NAME

file – determine the type of a file by examining its contents

SYNOPSIS

/usr/ucb/file [**–f** *ffile*] [**–cL**] [**–m** *mfile*] *filename*. . .

AVAILABILITY

SUNWscpu

DESCRIPTION

file performs a series of tests on each *filename* in an attempt to determine what it contains. If the contents of a file appear to be ASCII text, **file** examines the first 512 bytes and tries to guess its language.

file uses the file **/etc/magic** to identify files that have some sort of *magic number*, that is, any file containing a numeric or string constant that indicates its type.

OPTIONS

–c Check for format errors in the magic number file. For reasons of efficiency, this validation is not normally carried out. No file type-checking is done under **–c**.

–f *ffile* Get a list of filenames to identify from *ffile.*

–L If a file is a symbolic link, test the file the link references rather than the link itself.

–m *mfile* Use *mfile* as the name of an alternate magic number file.

EXAMPLES

This example illustrates the use of **file** on all the files in a specific user's directory:

```
example% pwd
/usr/blort/misc
example% /usr/ucb/file *
code:           mc68020 demand paged executable
code.c:         c program text
counts:         ascii text
doc:            roff, nroff , or eqn input text
empty.file:     empty
libz:           archive random library
memos:          directory
project:        symbolic link to /usr/project
script:         executable shell script
titles:         ascii text
s5.stuff:       cpio archive
example%
```

ENVIRONMENT

The environment variables **LC_CTYPE**, **LANG**, and **LC_default** control the character classification throughout **file**. On entry to **file**, these environment variables are checked in the following order: **LC_CTYPE**, **LANG**, and **LC_default.** When a valid value is found, remaining environment variables for character classification are ignored. For example, a new setting for **LANG** does not override the current valid character classification rules of **LC_CTYPE**. When none of the values is valid, the shell character classification defaults to the POSIX.1 “C” locale.

FILES

/etc/magic

SEE ALSO

magic(4)

BUGS

file often makes mistakes. In particular, it often suggests that command files are C programs.

file does not recognize Pascal or LISP.