NAME

passwd – password file

SYNOPSIS

/etc/passwd

DESCRIPTION

/etc/passwd is a local source of information about users' accounts. The password file can be used in conjunction with other password sources, including the NIS maps **passwd.byname** and **passwd.bygid** and the NIS+ table **passwd**. Programs use the **getpwnam**(3C) routines to access this information.

Each **passwd** entry is a single line of the form:

*username***:***password***:***uid***:***gid***:***gcos-field***:***home-dir***:***login-shell*

where

username is the user's login name. It is recommended that this field conform to the checks performed by **pwck**(1M).

password is an empty field; The encrypted password for the user is in the corresponding entry in the **/etc/shadow** file. **pwconv**(1M) relies on a special value of '**x**' in the password field of **/etc/passwd**. If this value of '**x**' exists in the password field of **/etc/passwd**, this indicates that the password for the user is already in **/etc/shadow** and should not be modified.

uid is the user's unique numerical ID for the system.

gid is the unique numerical ID of the group that the user belongs to.

gcos-field is the user's real name, along with information to pass along in a mail-message heading. (It is called the gcos-field for historical reasons.) A ''**&**'' (ampersand) in this field stands for the login name (in cases where the login name appears in a user's real name).

home-dir is the pathname to the directory in which the user is initially positioned upon logging in.

login-shell is the user's initial shell program. If this field is empty, the default shell is **/usr/bin/sh**.

The password file is an ASCII file. Because the encrypted passwords are always kept in the shadow file, **/etc/passwd** has general read permission on all systems, and can be used by routines that map between numerical user IDs and user names.

Previous releases used a password entry beginning with a '+' (plus sign) or '–' (minus sign) to selectively incorporate entries from NIS maps for password. If still required, this is supported by specifying ''passwd : compat'' in **nsswitch.conf**(4). The ''compat'' source may not be supported in future releases. The preferred sources are, ''files'' followed by ''nisplus''. This has the effect of incorporating the entire contents of the NIS+ **passwd** table after the password file.

EXAMPLES

Here is a sample **passwd** file:

```
root:q.mJzTnu8icF.:0:10:God:/:/bin/csh
fred:6k/7KCFRPNVXg:508:10:% Fredericks:/usr2/fred:/bin/csh
```

and the sample password entry from **nsswitch.conf**:

```
passwd: files nisplus
```

In this example, there are specific entries for users **root** and **fred** to assure that they can login even when the system is running single-user. In addition, anyone in the NIS+ table **passwd** will be able to login with their usual password, shell and home directory.

If the password file is:

```
root:q.mJzTnu8icF.:0:10:God:/:/bin/csh
fred:6k/7KCFRPNVXg:508:10:% Fredericks:/usr2/fred:/bin/csh
+
```

and the password entry from nsswitch.conf:

```
passwd: compat
```

all the entries listed in the NIS **passwd.byuid** and **passwd.byname** maps will be effectively incorporated after the entries for **root** and **fred**.

FILES

/etc/nsswitch.conf
/etc/passwd
/etc/shadow

SEE ALSO

chgrp(1), **chown**(1), **groups**(1), **login**(1), **makekey**(1), **newgrp**(1), **nispasswd**(1), **passwd**(1), **sh**(1), **sort**(1), **chown**(1M), **domainname**(1M), **getent**(1M), **in.ftpd**(1M), **passmgmt**(1M), **pwck**(1M), **pwconv**(1M), **su**(1M), **useradd**(1M), **userdel**(1M), **usermod**(1M), **a64l**(3C), **crypt**(3C), **getpw**(3C), **getpwnam**(3C), **getspnam**(3C), **putpwent**(3C), **group**(4), **hosts.equiv**(4), **nsswitch.conf**(4), **shadow**(4), **unistd**(4), **environ**(5)