NAME

mail − send and receive electronic mail

SYNOPSIS

mail [**−epqr**] [**−f** *file*]
mail [**−dtv**] [**−s** *subject*] *user* [...]

OPTIONS

−e Exit with status TRUE or FALSE to indicate if there is mail in mailbox

−p Print all mail and then exit

−q Quit program if SIGINT received

−r Reverse print order, i.e., print oldest first

−f Use *file* instead of */usr/spool/mail/user* as mailbox

−d Force use of the shell variable *MAILER*

−t Show distribution list as Dist: header in message

−v Verbose mode (passed on to *MAILER*)

−s Use Subject: *subject*

EXAMPLES

mail ast # Send a message to *ast*

mail # Read your mail

cat mail.cdiff | mail -s ''Here's the diff!'' asw
Pipe program output to mail with a subject line

mail -f /usr/spool/mail/asw
How root can read asw's mail

DESCRIPTION

Mail is an extremely simple electronic mail program. It can be used to send or receive email on a single MINIX system, in which case it functions as user agent and local delivery agent. If the flag *MAILER* is defined in *mail.c*, it can also call a transport agent to handle remote mail as well. No such agent is supplied with MINIX.

When called by *user* with no arguments, it examines the mailbox */usr/spool/mail/user*, prints one message (depending on the **−r** flag), and waits for one of the following commands:

<newline>	Go to the next message
−	Print the previous message
!command	Fork off a shell and execute *command*
CTRL-D	Update the mailbox and quit (same as q)
d	Delete the current message and go to the next one
q	Update the mailbox and quit (same as CTRL-D)
p	Print the current message again
s [*file*]	Save message in the named file
x	Exit without updating the mailbox

To send mail, the program is called with the name of one or more recipients as arguments. The mail is sent, along with a postmark line containing the date. For local delivery, a file named after each recipient in the directory */usr/spool/mail* must be writable. If a spool file does not exist for a recipient it will be created.

If the directory */usr/spool/mail* does not exist then the mail is dumped on the console, so that system programs have a way to notify a user on a system that does not have a mail spool.

The received mail contains a To: header showing the recipient. If there are multiple recipients and the **−t** option is specified each recipient will also see a Dist: header line showing the other recipients.

The **−s** option allows a subject to be specified. The subject must be quoted if it contains spaces. If no subject is specified the mail will be delivered with Subject: No subject.

NOTES

The **−s** option was added to make this simple mail program consistent with mail programs found in other *nix variants. Many programs, including the version of cron distributed with Minix releases 2.0.3 and later, report their outcome by piping output to the mail program in order to send a mail message to root in lieu of writing a log file. Such programs often expect the mail program to accept a subject line using this option.

BUGS

If an external *MAILER* is used it is likely the conditional code supporting this will need some editing to be made to work correctly.

AUTHOR

The original mail program for Minix was written by Peter B. Housel. The -e and -t options were added by C. W. Rose. The -s option was added by A. S. Woodhull. This man page revised by ASW 2003-07-18.