NAME

cron – clock daemon

SYNOPSIS

/usr/sbin/cron

AVAILABILITY

SUNWcsu

DESCRIPTION

The **cron** command starts a process that executes commands at specified dates and times. Regularly scheduled commands can be specified according to instructions found in **crontab** files in the directory **/var/spool/cron/crontabs**. Users can submit their own **crontab** file using the **crontab**(1) command. Commands which are to be executed only once may be submitted using the **at**(1) command.

cron only examines **crontab** or **at** command files during its own process initialization phase and when the **crontab** or **at** command is run. This reduces the overhead of checking for new or changed files at regularly scheduled intervals.

Since **cron** never exits, it should be executed only once. This is done routinely through **/etc/rc2.d/S75cron** at system boot time. The file **/etc/cron.d/FIFO** is used (among other things) as a lock file to prevent the execution of more than one instance of **cron**.

cron captures the output of the job's **stdout** and **stderr** streams, and, if it is non-empty, mails the output to the user. If the job does not produce output, no mail is sent to the user (unless the job is an **at**(1) job and the **–m** option was specified when the job was submitted).

Setting cron Defaults

To keep a log of all actions taken by **cron**, **CRONLOG=YES** (by default) must be specified in the **/etc/default/cron** file. If **CRONLOG=NO** is specified, no logging is done. Keeping the log is a user configurable option since **cron** usually creates huge log files.

The **PATH** for **user** cron jobs can be set using **PATH=** in **/etc/default/cron**. The **PATH** for **root** cron jobs can be set using **SUPATH=** in **/etc/default/cron**. The security implications of setting **PATH** and **SUPATH** should be carefully considered.

Example **/etc/default/cron** file:

```
CRONLOG=YES
PATH=/usr/bin:/usr/ucb:
```

This example enables logging and sets the default **PATH** used by non-root jobs to **/usr/bin:/usr/ucb:**. Root jobs will continue to use **/usr/sbin:/usr/bin**.

/etc/cron.d/logchecker is a script that checks to see if the log file has exceeded the system ulimit. If so, the log file is moved to **/var/cron/olog**.

FILES

/etc/cron.d	main **cron** directory
/etc/cron.d/FIFO	used as a lock file
/etc/default/cron	contains cron default settings
/var/cron/log	**cron** history information
/var/spool/cron	spool area
/etc/cron.d/logchecker	moves log file to **/var/cron/olog** if log file exceeds system ulimit.

/etc/cron.d/queuedefs queue description file for **at**, **batch**, and **cron**.

SEE ALSO

at(1), **crontab**(1), **sh**(1), **queuedefs**(4)

DIAGNOSTICS

A history of all actions taken by **cron** is stored in **/var/cron/log** and (possibly) **/var/cron/olog**.