



Linux Ubuntu 26.04 Manual Pages on command 'drand48.3'

\$ man drand48.3

drand48(3) Library Functions Manual drand48(3)

NAME

drand48, erand48, lrand48, nrand48, mrand48, jrand48, srand48, seed48, lcong48 - generate uniformly distributed pseudo-random numbers

LIBRARY

Standard C library (libc, -lc)

SYNOPSIS

```
#include <stdlib.h>

double drand48(void);

double erand48(unsigned short xsubi[3]);

long lrand48(void);

long nrand48(unsigned short xsubi[3]);

long mrand48(void);

long jrand48(unsigned short xsubi[3]);

void srand48(long seedval);

unsigned short *seed48(unsigned short seed16v[3]);

void lcong48(unsigned short param[7]);
```

Feature Test Macro Requirements for glibc (see feature_test_macros(7)):

All functions shown above:

```
_XOPEN_SOURCE

|| /* glibc >= 2.19: */ _DEFAULT_SOURCE

|| /* glibc <= 2.19: */ _SVID_SOURCE
```

DESCRIPTION

These functions generate pseudo-random numbers using the linear congruential algorithm and 48-bit integer arithmetic.

The `drand48()` and `erand48()` functions return nonnegative double-precision floating-point values uniformly distributed over the interval $[0.0, 1.0)$.

The `lrand48()` and `nrand48()` functions return nonnegative long integers uniformly distributed over the interval $[0, 2^{31})$.

The `mrnd48()` and `jrand48()` functions return signed long integers uniformly distributed over the interval $[-2^{31}, 2^{31})$.

The `srand48()`, `seed48()`, and `lcong48()` functions are initialization functions, one of which should be called before using `drand48()`, `lrand48()`, or `mrnd48()`. The functions `erand48()`, `nrand48()`, and `jrand48()` do not require an initialization function to be called first.

All the functions work by generating a sequence of 48-bit integers, X_i , according to the linear congruential formula:

$$X_{n+1} = (aX_n + c) \bmod m, \text{ where } n \geq 0$$

The parameter $m = 2^{48}$, hence 48-bit integer arithmetic is performed. Unless `lcong48()` is called, a and c are given by:

$$a = 0x5DEECE66D$$

$$c = 0xB$$

The value returned by any of the functions `drand48()`, `erand48()`, `lrand48()`, `nrand48()`, `mrnd48()`, or `jrand48()` is computed by first generating the next 48-bit X_i in the sequence. Then the appropriate number of bits, according to the type of data item to be returned, is copied from the high-order bits of X_i and transformed into the returned value.

The functions `drand48()`, `lrand48()`, and `mrnd48()` store the last 48-bit X_i generated in an internal buffer. The functions `erand48()`, `nrand48()`, and `jrand48()` require the calling program to provide storage for the successive X_i values in the array argument `xsubi`. The functions are initialized by placing the initial value of X_i into the array before calling the function for the first time.

The initializer function `srand48()` sets the high order 32-bits of X_i to the argument `seedval`. The low order 16-bits are set to the arbitrary value `0x330E`.

The initializer function `seed48()` sets the value of X_i to the 48-bit value specified in the array argument `seed16v`. The previous value of X_i is copied into an internal buffer and a pointer to this buffer is returned by `seed48()`.

The initialization function `lcong48()` allows the user to specify initial values for X_i , a ,

ATTRIBUTES

[illegible][illegible]

? mrand48(), jrand48(), srand48(), seed48(), ? ? ?

[illegible]

STANDARDS

HISTORY

SEE ALSO

Linux man-pages 6.17 2026-02-08 drand48(3)