

Linux UBUNTU Manual Pages

TOUCH(1)

User Commands

TOUCH(1)

NAME

touch - change file timestamps

SYNOPSIS

touch [OPTION]... FILE...

DESCRIPTION

Update the access and modification times of each FILE to the current time.

A FILE argument that does not exist is created empty, unless **-c** or **-h** is supplied.

A FILE argument string of **-** is handled specially and causes touch to change the times of the file associated with standard output.

Mandatory arguments to long options are mandatory for short options too.

-a change only the access time

-c, --no-create

-d, --date=STRING

parse STRING and use it instead of current time

-f (ignored)

-h, --no-dereference

affect each symbolic link instead of any referenced file (useful only on systems that can change the timestamps of a symlink)

-m change only the modification time

-r, --reference=FILE

use this file's times instead of current time

-t STAMP

use [[CC]YY]MMDDhhmm[.ss] instead of current time

--time=WORD

change the specified time: WORD is access, atime, or use: equivalent to -a WORD is modify or mtime: equivalent to -m

--help display this help and exit

output version information and exit

Note that the `-d` and `-t` options accept different time-date formats.

DATE STRING

The `--date=STRING` is a mostly free format human readable date string such as "Sun, 29 Feb 2004 16:21:42 -0800" or "2004-02-29 16:21:42" or even "next Thursday". A date string may contain items indicating calendar date, time of day, time zone, day of week, relative time, relative date, and numbers. An empty string indicates the beginning of the day. The date string format is more complex than is easily documented here but is fully described in the info documentation.

AUTHOR

Written by Paul Rubin, Arnold Robbins, Jim Kingdon, David MacKenzie, and Randy Smith.

REPORTING BUGS

GNU coreutils online help: [<https://www.gnu.org/software/coreutils/>](https://www.gnu.org/software/coreutils/)

Report any translation bugs to [<https://translationproject.org/team/>](https://translationproject.org/team/)

COPYRIGHT

Copyright ? 2023 Free Software Foundation, Inc. License GPLv3+: GNU

GPL version 3 or later [<https://gnu.org/licenses/gpl.html>](https://gnu.org/licenses/gpl.html).

Linux UBUNTU Manual Pages

There is NO WARRANTY, to the extent permitted by law.

SEE ALSO

Full documentation <<https://www.gnu.org/software/coreutils/touch>>

or available locally via: info '(coreutils) touch invocation'

GNU coreutils 9.4

June 2025

TOUCH(1)