NAME expand, unexpand – expand TAB characters to SPACE characters, and vice versa

SYNOPSIS

expand [**–t** *tablist*] [*file*. . .]
expand [*–tabstop*] [*–tab1, tab2,. . ., tabn*] [*file*. . .]

unexpand [–**a**] [**–t** *tablist*] [*file*. . .]

AVAILABILITY SUNWesu

DESCRIPTION

expand copies *file*s (or the standard input) to the standard output, with TAB characters expanded to SPACE characters. BACKSPACE characters are preserved into the output and decrement the column count for TAB calculations. **expand** is useful for pre-processing character files (before sorting, looking at specific columns, and so forth) that contain TAB characters.

unexpand copies *file*s (or the standard input) to the standard output, putting TAB characters back into the data. By default, only leading SPACE and TAB characters are converted to strings of tabs, but this can be overridden by the –**a** option (see the **OPTIONS** section below).

OPTIONS

expand options are:

–t *tablist* Specify the tab stops. The argument *tablist* must consist of a single positive decimal integer or multiple positive decimal integers, separated by blank characters or commas, in ascending order. If a single number is given, tabs will be set *tablist* column positions apart instead of the default **8**. If multiple numbers are given, the tabs will be set at those specific column positions.

Each tab-stop position *N* must be an integer value greater than zero, and the list must be in strictly ascending order. This is taken to mean that, from the start of a line of output, tabbing to position *N* causes the next character output to be in the (*N*+1)th column position on that line.

In the event of **expand** having to process a tab character at a position beyond the last of those specified in a multiple tab-stop list, the tab character is replaced by a single space character in the output.

–tabstop Specify as a single argument, sets TAB characters *tabstop* SPACE characters apart instead of the default **8**.

–tab1, tab2,. . ., tabn
Set TAB characters at the columns specified by *–tab1, tab2,. . ., tabn*

unexpand options are:

–**a** Insert TAB characters when replacing a run of two or more SPACE characters would produce a smaller output file.

–t *tablist* Specify the tab stops. The option-argument *tablist* must be a single argument consisting of a single positive decimal integer or multiple positive decimal integers, separated by blank characters or commas, in ascending order. If a single number is given, tabs will be set *tablist* column positions apart instead of the default **8**. If multiple numbers are given, the tabs will be set at those specific column positions.

Each tab-stop position *N* must be an integer value greater than zero, and the list must be in strictly ascending order. This is taken to mean that, from the start of a line of output, tabbing to position *N* will cause the next character output to be in the (*N*+1)th column position on that line. When the −**t** option is not specified, the default is the equivalent of specifying −**t 8** (except for the interaction with −**a**, described below).

No space-to-tab character conversions occur for characters at positions beyond the last of those specified in a multiple tab-stop list.

When −**t** is specified, the presence or absence of the −**a** option is ignored; conversion will not be limited to the processing of leading blank characters.

OPERANDS

expand and **unexpand** support the following operand:

file The path name of a text file to be used as input.

ENVIRONMENT

See **environ**(5) for descriptions of the following environment variables that affect the execution of **expand** and **unexpand**: **LC_CTYPE**, **LC_MESSAGES**, and **NLSPATH**.

EXIT STATUS

The following exit values are returned:

0 Successful completion

>0 An error occurred.

SEE ALSO

tabs(1), **environ**(5)