

NAME

ps — process status

SYNOPSIS

ps [-aklx] [name]

DESCRIPTION

Ps prints certain indicia about active processes. The **a** flag asks for information about all processes with process groups (ordinarily only one's own processes are displayed); **x** asks even about processes with no process group; **l** asks for a long listing. Ordinarily only the line number (if not one's own), the process number, its parent's process number, its process group, and an approximation to the command line are given. If the **k** flag is specified, the file `unix-core` is used in place of `/dev/mem`. This is used for post-mortem system debugging. Name is the name of a file containing the system namelist for the running system if it is not in `/unix`.

The long listing is columnar and contains

The line number (00 through 99) of the control terminal of the process.

A number encoding the flags associated with a process. Any combination of the following,

- 01 process swapped in.
- 02 The UNIX Scheduler
- 04 Locked in core
- 30 Tracing
- 100 Sleeping

A letter encoding the state of a process.

- S — Sleeping
- W — Waiting
- R — Running
- I — Idling (unused)
- Z — Zombie — process exited, parent not yet notified.
- T — Traced

A number related in some unknown way to the scheduling heuristic.

The priority of the process; high numbers mean low priority.

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The process unique number (as in certain cults it is possible to kill a process if you know its true name).

The process number of the parent of the process.

The process group of the process.

An entry that tells the core address in the system of the event which the process is waiting for; if blank, the process is running.

The last column is the file name of the process, plus a few of the arguments, if any, which were passed.

Ps makes an educated guess as to the file name and arguments given when the process was created by examining core memory or the swap area. The method is inherently somewhat unreliable and in any event a process is entitled to destroy this information, so the names cannot be counted on too much. *Ps* also assumes a swap

device but is intelligent enough to figure it out for itself.

FILES

/unix system namelist
/dev/mem core memory
/dev/swapdev swap device
unixcore optional mem file

SEE ALSO

kill(1), sps(1)