implementa-  
1857 tions can still give it.

1858 Another way that some historical implementations handle shell scripts is by  
1859 recognizing the first two bytes of the file as the character string #! and using the  
1860 remainder of the first line of the file as the name of the command interpreter to  
1861 execute.

1862 Some implementations provide a third argument to *main()* called *envp*. This is  
1863 defined as a pointer to the environment. The C Standard (2) specifies invoking  
1864 *main()* with two arguments, so implementations must support applications writ-  
1865 ten this way. Since POSIX.1 defines the global variable *environ*, which is also pro-  
1866 vided by historical implementations and can be used anywhere *envp* could be  
1867 used, there is no functional need for the *envp* argument. Applications should use

1868 the *getenv()* function rather than accessing the environment directly via either  
1869 *envp* or *environ*. Implementations are required to support the two-argument call-  
1870 ing sequence, but this does not prohibit an implementation from supporting *envp*  
1871 as an optional, third argument.

1872 POSIX.1 specifies that signals set to SIG\_IGN remain set to SIG\_IGN and that the  
1873 process signal mask be unchanged across an *exec*. This is consistent with histori-  
1874 cal implementations, and it permits some useful functionality, such as the *nohup*  
1875 command. However, it should be noted that many existing applications wrongly  
1876 assume that they start with certain signals set to the default action and/or  
1877 unblocked. In particular, applications written with a simpler signal model that  
1878 does not include blocking of signals, such as the one in the C Standard {2}, may  
1879 not behave properly if invoked with some signals blocked. Therefore, it is best not  
1880 to block or ignore signals across *execs* without explicit reason to do so, and espe-  
1881 cially not to block signals across *execs* of arbitrary (not closely co-operating)  
1882 programs.

1883 If `{_POSIX_SAVED_IDS}` is defined, the *exec* functions always save the value of the  
1884 effective user ID and effective group ID of the process at the completion of the  
1885 *exec*, whether or not the set-user-ID or the set-group-ID bit of the process image  
1886 file is set.

1887 The statement about *argv[]* and *envp[]* being constants is included to make expli-  
1888 cit to future writers of language bindings that these objects are completely con-  
1889 stant. Due to a limitation of the C Standard {2}, it is not possible to state that  
1890 idea in Standard C. Specifying two levels of *const*-qualification for the *argv[]*  
1891 and *envp[]* parameters for the *exec* functions may seem to be the natural choice,  
1892 given that these functions do not modify either the array of pointers or the charac-  
1893 ters to which the function points, but this would disallow existing correct code.  
1894 Instead, only the array of pointers is noted as constant. The table of assignment  
1895 compatibility for *dst = src*, derived from the C Standard {2}, summarizes the  
1896 compatibility:

|                                  | <i>dst:</i>     |                |                 |                     |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
|                                  |                 | <i>const</i>   | <i>char</i>     | <i>const</i>        |
|                                  | <i>char *[]</i> | <i>char*[]</i> | <i>*const[]</i> | <i>char*const[]</i> |
| 1900 <i>src:</i>                 |                 |                |                 |                     |
| 1901 <i>char *[]</i>             | VALID           |                | VALID           |                     |
| 1902 <i>const char *[]</i>       |                 | VALID          |                 | VALID               |
| 1903 <i>char * const []</i>      |                 |                | VALID           |                     |
| 1904 <i>const char *const []</i> |                 |                |                 | VALID               |

1905 Since all existing code has a source type matching the first row, the column that  
1906 gives the most valid combinations is the third column. The only other possibility  
1907 is the fourth column, but using it would require a cast on the *argv* or *envp* argu-  
1908 ments. It is unfortunate that the fourth column cannot be used, because the  
1909 declaration a nonexpert would naturally use would be that in the second row.

1910 The C Standard {2} and POSIX.1 do not conflict on the use of *environ*, but some  
1911 historical implementations of *environ* may cause a conflict. As long as *environ* is  
1912 treated in the same way as an entry point [e.g., *fork()*], it conforms to both stan-  
1913 dards. A library can contain *fork()*, but if there is a user-provided *fork()*, that

1914 *fork()* is given precedence and no problem ensues. The situation is similar for  
1915 *environ*—the POSIX.1 definition is to be used if there is no user-provided *environ*  
1916 to take precedence. At least three implementations are known to exist that solve  
1917 this problem.

1918 [E2BIG] The limit {ARG\_MAX} applies not just to the size of the argu-  
1919 ment list, but to the sum of that and the size of the environ-  
1920 ment list.

1921 [EFAULT] Some historical systems return [EFAULT] rather than  
1922 [ENOEXEC] when the new process image file is corrupted. They  
1923 are nonconforming.

1924 [ENAMETOOLONG]  
1925 Since the file pathname may be constructed by taking elements  
1926 in the PATH variable and putting them together with the  
1927 filename, the [ENAMETOOLONG] condition could also be  
1928 reached this way.

1929 [ETXTBSY] The error [ETXTBSY] was considered too implementation  
1930 dependent to include. System V returns this error when the  
1931 executable file is currently open for writing by some process.  
1932 POSIX.1 neither requires nor prohibits this behavior.

1933 Other systems (such as System V) may return [EINTR] from *exec*. This is not  
1934 addressed by POSIX.1, but implementations may have a window between the call  
1935 to *exec* and the time that a signal could cause one of the *exec* calls to return with  
1936 [EINTR].

### 1937 B.3.2 Process Termination

1938 Early drafts drew a different distinction between normal and abnormal process  
1939 termination. Abnormal termination was caused only by certain signals and  
1940 resulted in implementation-defined “actions,” as discussed below. Subsequent  
1941 drafts of POSIX.1 distinguished three types of termination: normal termination  
1942 (as in the current POSIX.1), “simple abnormal termination,” and “abnormal termi-  
1943 nation with actions.” Again the distinction between the two types of abnormal  
1944 termination was that they were caused by different signals and that  
1945 implementation-defined actions would result in the latter case. Given that these  
1946 actions were completely implementation defined, the early drafts were only saying  
1947 when the actions could occur and how their occurrence could be detected, but not  
1948 what they were. This was of little or no use to portable applications, and thus the  
1949 distinction was dropped from POSIX.1.

1950 The implementation-defined actions usually include, in most historical implemen-  
1951 tations, the creation of a file named *core* in the current working directory of the  
1952 process. This file contains an image of the memory of the process, together with  
1953 descriptive information about the process, perhaps sufficient to reconstruct the  
1954 state of the process at the receipt of the signal.

1955 There is a potential security problem in creating a *core* file if the process was  
1956 set-user-ID and the current user is not the owner of the program, if the process  
1957 was set-group-ID and none of the user’s groups match the group of the program,

1958 or if the user does not have permission to write in the current directory. In this  
1959 situation, an implementation either should not create a `core` file or should make  
1960 it unreadable by the user.

1961 Despite the silence of POSIX.1 on this feature, applications are advised not to  
1962 create files named `core` because of potential conflicts in many implementations.  
1963 Some historical implementations use a different name than `core` for the file, such  
1964 as by appending the process ID to the filename.

### 1965 B.3.2.1 Wait for Process Termination

1966 A call to the `wait()` or `waitpid()` function only returns status on an immediate  
1967 child process of the calling process; i.e., a child that was produced by a single  
1968 `fork()` call (perhaps followed by an `exec` or other function calls) from the parent. If  
1969 a child produces grandchildren by further use of `fork()`, none of those grandchil-  
1970 dren nor any of their descendants will affect the behavior of a `wait()` from the ori-  
1971 ginal parent process. Nothing in POSIX.1 prevents an implementation from provid-  
1972 ing extensions that permit a process to get status from a grandchild or any  
1973 other process, but a process that does not use such extensions must be guaranteed  
1974 to see status from only its direct children.

1975 The `waitpid()` function is provided for three reasons:

- 1976 — To support job control (see B.3.3).
- 1977 — To permit a nonblocking version of the `wait()` function.
- 1978 — To permit a library routine, such as `system()` or `pclose()`, to wait for its chil-  
1979 dren without interfering with other terminated children for which the pro-  
1980 cess has not waited.

1981 The first two of these facilities are based on the `wait3()` function provided by  
1982 4.3BSD. The interface uses the `options` argument, which is identical to an argu-  
1983 ment to `wait3()`. The `WUNTRACED` flag is used only in conjunction with job con-  
1984 trol on systems supporting that option. Its name comes from 4.3BSD and refers to  
1985 the fact that there are two types of stopped processes in that implementation:  
1986 processes being traced via the `ptrace()` debugging facility and (untraced) processes  
1987 stopped by job-control signals. Since `ptrace()` is not part of POSIX.1, only the  
1988 second type is relevant. The name `WUNTRACED` was retained because its usage  
1989 is the same, even though the name is not intuitively meaningful in this context.

1990 The third reason for the `waitpid()` function is to permit independent sections of a  
1991 process to spawn and wait for children without interfering with each other. For  
1992 example, the following problem occurs in developing a portable shell, or command  
1993 interpreter:

```
1994     stream = popen("/bin/true");
1995     (void) system("sleep 100");
1996     (void) pclose(stream);
```

1997 On all historical implementations, the final `pclose()` will fail to reap the wait  
1998 status of the `popen()`.

1999 The status values are retrieved by macros, rather than given as specific bit encod-  
2000 ings as they are in most historical implementations (and thus expected by

2001 existing programs). This was necessary to eliminate a limitation on the number  
2002 of signals an implementation can support that was inherent in the traditional  
2003 encodings. POSIX.1 does require that a status value of zero corresponds to a pro-  
2004 cess calling `_exit(0)`, as this is the most common encoding expected by existing  
2005 programs. Some of the macro names were adopted from 4.3BSD.

2006 These macros syntactically operate on an arbitrary integer value. The behavior is  
2007 undefined unless that value is one stored by a successful call to `wait()` or `wait-`  
2008 `pid()` in the location pointed to by the `stat_loc` argument. An earlier draft  
2009 attempted to make this clearer by specifying each argument as `*stat_loc` rather  
2010 than `stat_val`. However, that did not follow the conventions of other specifications  
2011 in POSIX.1 or traditional usage. It also could have implied that the argument to  
2012 the macro must literally be `*stat_loc`; in fact, that value can be stored or passed as  
2013 an argument to other functions before being interpreted by these macros.

2014 The extension that affects `wait()` and `waitpid()` and is common in historical imple-  
2015 mentations is the `ptrace()` function. It is called by a child process and causes that  
2016 child to stop and return a status that appears identical to the status indicated by  
2017 `WIFSTOPPED`. The status of `ptraced` children is traditionally returned regardless  
2018 of the `WUNTRACED` flag [or by the `wait()` function]. Most applications do not need  
2019 to concern themselves with such extensions because they have control over what  
2020 extensions they or their children use. However, applications, such as command  
2021 interpreters, that invoke arbitrary processes may see this behavior when those  
2022 arbitrary processes misuse such extensions.

2023 Implementations that support core file creation or other implementation-defined  
2024 actions on termination of some processes traditionally provide a bit in the status  
2025 returned by `wait()` to indicate that such actions have occurred.

### 2026 B.3.2.2 Terminate a Process

2027 Most C language programs should use the `exit()` function rather than `_exit()`. The  
2028 `_exit()` function is defined here instead of `exit()` because the C Standard {2} defines  
2029 the latter to have certain characteristics that are beyond the scope of POSIX.1,  
2030 specifically the flushing of buffers on open files and the use of `atexit()`. See “The C  
2031 Language” in the Introduction. There are several public-domain implementations  
2032 of `atexit()` that may be of use to interface implementors who wish to incorporate it.

2033 It is important that the consequences of process termination as described in this  
2034 subclause occur regardless of whether the process called `_exit()` [perhaps  
2035 indirectly through `exit()`] or instead was terminated due to a signal or for some  
2036 other reason. Note that in the specific case of `exit()` this means that the `status`  
2037 argument to `exit()` is treated the same as the `status` argument to `_exit()`. See also  
2038 B.3.2.

2039 A language other than C may have other termination primitives than the C  
2040 language `exit()` function, and programs written in such a language should use its  
2041 native termination primitives, but those should have as part of their function the  
2042 behavior of `_exit()` as described in this subclause. Implementations in languages  
2043 other than C are outside the scope of the present version of POSIX.1, however.

2044 As required by the C Standard {2}, using `return` from `main()` is equivalent to cal-  
2045 ling `exit()` with the same argument value. Also, reaching the end of the `main()`

2046 function is equivalent to using *exit()* with an unspecified value.

2047 A value of zero (or `EXIT_SUCCESS`, which is required by 8.1 to be zero) for the  
2048 argument *status* conventionally indicates successful termination. This  
2049 corresponds to the specification for *exit()* in the C Standard {2}. The convention is  
2050 followed by utilities such as `make` and various shells, which interpret a zero  
2051 status from a child process as success. For this reason, applications should not  
2052 call *exit(0)* or *\_exit(0)* when they terminate unsuccessfully, for example in signal-  
2053 catching functions.

2054 Historically, the implementation-dependent process that inherits children whose  
2055 parents have terminated without waiting on them is called `init` and has a pro-  
2056 cess ID of 1.

2057 The sending of a `SIGHUP` to the foreground process group when a controlling pro-  
2058 cess terminates corresponds to somewhat different historical implementations. In  
2059 System V, the kernel sends a `SIGHUP` on termination of (essentially) a controlling  
2060 process. In 4.2BSD, the kernel does not send `SIGHUP` in a case like this, but the  
2061 termination of a controlling process is usually noticed by a system daemon, which  
2062 arranges to send a `SIGHUP` to the foreground process group with the *vhangup()*  
2063 function. However, in 4.2BSD, due to the behavior of the shells that support job  
2064 control, the controlling process is usually a shell with no other processes in its  
2065 process group. Thus, a change to make *\_exit()* behave this way in such systems  
2066 should not cause problems with existing applications.

2067 The termination of a process may cause a process group to become orphaned in  
2068 either of two ways. The connection of a process group to its parent(s) outside of  
2069 the group depends on both the parents and their children. Thus, a process group  
2070 may be orphaned by the termination of the last connecting parent process outside  
2071 of the group or by the termination of the last direct descendant of the parent  
2072 process(es). In either case, if the termination of a process causes a process group  
2073 to become orphaned, processes within the group are disconnected from their job  
2074 control shell, which no longer has any information on the existence of the process  
2075 group. Stopped processes within the group would languish forever. In order to  
2076 avoid this problem, newly orphaned process groups that contain stopped processes  
2077 are sent a `SIGHUP` signal and a `SIGCONT` signal to indicate that they have been  
2078 disconnected from their session. The `SIGHUP` signal causes the process group  
2079 members to terminate unless they are catching or ignoring `SIGHUP`. Under most  
2080 circumstances, all of the members of the process group are stopped if any of them  
2081 are stopped.

2082 The action of sending a `SIGHUP` and a `SIGCONT` signal to members of a newly  
2083 orphaned process group is similar to the action of 4.2BSD, which sends `SIGHUP`  
2084 and `SIGCONT` to each stopped child of an exiting process. If such children exit in  
2085 response to the `SIGHUP`, any additional descendants will receive similar treat-  
2086 ment at that time. In POSIX.1, the signals will be sent to the entire process group  
2087 at the same time. Also, in POSIX.1, but not in 4.2BSD, stopped processes may be  
2088 orphaned, but may be members of a process group that is not orphaned; therefore,  
2089 the action taken at *\_exit()* must consider processes other than child processes.

2090 It is possible for a process group to be orphaned by a call to *setpgid()* or *setsid()*,  
2091 as well as by process termination. POSIX.1 does not require sending `SIGHUP` and  
2092 `SIGCONT` in those cases, because, unlike process termination, those cases will not

2093 be caused accidentally by applications that are unaware of job control. An imple-  
2094 mentation can choose to send SIGHUP and SIGCONT in those cases as an exten-  
2095 sion; such an extension must be documented as required in 3.3.1.2.

### 2096 B.3.3 Signals

2097 Signals, as defined in Version 7, System III, the 1984 */usr/group Standard* (B59),  
2098 and System V (except very recent releases), have shortcomings that make them  
2099 unreliable for many application uses. Several objections were raised against early  
2100 drafts of POSIX.1 because of this. Therefore, a new signal mechanism, based very  
2101 closely on the one of 4.2BSD and 4.3BSD, was added to POSIX.1. With the excep-  
2102 tion of one feature [see item (4) below and also *sigpending()*], it is possible to  
2103 implement the POSIX.1 interface as a simple library veneer on top of 4.3BSD.  
2104 There are also a few minor aspects of the underlying 4.3BSD implementation (as  
2105 opposed to the interface) that would also need to change to conform to POSIX.1.

2106 The major differences from the BSD mechanism are:

- 2107 (1) *Signal mask type.* BSD uses the type *int* to represent a signal mask, thus  
2108 limiting the number of signals to the number of bits in an *int* (typically  
2109 32). The new standard instead uses a defined type for signal masks.  
2110 Because of this change, the interface is significantly different than it is in  
2111 BSD implementations, although the functionality, and potentially the  
2112 implementation, are very similar.
- 2113 (2) *Restarting system calls.* Unlike all previous historical implementations,  
2114 4.2BSD restarts some interrupted system calls rather than returning an  
2115 error with *errno* set to [EINTR] after the signal-catching function returns.  
2116 This change caused problems for some existing application code. 4.3BSD  
2117 and other systems derived from 4.2BSD allow the application to choose  
2118 whether system calls are to be restarted. POSIX.1 (in 3.3.4) does not  
2119 require restart of functions because it was not clear that the semantics of  
2120 system-call restart in any historical implementation were useful enough  
2121 to be of value in a standard. Implementors are free to add such mechan-  
2122 isms as extensions.
- 2123 (3) *Signal stacks.* The 4.2BSD mechanism includes a function *sigstack()*.  
2124 The 4.3BSD mechanism includes this and a function *sigreturn()*. No  
2125 equivalent is included in POSIX.1 because these functions are not port-  
2126 able, and no sufficiently portable and useful equivalent has been  
2127 identified. See also 8.3.1.
- 2128 (4) *Pending signals.* The *sigpending()* function is the sole new signal opera-  
2129 tion introduced in POSIX.1.

2130 A proposal was considered for making reliable signals optional. However, the  
2131 consensus was that this would hurt application portability, as a large percentage  
2132 of applications using signals can be hurt by the unreliable aspects of historical  
2133 implementations of the *signal()* mechanism defined by the C Standard [2]. This  
2134 unreliability stems from the fact that the signal action is reset to SIG\_DFL before  
2135 the user's signal-catching routine is entered. The C Standard [2] does not require  
2136 this behavior, but does explicitly permit it, and most historical implementations  
2137 behave this way.

2138 For example, an application that catches the SIGINT signal using *signal()* could  
2139 be terminated with no chance to recover when two such signals arrive sufficiently  
2140 close in time (e.g., when an impatient user types the INTR character twice in a  
2141 row on a busy system). Although the C Standard {2} no longer requires this  
2142 unreliable behavior, many historical implementations, including System V, will  
2143 reset the signal action to SIG\_DFL. For this reason, it is strongly recommended  
2144 that the *signal()* function not be used by POSIX.1 conforming applications. Imple-  
2145 mentations should also consider blocking signals during the execution of the  
2146 signal-catching function instead of resetting the action to SIG\_DFL, but backward  
2147 compatibility considerations will most likely prevent this from becoming  
2148 universal.

2149 Most historical implementations do not queue signals; i.e., a process's signal  
2150 handler is invoked once, even if the signal has been generated multiple times  
2151 before it is delivered. A notable exception to this is SIGCLD, which, in System V,  
2152 is queued. The queueing of signals is neither required nor prohibited by POSIX.1.  
2153 See 3.3.1.2. It is expected that a future realtime extension to POSIX.1 will address  
2154 the issue of reliable queueing of event notification.

### 2155 B.3.3.1 Signal Concepts

#### 2156 B.3.3.1.1 Signal Names

2157 The restriction on the actual type used for *sigset\_t* is intended to guarantee that  
2158 these objects can always be assigned, have their address taken, and be passed as  
2159 parameters by value. It is not intended that this type be a structure including  
2160 pointers to other data structures, as that could impact the portability of applica-  
2161 tions performing such operations. A reasonable implementation could be a struc-  
2162 ture containing an array of some integer type.

2163 The signals described in POSIX.1 must have unique values so that they may be  
2164 named as parameters of case statements in the body of a C language switch  
2165 clause. However, implementation-defined signals may have values that overlap  
2166 with each other or with signals specified in this document. An example of this is  
2167 SIGABRT, which traditionally overlaps some other signal, such as SIGIOT.

2168 SIGKILL, SIGTERM, SIGUSR1, and SIGUSR2 are ordinarily generated only through  
2169 the explicit use of the *kill()* function, although some implementations generate  
2170 SIGKILL under extraordinary circumstances. SIGTERM is traditionally the  
2171 default signal sent by the *kill* command.

2172 The signals SIGBUS, SIGEMT, SIGIOT, SIGTRAP, and SIGSYS were omitted from  
2173 POSIX.1 because their behavior is implementation dependent and could not be  
2174 adequately categorized. Conforming implementations may deliver these signals,  
2175 but must document the circumstances under which they are delivered and note  
2176 any restrictions concerning their delivery. The signals SIGFPE, SIGILL, and SIG-  
2177 SEGV are similar in that they also generally result only from programming errors.  
2178 They were included in POSIX.1 because they do indicate three relatively well-  
2179 categorized conditions. They are all defined by the C Standard {2} and thus would  
2180 have to be defined by any system with a C Standard {2} binding, even if not expli-  
2181 citly included in POSIX.1.

2182 There is very little that a Conforming POSIX.1 Application can do by catching,  
2183 ignoring, or masking any of the signals SIGILL, SIGTRAP, SIGIOT, SIGEMT,  
2184 SIGBUS, SIGSEGV, SIGSYS, or SIGFPE. They will generally be generated by the  
2185 system only in cases of programming errors. While it may be desirable for some  
2186 robust code (e.g., a library routine) to be able to detect and recover from program-  
2187 ming errors in other code, these signals are not nearly sufficient for that purpose.  
2188 One portable use that does exist for these signals is that a command interpreter  
2189 can recognize them as the cause of a process's termination [with *wait()*] and print  
2190 an appropriate message. The mnemonic tags for these signals are derived from  
2191 their PDP-11 origin.

2192 The signals SIGSTOP, SIGTSTP, SIGTTIN, SIGTTOU, and SIGCONT are provided for  
2193 job control and are unchanged from 4.2BSD. The signal SIGCHLD is also typically  
2194 used by job control shells to detect children that have terminated or, as in 4.2BSD,  
2195 stopped. See also B.3.3.4.

2196 Some implementations, including System V, have a signal named SIGCLD, which  
2197 is similar to SIGCHLD in 4.2BSD. POSIX.1 permits implementations to have a sin-  
2198 gle signal with both names. POSIX.1 carefully specifies ways in which portable  
2199 applications can avoid the semantic differences between the two different imple-  
2200 mentations. The name SIGCHLD was chosen for POSIX.1 because most current  
2201 application usages of it can remain unchanged in conforming applications.  
2202 SIGCLD in System V has more cases of semantics that POSIX.1 does not specify,  
2203 and thus applications using it are more likely to require changes in addition to  
2204 the name change.

2205 Some implementations that do not support job control may nonetheless imple-  
2206 ment SIGCHLD. Similarly, such an implementation may choose to implement SIG-  
2207 STOP. Since POSIX.1 requires that symbolic names always be defined (with the  
2208 exception of certain names in *<limits.h>* and *<unistd.h>*), a portable method  
2209 of determining, at run-time, whether an optional signal is supported is to call the  
2210 *sigaction()* function with *NULL act* and *oact* arguments. A successful return indi-  
2211 cates that the signal is supported. Note that if *sysconf()* shows that job control is  
2212 present, then all of the optional signals shall also be supported.

2213 The signals SIGUSR1 and SIGUSR2 are commonly used by applications for  
2214 notification of exceptional behavior and are described as "reserved as application  
2215 defined" so that such use is not prohibited. Implementations should not generate  
2216 SIGUSR1 or SIGUSR2, except when explicitly requested by *kill()*. It is recom-  
2217 mended that libraries not use these two signals, as such use in libraries could  
2218 interfere with their use by applications calling the libraries. If such use is un-  
2219 avoidable, it should be documented. It is prudent for nonportable libraries to use  
2220 nonstandard signals to avoid conflicts with use of standard signals by portable  
2221 libraries.

2222 There is no portable way for an application to catch or ignore nonstandard sig-  
2223 nals. Some implementations define the range of signal numbers, so applications  
2224 can install signal-catching functions for all of them. Unfortunately,  
2225 implementation-defined signals often cause problems when caught or ignored by  
2226 applications that do not understand the reason for the signal. While the desire  
2227 exists for an application to be more robust by handling all possible signals [even  
2228 those only generated by *kill()*], no existing mechanism was found to be sufficiently  
2229 portable to include in POSIX.1. The value of such a mechanism, if included, would

2230 be diminished given that SIGKILL would still not be catchable.

### 2231 B.3.3.1.2 Signal Generation and Delivery

2232 The terms defined in this subclause are not used consistently in documentation of  
2233 historical systems. Each signal can be considered to have a lifetime beginning  
2234 with *generation* and ending with *delivery*. The POSIX.1 definition of *delivery* does  
2235 not exclude ignored signals; this is considered a more consistent definition.

2236 Implementations should deliver unblocked signals as soon after they are gen-  
2237 erated as possible. However, it is difficult for POSIX.1 to make specific require-  
2238 ments about this, beyond those in *kill()* and *sigprocmask()*. Even on systems with  
2239 prompt delivery, scheduling of higher priority processes is always likely to cause  
2240 delays.

2241 In general, the interval between the generation and delivery of unblocked signals  
2242 cannot be detected by an application. Thus, references to pending signals gen-  
2243 erally apply to blocked, pending signals.

2244 In the 4.3BSD system, signals that are blocked and set to SIG\_IGN are discarded  
2245 immediately upon generation. For a signal that is ignored as its default action, if  
2246 the action is SIG\_DFL and the signal is blocked, a generated signal remains pend-  
2247 ing. In the 4.1BSD system and in System V Release 3, two other implementations  
2248 that support a somewhat similar signal mechanism, all ignored, blocked signals  
2249 remain pending if generated. Because it is not normally useful for an application  
2250 to simultaneously ignore and block the same signal, it was unnecessary for  
2251 POSIX.1 to specify behavior that would invalidate any of the historical  
2252 implementations.

2253 There is one case in some historical implementations where an unblocked, pend-  
2254 ing signal does not remain pending until it is delivered. In the System V imple-  
2255 mentation of *signal()*, pending signals are discarded when the action is set to  
2256 SIG\_DFL or a signal-catching routine (as well as to SIG\_IGN). Except in the case  
2257 of setting SIGCHLD to SIG\_DFL, implementations that do this do not conform com-  
2258 pletely to POSIX.1. Some earlier drafts of POSIX.1 explicitly stated this, but these  
2259 statements were redundant due to the requirement that functions defined by  
2260 POSIX.1 not change attributes of processes defined by POSIX.1 except as explicitly  
2261 stated (see Section 3).

2262 POSIX.1 specifically states that the order in which multiple, simultaneously pend-  
2263 ing signals are delivered is unspecified. This order has not been explicitly  
2264 specified in historical implementations, but has remained quite consistent and  
2265 been known to those familiar with the implementations. Thus, there have been  
2266 cases where applications (usually system utilities) have been written with explicit  
2267 or implicit dependencies on this order. Implementors and others porting existing  
2268 applications may need to be aware of such dependencies.

2269 When there are multiple pending signals that are not blocked, implementations  
2270 should arrange for the delivery of all signals at once, if possible. Some implemen-  
2271 tations stack calls to all pending signal-catching routines, making it appear that  
2272 each signal-catcher was interrupted by the next signal. In this case, the imple-  
2273 mentation should ensure that this stacking of signals does not violate the seman-  
2274 tics of the signal masks established by *sigaction()*. Other implementations pro-  
2275 cess at most one signal when the operating system is entered, with remaining

2276 signals saved for later delivery. Although this practice is widespread, this  
2277 behavior is neither standardized nor endorsed. In either case, implementations  
2278 should attempt to deliver signals associated with the current state of the process  
2279 (e.g., SIGFPE) before other signals, if possible.

2280 In 4.2BSD and 4.3BSD, it is not permissible to ignore or explicitly block SIGCONT  
2281 because if blocking or ignoring this signal prevented it from continuing a stopped  
2282 process, such a process could never be continued (only killed by SIGKILL). How-  
2283 ever, 4.2BSD and 4.3BSD do block SIGCONT during execution of its signal-catching  
2284 function when it is caught, creating exactly this problem. A proposal was con-  
2285 sidered to disallow catching SIGCONT in addition to ignoring and blocking it, but  
2286 this limitation led to objections. The consensus was to require that SIGCONT  
2287 always continue a stopped process when generated. This removed the need to  
2288 disallow ignoring or explicit blocking of the signal; note that SIG\_IGN and  
2289 SIG\_DFL are equivalent for SIGCONT.

### 2290 B.3.3.1.3 Signal Actions

2291 Earlier drafts of POSIX.1 mentioned SIGCONT as a second exception to the rule  
2292 that signals are not delivered to stopped processes until continued. Because  
2293 POSIX.1 now specifies that SIGCONT causes the stopped process to continue when  
2294 it is generated, delivery of SIGCONT is not prevented because a process is stopped,  
2295 even without an explicit exception to this rule.

2296 Ignoring a signal by setting the action to SIG\_IGN (or SIG\_DFL for signals whose  
2297 default action is to ignore) is not the same as installing a signal-catching function  
2298 that simply returns. Invoking such a function will interrupt certain system func-  
2299 tions that block processes [e.g., *wait()*, *sigsuspend()*, *pause()*, *read()*, *write()*]  
2300 while ignoring a signal has no such effect on the process.

2301 Historical implementations discard pending signals when the action is set to  
2302 SIG\_IGN. However, they do not always do the same when the action is set to  
2303 SIG\_DFL and the default action is to ignore the signal. POSIX.1 requires this for  
2304 the sake of consistency and also for completeness, since the only signal this  
2305 applies to is SIGCHLD, and POSIX.1 disallows setting its action to SIG\_IGN.

2306 The specification of the effects of SIG\_IGN on SIGCHLD as implementation defined  
2307 permits, but does not require, the System V effect of causing terminating children  
2308 to be ignored by *wait()*. Yet it permits SIGCHLD to be effectively ignored in an  
2309 implementation-independent manner by use of SIG\_DFL.

2310 Some implementations (System V, for example) assign different semantics for  
2311 SIGCLD depending on whether the action is set to SIG\_IGN or SIG\_DFL. Since  
2312 POSIX.1 requires that the default action for SIGCHLD be to ignore the signal,  
2313 applications should always set the action to SIG\_DFL in order to avoid SIGCHLD.

2314 Some implementations (System V, for example) will deliver a SIGCLD signal  
2315 immediately when a process establishes a signal-catching function for SIGCLD  
2316 when that process has a child that has already terminated. Other implementa-  
2317 tions, such as 4.3BSD, do not generate a new SIGCHLD signal in this way. In gen-  
2318 eral, a process should not attempt to alter the signal action for the SIGCHLD sig-  
2319 nal while it has any outstanding children. However, it is not always possible for a  
2320 process to avoid this; for example, shells sometimes start up processes in pipe-  
2321 lines with other processes from the pipeline as children. Processes that cannot

2322 ensure that they have no children when altering the signal action for SIGCHLD  
2323 thus need to be prepared for, but not depend on, generation of an immediate  
2324 SIGCHLD signal.

2325 The default action of the stop signals (SIGSTOP, SIGTSTP, SIGTTIN, SIGTTOU) is  
2326 to stop a process that is executing. If a stop signal is delivered to a process that is  
2327 already stopped, it has no effect. In fact, if a stop signal is generated for a  
2328 stopped process whose signal mask blocks the signal, the signal will never be  
2329 delivered to the process since the process must receive a SIGCONT, which discards  
2330 all pending stop signals, in order to continue executing.

2331 The SIGCONT signal shall continue a stopped process even if SIGCONT is blocked  
2332 (or ignored). However, if a signal-catching routine has been established for  
2333 SIGCONT, it will not be entered until SIGCONT is unblocked.

2334 If a process in an orphaned process group stops, it is no longer under the control  
2335 of a job-control shell and hence would not normally ever be continued. Because of  
2336 this, orphaned processes that receive terminal-related stop signals (SIGTSTP,  
2337 SIGTTIN, SIGTTOU, but not SIGSTOP) must not be allowed to stop. The goal is to  
2338 prevent stopped processes from languishing forever. [As SIGSTOP is sent only via  
2339 *kill()*, it is assumed that the process or user sending a SIGSTOP can send a  
2340 SIGCONT when desired.] Instead, the system must discard the stop signal. As an  
2341 extension, it may also deliver another signal in its place. 4.3BSD sends a SIG-  
2342 KILL, which is overly effective because SIGKILL is not catchable. Another possible  
2343 choice is SIGHUP. 4.3BSD also does this for orphaned processes (processes whose  
2344 parent has terminated) rather than for members of orphaned process groups; this  
2345 is less desirable because job-control shells manage process groups. POSIX.1 also  
2346 prevents SIGTTIN and SIGTTOU signals from being generated for processes in  
2347 orphaned process groups as a direct result of activity on a terminal, preventing  
2348 infinite loops when *read()* and *write()* calls generate signals that are discarded.  
2349 (See B.7.1.1.4.) A similar restriction on the generation of SIGTSTP was con-  
2350 sidered, but that would be unnecessary and more difficult to implement due to its  
2351 asynchronous nature.

2352 Although POSIX.1 requires that signal-catching functions be called with only one  
2353 argument, there is nothing to prevent conforming implementations from extend-  
2354 ing POSIX.1 to pass additional arguments, as long as Strictly Conforming POSIX.1  
2355 Applications continue to compile and execute correctly. Most historical implemen-  
2356 tations do, in fact, pass additional, signal-specific arguments to certain signal-  
2357 catching routines.

2358 There was a proposal to change the declared type of the signal handler to:

```
2359     void func (int sig, ... );
```

2360 The usage of ellipses (“, ...”) is C Standard {2} syntax to indicate a variable  
2361 number of arguments. Its use was intended to allow the implementation to pass  
2362 additional information to the signal handler in a standard manner.

2363 Unfortunately, this construct would require all signal handlers to be defined with  
2364 this syntax because the C Standard {2} allows implementations to use a different  
2365 parameter passing mechanism for variable parameter lists than for nonvariable  
2366 parameter lists. Thus, all existing signal handlers in all existing applications  
2367 would have to be changed to use the variable syntax in order to be standard and

2368 portable. This is in conflict with the goal of Minimal Changes to Existing Applica-  
2369 tion Code.

2370 When terminating a process from a signal-catching function, processes should be  
2371 aware of any interpretation that their parent may make of the status returned by  
2372 *wait()* or *waitpid()*. In particular, a signal-catching function should not call  
2373 *exit(0)* or *\_exit(0)* unless it wants to indicate successful termination. A nonzero  
2374 argument to *exit()* or *\_exit()* can be used to indicate unsuccessful termination.  
2375 Alternatively, the process can use *kill()* to send itself a fatal signal (first ensuring  
2376 that the signal is set to the default action and not blocked). (See also B.3.2.2).

2377 The behavior of *unsafe* functions, as defined by this subclause, is undefined when  
2378 they are invoked from signal-catching functions in certain circumstances. The  
2379 behavior of reentrant functions, as defined by this subclause, is as specified by  
2380 POSIX.1, regardless of invocation from a signal-catching function. This is the only  
2381 intended meaning of the statement that reentrant functions may be used in  
2382 signal-catching functions without restriction. Applications must still consider all  
2383 effects of such functions on such things as data structures, files, and process state.  
2384 In particular, application writers need to consider the restrictions on interactions  
2385 when interrupting *sleep()* [see *sleep()* and B.3.4.3] and interactions among multi-  
2386 ple handles for a file description (see 8.2.3 and B.8.2.3). The fact that any specific  
2387 function is listed as reentrant does not necessarily mean that invocation of that  
2388 function from a signal-catching function is recommended.

2389 In order to prevent errors arising from interrupting nonreentrant function calls,  
2390 applications should protect calls to these functions either by blocking the  
2391 appropriate signals or through the use of some programmatic semaphore.  
2392 POSIX.1 does not address the more general problem of synchronizing access to  
2393 shared data structures. Note in particular that even the “safe” functions may  
2394 modify the global variable *errno*; the signal-catching function may want to save  
2395 and restore its value. The same principles apply to the reentrancy of application  
2396 routines and asynchronous data access.

2397 Note that *longjmp()* and *siglongjmp()* are not in the list of reentrant functions.  
2398 This is because the code executing after *longjmp()* or *siglongjmp()* can call any  
2399 unsafe functions with the same danger as calling those unsafe functions directly  
2400 from the signal handler. Applications that use *longjmp()* or *siglongjmp()* out of  
2401 signal handlers require rigorous protection in order to be portable. Many of the  
2402 other functions that are excluded from the list are traditionally implemented  
2403 using either the C language *malloc()* or *free()* functions or the C language stan-  
2404 dard I/O library, both of which traditionally use data structures in a nonreentrant  
2405 manner. Because any combination of different functions using a common data  
2406 structure can cause reentrancy problems, POSIX.1 does not define the behavior  
2407 when any unsafe function is called in a signal handler that interrupts any unsafe  
2408 function.

#### 2409 **B.3.3.1.4 Signal Effects on Other Functions**

2410 The most common behavior of an interrupted function after a signal-catching  
2411 function returns is for the interrupted function to give an [EINTR] error. How-  
2412 ever, there are a number of specific exceptions, including *sleep()* and certain  
2413 situations with *read()* and *write()*.

2414 The historical implementations of many functions defined by POSIX.1 are not  
2415 interruptible, but delay delivery of signals generated during their execution until  
2416 after they complete. This is never a problem for functions that are guaranteed to  
2417 complete in a short (imperceptible to a human) period of time. It is normally  
2418 those functions that can suspend a process indefinitely or for long periods of time  
2419 [e.g., *wait()*, *pause()*, *sigsuspend()*, *sleep()*, or *read()/write()* on a slow device like a  
2420 terminal] that are interruptible. This permits applications to respond to interac-  
2421 tive signals or to set timeouts on calls to most such functions with *alarm()*.  
2422 Therefore, implementations should generally make such functions (including ones  
2423 defined as extensions) interruptible.

2424 Functions not mentioned explicitly as interruptible may be so on some implemen-  
2425 tations, possibly as an extension where the function gives an [EINTR] error.  
2426 There are several functions [e.g., *getpid()*, *getuid()*] that are specified as never  
2427 returning an error, which can thus never be extended in this way.

### 2428 B.3.3.2 Send a Signal to a Process

2429 The semantics for permission checking for *kill()* differ between System V and  
2430 most other implementations, such as Version 7 or 4.3BSD. The semantics chosen  
2431 for POSIX.1 agree with System V. Specifically, a set-user-ID process cannot pro-  
2432 tect itself against signals (or at least not against SIGKILL) unless it changes its  
2433 real user ID. This choice allows the user who starts an application to send it sig-  
2434 nals even if it changes its effective user ID. The other semantics give more power  
2435 to an application that wants to protect itself from the user who ran it.

2436 Some implementations provide semantic extensions to the *kill()* function when  
2437 the absolute value of *pid* is greater than some maximum, or otherwise special,  
2438 value. Negative values are a flag to *kill()*. Since most implementations return  
2439 [ESRCH] in this case, this behavior is not included in POSIX.1, although a con-  
2440 forming implementation could provide such an extension.

2441 The implementation-defined processes to which a signal cannot be sent may  
2442 include the scheduler or *init*.

2443 Most historical implementations use *kill(-1, sig)* from a super-user process to  
2444 send a signal to all processes (excluding system processes like *init*). This use of  
2445 the *kill()* function is for administrative purposes only; portable applications  
2446 should not send signals to processes about which they have no knowledge. In  
2447 addition, there are semantic variations among different implementations that,  
2448 because of the limited use of this feature, were not necessary to resolve by stan-  
2449 dardization. System V implementations also use *kill(-1, sig)* from a  
2450 nonsuper-user process to send a signal to all processes with matching user IDs.  
2451 This use was considered neither sufficiently widespread nor necessary for applica-  
2452 tion portability to warrant inclusion in POSIX.1.

2453 There was initially strong sentiment to specify that, if *pid* specifies that a signal  
2454 be sent to the calling process and that signal is not blocked, that signal would be  
2455 delivered before *kill()* returns. This would permit a process to call *kill()* and be  
2456 guaranteed that the call never return. However, historical implementations that  
2457 provide only the *signal()* interface make only the weaker guarantee in POSIX.1,  
2458 because they only deliver one signal each time a process enters the kernel.  
2459 Modifications to such implementations to support the *sigaction()* interface

2460 generally require entry to the kernel following return from a signal-catching func-  
2461 tion, in order to restore the signal mask. Such modifications have the effect of  
2462 satisfying the stronger requirement, at least when *sigaction()* is used, but not  
2463 necessarily when *signal()* is used. The developers of POSIX.1 considered making  
2464 the stronger requirement except when *signal()* is used, but felt this would be  
2465 unnecessarily complex. Implementors are encouraged to meet the stronger  
2466 requirement whenever possible. In practice, the weaker requirement is the same,  
2467 except in the rare case when two signals arrive during a very short window. This  
2468 reasoning also applies to a similar requirement for *sigprocmask()*.

2469 In 4.2BSD, the SIGCONT signal can be sent to any descendant process regardless  
2470 of user-ID security checks. This allows a job-control shell to continue a job even if  
2471 processes in the job have altered their user IDs (as in the *su* command). In keep-  
2472 ing with the addition of the concept of sessions, similar functionality is provided  
2473 by allowing the SIGCONT signal to be sent to any process in the same session,  
2474 regardless of user-ID security checks. This is less restrictive than BSD in the  
2475 sense that ancestor processes (in the same session) can now be the recipient. It is  
2476 more restrictive than BSD in the sense that descendant processes that form new  
2477 sessions are now subject to the user-ID checks. A similar relaxation of security is  
2478 not necessary for the other job-control signals since those signals are typically  
2479 sent by the terminal driver in recognition of special characters being typed; the  
2480 terminal driver bypasses all security checks.

2481 In secure implementations, a process may be restricted from sending a signal to a  
2482 process having a different security label. In order to prevent the existence or  
2483 nonexistence of a process from being used as a covert channel, such processes  
2484 should appear nonexistent to the sender; i.e., [ESRCH] should be returned, rather  
2485 than [EPERM], if *pid* refers only to such processes.

2486 Existing implementations vary on the result of a *kill()* with *pid* indicating an  
2487 inactive process (a terminated process that has not been waited for by its parent).  
2488 Some indicate success on such a call (subject to permission checking), while others  
2489 give an error of [ESRCH]. Since POSIX.1's definition of *process lifetime* covers inac-  
2490 tive processes, the [ESRCH] error as described is inappropriate in this case. In  
2491 particular, this means that an application cannot have a parent process check for  
2492 termination of a particular child with *kill()* [usually this is done with the null sig-  
2493 nal; this can be done reliably with *waitpid()*].

2494 There is some belief that the name *kill()* is misleading, since the function is not  
2495 always intended to cause process termination. However, the name is common to  
2496 all historical implementations, and any change would be in conflict with the goal  
2497 of Minimal Changes to Existing Application Code.

### 2498 B.3.3.3 Manipulate Signal Sets

2499 The implementation of the *sigemptyset()* [or *sigfillset()*] functions could quite trivi-  
2500 ally clear (or set) all the bits in the signal set. Alternatively, it would be reason-  
2501 able to initialize part of the structure, such as a version field, to permit binary  
2502 compatibility between releases where the size of the set varies. For such reasons,  
2503 either *sigemptyset()* or *sigfillset()* must be called prior to any other use of the sig-  
2504 nal set, even if such use is read-only [e.g., as an argument to *sigpending()*]. This  
2505 function is not intended for dynamic allocation.

2506 The *sigfillset()* and *sigemptyset()* functions require that the resulting signal set  
2507 include (or exclude) all the signals defined in POSIX.1. Although it is outside the  
2508 scope of POSIX.1 to place this requirement on signals that are implemented as  
2509 extensions, it is recommended that implementation-defined signals also be  
2510 affected by these functions. However, there may be a good reason for a particular  
2511 signal not to be affected. For example, blocking or ignoring an implementation-  
2512 defined signal may have undesirable side effects, whereas the default action for  
2513 that signal is harmless. In such a case, it would be preferable for such a signal to  
2514 be excluded from the signal set returned by *sigfillset()*.

2515 In earlier drafts of POSIX.1 there was no distinction between invalid and unsup-  
2516 ported signals (the names of optional signals that were not supported by an  
2517 implementation were not defined by that implementation). The [EINVAL] error  
2518 was thus specified as a required error for invalid signals. With that distinction, it  
2519 is not necessary to require implementations of these functions to determine  
2520 whether an optional signal is actually supported, as that could have a significant  
2521 performance impact for little value. The error could have been required for  
2522 invalid signals and optional for unsupported signals, but this seemed unneces-  
2523 sarily complex. Thus, the error is optional in both cases.

#### 2524 B.3.3.4 Examine and Change Signal Action

2525 Although POSIX.1 requires that signals that cannot be ignored shall not be added  
2526 to the signal mask when a signal-catching function is entered, there is no explicit  
2527 requirement that subsequent calls to *sigaction()* reflect this in the information  
2528 returned in the *oact* argument. In other words, if SIGKILL is included in the  
2529 *sa\_mask* field of *act*, it is unspecified whether or not a subsequent call to *sigac-*  
2530 *tion()* will return with SIGKILL included in the *sa\_mask* field of *oact*.

2531 The SA\_NOCLDSTOP flag, when supplied in the *act->sa\_flags* parameter, allows  
2532 overloading SIGCHLD with the System V semantics that each SIGCLD signal indi-  
2533 cates a single terminated child. Most portable applications that catch SIGCHLD  
2534 are expected to install signal-catching functions that repeatedly call the *waitpid()*  
2535 function with the WNOHANG flag set, acting on each child for which status is  
2536 returned, until *waitpid()* returns zero. If stopped children are not of interest, the  
2537 use of the SA\_NOCLDSTOP flag can prevent the overhead from invoking the  
2538 signal-catching routine when they stop.

2539 Some historical implementations also define other mechanisms for stopping  
2540 processes, such as the *ptrace()* function. These implementations usually do not  
2541 generate a SIGCHLD signal when processes stop due to this mechanism; however,  
2542 that is beyond the scope of POSIX.1.

2543 POSIX.1 requires that calls to *sigaction()* that supply a NULL *act* argument  
2544 succeed, even in the case of signals that cannot be caught or ignored (i.e., SIGKILL  
2545 or SIGSTOP). The System V *signal()* and BSD *sigvec()* functions return [EINVAL]  
2546 in these cases and, in this respect, their behavior varies from *sigaction()*.

2547 POSIX.1 requires that *sigaction()* properly save and restore a signal action set up  
2548 by the C Standard (2) *signal()* function. However, there is no guarantee that the  
2549 reverse is true, nor could there be given the greater amount of information con-  
2550 veyed by the *sigaction* structure. Because of this, applications should avoid using  
2551 both functions for the same signal in the same process. Since this cannot always

2552 be avoided in case of general-purpose library routines, they should always be  
2553 implemented with *sigaction()*.

2554 It was intended that the *signal()* function should be implementable as a library  
2555 routine using *sigaction()*.

### 2556 **B.3.3.5 Examine and Change Blocked Signals**

2557 When a process's signal mask is changed in a signal-catching function that is  
2558 installed by *sigaction()*, the restoration of the signal mask on return from the  
2559 signal-catching function overrides that change [see *sigaction()*]. If the signal-  
2560 catching function was installed with *signal()*, it is unspecified whether this  
2561 occurs.

2562 See B.3.3.2 for a discussion of the requirement on delivery of signals.

### 2563 **B.3.3.6 Examine Pending Signals**

2564 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

### 2565 **B.3.3.7 Wait for a Signal**

2566 Normally, at the beginning of a critical code section, a specified set of signals is  
2567 blocked using the *sigprocmask()* function. When the process has completed the  
2568 critical section and needs to wait for the previously blocked signal(s), it pauses by  
2569 calling *sigsuspend()* with the mask that was returned by the *sigprocmask()* call.

## 2570 **B.3.4 Timer Operations**

### 2571 **B.3.4.1 Schedule Alarm**

2572 Many historical implementations (including Version 7 and System V) allow an  
2573 alarm to occur up to a second early. Other implementations allow alarms up to  
2574 half a second or one clock tick early or do not allow them to occur early at all. The  
2575 latter is considered most appropriate, since it gives the most predictable behavior,  
2576 especially since the signal can always be delayed for an indefinite amount of time  
2577 due to scheduling. Applications can thus choose the *seconds* argument as the  
2578 minimum amount of time they wish to have elapse before the signal.

2579 The term "real time" here and elsewhere [*sleep()*, *times()*] is intended to mean  
2580 "wall clock" time as common English usage, and has nothing to do with "realtime  
2581 operating systems." It is in contrast to "virtual time," which could be misinter-  
2582 preted if just "time" were used.

2583 In some implementations, including 4.3BSD, very large values of the *seconds*  
2584 argument are silently rounded down to an implementation-defined maximum  
2585 value. This maximum is large enough (on the order of several months) that the  
2586 effect is not noticeable.

2587 Application writers should note that the type of the argument *seconds* and the  
2588 return value of *alarm()* is *unsigned int*. That means that a Strictly Conforming  
2589 POSIX.1 Application cannot pass a value greater than the minimum guaranteed

2590 value for {UINT\_MAX}, which the C Standard {2} sets as 65 535, and any applica-  
2591 tion passing a larger value is restricting its portability. A different type was con-  
2592 sidered, but historical implementations, including those with a 16-bit *int* type,  
2593 consistently use either *unsigned int* or *int*.

2594 Application writers should be aware of possible interactions when the same pro-  
2595 cess uses both the *alarm()* and *sleep()* functions [see *sleep()* and B.3.4.3].

#### 2596 B.3.4.2 Suspend Process Execution

2597 Many common uses of *pause()* have timing windows. The scenario involves check-  
2598 ing a condition related to a signal and, if the signal has not occurred, calling  
2599 *pause()*. When the signal occurs between the check and the call to *pause()*, the  
2600 process often blocks indefinitely. The *sigprocmask()* and *sigsuspend()* functions  
2601 can be used to avoid this type of problem.

#### 2602 B.3.4.3 Delay Process Execution

2603 There are two general approaches to the implementation of the *sleep()* function.  
2604 One is to use the *alarm()* function to schedule a SIGALRM signal and then  
2605 suspend the process waiting for that signal. The other is to implement an  
2606 independent facility. POSIX.1 permits either approach.

2607 In order to comply with the wording of the introduction to Section 3, that no prim-  
2608 itive shall change a process attribute unless explicitly described by POSIX.1, an  
2609 implementation using SIGALRM must carefully take into account any SIGALRM  
2610 signal scheduled by previous *alarm()* calls, the action previously established for  
2611 SIGALRM, and whether SIGALRM was blocked. If a SIGALRM has been scheduled  
2612 before the *sleep()* would ordinarily complete, the *sleep()* must be shortened to that  
2613 time and a SIGALRM generated (possibly simulated by direct invocation of the  
2614 signal-catching function) before *sleep()* returns. If a SIGALRM has been scheduled  
2615 after the *sleep()* would ordinarily complete, it must be rescheduled for the same  
2616 time before *sleep()* returns. The action and blocking for SIGALRM must be saved  
2617 and restored.

2618 Historical implementations often implement the SIGALRM-based version using  
2619 *alarm()* and *pause()*. One such implementation is prone to infinite hangups, as  
2620 described in B.3.4.2. Another such implementation uses the C language *setjmp()*  
2621 and *longjmp()* functions to avoid that window. That implementation introduces a  
2622 different problem: when the SIGALRM signal interrupts a signal-catching function  
2623 installed by the user to catch a different signal, the *longjmp()* aborts that signal-  
2624 catching function. An implementation based on *sigprocmask()*, *alarm()*, and *sig-*  
2625 *suspend()* can avoid these problems.

2626 Despite all reasonable care, there are several very subtle, but detectable and una-  
2627 voidable, differences between the two types of implementations. These are the  
2628 cases mentioned in POSIX.1 where some other activity relating to SIGALRM takes  
2629 place, and the results are stated to be unspecified. All of these cases are  
2630 sufficiently unusual as not to be of concern to most applications.

2631 (See also the discussion of the term “real time” in B.3.4.1.)

2632 Because *sleep()* can be implemented using *alarm()*, the discussion about alarms  
2633 occurring early under B.3.4.1 applies to *sleep()* as well.

2634 Application writers should note that the type of the argument *seconds* and the  
2635 return value of *sleep()* is *unsigned int*. That means that a Strictly Conforming  
2636 POSIX.1 Application cannot pass a value greater than the minimum guaranteed  
2637 value for {UINT\_MAX}, which the C Standard [2] sets as 65535, and any applica-  
2638 tion passing a larger value is restricting its portability. A different type was con-  
2639 sidered, but historical implementations, including those with a 16-bit *int* type,  
2640 consistently use either *unsigned int* or *int*.

2641 Scheduling delays may cause the process to return from the *sleep()* function  
2642 significantly after the requested time. In such cases, the return value should be  
2643 set to zero, since the formula (requested time minus the time actually spent)  
2644 yields a negative number and *sleep()* returns an *unsigned int*.

## 2645 **B.4 Process Environment**

### 2646 **B.4.1 Process Identification**

#### 2647 **B.4.1.1 Get Process and Parent Process IDs**

2648 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

### 2649 **B.4.2 User Identification**

#### 2650 **B.4.2.1 Get Real User, Effective User, Real Group, and Effective Group 2651 IDs**

2652 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

#### 2653 **B.4.2.2 Set User and Group IDs**

2654 The saved set-user-ID capability allows a program to regain the effective user ID  
2655 established at the last *exec* call. Similarly, the saved set-group-ID capability  
2656 allows a program to regain the effective group ID established at the last *exec* call.

2657 These two capabilities are derived from System V. Without them, a program may  
2658 have to run as super-user in order to perform the same functions, because super-  
2659 user can write on the user's files. This is a problem because such a program can  
2660 write on *any* user's files, and so must be carefully written to emulate the permis-  
2661 sions of the calling process properly.

2662 A process with appropriate privilege on a system with this saved ID capability  
2663 establishes all relevant IDs to the new value, since this function is used to estab-  
2664 lish the identity of the user during *login* or *su*. Any change to this behavior  
2665 would be dangerous since it involves programs that need to be trusted.

2666 The behavior of 4.2BSD and 4.3BSD that allows setting the real ID to the effective  
2667 ID is viewed as a value-dependent special case of appropriate privilege.

### 2668 B.4.2.3 Get Supplementary Group IDs

2669 The related function *setgroups()* is a privileged operation and therefore is not  
2670 covered by POSIX.1.

2671 As implied by the definition of supplementary groups, the effective group ID may  
2672 appear in the array returned by *getgroups()* or it may be returned only by  
2673 *getegid()*. Duplication may exist, but the application needs to call *getegid()* to be  
2674 sure of getting all of the information. Various implementation variations and  
2675 administrative sequences will cause the set of groups appearing in the result of  
2676 *getgroups()* to vary in order and as to whether the effective group ID is included,  
2677 even when the set of groups is the same (in the mathematical sense of "set"). (The  
2678 history of a process and its parents could affect the details of result.)

2679 Applications writers should note that {NGROUPS\_MAX} is not necessarily a con-  
2680 stant on all implementations.

### 2681 B.4.2.4 Get User Name

2682 The *getlogin()* function returns a pointer to the user's login name. The same user  
2683 ID may be shared by several login names. If it is desired to get the user database  
2684 entry that is used during login, the result of *getlogin()* should be used to provide  
2685 the argument to the *getpwnam()* function. (This might be used to determine the  
2686 user's login shell, particularly where a single user has multiple login shells with  
2687 distinct login names, but the same user ID.)

2688 The information provided by the *cuserid()* function, which was originally defined  
2689 in IEEE Std 1003.1-1990 and subsequently removed, can be obtained by the  
2690 following:

2691 `getpwuid(geteuid())`

2692 while the information provided by historical implementations of *cuserid()* can be  
2693 obtained by:

2694 `getpwuid(getuid())`

## 2695 B.4.3 Process Groups

### 2696 B.4.3.1 Get Process Group ID

2697 4.3BSD provides a *getpgrp()* function that returns the process group ID for a  
2698 specified process. Although this function is used to support job control, all known  
2699 job-control shells always specify the calling process with this function. Thus, the  
2700 simpler System V *getpgrp()* suffices, and the added complexity of the 4.3BSD  
2701 *getpgrp()* has been omitted from POSIX.1.

### 2702 **B.4.3.2 Create Session and Set Process Group ID**

2703 The *setsid()* function is similar to the *setpgrp()* function of System V. System V,  
2704 without job control, groups processes into process groups and creates new process  
2705 groups via *setpgrp()*; only one process group may be part of a login session.

2706 Job control allows multiple process groups within a login session. In order to  
2707 limit job-control actions so that they can only affect processes in the same login  
2708 session, POSIX.1 adds the concept of a session that is created via *setsid()*. The *set-*  
2709 *sid()* function also creates the initial process group contained in the session.  
2710 Additional process groups can be created via the *setpgid()* function. A System V  
2711 process group would correspond to a POSIX.1 session containing a single POSIX.1  
2712 process group. Note that this function requires that the calling process not be a  
2713 process group leader. The usual way to ensure this is true is to create a new pro-  
2714 cess with *fork()* and have it call *setsid()*. The *fork()* function guarantees that the  
2715 process ID of the new process does not match any existing process group ID.

### 2716 **B.4.3.3 Set Process Group ID for Job Control**

2717 The *setpgid()* function is used to group processes together for the purpose of sig-  
2718 naling, placement in foreground or background, and other job-control actions. See  
2719 B.2.2.2.

2720 The *setpgid()* function is similar to the *setpgrp()* function of 4.2BSD, except that  
2721 4.2BSD allowed the specified new process group to assume any value. This  
2722 presents certain security problems and is more flexible than necessary to support  
2723 job control.

2724 To provide tighter security, *setpgid()* only allows the calling process to join a pro-  
2725 cess group already in use inside its session or create a new process group whose  
2726 process group ID was equal to its process ID.

2727 When a job-control shell spawns a new job, the processes in the job must be  
2728 placed into a new process group via *setpgid()*. There are two timing constraints  
2729 involved in this action:

- 2730 (1) The new process must be placed in the new process group before the  
2731 appropriate program is launched via one of the *exec* functions.
- 2732 (2) The new process must be placed in the new process group before the shell  
2733 can correctly send signals to the new process group.

2734 To address these constraints, the following actions are performed: The new  
2735 processes call *setpgid()* to alter their own process groups after *fork()* but before  
2736 *exec*. This satisfies the first constraint. Under 4.3BSD, the second constraint is  
2737 satisfied by the synchronization property of *vfork()*; that is, the shell is suspended  
2738 until the child has completed the *exec*, thus ensuring that the child has completed  
2739 the *setpgid()*. A new version of *fork()* with this same synchronization property  
2740 was considered, but it was decided instead to merely allow the parent shell pro-  
2741 cess to adjust the process group of its child processes via *setpgid()*. Both timing  
2742 constraints are now satisfied by having both the parent shell and the child  
2743 attempt to adjust the process group of the child process; it does not matter which  
2744 succeeds first.

2745 Because it would be confusing to an application to have its process group change  
2746 after it began executing (i.e., after *exec*) and because the child process would  
2747 already have adjusted its process group before this, the [EACCES] error was added  
2748 to disallow this.

2749 One nonobvious use of *setpgid()* is to allow a job-control shell to return itself to its  
2750 original process group (the one in effect when the job-control shell was executed).  
2751 A job-control shell does this before returning control back to its parent when it is  
2752 terminating or suspending itself as a way of restoring its job control "state" back  
2753 to what its parent would expect. (Note that the original process group of the job-  
2754 control shell typically matches the process group of its parent, but this is not  
2755 necessarily always the case.) See also B.7.2.4.

## 2756 B.4.4 System Identification

### 2757 B.4.4.1 System Name

2758 The values of the structure members are not constrained to have any relation to  
2759 the version of POSIX.1 implemented in the operating system. An application  
2760 should instead depend on `_POSIX_VERSION` and related constants defined in 2.9.

2761 POSIX.1 does not define the sizes of the members of the structure and permits  
2762 them to be of different sizes, although most implementations define them all to be  
2763 the same size: eight bytes plus one byte for the string terminator. That size for  
2764 *nodename* is not enough for use with many networks.

2765 The *uname()* function is specific to System III, System V, and related implementa-  
2766 tions, and it does not exist in Version 7 or 4.3BSD. The values it returns are set  
2767 at system compile time in those historical implementations.

2768 4.3BSD has *gethostname()* and *gethostid()*, which return a symbolic name and a  
2769 numeric value, respectively. There are related *sethostname()* and *sethostid()*  
2770 functions that are used to set the values the other two functions return. The  
2771 length of the host name is limited to 31 characters in most implementations and  
2772 the host ID is a 32-bit integer.

## 2773 B.4.5 Time

2774 The *time()* function returns a value in seconds (type *time\_t*) while *times()* returns  
2775 a set of values in clock ticks (type *clock\_t*). Some historical implementations, such  
2776 as 4.3BSD, have mechanisms capable of returning more precise times [see the  
2777 description of *gettimeofday()* in B.4.5.1]. A generalized timing scheme to unify  
2778 these various timing mechanisms has been proposed but not adopted in POSIX.1.

### 2779 B.4.5.1 Get System Time

2780 Implementations in which *time\_t* is a 32-bit signed integer (most historical imple-  
2781 mentations) will fail in the year 2038. This version of POSIX.1 does not address  
2782 this problem. However, the use of the new *time\_t* type is mandated in order to  
2783 ease the eventual fix.

2784 The use of the header `<time.h>`, instead of `<sys/types.h>`, allows compatibil-  
2785 ity with the C Standard {2}.

2786 Many historical implementations (including Version 7) and the 1984 */usr/group*  
2787 *Standard* {B59} use *long* instead of *time\_t*. POSIX.1 uses the latter type in order  
2788 to agree with the C Standard {2}.

2789 4.3BSD includes *time()* only as an interface to the more flexible *gettimeofday()*  
2790 function.

#### 2791 B.4.5.2 Get Process Times

2792 The accuracy of the times reported is intentionally left unspecified to allow imple-  
2793 mentations flexibility in design, from uniprocessor to multiprocessor networks.

2794 The inclusion of times of child processes is recursive, so that a parent process may  
2795 collect the total times of all of its descendants. But the times of a child are only  
2796 added to those of its parent when its parent successfully waits on the child. Thus,  
2797 it is not guaranteed that a parent process will always be able to see the total  
2798 times of all its descendants.

2799 (See also the discussion of the term “real time” in B.3.4.1.)

2800 If the type *clock\_t* is defined to be a signed 32-bit integer, it will overflow in some-  
2801 what more than a year if there are 60 clock ticks per second, or less than a year if  
2802 there are 100. There are individual systems that run continuously for longer than  
2803 that. POSIX.1 permits an implementation to make the reference point for the  
2804 returned value be the startup time of the process, rather than system startup  
2805 time.

2806 The term “charge” in this context has nothing to do with billing for services. The  
2807 operating system accounts for time used in this way. That information must be  
2808 correct, regardless of how that information is used.

#### 2809 B.4.6 Environment Variables

##### 2810 B.4.6.1 Environment Access

2811 Additional functions *putenv()* and *clearenv()* were considered but rejected because  
2812 they were considered to be more oriented towards system administration than  
2813 ordinary application programs. This is being reconsidered for an amendment to  
2814 POSIX.1 because uses from within an application have been identified since the  
2815 decision was made.

2816 It was proposed that this function is properly part of Section 8. It is an extension  
2817 to a function in the C Standard {2}. Because this function should be available  
2818 from any language, not just C, it appears here, to separate it from the material in  
2819 Section 8, which is specific to the C binding. (The localization extensions to C are  
2820 not, at this time, appropriate for other languages.)

**2821 B.4.7 Terminal Identification**

2822 The difference between *ctermid()* and *ttyname()* is that *ttyname()* must be passed  
2823 a file descriptor and returns the pathname of the terminal associated with that  
2824 file descriptor, while *ctermid()* returns a string (such as */dev/tty*) that will refer  
2825 to the controlling terminal if used as a pathname. Thus *ttyname()* is useful only if  
2826 the process already has at least one file open to a terminal.

2827 The historical value of *ctermid()* is */dev/tty*; this is acceptable. The *ctermid()*  
2828 function should not be used to determine if a process actually has a controlling  
2829 terminal, but merely the name that would be used.

**2830 B.4.7.1 Generate Terminal Pathname**

2831 *L\_ctermid* must be defined appropriately for a given implementation and must be  
2832 greater than zero so that array declarations using it are accepted by the compiler.  
2833 The value includes the terminating null byte.

**2834 B.4.7.2 Determine Terminal Device Name**

2835 The term "terminal" is used instead of the historical term "terminal device" in  
2836 order to avoid a reference to an undefined term.

**2837 B.4.8 Configurable System Variables**

2838 This subclause was added in response to requirements of application developers  
2839 and of system vendors who deal with many international system configurations.  
2840 It is closely related to B.5.7 as well.

2841 Although a portable application can run on all systems by never demanding more  
2842 resources than the minimum values published in POSIX.1, it is useful for that  
2843 application to be able to use the actual value for the quantity of a resource avail-  
2844 able on any given system. To do this, the application will make use of the value of  
2845 a symbolic constant in *<limits.h>* or *<unistd.h>*.

2846 However, once compiled, the application must still be able to cope if the amount of  
2847 resource available is increased. To that end, an application may need a means of  
2848 determining the quantity of a resource, or the presence of an option, at execution  
2849 time.

2850 Two examples are offered:

2851 (1) Applications may wish to act differently on systems with or without job  
2852 control. Applications vendors who wish to distribute only a single binary  
2853 package to all instances of a computer architecture would be forced to  
2854 assume job control is never available if it were to rely solely on the  
2855 *<unistd.h>* value published in POSIX.1.

2856 (2) International applications vendors occasionally require knowledge of the  
2857 number of clock ticks per second. Without the facilities of this subclause,  
2858 they would be required to either distribute their applications partially in  
2859 source form or to have 50 Hz and 60 Hz versions for the various countries  
2860 in which they operate.

2861 It is the knowledge that many applications are actually distributed widely in exe-  
2862 cutable form that lead to this facility. If limited to the most restrictive values in  
2863 the headers, such applications would have to be prepared to accept the most lim-  
2864 ited environments offered by the smallest microcomputers. Although this is  
2865 entirely portable, there was a consensus that they should be able to take advan-  
2866 tage of the facilities offered by large systems, without the restrictions associated  
2867 with source and object distributions.

2868 During the discussions of this feature, it was pointed out that it is almost always  
2869 possible for an application to discern what a value might be at run-time by suit-  
2870 ably testing the various interfaces themselves. And, in any event, it could always  
2871 be written to adequately deal with error returns from the various functions. In  
2872 the end, it was felt that this imposed an unreasonable level of complication and  
2873 sophistication on the application writer.

2874 This run-time facility is not meant to provide ever-changing values that applica-  
2875 tions will have to check multiple times. The values are seen as changing no more  
2876 frequently than once per system initialization, such as by a system administrator  
2877 or operator with an automatic configuration program. POSIX.1 specifies that they  
2878 shall not change within the lifetime of the process.

2879 Some values apply to the system overall and others vary at the file system or  
2880 directory level. These latter are described in B.5.7.

#### 2881 **B.4.8.1 Get Configurable System Variables**

2882 Note that all values returned must be expressible as integers. String values were  
2883 considered, but the additional flexibility of this approach was rejected due to its  
2884 added complexity of implementation and use.

2885 Some values, such as `{PATH_MAX}`, are sometimes so large that they must not be  
2886 used to, say, allocate arrays. The `sysconf()` function will return a negative value  
2887 to show that this symbolic constant is not even defined in this case.

##### 2888 **B.4.8.1.1 Special Symbol `{CLK_TCK}`**

2889 `{CLK_TCK}` appears in POSIX.1 for backwards compatibility with IEEE Std  
2890 1003.1-1988. Its use is obsolescent.

#### 2891 **B.4.8.2 Get Password From User**

2892 The `getpass()` function was explicitly excluded from POSIX.1 because it was found  
2893 that the name was misleading, and it provided no functionality that the user  
2894 could not easily implement within POSIX.1. The implication of some form of secu-  
2895 rity, which was not actually provided, exceeded the small gain in convenience.

2896 **B.5 Files and Directories**2897 See *pathname resolution*.

2898 The wording regarding the group of a newly created regular file, directory, or  
 2899 FIFO in *open()*, *mkdir()*, *mkfifo()*, respectively, defines the two acceptable  
 2900 behaviors in order to permit both the System V (and Version 7) behavior (in which  
 2901 the group of the new object is set to the effective group ID of the creating process)  
 2902 and the 4.3BSD behavior (in which the new object has the group of its parent  
 2903 directory). An application that needs a file to be created specifically in one or the  
 2904 other of the possible groups should use *chown()* to ensure the new group regard-  
 2905 less of the style of groups the interface implements. Most applications will not  
 2906 and should not be concerned with the group ID of the file.

2907 **B.5.1 Directories**

2908 Historical implementations prior to 4.2BSD had no special functions, types, or  
 2909 headers for directory access. Instead, directories were read with *read()* and each  
 2910 program that did so had code to understand the internal format of directory files.  
 2911 Many such programs did not correctly handle the case of a maximum-length (his-  
 2912 torically fourteen character) filename and would neglect to add a null character  
 2913 string terminator when doing comparisons. The access methods in POSIX.1 elim-  
 2914 inate that bug, as well as hiding differences in implementations of directories or  
 2915 file systems.

2916 The directory access functions originally selected for POSIX.1 were derived from  
 2917 4.2BSD, were adopted in System V Release 3, and are in *SVID* (B39) Volume 3,  
 2918 with the exception of a type difference for the *d\_ino* field. That field represents  
 2919 implementation-dependent or even file system-dependent information (the i-node  
 2920 number in most implementations). Since the directory access mechanism is  
 2921 intended to be implementation-independent, and since only system programs, not  
 2922 ordinary applications, need to know about the i-node number (or file serial  
 2923 number) in this context, the *d\_ino* field does not appear in POSIX.1. Also, pro-  
 2924 grams that want this information can get it with *stat()*.

2925 **B.5.1.1 Format of Directory Entries**

2926 Information similar to that in the header `<dirent.h>` is contained in a file  
 2927 `<sys/dir.h>` in 4.2BSD and 4.3BSD. The equivalent in these implementations  
 2928 of *struct dirent* from POSIX.1 is *struct direct*. The filename was changed because  
 2929 the name `<sys/dir.h>` was also used in earlier implementations to refer to  
 2930 definitions related to the older access method; this produced name conflicts. The  
 2931 name of the structure was changed because POSIX.1 does not completely define  
 2932 what is in the structure, so it could be different on some implementations from  
 2933 *struct direct*.

2934 The name of an array of *char* of an unspecified size should not be used as an  
 2935 *lvalue*. Use of

2936           sizeof (d\_name)

2937 is incorrect; use

2938        `strlen (d_name)`

2939        instead.

2940        The array of *char d\_name* is not a fixed size. Implementations may need to  
2941        declare *struct dirent* with an array size for *d\_name* of 1, but the actual number of  
2942        characters provided matches (or only slightly exceeds) the length of the file name.

2943        Currently, implementations are excluded if they have *d\_name* with type *char \**.  
2944        Lacking experience of such implementations, the developers of POSIX.1 declined  
2945        to try to describe in standards language what to do if either type were permitted.

#### 2946        **B.5.1.2 Directory Operations**

2947        Based on historical implementations, the rules about file descriptors apply to  
2948        directory streams as well. However, POSIX.1 does not mandate that the directory  
2949        stream be implemented using file descriptors. The description of *opendir()*  
2950        clarifies that if a file descriptor is used for the directory stream it is mandatory  
2951        that *closedir()* deallocate the file descriptor. When a file descriptor is used to  
2952        implement the directory stream, it behaves as if the `FD_CLOEXEC` had been set  
2953        for the file descriptor.

2954        The returned value of *readdir()* merely *represents* a directory entry. No  
2955        equivalence should be inferred.

2956        The directory entries for dot and dot-dot are optional. POSIX.1 does not provide a  
2957        way to test *a priori* for their existence because an application that is portable  
2958        must be written to look for (and usually ignore) those entries. Writing code that  
2959        presumes that they are the first two entries does not always work, as many imple-  
2960        mentations permit them to be other than the first two entries, with a “normal”  
2961        entry preceding them. There is negligible value in providing a way to determine  
2962        what the implementation does because the code to deal with dot and dot-dot must  
2963        be written in any case and because such a flag would add to the list of those flags  
2964        (which has proven in itself to be objectionable) and might be abused.

2965        Since the structure and buffer allocation, if any, for directory operations are  
2966        defined by the implementation, POSIX.1 imposes no portability requirements for  
2967        erroneous program constructs, erroneous data, or the use of indeterminate values  
2968        such as the use or referencing of a *dirp* value or a *dirent* structure value after a  
2969        directory stream has been closed or after a *fork()* or one of the *exec* function calls.

2970        Historical implementations of *readdir()* obtain multiple directory entries on a sin-  
2971        gle read operation, which permits subsequent *readdir()* operations to operate  
2972        from the buffered information. Any wording that required each successful *read-*  
2973        *dir()* operation to mark the directory *st\_atime* field for update would militate  
2974        against the historical performance-oriented implementations.

2975        Since *readdir()* returns NULL both:

- 2976        (1) When it detects an error, and
- 2977        (2) When the end of the directory is encountered

2978        an application that needs to tell the difference must set *errno* to zero before the  
2979        call and check it if NULL is returned. Because the function must not change  
2980        *errno* in case (2) and must set it to a nonzero value in case (1), a zero *errno* after a

2981 call returning NULL indicates end of directory, otherwise an error.

2982 Routines to deal with this problem more directly were proposed:

2983       int derror (*dirp*)

2984       DIR \**dirp*;

2985       void clearderr (*dirp*)

2986       DIR \**dirp*;

2987 The first would indicate whether an error had occurred, and the second would  
2988 clear the error indication. The simpler method involving *errno* was adopted  
2989 instead by requiring that *readdir()* not change *errno* when end-of-directory is  
2990 encountered.

2991 Historical implementations include two more functions:

2992       long telldir (*dirp*)

2993       DIR \**dirp*;

2994       void seekdir (*dirp*, *loc*)

2995       DIR \**dirp*;

2996       long *loc*;

2997 The *telldir()* function returns the current location associated with the named  
2998 directory stream.

2999 The *seekdir()* function sets the position of the next *readdir()* operation on the  
3000 directory stream. The new position reverts to the one associated with the direc-  
3001 tory stream when the *telldir()* operation was performed.

3002 These functions have restrictions on their use related to implementation details.  
3003 Their capability can usually be accomplished by saving a filename found by *read-*  
3004 *dir()* and later using *rewinddir()* and a loop on *readdir()* to relocate the position  
3005 from which the filename was saved. Though this method is probably slower than  
3006 using *seekdir()* and *telldir()*, there are few applications in which the capability is  
3007 needed. Furthermore, directory systems that are implemented using technology  
3008 such as balanced trees, where the order of presentation may vary from access to  
3009 access, do not lend themselves well to any concept along these lines. For these  
3010 reasons, *seekdir()* and *telldir()* are not included in POSIX.1.

3011 An error or signal indicating that a directory has changed while open was con-  
3012 sidered but rejected.

### 3013 B.5.1.3 Set Position of Directory Stream

3014 The *seekdir()* and *telldir()* functions were proposed for inclusion in POSIX.1, but  
3015 were excluded because they are inherently unreliable when all the possible con-  
3016 forming implementations of the rest of POSIX.1 were considered. The problem is  
3017 that returning to a given point in a directory is quite difficult to describe formally,  
3018 in spite of its intuitive appeal, when systems that used B-trees, hashing functions,  
3019 or other similar mechanisms for directory search are considered.

3020 Even the simple goal of attempting to visit each directory entry that is unmodified  
3021 between the *opendir()* and *closedir()* calls exactly once is difficult to implement  
3022 reliably in the face of directory compaction and reorganization.

3023 Since the primary need for *seekdir()* and *telldir()* is to implement file tree walks,  
3024 and since such a function is likely to be included in a future revision of POSIX.1,  
3025 and since in that more constrained context it appears that at least the goal of  
3026 visiting unmodified nodes exactly once can be achieved, it was felt that waiting for  
3027 the development of that function best served all the constituencies.

## 3028 **B.5.2 Working Directory**

### 3029 **B.5.2.1 Change Current Working Directory**

3030 The *chdir()* function only affects the working directory of the current process.  
3031 The result if a NULL argument is passed to *chdir()* is left implementation defined  
3032 because some implementations dynamically allocate space in that case.

### 3033 **B.5.2.2 Working Directory Pathname**

3034 Since the maximum pathname length is arbitrary unless `(PATH_MAX)` is defined,  
3035 an application generally cannot supply a *buf* with *size* `((PATH_MAX) + 1)`.

3036 Having *getcwd()* take no arguments and instead use the C function *malloc()* to  
3037 produce space for the returned argument was considered. The advantage is that  
3038 *getcwd()* knows how big the working directory pathname is and can allocate an  
3039 appropriate amount of space. But the programmer would have to use the C func-  
3040 tion *free()* to free the resulting object, or each use of *getcwd()* would further  
3041 reduce the available memory. Also, *malloc()* and *free()* are used nowhere else in  
3042 POSIX.1. Finally, *getcwd()* is taken from the SVID [B39], where it has the two  
3043 arguments used in POSIX.1.

3044 The older function *getwd()* was rejected for use in this context because it had only  
3045 a buffer argument and no size argument, and thus had no way to prevent  
3046 overwriting the buffer, except to depend on the programmer to provide a large  
3047 enough buffer.

3048 The result if a NULL argument is passed to *getcwd()* is left implementation  
3049 defined because some implementations dynamically allocate space in that case.

3050 If a program is operating in a directory where some (grand)parent directory does  
3051 not permit reading, *getcwd()* may fail, as in most implementations it must read  
3052 the directory to determine the name of the file. This can occur if search, but not  
3053 read, permission is granted in an intermediate directory, or if the program is  
3054 placed in that directory by some more privileged process (e.g., `login`). Including  
3055 this error, `[EACCES]`, makes the reporting of the error consistent and warns the  
3056 application writer that *getcwd()* can fail for reasons beyond the control of the  
3057 application writer or user. Some implementations can avoid this occurrence [e.g.,  
3058 by implementing *getcwd()* using `pwd`, where `pwd` is a set-user-root process], thus  
3059 the error was made optional.

3060 Because POSIX.1 permits the addition of other errors, this would be a common  
3061 addition and yet one that applications could not be expected to deal with without  
3062 this addition.

3063 Some current implementations use `{PATH_MAX}+2` bytes. These will have to be  
3064 changed. Many of those same implementations also may not diagnose the  
3065 `[ERANGE]` error properly or deal with a common bug having to do with newline in  
3066 a directory name (the fix to which is essentially the same as the fix for using `+1`  
3067 bytes), so this is not a severe hardship.

### 3068 B.5.2.3 Change Process's Root Directory

3069 The `chroot()` function was excluded from POSIX.1 on the basis that it was not use-  
3070 ful to portable applications. In particular, creating an environment in which an  
3071 application could run after executing a `chroot()` call is well beyond the current  
3072 scope of POSIX.1.

### 3073 B.5.3 General File Creation

3074 Because there is no portable way to specify a value for the argument indicating  
3075 the file mode bits (except zero), `<sys/stat.h>` is included with the functions  
3076 that reference mode bits.

#### 3077 B.5.3.1 Open a File

3078 Except as specified in POSIX.1, the flags allowed in `oflag` are not mutually  
3079 exclusive and any number of them may be used simultaneously.

3080 Some implementations permit opening FIFOs with `O_RDWR`. Since FIFOs could  
3081 be implemented in other ways, and since two file descriptors can be used to the  
3082 same effect, this possibility is left as undefined.

3083 See B.4.2.3 about the group of a newly created file.

3084 The use of `open()` to create a regular file is preferable to the use of `creat()` because  
3085 the latter is redundant and included only for historical reasons.

3086 The use of the `O_TRUNC` flag on FIFOs and directories [pipes cannot be `open()`-ed]  
3087 must be permissible without unexpected side effects [e.g., `creat()` on a FIFO must  
3088 not remove data]. Because terminal special files might have type-ahead data  
3089 stored in the buffer, `O_TRUNC` should not affect their content, particularly if a  
3090 program that normally opens a regular file should open the current controlling  
3091 terminal instead. Other file types, particularly implementation-defined ones, are  
3092 left implementation defined.

3093 Implementations may deny access and return `[EACCES]` for reasons other than  
3094 just those listed in the `[EACCES]` definition.

3095 The `O_NOCTTY` flag was added to allow applications to avoid unintentionally  
3096 acquiring a controlling terminal as a side effect of opening a terminal file.  
3097 POSIX.1 does not specify how a controlling terminal is acquired, but it allows an  
3098 implementation to provide this on `open()` if the `O_NOCTTY` flag is not set and  
3099 other conditions specified in 7.1.1.3 are met. The `O_NOCTTY` flag is an effective  
3100 no-op if the file being opened is not a terminal device.

3101 In historical implementations the value of `O_RDONLY` is zero. Because of that, it  
3102 is not possible to detect the presence of `O_RDONLY` and another option. Future

3103 implementations should encode `O_RDONLY` and `O_WRONLY` as bit flags so that:

3104 `O_RDONLY | O_WRONLY == O_RDWR`

3105 See the rationale for the change from `O_NDELAY` to `O_NONBLOCK` in B.6.

### 3106 **B.5.3.2 Create a New File or Rewrite an Existing One**

3107 The `creat()` function is redundant. Its services are also provided by the `open()`  
3108 function. It has been included primarily for historical purposes since many exist-  
3109 ing applications depend on it. It is best considered a part of the C binding rather  
3110 than a function that should be provided in other languages.

### 3111 **B.5.3.3 Set File Creation Mask**

3112 Unsigned argument and return types for `umask()` were proposed. The return  
3113 type and the argument were both changed to `mode_t`.

3114 Historical implementations have made use of additional bits in `cmask` for their  
3115 implementation-specific purposes. The addition of the text that the meaning of  
3116 other bits of the field are implementation defined permits these implementations  
3117 to conform to POSIX.1.

### 3118 **B.5.3.4 Link to a File**

3119 See B.2.2.2.

3120 Linking to a directory is restricted to the super-user in most historical implemen-  
3121 tations because this capability may produce loops in the file hierarchy or other-  
3122 wise corrupt the file system. POSIX.1 continues that philosophy by prohibiting  
3123 `link()` and `unlink()` from doing this. Other functions could do it if the implemen-  
3124 tor designed such an extension.

3125 Some historical implementations allow linking of files on different file systems.  
3126 Wording was added to explicitly allow this optional behavior. Symbolic links are  
3127 not discussed by POSIX.1. The exception for cross-file system links is intended to  
3128 apply only to links that are programmatically indistinguishable from “hard” links.

## 3129 **B.5.4 Special File Creation**

### 3130 **B.5.4.1 Make a Directory**

3131 See B.2.5.

3132 The `mkdir()` function originated in 4.2BSD and was added to System V in  
3133 Release 3.0.

3134 4.3BSD detects [ENAMETOOLONG].

3135 See B.4.2.3 about the group of a newly created directory.

**3136 B.5.4.2 Make a FIFO Special File**

3137 The syntax of this routine is intended to maintain compatibility with historical  
3138 implementations of *mknod()*. The latter function was included in the 1984  
3139 */usr/group Standard* [B59], but only for use in creating FIFO special files. The  
3140 *mknod()* function was excluded from POSIX.1 as implementation defined and  
3141 replaced by *mkdir()* and *mkfifo()*.

3142 See B.4.2.3 about the group of a newly created FIFO.

**3143 B.5.5 File Removal**

3144 The *rmdir()* and *rename()* functions originated in 4.2BSD, and they used  
3145 [ENOTEMPTY] for the condition when the directory to be removed does not exist  
3146 or *new* already exists. When the 1984 */usr/group Standard* [B59] was published,  
3147 it contained [EEXIST] instead. When these functions were adopted into System V,  
3148 the 1984 */usr/group Standard* [B59] was used as a reference. Therefore, several  
3149 existing applications and implementations support/use both forms, and no agree-  
3150 ment could be reached on either value. All implementations are required to sup-  
3151 ply both [EEXIST] and [ENOTEMPTY] in `<errno.h>` with distinct values so that  
3152 applications can use both values in C language case statements.

**3153 B.5.5.1 Remove Directory Entries**

3154 Unlinking a directory is restricted to the super-user in many historical implemen-  
3155 tations for reasons given in B.5.3.4. But see B.5.5.3.

3156 The meaning of [EBUSY] in historical implementations is "mount point busy."  
3157 Since POSIX.1 does not cover the system administration concepts of mounting and  
3158 unmounting, the description of the error was changed to "resource busy." (This  
3159 meaning is used by some device drivers when a second process tries to open an  
3160 exclusive use device.) The wording is also intended to allow implementations to  
3161 refuse to remove a directory if it is the root or current working directory of any  
3162 process.

**3163 B.5.5.2 Remove a Directory**

3164 See also B.5.5 and B.5.5.1.

**3165 B.5.5.3 Rename a File**

3166 This *rename()* function is equivalent for regular files to that defined by the  
3167 C Standard [2]. Its inclusion here expands that definition to include actions on  
3168 directories and specifies behavior when the *new* parameter names a file that  
3169 already exists. That specification requires that the action of the function be  
3170 atomic.

3171 One of the reasons for introducing this function was to have a means of renaming  
3172 directories while permitting implementations to prohibit the use of *link()* and  
3173 *unlink()* with directories, thus constraining links to directories to those made by  
3174 *mkdir()*.

3175 The specification that if *old* and *new* refer to the same file describes existing,  
3176 although undocumented, 4.3BSD behavior. It is intended to guarantee that:

3177 `rename("x", "x");`

3178 does not remove the file.

3179 Renaming *dot* or *dot-dot* is prohibited in order to prevent cyclical file system  
3180 paths.

3181 See also the descriptions of [ENOTEMPTY] and [ENAMETOOLONG] in B.5.5 and  
3182 [EBUSY] in B.5.5.1. For a discussion of [EXDEV], see B.5.3.4.

### 3183 B.5.6 File Characteristics

3184 The *ustat()* function, which appeared in the 1984 */usr/group Standard* (B59) and  
3185 is still in the *SVID* (B39), was excluded from POSIX.1 because it is:

3186 — Not reliable. The amount of space available can change between the time  
3187 the call is made and the time the calling process attempts to use it.

3188 — Not required. The only known program that uses it is the text editor *ed*.

3189 — Not readily extensible to networked systems.

#### 3190 B.5.6.1 File Characteristics: Header and Data Structure

3191 See B.2.5.

3192 A conforming C language application must include `<sys/stat.h>` for functions  
3193 that have arguments or return values of type *mode\_t*, so that symbolic values for  
3194 that type can be used. An alternative would be to require that these constants  
3195 are also defined by including `<sys/types.h>`.

3196 The *S\_ISUID* and *S\_ISGID* bits may be cleared on any write, not just on *open()*, as  
3197 some historical implementations do it.

3198 System calls that update the time entry fields in the *stat* structure must be docu-  
3199 mented by the implementors. POSIX.1 conforming systems should not update the  
3200 time entry fields for functions listed in POSIX.1 unless the standard requires that  
3201 they do, except in the case of documented extensions to the standard.

3202 Note that *st\_dev* must be unique within a Local Area Network (LAN) in a “system”  
3203 made up of multiple computers’ file systems connected by a LAN.

3204 Networked implementations of a POSIX.1 system must guarantee that all files  
3205 visible within the file tree (including parts of the tree that may be remotely  
3206 mounted from other machines on the network) on each individual processor are  
3207 uniquely identified by the combination of the *st\_ino* and *st\_dev* fields.

#### 3208 B.5.6.2 Get File Status

3209 The intent of the paragraph describing “additional or alternate file access control  
3210 mechanisms” is to allow a secure implementation where a process with a label  
3211 that does not dominate the file’s label cannot perform a *stat()* function. This is  
3212 not related to read permission; a process with a label that dominates the file’s

3213 label will not need read permission. An implementation that supports write-up  
3214 operations could fail *fstat()* function calls even though it has a valid file descriptor  
3215 open for writing.

### 3216 B.5.6.3 File Accessibility

3217 In early drafts of POSIX.1, some inadequacies in the *access()* function led to the  
3218 creation of an *eaccess()* function because:

3219 (1) Historical implementations of *access()* do not test file access correctly  
3220 when the process's real user ID is super-user. In particular, they always  
3221 return zero when testing execute permissions without regard to whether  
3222 the file is executable.

3223 (2) The super-user has complete access to all files on a system. As a conse-  
3224 quence, programs started by the super-user and switched to the effective  
3225 user ID with lesser privileges cannot use *access()* to test their file access  
3226 permissions.

3227 However, the historical model of *eaccess()* does not resolve problem (1), so POSIX.1  
3228 now allows *access()* to behave in the desired way because several implementa-  
3229 tions have corrected the problem. It was also argued that problem (2) is more  
3230 easily solved by using *open()*, *chdir()*, or one of the *exec* functions as appropriate  
3231 and responding to the error, rather than creating a new function that would not  
3232 be as reliable. Therefore, *eaccess()* was taken back out of POSIX.1.

3233 Secure implementations will probably need an extended *access()*-like function, but  
3234 there were not enough of the requirements to define it yet. This could be pro-  
3235 posed as an extension for a future amendment to POSIX.1.

3236 The sentence concerning appropriate privileges and execute permission bits  
3237 reflects the two possibilities implemented by historical implementations when  
3238 checking super-user access for X\_OK.

### 3239 B.5.6.4 Change File Modes

3240 POSIX.1 specifies that the S\_ISGID bit is cleared by *chmod()* on a regular file  
3241 under certain conditions. This is specified on the assumption that regular files  
3242 may be executed, and the system should prevent users from making executable  
3243 *setgid* files perform with privileges that the caller does not have. On implementa-  
3244 tions that support execution of other file types, the S\_ISGID bit should be cleared  
3245 for those file types under the same circumstances.

3246 Implementations that use the S\_ISUID bit to indicate some other function (for  
3247 example, mandatory record locking) on nonexecutable files need not clear this bit  
3248 on writing. They should clear the bit for executable files and any other cases  
3249 where the bit grants special powers to processes that change the file contents.  
3250 Similar comments apply to the S\_ISGID bit.

### 3251 **B.5.6.5 Change Owner and Group of File**

3252 System III and System V allow a user to give away files; that is, the owner of a file  
3253 may change its user ID to anything. This is a serious problem for implementa-  
3254 tions that are intended to meet government security regulations. Version 7 and  
3255 4.3BSD permit only the super-user to change the user ID of a file. Some govern-  
3256 ment agencies (usually not ones concerned directly with security) find this limita-  
3257 tion too confining. POSIX.1 uses “may” to permit secure implementations while  
3258 not disallowing System V.

3259 System III and System V allow the owner of a file to change the group ID to any-  
3260 thing. Version 7 permits only the super-user to change the group ID of a file.  
3261 4.3BSD permits the owner to change the group ID of a file to its effective group ID  
3262 or to any of the groups in the list of supplementary group IDs, but to no others.

3263 Although *chown()* can be used on some systems by the file owner to change the  
3264 owner and group to any desired values, the only portable use of this function is to  
3265 change the group of a file to the effective GID of the calling process or to a member  
3266 of its group set.

3267 The decision to require that, for nonprivileged processes, the S\_ISUID and  
3268 S\_ISGID bits be cleared on regular files, but only *may* be cleared on nonregular  
3269 files, was to allow plans for using these bits in implementation-specified manners  
3270 on directories. Similar cases could be made for other file types, so POSIX.1 does  
3271 not require that these bits be cleared except on regular files. As these cases arise,  
3272 the system implementors will have to determine whether these features enable  
3273 any security loopholes and specify appropriate restrictions. If the implementation  
3274 supports executing any file types other than regular files, the S\_ISUID and  
3275 S\_ISGID bits should be cleared for those file types in the same way as they are on  
3276 regular files.

### 3277 **B.5.6.6 Set File Access and Modification Times**

3278 The *actime* structure member must be present so that an application may set it,  
3279 even though an implementation may ignore it and not change the access time on  
3280 the file. If an application intends to leave one of the times of a file unchanged  
3281 while changing the other, it should use *stat()* to retrieve the file's *st\_atime* and  
3282 *st\_mtime* parameters, set *actime* and *modtime* in the buffer, and change one of  
3283 them before making the *utime()* call.

### 3284 **B.5.7 Configurable Pathname Variables**

3285 When the run-time facility described in B.4.8 was designed, it was realized that  
3286 some variables change depending on the file system. For example, it is quite  
3287 feasible for a system to have two varieties of file systems mounted: a System V  
3288 file system and a BSD “Fast File System.”

3289 If limited to strictly compile-time features, no application that was widely distri-  
3290 buted in executable binary form could rely on more than 14 bytes in a pathname  
3291 component, as that is the minimum published for {NAME\_MAX} in POSIX.1. The  
3292 *pathconf()* function allows the application to take advantage of the most liberal  
3293 file system available at run-time. In many BSD-based systems, 255 bytes are  
3294 allowed for pathname components.

3295 These values are potentially changeable at the directory level, not just at the file  
3296 system. And, unlike the overall system variables, there is no guarantee that  
3297 these might not change during program execution.

### 3298 B.5.7.1 Get Configurable Pathname Variables

3299 The *pathconf()* function was proposed immediately after the *sysconf()* function  
3300 when it was realized that some configurable values may differ across file system,  
3301 directory, or device boundaries.

3302 For example, {NAME\_MAX} frequently changes between System V and BSD-based  
3303 file systems; System V uses a maximum of 14, BSD 255. On an implementation  
3304 that provided both types of file systems, an application would be forced to limit all  
3305 pathname components to 14 bytes, as this would be the value specified in  
3306 `<limits.h>` on such a system.

3307 Therefore, various useful values can be queried on any pathname or file descrip-  
3308 tor, assuming that the appropriate permissions are in place.

3309 The value returned for the variable {PATH\_MAX} indicates the longest relative  
3310 pathname that could be given if the specified directory is the process's current  
3311 working directory. A process may not always be able to generate a name that  
3312 long and use it if a subdirectory in the pathname crosses into a more restrictive  
3313 file system.

3314 The value returned for the variable {POSIX\_CHOWN\_RESTRICTED} also applies  
3315 to directories that do not have file systems mounted on them. The value may  
3316 change when crossing a mount point, so applications that need to know should  
3317 check for each directory. [An even easier check is to try the *chown()* function and  
3318 look for an error in case it happens.]

3319 Unlike the values returned by *sysconf()*, the pathname-oriented variables are  
3320 potentially more volatile and are not guaranteed to remain constant throughout  
3321 the process's lifetime. For example, in between two calls to *pathconf()*, the file  
3322 system in question may have been unmounted and remounted with different  
3323 characteristics.

3324 Also note that most of the errors are optional. If one of the variables always has  
3325 the same value on an implementation, the implementation need not look at *path*  
3326 or *files* to return that value and is, therefore, not required to detect any of the  
3327 errors except the meaning of [EINVAL] that indicates that the value of *name* is not  
3328 valid for that variable.

3329 If the value of any of the limits described in 2.8.4 or 2.8.5 are indeterminate (logi-  
3330 cally infinite), they will not be defined in `<limits.h>` and the *pathconf()* and  
3331 *fpathconf()* functions will return -1 without changing *errno*. This can be dis-  
3332 tinguished from the case of giving an unrecognized *name* argument because *errno*  
3333 will be set to [EINVAL] in this case.

3334 Since -1 is a valid return value for the *pathconf()* and *fpathconf()* functions,  
3335 applications should set *errno* to zero before calling them and check *errno* only if  
3336 the return value is -1.

## 3337 B.6 Input and Output Primitives

3338 System III and System V have included a flag, `O_NDELAY`, to mark file descrip-  
3339 tors so that user processes would not block when doing I/O to them. If the flag is  
3340 set, a `read()` or `write()` call that would otherwise need to block for data returns a  
3341 value of zero instead. But a `read()` call also returns a value of zero on end-of-file,  
3342 and applications have no way to distinguish between these two conditions.

3343 BSD systems support a similar feature through a flag with the same name, but  
3344 somewhat different semantics. The flag applies to all users of a file (or socket)  
3345 rather than only to those sharing a file descriptor. The BSD interface provides a  
3346 solution to the problem of distinguishing between a blocking condition and an  
3347 end-of-file condition by returning an error, `[EWOULDBLOCK]`, on a blocking  
3348 condition.

3349 The *1984 /usr/group Standard* (B59) includes an interface with some features  
3350 from both System III/V and BSD. The overall semantics are that it applies only to  
3351 a file descriptor. However, the return indication for a blocking condition is an  
3352 error, `[EAGAIN]`. This was the starting point for POSIX.1.

3353 The problem with the *1984 /usr/group Standard* (B59) is that it does not allow  
3354 compatibility with existing applications. An implementation cannot both conform  
3355 to that standard and support applications written for existing System V or BSD  
3356 systems. Several changes have been considered address this issue. These  
3357 include:

- 3358 (1) No change (from *1984 /usr/group Standard* (B59))
- 3359 (2) Changing to System III/V semantics
- 3360 (3) Changing to BSD semantics
- 3361 (4) Broadening POSIX.1 to allow conforming implementation a choice among  
3362 these semantics
- 3363 (5) Changing the name of the flag from `O_NDELAY`
- 3364 (6) Changing to System III/V semantics and providing a new call to distin-  
3365 guish between blocking and end-of-file conditions

3366 Alternative (5) was the consensus choice. The new name is `O_NONBLOCK`. This  
3367 alternative allows a conforming implementation to provide backward compatibil-  
3368 ity at the source and/or object level with either System III/V or BSD systems (but  
3369 POSIX.1 does not require or even suggest that this be done). It also allows a Con-  
3370 forming POSIX.1 Application Using Extensions the functionality to distinguish  
3371 between blocking and end-of-file conditions, and to do so in as simple a manner as  
3372 any of the alternatives. The greatest shortcoming was that it forces all existing  
3373 System III/V and BSD applications that use this facility to be modified in order to  
3374 strictly conform to POSIX.1. This same shortcoming applies to (1) and (4) as well,  
3375 and it applies to one group of applications for (2), (3), and (6).

3376 Systems may choose to implement both `O_NDELAY` and `O_NONBLOCK`, and there  
3377 is no conflict as long as an application does not turn both flags on at the same  
3378 time.

3379 See also the discussion of scope in B.6.5.1.

## 3380 B.6.1 Pipes

3381 An implementation that fails *write()* operations on *fildest[0]* or *read()*s on *fildest[1]*  
3382 is not required. Historical implementations (Version 7 and System V) return the  
3383 error [EBADF] in such cases. This allows implementations to set up a second pipe  
3384 for full duplex operation at the same time. A conforming application that uses the  
3385 *pipe()* function as described in POSIX.1 will succeed whether this second pipe is  
3386 present or not.

### 3387 B.6.1.1 Create an Inter-Process Channel

3388 The wording carefully avoids using the verb “to open” in order to avoid any impli-  
3389 cation of use of *open()*.

3390 See also B.6.4.2.

## 3391 B.6.2 File Descriptor Manipulation

### 3392 B.6.2.1 Duplicate an Open File Descriptor

3393 The *dup()* and *dup2()* functions are redundant. Their services are also provided  
3394 by the *fcntl()* function. They have been included in POSIX.1 primarily for histori-  
3395 cal reasons, since many existing applications use them.

3396 While the brief code segment shown is very similar in behavior to *dup2()*, a con-  
3397 forming implementation based on other functions defined by POSIX.1 is  
3398 significantly more complex. Least obvious is the possible effect of a signal-  
3399 catching function that could be invoked between steps and allocate or deallocate  
3400 file descriptors. This could be avoided by blocking signals.

3401 The *dup2()* function is not marked obsolescent because it presents a type-safe ver-  
3402 sion of functionality provided in a type-unsafe version by *fcntl()*. It is used in the  
3403 current draft of the Ada binding to POSIX.1.

3404 The *dup2()* function is not intended for use in critical regions as a synchroniza-  
3405 tion mechanism.

3406 In the description of [EBADF], the case of *fildest* being out of range is covered by  
3407 the given case of *fildest* not being valid. The descriptions for *fildest* and *fildest2* are  
3408 different because the only kind of invalidity that is relevant for *fildest2* is whether  
3409 it is out of range; that is, it does not matter whether *fildest2* refers to an open file  
3410 when the *dup2()* call is made.

3411 If *fildest2* is a valid file descriptor, it shall be closed, regardless of whether the  
3412 function returns an indication of success or failure, unless *fildest2* is equal to  
3413 *fildest*.

### 3414 B.6.3 File Descriptor Deassignment

#### 3415 B.6.3.1 Close a File

3416 Once a file is closed, the file descriptor no longer exists, since the integer  
3417 corresponding to it no longer refers to a file.

3418 The use of interruptible device close routines should be discouraged to avoid prob-  
3419 lems with the implicit closes of file descriptors by *exec* and *exit()*. POSIX.1 only  
3420 intends to permit such behavior by specifying the [EINTR] error case.

#### 3421 B.6.4 Input and Output

3422 The use of I/O with large byte counts has always presented problems. Ideas such  
3423 as *lread()* and *lwrite()* (using and returning *long*s) were considered at one time.  
3424 The current solution is to use abstract types on the C Standard {2} interface to  
3425 *read()* and *write()* (and not to discuss common usage). The abstract types can be  
3426 declared so that existing interfaces work, but can also be declared so that larger  
3427 types can be represented in future implementations. It is presumed that what-  
3428 ever constraints limit the maximum range of *size\_t* also limit portable I/O requests  
3429 to the same range. POSIX.1 also limits the range further by requiring that the  
3430 byte count be limited so that a signed return value remains meaningful. Since  
3431 the return type is also a (signed) abstract type, the byte count can be defined by  
3432 the implementation to be larger than an *int* can hold.

3433 POSIX.1 requires that no action be taken when *nbyte* is zero. This is not intended  
3434 to take precedence over detection of errors (such as invalid buffer pointers or file  
3435 descriptors). This is consistent with the rest of POSIX.1, but the phrasing here  
3436 could be misread to require detection of the zero case before any other errors. A  
3437 value of zero is to be considered a correct value, for which the semantics are a  
3438 no-op.

3439 There were recommendations to add format parameters to *read()* and *write()* in  
3440 order to handle networked transfers among heterogeneous file system and base  
3441 hardware types. Such a facility may be required for support by the OSI presenta-  
3442 tion of layer services. However, it was determined that this should correspond  
3443 with similar C Language facilities, and that is beyond the scope of POSIX.1. The  
3444 concept was suggested to the developers of the C Standard {2} for their considera-  
3445 tion as a possible area for future work.

3446 In 4.3BSD, a *read()* or *write()* that is interrupted by a signal before transferring  
3447 any data does not by default return an [EINTR] error, but is restarted. In 4.2BSD,  
3448 4.3BSD, and the Eighth Edition there is an additional function, *select()*, whose  
3449 purpose is to pause until specified activity (data to read, space to write, etc.) is  
3450 detected on specified file descriptors. It is common in applications written for  
3451 those systems for *select()* to be used before *read()* in situations (such as keyboard  
3452 input) where interruption of I/O due to a signal is desired. But this approach does  
3453 not conform, because *select()* is not in POSIX.1. 4.3BSD semantics can be provided  
3454 by extensions to POSIX.1.

3455 POSIX.1 permits *read()* and *write()* to return the number of bytes successfully  
3456 transferred when interrupted by an error. This is not simply required because it

3457 was not done by Version 7, System III, or System V, and because some hardware  
3458 may not be capable of returning information about partial transfers if a device  
3459 operation is interrupted. Unfortunately, this does make writing a Conforming  
3460 POSIX.1 Application more difficult in circumstances where this could occur.

3461 Requiring this behavior does not address the situation of pipelined buffers, such  
3462 as might be found in streaming tape drives or other devices that read ahead of the  
3463 actual requests. The signal interruption will often indicate an exceptional condi-  
3464 tion and flush all buffers. Thus, the amount read from the device may be dif-  
3465 ferent from the amount transferred to the application.

3466 The issue of which files or file types are interruptible is considered an implemen-  
3467 tation design issue. This is often affected primarily by hardware and reliability  
3468 issues.

3469 There are no references to actions taken following an "unrecoverable error." It is  
3470 considered beyond the scope of POSIX.1 to describe what happens in the case of  
3471 hardware errors.

#### 3472 **B.6.4.1 Read from a File**

3473 POSIX.1 does not specify the value of the file offset after an error is returned;  
3474 there are too many cases. For programming errors, such as [EBADF], the concept  
3475 is meaningless since no file is involved. For errors that are detected immediately,  
3476 such as [EAGAIN], clearly the pointer should not change. After an interrupt or  
3477 hardware error, however, an updated value would be very useful and is the  
3478 behavior of many implementations.

3479 Note that a *read()* of zero bytes does not modify *st\_atime*. A *read()* that requests  
3480 more than zero bytes, but returns zero, does modify *st\_atime*.

#### 3481 **B.6.4.2 Write to a File**

3482 An attempt to write to a pipe or FIFO has several major characteristics:

##### 3483 **Atomic/nonatomic**

3484 A write is atomic if the whole amount written in one operation is not  
3485 interleaved with data from any other process. This is useful when there  
3486 are multiple writers sending data to a single reader. Applications need  
3487 to know how large a write request can be expected to be performed atomi-  
3488 cally. This maximum is called {PIPE\_BUF}. POSIX.1 does not say  
3489 whether write requests for more than {PIPE\_BUF} bytes will be atomic,  
3490 but requires that writes of {PIPE\_BUF} or fewer bytes shall be atomic.

##### 3491 **Blocking/immediate**

3492 Blocking is only possible with O\_NONBLOCK clear. If there is enough  
3493 space for all the data requested to be written immediately, the implemen-  
3494 tation should do so. Otherwise, the process may block; that is, pause  
3495 until enough space is available for writing. The effective size of a pipe or  
3496 FIFO (the maximum amount that can be written in one operation without  
3497 blocking) may vary dynamically, depending on the implementation, so it  
3498 is not possible to specify a fixed value for it.

3499 Complete/partial/deferred  
3500 A write request,

```
3501     int fildes;
3502     size_t nbyte;
3503     ssize_t ret;
3504     char *buf;

3505     ret = write (fildes, buf, nbyte);
```

3506 may return

3507 complete:  $ret = nbyte$

3508 partial:  $ret < nbyte$

3509 This shall never happen if  $nbyte \leq \{PIPE\_BUF\}$ . If it does  
3510 happen (with  $nbyte > \{PIPE\_BUF\}$ ), POSIX.1 does not  
3511 guarantee atomicity, even if  $ret \leq \{PIPE\_BUF\}$ , because  
3512 atomicity is guaranteed according to the amount *requested*,  
3513 not the amount written.

3514 deferred:  $ret = -1, errno = [EAGAIN]$

3515 This error indicates that a later request may succeed. It  
3516 does not indicate that it *shall* succeed, even if  $nbyte \leq$   
3517  $\{PIPE\_BUF\}$ , because if no process reads from the pipe or  
3518 FIFO, the write will never succeed. An application could  
3519 usefully count the number of times [EAGAIN] is caused by a  
3520 particular value of  $nbyte > \{PIPE\_BUF\}$  and perhaps do  
3521 later writes with a smaller value, on the assumption that  
3522 the effective size of the pipe may have decreased.

3523 Partial and deferred writes are only possible with O\_NONBLOCK set.

3524 The relations of these properties are shown in the following tables.

3525  
3526

| Write to a Pipe or FIFO with O_NONBLOCK clear |                                 |                                 |                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Immediately Writable:                         | None                            | Some                            | <i>nbyte</i>                     |
| $nbyte \leq \{PIPE\_BUF\}$                    | Atomic blocking<br><i>nbyte</i> | Atomic blocking<br><i>nbyte</i> | Atomic immediate<br><i>nbyte</i> |
| $nbyte > \{PIPE\_BUF\}$                       | Blocking<br><i>nbyte</i>        | Blocking<br><i>nbyte</i>        | Blocking<br><i>nbyte</i>         |

3534 If the O\_NONBLOCK flag is clear, a write request shall block if the amount writ-  
3535 able immediately is less than that requested. If the flag is set [by *fcntl()*], a write  
3536 request shall never block.

3537  
3538  
3539  
3540  
3541  
3542  
3543  
3544

| Write to a Pipe or FIFO with O_NONBLOCK set |                 |                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Immediately Writable:                       | None            | Some                            | <i>nbyte</i>                       |
| $nbyte \leq$<br>{PIPE_BUF}                  | -1,<br>[EAGAIN] | -1,<br>[EAGAIN]                 | Atomic<br><i>nbyte</i>             |
| $nbyte >$<br>{PIPE_BUF}                     | -1,<br>[EAGAIN] | $< nbyte$<br>or -1,<br>[EAGAIN] | $\leq nbyte$<br>or -1,<br>[EAGAIN] |

3545 There is no exception regarding partial writes when O\_NONBLOCK is set. With  
3546 the exception of writing to an empty pipe, POSIX.1 does not specify exactly when a  
3547 partial write will be performed since that would require specifying internal  
3548 details of the implementation. Every application should be prepared to handle  
3549 partial writes when O\_NONBLOCK is set and the requested amount is greater  
3550 than {PIPE\_BUF}, just as every application should be prepared to handle partial  
3551 writes on other kinds of file descriptors.

3552 The intent of forcing writing at least one byte if any can be written is to assure  
3553 that each write will make progress if there is any room in the pipe. If the pipe is  
3554 empty, {PIPE\_BUF} bytes must be written; if not, at least some progress must  
3555 have been made.

3556 Where POSIX.1 requires -1 to be returned and *errno* set to [EAGAIN], most histori-  
3557 cal implementations return zero (with the O\_NDELAY flag set—that flag is the  
3558 historical predecessor of O\_NONBLOCK, but is not itself in POSIX.1). The error  
3559 indications in POSIX.1 were chosen so that an application can distinguish these  
3560 cases from end-of-file. While *write()* cannot receive an indication of end-of-file,  
3561 *read()* can, and the two functions have similar return values. Also, some existing  
3562 systems (e.g., Eighth Edition) permit a write of zero bytes to mean that the reader  
3563 should get an end-of-file indication; for those systems, a return value of zero from  
3564 *write()* indicates a successful write of an end-of-file indication.

3565 The concept of a {PIPE\_MAX} limit (indicating the maximum number of bytes that  
3566 can be written to a pipe in a single operation) was considered, but rejected,  
3567 because this concept would unnecessarily limit application writing.

3568 See also the discussion of O\_NONBLOCK in B.6.

3569 Writes can be serialized with respect to other reads and writes. If a *read()* of file  
3570 data can be proven (by any means) to occur after a *write()* of the data, it must  
3571 reflect that *write()*, even if the calls are made by different processes. A similar  
3572 requirement applies to multiple write operations to the same file position. This is  
3573 needed to guarantee the propagation of data from *write()* calls to subsequent  
3574 *read()* calls. This requirement is particularly significant for networked file sys-  
3575 tems, where some caching schemes violate these semantics.

3576 Note that this is specified in terms of *read()* and *write()*. Additional calls such as  
3577 the common *readv()* and *writev()* would want to obey these semantics. A new  
3578 “high-performance” write analog that did not follow these serialization require-  
3579 ments would also be permitted by this wording. POSIX.1 is also silent about any  
3580 effects of application-level caching (such as that done by *stdio*).

3581 POSIX.1 does not specify the value of the file offset after an error is returned;  
3582 there are too many cases. For programming errors, such as [EBADF], the concept  
3583 is meaningless since no file is involved. For errors that are detected immediately,  
3584 such as [EAGAIN], clearly the pointer should not change. After an interrupt or  
3585 hardware error, however, an updated value would be very useful and is the  
3586 behavior of many implementations.

3587 POSIX.1 does not specify behavior of concurrent writes to a file from multiple  
3588 processes. Applications should use some form of concurrency control.

## 3589 B.6.5 Control Operations on Files

### 3590 B.6.5.1 Data Definitions for File Control Operations

3591 The main distinction between the file descriptor flags and the file status flags is  
3592 scope. The former apply to a single file descriptor only, while the latter apply to  
3593 all file descriptors that share a common open file description [by inheritance  
3594 through *fork()* or an *F\_DUPFD* operation with *fcntl()*]. For *O\_NONBLOCK*, this  
3595 scoping is like that of *O\_NDELAY* in System V rather than in 4.3BSD, where the  
3596 scoping for *O\_NDELAY* is different from all the other flags accessed via the same  
3597 commands.

3598 For example:

```
3599     fd1 = open (pathname, oflags);  
3600     fd2 = dup (fd1);  
3601     fd3 = open (pathname, oflags);
```

3602 Does an *fcntl()* call on *fd1* also apply to *fd2* or *fd3* or to both? According to  
3603 POSIX.1, *F\_SETFD* applies only to *fd1*, while *F\_SETFL* applies to *fd1* and *fd2* but  
3604 not to *fd3*. This is in agreement with all common historical implementations  
3605 except for BSD with the *F\_SETFL* command and the *O\_NDELAY* flag (which would  
3606 apply to *fd3* as well). Note that this does not force any incompatibilities in BSD  
3607 implementations, because *O\_NDELAY* is not in POSIX.1. See also B.6.

3608 Historically, the file descriptor flags have had only the literal values 0 and 1.  
3609 POSIX.1 defines the symbolic name *FD\_CLOEXEC* to permit a more graceful exten-  
3610 sion of this functionality. Owners of existing applications should be aware of the  
3611 need to change applications using the literal values, and implementors should be  
3612 aware of the existence of this practice in existing applications.

### 3613 B.6.5.2 File Control

3614 The ellipsis in the Synopsis is the syntax specified by the C Standard (2) for a  
3615 variable number of arguments. It is used because System V uses pointers for the  
3616 implementation of file locking functions.

3617 The *arg* values to *F\_GETFD*, *F\_SETFD*, *F\_GETFL*, and *F\_SETFL* all represent flag  
3618 values to allow for future growth. Applications using these functions should do a  
3619 read-modify-write operation on them, rather than assuming that only the values  
3620 defined by POSIX.1 are valid. It is a common error to forget this, particularly in  
3621 the case of *F\_SETFD*, because there is only one flag in POSIX.1.

3622 POSIX.1 permits concurrent read and write access to file data using the *fcntl()*  
3623 function; this is a change from the 1984 */usr/group Standard* (B59) and early  
3624 POSIX.1 drafts, which included a *lockf()* function. Without concurrency controls,  
3625 this feature may not be fully utilized without occasional loss of data. Since other  
3626 mechanisms for creating critical regions, such as semaphores, are not included, a  
3627 file record locking mechanism was thought to be appropriate. The *fcntl()* mechan-  
3628 ism may be used to implement semaphores, although access is not first-in-first-  
3629 out without extra application development effort.

3630 Data losses occur in several ways. One is that read and write operations are not  
3631 atomic, and as such a reader may get segments of new and old data if con-  
3632 currently written by another process. Another occurs when several processes try  
3633 to update the same record, without sequencing controls; several updates may  
3634 occur in parallel and the last writer will "win." Another case is a b-tree or other  
3635 internal list-based database that is undergoing reorganization. Without exclusive  
3636 use to the tree segment by the updating process, other reading processes chance  
3637 getting lost in the database when the index blocks are split, condensed, inserted,  
3638 or deleted. While *fcntl()* is useful for many applications, it is not intended to be  
3639 overly general and will not handle the b-tree example well.

3640 This facility is only required for regular files because it is not appropriate for  
3641 many devices such as terminals and network connections.

3642 Since *fcntl()* works with "any file descriptor associated with that file, however it is  
3643 obtained," the file descriptor may have been inherited through a *fork()* or *exec*  
3644 operation and thus may affect a file that another process also has open.

3645 The use of the open file description to identify what to lock requires extra calls  
3646 and presents problems if several processes are sharing an open file description,  
3647 but there are too many implementations of the existing mechanism for POSIX.1 to  
3648 use different specifications.

3649 Another consequence of this model is that closing any file descriptor for a given  
3650 file (whether or not it is the same open file description that created the lock)  
3651 causes the locks on that file to be relinquished for that process. Equivalently, any  
3652 close for any file/process pair relinquishes the locks owned on that file for that  
3653 process. But note that while an open file description may be shared through  
3654 *fork()*, locks are not inherited through *fork()*. Yet locks may be inherited through  
3655 one of the *exec* functions.

3656 The identification of a machine in a network environment is outside of the scope  
3657 of POSIX.1. Thus, an *l\_sysid* member, such as found in System V, is not included  
3658 in the locking structure.

3659 Since locking is performed with *fcntl()*, rather than *lockf()*, this specification  
3660 prohibits use of advisory exclusive locking on a file that is not open for writing.

3661 Before successful return from a *F\_SETLK* or *F\_SETLKW* request, the previous lock  
3662 type for each byte in the specified region shall be replaced by the new lock type.  
3663 This can result in a previously locked region being split into smaller regions. If  
3664 this would cause the number of regions being held by all processes in the system  
3665 to exceed a system-imposed limit, the *fcntl()* function returns *-1* with *errno* set to  
3666 *[ENOLCK]*.

3667 Mandatory locking was a major feature of the 1984 */usr/group Standard* (B59).  
3668 For advisory file record locking to be effective, all processes that have access to a  
3669 file must cooperate and use the advisory mechanism before doing I/O on the file.  
3670 Enforcement-mode record locking is important when it cannot be assumed that all  
3671 processes are cooperating. For example, if one user uses an editor to update a file  
3672 at the same time that a second user executes another process that updates the  
3673 same file and if only one of the two processes is using advisory locking, the  
3674 processes are not cooperating. Enforcement-mode record locking would protect  
3675 against accidental collisions.

3676 Secondly, advisory record locking requires a process using locking to bracket each  
3677 I/O operation with lock (or test) and unlock operations. With enforcement-mode  
3678 file and record locking, a process can lock the file once and unlock when all I/O  
3679 operations have been completed. Enforcement-mode record locking provides a  
3680 base that can be enhanced, for example, with sharable locks. That is, the  
3681 mechanism could be enhanced to allow a process to lock a file so other processes  
3682 could read it, but none of them could write it.

3683 Mandatory locks were omitted for several reasons:

- 3684 (1) Mandatory lock setting was done by multiplexing the set-group-ID bit in  
3685 most implementations; this was confusing, at best.
- 3686 (2) The relationship to file truncation as supported in 4.2BSD was not well  
3687 specified.
- 3688 (3) Any publicly readable file could be locked by anyone. Many historical  
3689 implementations keep the password database in a publicly readable file.  
3690 A malicious user could thus prohibit logins. Another possibility would be  
3691 to hold open a long-distance telephone line.
- 3692 (4) Some demand-paged historical implementations offer memory mapped  
3693 files, and enforcement cannot be done on that type of file.

3694 Since sleeping on a region is interrupted with any signal, *alarm()* may be used to  
3695 provide a timeout facility in applications requiring it. This is useful in deadlock  
3696 detection. Because implementation of full deadlock detection is not always feasi-  
3697 ble, the [EDEADLK] error was made optional.

3698

### 3699 B.6.5.3 Reposition Read/Write File Offset

3700 The C Standard (2) includes the functions *fgetpos()* and *fsetpos()*, which work on  
3701 very large files by use of a special positioning type.

3702 Although *lseek()* may position the file offset beyond the end of the file, this func-  
3703 tion does not itself extend the size of the file. While the only function in POSIX.1  
3704 that may extend the size of the file is *write()*, several C Standard (2) functions,  
3705 such as *fwrite()*, *fprintf()*, etc., may do so [by causing calls on *write()*].

3706 An invalid file offset that would cause [EINVAL] to be returned may be both  
3707 implementation defined and device dependent (for example, memory may have  
3708 few invalid values). A negative file offset may be valid for some devices in some  
3709 implementations.

3710 See B.6.5.2 for a explanation of the use of signed and unsigned offsets with  
3711 *lseek()*.

## 3712 B.7 Device- and Class-Specific Functions

3713 There were several sources of difficulties involved with using historical interfaces  
3714 as the basis of this section:

- 3715 (1) The basic Version 7 *ioctl()* mechanism is difficult to specify adequately,  
3716 due to its use of a third argument that varies in both size and type  
3717 according to the second, command, argument.
- 3718 (2) System III introduced and System V continued *ioctl()* commands that are  
3719 completely different from those of Version 7.
- 3720 (3) 4.2BSD and other BSD systems added to the basic Version 7 *ioctl()* com-  
3721 mand set; some of these were for features such as job control that  
3722 POSIX.1 eventually adopted.
- 3723 (4) None of the basic historical implementations are adequate in an interna-  
3724 tional environment. This concern is not technically within the scope of  
3725 POSIX.1, but the goal of POSIX.1 was to mandate no unnecessary impedi-  
3726 ments to internationalization.

3727 The 1984 */usr/group Standard* (B59) attempted to specify a portable mechanism  
3728 that application writers could use to get and set the modes of an asynchronous  
3729 terminal. The intention of that committee was to provide an interface that was  
3730 neither implementation specific nor hardware dependent. Initial proposals dealt  
3731 with high-level routines similar to the *curses* library (available on most historical  
3732 implementations). In such an implementation, the user interface would consist of  
3733 calls similar to:

```
3734     setraw();  
3735     setcooked();
```

3736 It was quickly pointed out that if such routines were standardized, the definition  
3737 of "raw" and "cooked" would have to be provided. If these modes were not well  
3738 defined in POSIX.1, application code could not be written in a portable way. How-  
3739 ever, the definition of the terms would force low-level concepts to be included in a  
3740 supposedly high-level interface definition.

3741 Focus was given to the necessary low-level attributes that were needed to support  
3742 the necessary terminal characteristics (e.g., line speeds, raw mode, cooked mode,  
3743 etc.). After considerable debate, a structure similar to, but more flexible than, the  
3744 System III *termio* was accepted. The format of that structure, referred to as the  
3745 *termios* structure, has formed the basis for the current section.

3746 A method was needed to communicate with the system about the *termios* informa-  
3747 tion. Proposals included:

- 3748 (1) The *ioctl()* function as in System V. This had the same problems as men-  
3749 tioned previously for the Version 7 *ioctl()* function and was basically  
3750 identical to it. Another problem was that the direction of the command  
3751 (whether information is written from or read into the third argument)

3752 was not specified—in historical implementations, only the device driver  
3753 knows this information. This was a problem for networked implementa-  
3754 tions. It was also a problem that there was no size parameter to specify  
3755 the variable size of the third argument, and there was a similar problem  
3756 with its type.

3757 (2) An *ioctl()* function with additional arguments specifying direction, type,  
3758 and size. But these new arguments did not help application writers, who  
3759 would have no control over their values, which would have to match each  
3760 command exactly. The new arguments did, however, solve the problems  
3761 of networked implementations. And *ioctl()* would have been implement-  
3762 able in terms of *ioctl()* on historical implementations (without need for  
3763 modifying existing code), although it would have been easy to update  
3764 existing code to use the arguments directly.

3765 (3) A *termctl()* function with the same arguments as proposed for the  
3766 *ioctl()* function. The difference was that *termctl()* would be limited to  
3767 terminal interface functions; there would be other interface functions,  
3768 such as a *tapectl()* function for tape interfaces, rather than a single gen-  
3769 eral device interface routine.

3770 (4) Unspecified functions. The issue of what the interface function(s) should  
3771 be called was avoided for many of the early drafts while details of the  
3772 information to be handled was of prime concern. The resulting  
3773 specification resembled the information in System V, but attempted to  
3774 avoid problems of case, speed, networks, and internationalization.

3775 Specific *tc\*()* functions<sup>3)</sup> to replace each *ioctl()* function were finally incorporated  
3776 into POSIX.1, instead of any of the previously mentioned proposals.

3777 The issue of modem control was excluded from POSIX.1 on the grounds that

- 3778 — It was concerned with setting and control of hardware timers.
- 3779 — The appropriate timers and settings vary widely internationally.
- 3780 — Feedback from European computer manufacturers indicated that this  
3781 facility was not consistent with European needs and that specification of  
3782 such a facility was not a requirement for portability.

### 3783 B.7.1 General Terminal Interface

3784 If the implementation does not support this interface on any device types, it  
3785 should behave as if it were being used on a device that is not a terminal device (in  
3786 most cases *errno* will be set to [ENOTTY]) on return from functions defined by this  
3787 interface. This is based on the fact that many applications are written to run  
3788 both interactively and in some noninteractive mode, and they adapt themselves at  
3789 run time. Requiring that they all be modified to test an environment variable to

3790 3) The notation *tc\*()* is reminiscent of shell pattern matching notation and is an abbreviated way of  
3791 referring to all functions beginning with the letters "tc."

3792 determine if they should try to adapt is unnecessary. On a system that provides  
3793 no Section 7 interface, providing all the entry points as stubs that return  
3794 [ENOTTY] (or an equivalent, as appropriate) has the same effect and requires no  
3795 changes to the application.

3796 Although the needs of both interface implementors and application developers  
3797 were addressed throughout POSIX.1, this section pays more attention to the needs  
3798 of the latter. This is because, while many aspects of the programming interface  
3799 can be hidden from the user by the application developer, the terminal interface is  
3800 usually a large part of the user interface. Although to some extent the application  
3801 developer can build missing features or work around inappropriate ones, the  
3802 difficulties of doing that are greater in the terminal interface than elsewhere. For  
3803 example, efficiency prohibits the average program from interpreting every character  
3804 passing through it in order to simulate character erase, line kill, etc. These  
3805 functions should usually be done by the operating system, possibly at the inter-  
3806 rupt level.

3807 The *tc\**(*)* functions were introduced as a way of avoiding the problems inherent in  
3808 the traditional *ioctl*(*)* function and in variants of it that were proposed. For exam-  
3809 ple, *tcsetattr*(*)* is specified in place of the use of the TCSETA *ioctl*(*)* command func-  
3810 tion. This allows specification of all the arguments in a manner consistent with  
3811 the C Standard [2], unlike the varying third argument of *ioctl*(*)*, which is some-  
3812 times a pointer (to any of many different types) and sometimes an *int*.

3813 The advantages of this new method include:

- 3814 — It allows strict type checking.
- 3815 — The direction of transfer of control data is explicit.
- 3816 — Portable capabilities are clearly identified.
- 3817 — The need for a general interface routine is avoided.
- 3818 — Size of the argument is well-defined (there is only one type).

3819 The disadvantages include:

- 3820 — No historical implementation uses the new method.
- 3821 — There are many small routines instead of one general-purpose one.
- 3822 — The historical parallel with *fcntl*(*)* is broken.

### 3823 B.7.1.1 Interface Characteristics

#### 3824 B.7.1.1.1 Opening a Terminal Device File

3825 Further implications of the effects of CLOCAL are discussed in 7.1.2.4.

#### 3826 B.7.1.1.2 Process Groups

3827 There is a potential race when the members of the foreground process group on a  
3828 terminal leave that process group, either by exit or by changing process groups.  
3829 After the last process exits the process group, but before the foreground process  
3830 group ID of the terminal is changed (usually by a job-control shell), it would be  
3831 possible for a new process to be created with its process ID equal to the terminal's

3832 foreground process group ID. That process might then become the process group  
3833 leader and accidentally be placed into the foreground on a terminal that was not  
3834 necessarily its controlling terminal. As a result of this problem, the controlling  
3835 terminal is defined to not have a foreground process group during this time.

3836 The cases where a controlling terminal has no foreground process group occur  
3837 when all processes in the foreground process group either terminate and are  
3838 waited for or join other process groups via *setpgid()* or *setsid()*. If the process  
3839 group leader terminates, this is the first case described; if it leaves the process  
3840 group via *setpgid()*, this is the second case described [a process group leader can-  
3841 not successfully call *setsid()*]. When one of those cases causes a controlling termi-  
3842 nal to have no foreground process group, it has two visible effects on applications.  
3843 The first is the value returned by *tcgetpgrp()*, as discussed in 7.2.3 and B.7.2.3.  
3844 The second (which occurs only in the case where the process group leader ter-  
3845 minates) is the sending of signals in response to special input characters. The  
3846 intent of POSIX.1 is that no process group be wrongly identified as the foreground  
3847 process group by *tcgetpgrp()* or unintentionally receive signals because of place-  
3848 ment into the foreground.

3849 In 4.3BSD, the old process group ID continues to be used to identify the fore-  
3850 ground process group and is returned by the function equivalent to *tcgetpgrp()*.  
3851 In that implementation it is possible for a newly created process to be assigned  
3852 the same value as a process ID and then form a new process group with the same  
3853 value as a process group ID. The result is that the new process group would  
3854 receive signals from this terminal for no apparent reason, and POSIX.1 precludes  
3855 this by forbidding a process group from entering the foreground in this way. It  
3856 would be more direct to place part of the requirement made by the last sentence  
3857 under 3.1.1, but there is no convenient way for that subclause to refer to the value  
3858 that *tcgetpgrp()* returns, since in this case there is no process group and thus no  
3859 process group ID.

3860 One possibility for a conforming implementation is to behave similarly to 4.3BSD,  
3861 but to prevent this reuse of the ID, probably in the implementation of *fork()*, as  
3862 long as it is in use by the terminal.

3863 Another possibility is to recognize when the last process stops using the  
3864 terminal's foreground process group ID, which is when the process group lifetime  
3865 ends, and to change the terminal's foreground process group ID to a reserved  
3866 value that is never used as a process ID or process group ID. (See the definition of  
3867 *process group lifetime* in 2.2.2.) The process ID can then be reserved until the ter-  
3868 minal has another foreground process group.

3869 The 4.3BSD implementation permits the leader (and only member) of the fore-  
3870 ground process group to leave the process group by calling the equivalent of  
3871 *setpgid()* and to later return, expecting to return to the foreground. There are no  
3872 known application needs for this behavior, and POSIX.1 neither requires nor for-  
3873 bids it (except that it is forbidden for session leaders) by leaving it unspecified.

#### 3874 B.7.1.1.3 The Controlling Terminal

3875 POSIX.1 does not specify a mechanism by which to allocate a controlling terminal.  
3876 This is normally done by a system utility (such as *getty*) and is considered an  
3877 administrative feature outside the scope of POSIX.1.

3878 Historical implementations allocate controlling terminals on certain *open()* calls.  
3879 Since *open()* is part of POSIX.1, its behavior had to be dealt with. The traditional  
3880 behavior is not required because it is not very straightforward or flexible for  
3881 either implementations or applications. However, because of its prevalence, it  
3882 was not practical to disallow this behavior either. Thus, a mechanism was stand-  
3883 ardized to ensure portable, predictable behavior in *open()*.

3884 Some historical implementations deallocate a controlling terminal on its last sys-  
3885 temwide close. This behavior is neither required nor prohibited. Even on imple-  
3886 mentations that do provide this behavior, applications generally cannot depend on  
3887 it due to its systemwide nature.

#### 3888 B.7.1.1.4 Terminal Access Control

3889 The access controls described in this subclause apply only to a process that is  
3890 accessing its controlling terminal. A process accessing a terminal that is not its  
3891 controlling terminal is effectively treated the same as a member of the foreground  
3892 process group. While this may seem unintuitive, note that these controls are for  
3893 the purpose of job control, not security, and job control relates only to a process's  
3894 controlling terminal. Normal file access permissions handle security.

3895 If the process calling *read()* or *write()* is in a background process group that is  
3896 orphaned, it is not desirable to stop the process group, as it is no longer under the  
3897 control of a job-control shell that could put it into foreground again. Accordingly,  
3898 calls to *read()* or *write()* functions by such processes receive an immediate error  
3899 return. This is different than in 4.2BSD, which kills orphaned processes that  
3900 receive terminal stop signals.

3901 The foreground/background/orphaned process group check performed by the ter-  
3902 minal driver must be repeatedly performed until the calling process moves into  
3903 the foreground or until the process group of the calling process becomes orphaned.  
3904 That is, when the terminal driver determines that the calling process is in the  
3905 background and should receive a job-control signal, it sends the appropriate sig-  
3906 nal (SIGTTIN or SIGTTOU) to every process in the process group of the calling pro-  
3907 cess and then it allows the calling process to immediately receive the signal. The  
3908 latter is typically performed by blocking the process so that the signal is immedi-  
3909 ately noticed. Note, however, that after the process finishes receiving the signal  
3910 and control is returned to the driver, the terminal driver must reexecute the fore-  
3911 ground/background/orphaned process group check. The process may still be in  
3912 the background, either because it was continued in the background by a job-  
3913 control shell, or because it caught the signal and did nothing.

3914 The terminal driver repeatedly performs the foreground/background/orphaned  
3915 process group checks whenever a process is about to access the terminal. In the  
3916 case of *write()* or the control functions in 7.2, the check is performed at the entry  
3917 of the function. In the case of *read()*, the check is performed not only at the entry  
3918 of the function, but also after blocking the process to wait for input characters (if  
3919 necessary). That is, once the driver has determined that the process calling the  
3920 *read()* function is in the foreground, it attempts to retrieve characters from the  
3921 input queue. If the queue is empty, it blocks the process waiting for characters.  
3922 When characters are available and control is returned to the driver, the terminal  
3923 driver must return to the repeated foreground/background/orphaned process  
3924 group check again. The process may have moved from the foreground to the

3925 background while it was blocked waiting for input characters.

#### 3926 **B.7.1.1.5 Input Processing and Reading Data**

3927 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

#### 3928 **B.7.1.1.6 Canonical Mode Input Processing**

3929 The term “character” is intended here. ERASE should erase the last character,  
3930 not the last byte. In the case of multibyte characters, these two may be different.

3931 4.3BSD has a WERASE character that erases the last “word” typed (but not any  
3932 preceding blanks or tabs). A word is defined as a sequence of nonblank charac-  
3933 ters, with tabs counted as blanks. Like ERASE, WERASE does not erase beyond  
3934 the beginning of the line. This WERASE feature has not been specified in POSIX.1  
3935 because it is difficult to define in the international environment. It is only useful  
3936 for languages where words are delimited by blanks. In some ideographic  
3937 languages, such as Japanese and Chinese, words are not delimited at all. The  
3938 WERASE character should presumably take one back to the beginning of a sen-  
3939 tence in those cases; practically, this means it would not get much use for those  
3940 languages.

3941 It should be noted that there is a possible inherent deadlock if the application and  
3942 implementation conflict on the value of MAX\_CANON. With ICANON set (if IXOFF  
3943 is enabled) and more than MAX\_CANON characters transmitted without a  
3944 linefeed, transmission will be stopped, the linefeed (or carriage return when  
3945 ICRLF is set) will never arrive, and the *read()* will never be satisfied.

3946 An application should not set IXOFF if it is using canonical mode unless it knows  
3947 that (even in the face of a transmission error) the conditions described previously  
3948 cannot be met or unless it is prepared to deal with the possible deadlock in some  
3949 other way, such as timeouts.

3950 It should also be noted that this can be made to happen in noncanonical mode if  
3951 the trigger value for sending IXOFF is less than VMIN and VTIME is zero.

#### 3952 **B.7.1.1.7 Noncanonical Mode Input Processing**

3953 Some points to note about MIN and TIME:

3954 (1) The interactions of MIN and TIME are not symmetric. For example, when  
3955 MIN > 0 and TIME = 0, TIME has no effect. However, in the opposite case  
3956 where MIN = 0 and TIME > 0, both MIN and TIME play a role in that MIN  
3957 is satisfied with the receipt of a single character.

3958 (2) Also note that in case A (MIN > 0, TIME > 0), TIME represents an inter-  
3959 character timer while in case C (MIN = 0, TIME > 0) TIME represents a  
3960 read timer.

3961 These two points highlight the dual purpose of the MIN/TIME feature. Cases A  
3962 and B, where MIN > 0, exist to handle burst-mode activity (e.g., file transfer pro-  
3963 grams) where a program would like to process at least MIN characters at a time.  
3964 In case A, the intercharacter timer is activated by a user as a safety measure; in  
3965 case B, it is turned off.

3966 Cases C and D exist to handle single-character timed transfers. These cases are  
3967 readily adaptable to screen-based applications that need to know if a character is  
3968 present in the input queue before refreshing the screen. In case C the read is  
3969 timed; in case D, it is not.

3970 Another important note is that MIN is always just a minimum. It does not denote  
3971 a record length. That is, if a program does a read of 20 bytes, MIN is 10, and 25  
3972 characters are present, 20 characters shall be returned to the user. In the special  
3973 case of MIN=0, this still applies: if more than one character is available, they all  
3974 will be returned immediately.

#### 3975 **B.7.1.1.8 Writing Data and Output Processing**

3976 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

#### 3977 **B.7.1.1.9 Special Characters**

3978 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

#### 3979 **B.7.1.1.10 Modem Disconnect**

3980 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

#### 3981 **B.7.1.1.11 Closing a Terminal Device File**

3982 POSIX.1 is silent on whether a *close()* will block on waiting for transmission to  
3983 drain, or even if a *close()* might cause a flush of pending output. If the application  
3984 is concerned about this, it should call the appropriate function, such as *tcdrain()*,  
3985 to ensure the desired behavior.

#### 3986 **B.7.1.2 Parameters That Can Be Set**

##### 3987 **B.7.1.2.1 *termios* Structure**

3988 This structure is part of an interface that, in general, retains the historic group-  
3989 ing of flags. Although a more optimal structure for implementations may be pos-  
3990 sible, the degree of change to applications would be significantly larger.

##### 3991 **B.7.1.2.2 Input Modes**

3992 Some historical implementations treated a long break as multiple events, as  
3993 many as one per character time. The wording in POSIX.1 explicitly prohibits this.

3994 Although the ISTRIP flag is normally superfluous with today's terminal hardware  
3995 and software, it is historically supported. Therefore, applications may be using  
3996 ISTRIP, and there is no technical problem with supporting this flag. Also, applica-  
3997 tions may wish to receive only 7-bit input bytes and may not be connected directly  
3998 to the hardware terminal device (for example, when a connection traverses a  
3999 network).

4000 Also, there is no requirement in general that the terminal device ensures that  
4001 high-order bits beyond the specified character size are cleared. ISTRIP provides  
4002 this function for 7-bit characters, which are common.

4003 In dealing with multibyte characters, the consequences of a parity error in such a  
4004 character, or in an escape sequence affecting the current character set, are beyond  
4005 the scope of POSIX.1 and are best dealt with by the application processing the  
4006 multibyte characters.

#### 4007 **B.7.1.2.3 Output Modes**

4008 POSIX.1 does not describe postprocessing of output to a terminal or detailed con-  
4009 trol of that from a portable application. (That is, translation of newline to car-  
4010 riage return followed by linefeed or tab processing.) There is nothing that a port-  
4011 able application should do to its output for a terminal because that would require  
4012 knowledge of the operation of the terminal. It is the responsibility of the operat-  
4013 ing system to provide postprocessing appropriate to the output device, whether it  
4014 is a terminal or some other type of device.

4015 Extensions to POSIX.1 to control the type of postprocessing already exist and are  
4016 expected to continue into the future. The control of these features is primarily to  
4017 adjust the interface between the system and the terminal device so the output  
4018 appears on the display correctly. This should be set up before use by any  
4019 application.

4020 In general, both the input and output modes should not be set absolutely, but  
4021 rather modified from the inherited state.

#### 4022 **B.7.1.2.4 Control Modes**

4023 This subclause could be misread that the symbol "CSIZE" is a title in Table 7-3.  
4024 Although it does serve that function, it is also a required symbol, as a literal read-  
4025 ing of POSIX.1 (and the caveats about typography) would indicate.

#### 4026 **B.7.1.2.5 Local Modes**

4027 Noncanonical mode is provided to allow fast bursts of input to be read efficiently  
4028 while still allowing single-character input.

4029 The ECHONL function historically has been in many implementations. Since  
4030 there seems to be no technical problem with supporting ECHONL, it is included in  
4031 POSIX.1 to increase consensus.

4032 The alternate behavior possible when ECHOK or ECHOE are specified with  
4033 ICANON is permitted as a compromise depending on what the actual terminal  
4034 hardware can do. Erasing characters and lines is preferred, but is not always  
4035 possible.

#### 4036 **B.7.1.2.6 Special Control Characters**

4037 Permitting VMIN and VTIME to overlap with VEOF and VEOL was a compromise  
4038 for historical implementations. Only when backwards compatibility of object code  
4039 is a serious concern to an implementor should an implementation continue this  
4040 practice. Correct applications that work with the overlap (at the source level)  
4041 should also work if it is not present, but not the reverse.

4042 **B.7.1.2.7 Baud Rate Values**

4043 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

4044 **B.7.1.3 Baud Rate Functions**

4045 The term *baud* is used historically here, but is not technically correct. This is  
4046 properly "bits per second," which may not be the same as "baud." However, the  
4047 term is used because of the historical usage and understanding.

4048 These functions do not take numbers as arguments, but rather symbolic names.  
4049 There are two reasons for this:

4050 — Historically, numbers were not used because of the way the rate was stored  
4051 in the data structure. This is retained even though an interface function is  
4052 now used.

4053 — More importantly, only a limited set of possible rates is at all portable, and  
4054 this constrains the application to that set.

4055 There is nothing to prevent an implementation to accept, as an extension, a  
4056 number (such as 126) if it wished, and because the encoding of the Bxxx symbols  
4057 is not specified, this can be done so no ambiguity is introduced.

4058 Setting the input baud rate to zero was a mechanism to allow for split baud rates.  
4059 Clarifications to this version of POSIX.1 have made it possible to determine if split  
4060 rates are supported and to support them without having to treat zero as a special  
4061 case. Since this functionality is also confusing, it has been declared obsolescent.  
4062 The 0 argument referred to is the literal constant 0, not the symbolic constant B0.  
4063 POSIX.1 does not preclude B0 from being defined as the value 0; in fact, imple-  
4064 mentations will likely benefit from the two being equivalent. POSIX.1 does not  
4065 fully specify whether the previous *cfsetispeed()* value is retained after a *tcgetattr()*  
4066 as the actual value or as zero. Therefore, portable applications should always set  
4067 both the input speed and output speed when setting either.

4068 In historical implementations, the baud rate information is traditionally kept in  
4069 *c\_cflag*. Applications should be written to presume that this might be the case  
4070 (and thus not blindly copy *c\_cflag*) but not to rely on it, in case it is in some other  
4071 field of the structure. Setting the *c\_cflag* field absolutely after setting a baud rate  
4072 is a nonportable action because of this. In general, the unused parts of the flag  
4073 fields might be used by the implementation and should not be blindly copied from  
4074 the descriptions of one terminal device to another.

4075 **B.7.2 General Terminal Interface Control Functions**

4076 The restrictions described in this subclause on access from processes in back-  
4077 ground process groups controls apply only to a process that is accessing its con-  
4078 trolling terminal. (See B.7.1.1.4).

4079 Care must be taken when changing the terminal attributes. Applications should  
4080 always do a *tcgetattr()*, save the *termios* structure values returned, and then do a  
4081 *tcsetattr()* changing only the necessary fields. The application should use the  
4082 values saved from the *tcgetattr()* to reset the terminal state whenever it is done

4083 with the terminal. This is necessary because terminal attributes apply to the  
4084 underlying port and not to each individual open instance; that is, all processes  
4085 that have used the terminal see the latest attribute changes.

4086 A program that uses these functions should be written to catch all signals and  
4087 take other appropriate actions to assure that when the program terminates,  
4088 whether planned or not, the terminal device's state is restored to its original  
4089 state. See also B.7.1.

4090 Existing practice dealing with error returns when only part of a request can be  
4091 honored is based on calls to the *ioctl()* function. In historical BSD and System V  
4092 implementations, the corresponding *ioctl()* returns zero if the requested actions  
4093 were semantically correct, even if some of the requested changes could not be  
4094 made. Many existing applications assume this behavior and would no longer  
4095 work correctly if the return value were changed from zero to -1 in this case.

4096 Note that either specification has a problem. When zero is returned, it implies  
4097 everything succeeded even if some of the changes were not made. When -1 is  
4098 returned, it implies everything failed even though some of the changes were  
4099 made.

4100 Applications that need all of the requested changes made to work properly should  
4101 follow *tcsetattr()* with a call to *tcgetattr()* and compare the appropriate field  
4102 values.

#### 4103 **B.7.2.1 Get and Set State**

4104 The *tcsetattr()* function can be interrupted in the following situations:

- 4105 — It is interrupted while waiting for output to drain.
- 4106 — It is called from a process in a background process group and SIGTTOU is  
4107 caught.

#### 4108 **B.7.2.2 Line Control Functions**

4109 There is no additional rationale provided for this subclause.

#### 4110 **B.7.2.3 Get Foreground Process Group ID**

4111 The *tcgetpgrp()* function has identical functionality to the 4.2BSD *ioctl()* function  
4112 TIOCGPGRP except for the additional security restriction that the referenced ter-  
4113 minal must be the controlling terminal for the calling process.

4114 In the case where there is no foreground process group, returning an error rather  
4115 than a positive value was considered. This was rejected because existing applica-  
4116 tions based on either IEEE Std 1003.1-1988 or 4.3BSD are likely to consider errors  
4117 from this call or the BSD equivalent to be catastrophic and respond inappropri-  
4118 ately. Such applications implicitly assume that this case does not exist, and the  
4119 positive return value is the only solution that permits them to behave properly  
4120 even when they do encounter it. No application has been identified that can  
4121 benefit from distinguishing between this case and the case of a valid foreground  
4122 process group other than its own. Therefore, requiring or permitting any other