

NAME

ftok – convert a pathname and a project identifier to a System V IPC key

SYNOPSIS

```
#include <sys/types.h>
```

```
#include <sys/ipc.h>
```

```
key_t ftok(const char *pathname, int proj_id);
```

DESCRIPTION

The **ftok()** function uses the identity of the file named by the given *pathname* (which must refer to an existing, accessible file) and the least significant 8 bits of *proj_id* (which must be nonzero) to generate a *key_t* type System V IPC key, suitable for use with **msgget(2)**, **semget(2)**, or **shmget(2)**.

The resulting value is the same for all pathnames that name the same file, when the same value of *proj_id* is used. The value returned should be different when the (simultaneously existing) files or the project IDs differ.

RETURN VALUE

On success, the generated *key_t* value is returned. On failure **-1** is returned, with *errno* indicating the error as for the **stat(2)** system call.

ATTRIBUTES

For an explanation of the terms used in this section, see **attributes(7)**.

Interface	Attribute	Value
ftok()	Thread safety	MT-Safe

CONFORMING TO

POSIX.1-2001, POSIX.1-2008.

NOTES

On some ancient systems, the prototype was:

```
key_t ftok(char *pathname, char proj_id);
```

Today, *proj_id* is an *int*, but still only 8 bits are used. Typical usage has an ASCII character *proj_id*, that is why the behavior is said to be undefined when *proj_id* is zero.

Of course, no guarantee can be given that the resulting *key_t* is unique. Typically, a best-effort attempt combines the given *proj_id* byte, the lower 16 bits of the inode number, and the lower 8 bits of the device number into a 32-bit result. Collisions may easily happen, for example between files on */dev/hda1* and files on */dev/sda1*.

SEE ALSO

msgget(2), **semget(2)**, **shmget(2)**, **stat(2)**, **sysvipc(7)**

COLOPHON

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