NAME

shadow – shadow password file

DESCRIPTION

/etc/shadow is an access-restricted ASCII system file that stores users' encrypted passwords and related information. The shadow file can be used in conjunction with other shadow sources, including the NIS maps **passwd.byname** and **passwd.byuid** and the NIS+ table **passwd**. Programs use the **getspnam**(3C) routines to access this information.

The fields for each user entry are separated by colons. Each user is separated from the next by a newline. Unlike the **/etc/passwd** file, **/etc/shadow** does not have general read permission.

Each entry in the shadow file has the form:

username:*password*:*lastchg*:*min*:*max*:*warn*:*inactive*:*expire*:*flag*

The fields are defined as follows:

username The user's login name (UID).

password A 13-character encrypted password for the user, a *lock* string to indicate that the login is not accessible, or no string, which shows that there is no password for the login.

lastchg The number of days between January 1, 1970, and the date that the password was last modified.

min The minimum number of days required between password changes.

max The maximum number of days the password is valid.

warn The number of days before password expires that the user is warned.

inactive The number of days of inactivity allowed for that user.

expire An absolute date specifying when the login may no longer be used.

flag Reserved for future use, set to zero. Currently not used.

The encrypted password consists of 13 characters chosen from a 64-character alphabet (**.**, **/**, **0**–**9**, **A**–**Z**, **a**–**z**). To update this file, use the **passwd**(1), **useradd**(1M), **usermod**(1M), or **userdel**(1M) commands.

In order to make system administration manageable, **/etc/shadow** entries should appear in exactly the same order as **/etc/passwd** entries; this includes ''+'' and ''-'' entries if the **compat** source is being used (see **nsswitch.conf**(4)).

FILES

/etc/shadow shadow password file
/etc/passwd password file
/etc/nsswitch.conf
name-service switch configuration file

SEE ALSO

login(1), **passwd**(1), **useradd**(1M), **usermod**(1M), **userdel**(1M), **putspent**(3C), **getspnam**(3C), **nsswitch.conf**(4), **passwd**(4)

NOTES

If password aging is turned on in any name service the *passwd:* line in the **/etc/nsswitch.conf** file must have a format specified in the **nsswitch.conf**(4) man page.

If the **/etc/nsswitch.conf** passwd policy is not in one of the supported formats, logins will not be allowed upon password expiration because the software does not know how to handle password updates under these conditions. See **nsswitch.conf**(4) for additional information.