



Linux Ubuntu 26.04 Manual Pages on command 'tar.1'

\$ man tar.1

TAR(1) GNU TAR Manual TAR(1)

NAME

tar - an archiving utility

SYNOPSIS

Traditional usage

tar {A|c|d|r|t|u|x}[GnSkUWOmpsMBiajJzZhPIRwwo] [ARG...]

UNIX-style usage

tar -A [OPTIONS] -f ARCHIVE ARCHIVE...

tar -c [-f ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [FILE...]

tar -d [-f ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [FILE...]

tar -r [-f ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [FILE...]

tar -t [-f ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [MEMBER...]

tar -u [-f ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [FILE...]

tar -x [-f ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [MEMBER...]

GNU-style usage

tar {--catenate|--concatenate} [OPTIONS] --file ARCHIVE ARCHIVE...

tar --create [--file ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [FILE...]

tar {--diff|--compare} [--file ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [FILE...]

tar --delete [--file ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [MEMBER...]

tar --append [--file ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [FILE...]

tar --list [--file ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [MEMBER...]

tar --test-label [--file ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [LABEL...]

tar --update [--file ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [FILE...]

```
tar [--extract|--get] [--file ARCHIVE] [OPTIONS] [MEMBER...]
```

NOTE

This manpage is a short description of GNU tar. For a detailed discussion, including examples and usage recommendations, refer to the GNU Tar Manual available in texinfo format. If the info reader and the tar documentation are properly installed on your system, the command

```
info tar
```

should give you access to the complete manual.

You can also view the manual using the info mode in emacs(1), or find it in various formats online at

```
https://www.gnu.org/software/tar/manual
```

If any discrepancies occur between this manpage and the GNU Tar Manual, the later shall be considered the authoritative source.

DESCRIPTION

GNU tar is an archiving program designed to store multiple files in a single file (an archive), and to manipulate such archives. The archive can be either a regular file or a device (e.g. a tape drive, hence the name of the program, which stands for tape archiver), which can be located either on the local or on a remote machine.

Option styles

Options to GNU tar can be given in three different styles. In traditional style, the first argument is a cluster of option letters and all subsequent arguments supply arguments to those options that require them. The arguments are read in the same order as the option letters. Any command line words that remain after all options have been processed are treated as non-option arguments: file or archive member names.

For example, the c option requires creating the archive, the v option requests the verbose operation, and the f option takes an argument that sets the name of the archive to operate upon. The following command, written in the traditional style, instructs tar to store all files from the directory /etc into the archive file etc.tar, verbosely listing the files being archived:

```
tar cfv etc.tar /etc
```

In UNIX or short-option style, each option letter is prefixed with a single dash, as in other command line utilities. If an option takes an argument, the argument follows it, either as a separate command line word, or immediately following the option. However, if the option takes an optional argument, the argument must follow the option letter without any

intervening whitespace, as in `-g/tmp/snar.db`.

Any number of options not taking arguments can be clustered together after a single dash, e.g. `-vkp`. An option that takes an argument (whether mandatory or optional) can appear at the end of such a cluster, e.g. `-vkpf a.tar`.

The example command above written in the short-option style could look like:

```
tar -cvf etc.tar /etc
```

or

```
tar -c -v -f etc.tar /etc
```

In GNU or long-option style, each option begins with two dashes and has a meaningful name, consisting of lower-case letters and dashes. When used, the long option can be abbreviated to its initial letters, provided that this does not create ambiguity. Arguments to long options are supplied either as a separate command line word, immediately following the option, or separated from the option by an equals sign with no intervening whitespace. Optional arguments must always use the latter method.

Here are several ways of writing the example command in this style:

```
tar --create --file etc.tar --verbose /etc
```

or (abbreviating some options):

```
tar --cre --file=etc.tar --verb /etc
```

The options in all three styles can be intermixed, although doing so with old options is not encouraged.

Operation mode

The options listed in the table below tell GNU tar what operation it is to perform. Exactly one of them must be given. The meaning of non-option arguments depends on the operation mode requested.

`-A`, `--catenate`, `--concatenate`

Append archives to the end of another archive. The arguments are treated as the names of archives to append. All archives must be of the same format as the archive they are appended to, otherwise the resulting archive might be unusable with non-GNU implementations of tar. Notice also that when more than one archive is given, the members from archives other than the first one will be accessible in the resulting archive only when using the `-i` (`--ignore-zeros`) option.

Compressed archives cannot be concatenated.

`-c`, `--create`

Create a new archive. Arguments supply the names of the files to be archived. Directories are archived recursively, unless the --no-recursion option is given.

-d, --diff, --compare

Find differences between archive and file system. The arguments are optional and specify archive members to compare. If not given, the current working directory is assumed.

--delete

Delete from the archive. The arguments supply names of the archive members to be removed. At least one argument must be given.

This option does not operate on compressed archives. There is no short option equivalent.

-r, --append

Append files to the end of an archive. Arguments have the same meaning as for -c (--create).

-t, --list

List the contents of an archive. Arguments are optional. When given, they specify the names of the members to list.

--test-label

Test the archive volume label and exit. When used without arguments, it prints the volume label (if any) and exits with status 0. When one or more command line arguments are given, tar compares the volume label with each argument. It exits with code 0 if a match is found, and with code 1 otherwise. No output is displayed, unless used together with the -v (--verbose) option.

There is no short option equivalent for this option.

-u, --update

Append files which are newer than the corresponding copy in the archive. Arguments have the same meaning as with the -c and -r options. Notice, that newer files don't replace their old archive copies, but instead are appended to the end of archive.

The resulting archive can thus contain several members of the same name, corresponding to various versions of the same file.

-x, --extract, --get

Extract files from an archive. Arguments are optional. When given, they specify names of the archive members to be extracted.

--show-defaults

Show built-in defaults for various tar options and exit.

-, --help

Display a short option summary and exit.

--usage

Display a list of available options and exit.

--version

Print program version and copyright information and exit.

OPTIONS

Operation modifiers

--check-device

Check device numbers when creating incremental archives (default).

-g, --listed-incremental=FILE

Handle new GNU-format incremental backups. FILE is the name of a snapshot file, where tar stores additional information which is used to decide which files changed since the previous incremental dump and, consequently, must be dumped again. If FILE does not exist when creating an archive, it will be created and all files will be added to the resulting archive (the level 0 dump). To create incremental archives of non-zero level N, you need a copy of the snapshot file created for level N-1, and use it as FILE.

When listing or extracting, the actual content of FILE is not inspected, it is needed only due to syntactical requirements. It is therefore common practice to use /dev/null in its place.

--hole-detection=METHOD

Use METHOD to detect holes in sparse files. This option implies --sparse. Valid values for METHOD are seek and raw. Default is seek with fallback to raw when not applicable.

-G, --incremental

Handle old GNU-format incremental backups.

--ignore-failed-read

Do not exit with nonzero on unreadable files.

--level=NUMBER

Set dump level for a created listed-incremental archive. Currently only --level=0 is

meaningful: it instructs tar to truncate the snapshot file before dumping, thereby forcing a level 0 dump.

`-n, --seek`

Assume the archive is seekable. Normally tar determines automatically whether the archive can be seeked or not. This option is intended for use in cases when such recognition fails. It takes effect only if the archive is open for reading (e.g. with `--list` or `--extract` options).

`--no-check-device`

Do not check device numbers when creating incremental archives.

`--no-seek`

Assume the archive is not seekable.

`--occurrence[=N]`

Process only the Nth occurrence of each file in the archive. This option is valid only when used with one of the following subcommands: `--delete`, `--diff`, `--extract` or `--list` and when a list of files is given either on the command line or via the `-T` option. The default N is 1.

`--restrict`

Disable the use of some potentially harmful options.

`--sparse-version=MAJOR[.MINOR]`

Set which version of the sparse format to use. This option implies `--sparse`. Valid argument values are 0.0, 0.1, and 1.0. For a detailed discussion of sparse formats, refer to the GNU Tar Manual, appendix D, "Sparse Formats". Using the info reader, it can be accessed running the following command: `info tar 'Sparse Formats'`.

`-S, --sparse`

Handle sparse files efficiently. Some files in the file system may have segments which were actually never written (quite often these are database files created by such systems as DBM). When given this option, tar attempts to determine if the file is sparse prior to archiving it, and if so, to reduce the resulting archive size by not dumping empty parts of the file.

Overwrite control

These options control tar actions when extracting a file over an existing copy on disk.

`-k, --keep-old-files`

Don't replace existing files when extracting.

`--keep-newer-files`

Don't replace existing files that are newer than their archive copies.

`--keep-directory-symlink`

Don't replace existing symlinks to directories when extracting.

`--no-overwrite-dir`

Preserve metadata of existing directories.

`--one-top-level[=DIR]`

Extract all files into DIR, or, if used without argument, into a subdirectory named by the base name of the archive (minus standard compression suffixes recognizable by `--auto-compress`).

`--overwrite`

Overwrite existing files when extracting.

`--overwrite-dir`

Overwrite metadata of existing directories when extracting (default).

`--recursive-unlink`

Recursively remove all files in the directory prior to extracting it.

`--remove-files`

Remove files from disk after adding them to the archive.

`--skip-old-files`

Don't replace existing files when extracting, silently skip over them.

`-U, --unlink-first`

Remove each file prior to extracting over it.

`-W, --verify`

Verify the archive after writing it.

Output stream selection

`--ignore-command-error`

Ignore subprocess exit codes.

`--no-ignore-command-error`

Treat non-zero exit codes of children as error (default).

`-O, --to-stdout`

Extract files to standard output.

`--to-command=COMMAND`

Pipe extracted files to COMMAND. The argument is the pathname of an external pro?

gram, optionally with command line arguments. The program will be invoked and the contents of the file being extracted supplied to it on its standard input. Additional data will be supplied via the following environment variables:

TAR_FILETYPE

Type of the file. It is a single letter with the following meaning:

f	Regular file
d	Directory
l	Symbolic link
h	Hard link
b	Block device
c	Character device

Currently only regular files are supported.

TAR_MODE

File mode, an octal number.

TAR_FILENAME

The name of the file.

TAR_REALNAME

Name of the file as stored in the archive.

TAR_UNAME

Name of the file owner.

TAR_GNAME

Name of the file owner group.

TAR_ETIME

Time of last access. It is a decimal number, representing seconds since the Epoch. If the archive provides times with nanosecond precision, the nanoseconds are appended to the timestamp after a decimal point.

TAR_MTIME

Time of last modification.

TAR_CTIME

Time of last status change.

TAR_SIZE

Size of the file.

TAR_UID

UID of the file owner.

TAR_GID

GID of the file owner.

Additionally, the following variables contain information about tar operation mode and the archive being processed:

TAR_VERSION

GNU tar version number.

TAR_ARCHIVE

The name of the archive tar is processing.

TAR_BLOCKING_FACTOR

Current blocking factor, i.e. number of 512-byte blocks in a record.

TAR_VOLUME

Ordinal number of the volume tar is processing (set if reading a multi-volume archive).

TAR_FORMAT

Format of the archive being processed. One of: gnu, oldgnu, posix, ustar, v7.

TAR_SUBCOMMAND

A short option (with a leading dash) describing the operation tar is executing.

Handling of file attributes

--atime-preserve[=METHOD]

Preserve access times on dumped files, either by restoring the times after reading (METHOD=replace, this is the default) or by not setting the times in the first place (METHOD=system).

--delay-directory-restore

Delay setting modification times and permissions of extracted directories until the end of extraction. Use this option when extracting from an archive which has unusual member ordering.

--group=NAME[:GID]

Force NAME as group for added files. If GID is not supplied, NAME can be either a user name or numeric GID. In this case the missing part (GID or name) will be inferred from the current host's group database.

When used with --group-map=FILE, affects only those files whose owner group is not

listed in FILE.

`--group-map=FILE`

Read group translation map from FILE. Empty lines are ignored. Comments are introduced with # sign and extend to the end of line. Each non-empty line in FILE defines translation for a single group. It must consist of two fields, delimited by any amount of whitespace:

OLDGRP NEWGRP[:NEWGID]

OLDGRP is either a valid group name or a GID prefixed with +. Unless NEWGID is supplied, NEWGRP must also be either a valid group name or a +GID. Otherwise, both NEWGRP and NEWGID need not be listed in the system group database.

As a result, each input file with owner group OLDGRP will be stored in archive with owner group NEWGRP and GID NEWGID.

`--mode=CHANGES`

Force symbolic mode CHANGES for added files.

`--mtime=DATE-OR-FILE`

Set mtime for added files. DATE-OR-FILE is either a date/time in almost arbitrary format, or the name of an existing file. In the latter case the mtime of that file will be used.

`-m, --touch`

Don't extract file modified time.

`--no-delay-directory-restore`

Cancel the effect of the prior `--delay-directory-restore` option.

`--no-same-owner`

Extract files as yourself (default for ordinary users).

`--no-same-permissions`

Apply the user's umask when extracting permissions from the archive (default for ordinary users).

`--numeric-owner`

Always use numbers for user/group names.

`--owner=NAME[:UID]`

Force NAME as owner for added files. If UID is not supplied, NAME can be either a user name or numeric UID. In this case the missing part (UID or name) will be inferred from the current host's user database.

When used with `--owner-map=FILE`, affects only those files whose owner is not listed in `FILE`.

`--owner-map=FILE`

Read owner translation map from `FILE`. Empty lines are ignored. Comments are introduced with `#` sign and extend to the end of line. Each non-empty line in `FILE` defines translation for a single UID. It must consist of two fields, delimited by any amount of whitespace:

`OLDUSR NEWUSR[:NEWUID]`

`OLDUSR` is either a valid user name or a UID prefixed with `+`. Unless `NEWUID` is supplied, `NEWUSR` must also be either a valid user name or a `+UID`. Otherwise, both `NEWUSR` and `NEWUID` need not be listed in the system user database.

As a result, each input file owned by `OLDUSR` will be stored in archive with owner name `NEWUSR` and UID `NEWUID`.

`-p, --preserve-permissions, --same-permissions`

Set permissions of extracted files to those recorded in the archive (default for `su?peruser`).

`--same-owner`

Try extracting files with the same ownership as exists in the archive (default for `superuser`).

`-s, --preserve-order, --same-order`

Tell `tar` that the list of file names to process is sorted in the same order as the files in the archive.

`--sort=ORDER`

When creating an archive, sort directory entries according to `ORDER`, which is one of `none`, `name`, or `inode`.

The default is `--sort=none`, which stores archive members in the same order as returned by the operating system.

Using `--sort=name` ensures the member ordering in the created archive is uniform and reproducible.

Using `--sort=inode` reduces the number of disk seeks made when creating the archive and thus can considerably speed up archivation. This sorting order is supported only if the underlying system provides the necessary information.

--acls Enable POSIX ACLs support.

--no-acls

Disable POSIX ACLs support.

--selinux

Enable SELinux context support.

--no-selinux

Disable SELinux context support.

--xattrs

Enable extended attributes support.

--no-xattrs

Disable extended attributes support.

--xattrs-exclude=PATTERN

Specify the exclude pattern for xattr keys. PATTERN is a globbing pattern, e.g.

--xattrs-exclude='user.*' to include only attributes from the user namespace.

--xattrs-include=PATTERN

Specify the include pattern for xattr keys. PATTERN is a globbing pattern.

Device selection and switching

-f, --file=ARCHIVE

Use archive file or device ARCHIVE. If this option is not given, tar will first examine the environment variable `TAPE'. If it is set, its value will be used as the archive name. Otherwise, tar will assume the compiled-in default. The default value can be inspected either using the --show-defaults option, or at the end of the tar --help output.

An archive name that has a colon in it specifies a file or device on a remote machine. The part before the colon is taken as the machine name or IP address, and the part after it as the file or device pathname, e.g.:

--file=remotehost:/dev/sr0

An optional username can be prefixed to the hostname, placing a @ sign between them. By default, the remote host is accessed via the rsh(1) command. Nowadays it is common to use ssh(1) instead. You can do so by giving the following command line option:

--rsh-command=/usr/bin/ssh

The remote machine should have the rmt(8) command installed. If its pathname does

not match tar's default, you can inform tar about the correct pathname using the `--rmt-command` option.

`--force-local`

Archive file is local even if it has a colon.

`-F, --info-script=COMMAND, --new-volume-script=COMMAND`

Run `COMMAND` at the end of each tape (implies `-M`). The command can include arguments.

When started, it will inherit tar's environment plus the following variables:

`TAR_VERSION`

GNU tar version number.

`TAR_ARCHIVE`

The name of the archive tar is processing.

`TAR_BLOCKING_FACTOR`

Current blocking factor, i.e. number of 512-byte blocks in a record.

`TAR_VOLUME`

Ordinal number of the volume tar is processing (set if reading a multi-volume archive).

`TAR_FORMAT`

Format of the archive being processed. One of: `gnu`, `oldgnu`, `posix`, `ustar`, `v7`.

`TAR_SUBCOMMAND`

A short option (with a leading dash) describing the operation tar is executing.

`TAR_FD` File descriptor which can be used to communicate the new volume name to tar.

If the info script fails, tar exits; otherwise, it begins writing the next volume.

`-L, --tape-length=N`

Change tape after writing `Nx1024` bytes. If `N` is followed by a size suffix (see the subsection `Size suffixes` below), the suffix specifies the multiplicative factor to be used instead of 1024.

This option implies `-M`.

`-M, --multi-volume`

Create/list/extract multi-volume archive.

`--rmt-command=COMMAND`

Use `COMMAND` instead of `rmt` when accessing remote archives. See the description of the `-f` option, above.

`--rsh-command=COMMAND`

Use COMMAND instead of rsh when accessing remote archives. See the description of the -f option, above.

`--volno-file=FILE`

When this option is used in conjunction with `--multi-volume`, tar will keep track of which volume of a multi-volume archive it is working in FILE.

Device blocking

`-b, --blocking-factor=BLOCKS`

Set record size to BLOCKSx512 bytes.

`-B, --read-full-records`

When listing or extracting, accept incomplete input records after end-of-file marker.

`-i, --ignore-zeros`

Ignore zeroed blocks in archive. Normally two consecutive 512-blocks filled with zeroes mean EOF and tar stops reading after encountering them. This option instructs it to read further and is useful when reading archives created with the -A option.

`--record-size=NUMBER`

Set record size. NUMBER is the number of bytes per record. It must be multiple of 512. It can be suffixed with a size suffix, e.g. `--record-size=10K`, for 10 Kilo? bytes. See the subsection Size suffixes, for a list of valid suffixes.

Archive format selection

`-H, --format=FORMAT`

Create archive of the given format. Valid formats are:

gnu GNU tar 1.13.x format

oldgnu GNU format as per tar <= 1.12.

pax, posix

POSIX 1003.1-2001 (pax) format.

ustar POSIX 1003.1-1988 (ustar) format.

v7 Old V7 tar format.

`--old-archive, --portability`

Same as `--format=v7`.

`--pax-option=keyword[:=value][,keyword[:=value]]...`

Control pax keywords when creating PAX archives (-H pax). This option is equivalent to the -o option of the pax(1) utility.

--posix

Same as --format=posix.

-V, --label=TEXT

Create archive with volume name TEXT. If listing or extracting, use TEXT as a glob?

bing pattern for volume name.

Compression options

-a, --auto-compress

Use archive suffix to determine the compression program.

-l, --use-compress-program=COMMAND

Filter data through COMMAND. It must accept the -d option, for decompression. The argument can contain command line options.

-j, --bzip2

Filter the archive through bzip2(1).

-J, --xz

Filter the archive through xz(1).

--lzip Filter the archive through lzip(1).

--lzma Filter the archive through lzma(1).

--lzop Filter the archive through lzop(1).

--no-auto-compress

Do not use archive suffix to determine the compression program.

-z, --gzip, --gunzip, --ungzip

Filter the archive through gzip(1).

-Z, --compress, --uncompress

Filter the archive through compress(1).

--zstd Filter the archive through zstd(1).

Local file selection

--add-file=FILE

Add FILE to the archive (useful if its name starts with a dash).

--backup[=CONTROL]

Backup before removal. The CONTROL argument, if supplied, controls the backup pol?

icy. Its valid values are:

none, off

Never make backups.

t, numbered

Make numbered backups.

nil, existing

Make numbered backups if numbered backups exist, simple backups otherwise.

never, simple

Always make simple backups

If CONTROL is not given, the value is taken from the VERSION_CONTROL environment variable. If it is not set, existing is assumed.

-C, --directory=DIR

Change to DIR before performing any operations. This option is order-sensitive, i.e. it affects all options that follow.

--exclude=PATTERN

Exclude files matching PATTERN, a glob(3)-style wildcard pattern.

--exclude-backups

Exclude backup and lock files.

--exclude-caches

Exclude contents of directories containing file CACHEDIR.TAG, except for the tag file itself.

--exclude-caches-all

Exclude directories containing file CACHEDIR.TAG and the file itself.

--exclude-caches-under

Exclude everything under directories containing CACHEDIR.TAG

--exclude-ignore=FILE

Before dumping a directory, see if it contains FILE. If so, read exclusion patterns from this file. The patterns affect only the directory itself.

--exclude-ignore-recursive=FILE

Same as --exclude-ignore, except that patterns from FILE affect both the directory and all its subdirectories.

--exclude-tag=FILE

Exclude contents of directories containing FILE, except for FILE itself.

--exclude-tag-all=FILE

Exclude directories containing FILE.

--exclude-tag-under=FILE

Exclude everything under directories containing FILE.

--exclude-vcs

Exclude version control system directories.

--exclude-vcs-ignores

Exclude files that match patterns read from VCS-specific ignore files. Supported files are: .cvsignore, .gitignore, .bzrignore, and .hgignore.

-h, --dereference

Follow symlinks; archive and dump the files they point to.

--hard-dereference

Follow hard links; archive and dump the files they refer to.

-K, --starting-file=MEMBER

Begin at the given member in the archive.

--newer-mtime=DATE

Work on files whose data changed after the DATE. If DATE starts with / or . it is taken to be a file name; the mtime of that file is used as the date.

--no-null

Disable the effect of the previous --null option.

--no-recursion

Avoid descending automatically in directories.

--no-unquote

Do not unquote input file or member names.

--no-verbatim-files-from

Treat each line read from a file list as if it were supplied in the command line.

I.e., leading and trailing whitespace is removed and, if the resulting string begins with a dash, it is treated as tar command line option.

This is the default behavior. The --no-verbatim-files-from option is provided as a way to restore it after --verbatim-files-from option.

This option is positional: it affects all --files-from options that occur after it in, until --verbatim-files-from option or end of line, whichever occurs first.

It is implied by the --no-null option.

--null Instruct subsequent -T options to read null-terminated names verbatim (disables special handling of names that start with a dash).

See also --verbatim-files-from.

-N, --newer=DATE, --after-date=DATE

Only store files newer than DATE. If DATE starts with / or . it is taken to be a file name; the mtime of that file is used as the date.

--one-file-system

Stay in local file system when creating archive.

-P, --absolute-names

Don't strip leading slashes from file names when creating archives.

--recursion

Recurse into directories (default).

--suffix=STRING

Backup before removal, override usual suffix. Default suffix is ~, unless overridden by environment variable SIMPLE_BACKUP_SUFFIX.

-T, --files-from=FILE

Get names to extract or create from FILE.

Unless specified otherwise, the FILE must contain a list of names separated by ASCII LF (i.e. one name per line). The names read are handled the same way as command line arguments. They undergo quote removal and word splitting, and any string that starts with a - is handled as tar command line option.

If this behavior is undesirable, it can be turned off using the --verbatim-files-from option.

The --null option instructs tar that the names in FILE are separated by ASCII NUL character, instead of LF. It is useful if the list is generated by find(1) -print0 predicate.

--unquote

Unquote file or member names (default).

--verbatim-files-from

Treat each line obtained from a file list as a file name, even if it starts with a dash. File lists are supplied with the --files-from (-T) option. The default behavior is to handle names supplied in file lists as if they were typed in the command line, i.e. any names starting with a dash are treated as tar options. The --verbatim-files-from option disables this behavior.

This option affects all --files-from options that occur after it in the command line.

Its effect is reverted by the --no-verbatim-files-from option.

This option is implied by the --null option.

See also --add-file.

-X, --exclude-from=FILE

Exclude files matching patterns listed in FILE.

File name transformations

--strip-components=NUMBER

Strip NUMBER leading components from file names on extraction.

--transform=EXPRESSION, --xform=EXPRESSION

Use sed replace EXPRESSION to transform file names.

File name matching options

These options affect both exclude and include patterns.

--anchored

Patterns match file name start.

--ignore-case

Ignore case.

--no-anchored

Patterns match after any / (default for exclusion).

--no-ignore-case

Case sensitive matching (default).

--no-wildcards

Verbatim string matching.

--no-wildcards-match-slash

Wildcards do not match /.

--wildcards

Use wildcards (default for exclusion).

--wildcards-match-slash

Wildcards match / (default for exclusion).

Informative output

--checkpoint[=N]

Display progress messages every Nth record (default 10).

--checkpoint-action=ACTION

Run ACTION on each checkpoint.

--clamp-mtime

Only set time when the file is more recent than what was given with --mtime.

--full-time

Print file time to its full resolution.

--index-file=FILE

Send verbose output to FILE.

-l, --check-links

Print a message if not all links are dumped.

--no-quote-chars=STRING

Disable quoting for characters from STRING.

--quote-chars=STRING

Additionally quote characters from STRING.

--quoting-style=STYLE

Set quoting style for file and member names. Valid values for STYLE are literal, shell, shell-always, c, c-maybe, escape, locale, clocale.

-R, --block-number

Show block number within archive with each message.

--show-omitted-dirs

When listing or extracting, list each directory that does not match search criteria.

--show-transformed-names, --show-stored-names

Show file or archive names after transformation by --strip and --transform options.

--totals[=SIGNAL]

Print total bytes after processing the archive. If SIGNAL is given, print total bytes when this signal is delivered. Allowed signals are: SIGHUP, SIGQUIT, SIGINT, SIGUSR1, and SIGUSR2. The SIG prefix can be omitted.

--utc Print file modification times in UTC.

-v, --verbose

Verbosely list files processed. Each instance of this option on the command line increases the verbosity level by one. The maximum verbosity level is 3. For a detailed discussion of how various verbosity levels affect tar's output, please refer to GNU Tar Manual, subsection 2.5.2 "The '--verbose' Option".

--warning=KEYWORD

Enable or disable warning messages identified by KEYWORD. The messages are suppressed if KEYWORD is prefixed with no- and enabled otherwise.

Multiple --warning options accumulate.

Keywords controlling general tar operation:

all Enable all warning messages. This is the default.

none Disable all warning messages.

filename-with-nuls

"%s: file name read contains nul character"

alone-zero-block

"A lone zero block at %s"

Keywords applicable for tar --create:

cachedir

"%s: contains a cache directory tag %s; %s"

file-shrank

"%s: File shrank by %s bytes; padding with zeros"

xdev "%s: file is on a different filesystem; not dumped"

file-ignored

"%s: Unknown file type; file ignored"

"%s: socket ignored"

"%s: door ignored"

file-unchanged

"%s: file is unchanged; not dumped"

ignore-archive

"%s: archive cannot contain itself; not dumped"

file-removed

"%s: File removed before we read it"

file-changed

"%s: file changed as we read it"

failed-read

Suppresses warnings about unreadable files or directories. This keyword applies only if used together with the --ignore-failed-read option.

Keywords applicable for tar --extract:

existing-file

"%s: skipping existing file"

timestamp

"%s: implausibly old time stamp %s"

"%s: time stamp %s is %s s in the future"

contiguous-cast

"Extracting contiguous files as regular files"

symlink-cast

"Attempting extraction of symbolic links as hard links"

unknown-cast

"%s: Unknown file type '%c', extracted as normal file"

ignore-newer

"Current %s is newer or same age"

unknown-keyword

"Ignoring unknown extended header keyword '%s'"

decompress-program

Controls verbose description of failures occurring when trying to run alternative decompressor programs. This warning is disabled by default (unless --verbose is used). A common example of what you can get when using this warning is:

```
$ tar --warning=decompress-program -x -f archive.Z
```

```
tar (child): cannot run compress: No such file or directory
```

```
tar (child): trying gzip
```

This means that tar first tried to decompress archive.Z using compress, and, when that failed, switched to gzip.

record-size

"Record size = %lu blocks"

Keywords controlling incremental extraction:

rename-directory

"%s: Directory has been renamed from %s"

"%s: Directory has been renamed"

new-directory

"%s: Directory is new"

xdev "%s: directory is on a different device: not purging"

bad-dumpdir

"Malformed dumpdir: 'X' never used"

-w, --interactive, --confirmation

Ask for confirmation for every action.

Compatibility options

-o When creating, same as --old-archive. When extracting, same as --no-same-owner.

Size suffixes

Suffix	Units	Byte Equivalent
b	Blocks	SIZE x 512
B	Kilobytes	SIZE x 1024
c	Bytes	SIZE
G	Gigabytes	SIZE x 1024 ³
K	Kilobytes	SIZE x 1024
k	Kilobytes	SIZE x 1024
M	Megabytes	SIZE x 1024 ²
P	Petabytes	SIZE x 1024 ⁵
T	Terabytes	SIZE x 1024 ⁴
w	Words	SIZE x 2

RETURN VALUE

Tar's exit code indicates whether it was able to successfully perform the requested operation, and if not, what kind of error occurred.

0 Successful termination.

1 Some files differ. If tar was invoked with the --compare (--diff, -d) command line option, this means that some files in the archive differ from their disk counterparts. If tar was given one of the --create, --append or --update options, this exit code means that some files were changed while being archived and so the resulting archive does not contain the exact copy of the file set.

2 Fatal error. This means that some fatal, unrecoverable error occurred.

If a subprocess that had been invoked by tar exited with a nonzero exit code, tar itself exits with that code as well. This can happen, for example, if a compression option (e.g. -z) was used and the external compressor program failed. Another example is rmt failure during backup to a remote device.

SEE ALSO

bzip2(1), compress(1), gzip(1), lzma(1), lzop(1), rmt(8), symlink(7), xz(1), zstd(1).

Complete tar manual: run `info tar` or use `emacs(1)` info mode to read it.

Online copies of GNU tar documentation in various formats can be found at:

<https://www.gnu.org/software/tar/manual>

BUG REPORTS

Report bugs to <bug-tar@gnu.org>.

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TAR

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TAR(1)