

## Configuring Describe Goal

Below are other configuration examples for the `help:describe` goal.

### ➔ The plugin Parameter

The `plugin` parameter is meant to provide two things: convenience and prefix-based access.

The **convenience** comes when specifying a plugin by `groupId:artifactId`, or by `groupId:artifactId:version`. Where the more traditional specification of separate fields would mean specifying this:

```
# mvn help:describe -DgroupId=org.somewhere -DartifactId=some-plugin -Dversion=0.0.0
```

the use of the `plugin` parameter allows this:

```
# mvn help:describe -Dplugin=org.somewhere:some-plugin:0.0.0
```

Here is **an example** to describe the Help plugin:

```
# mvn help:describe -Dplugin=org.apache.maven.plugins:maven-help-plugin
```

**Note:** `version` is always optional here.

On the other hand, the `plugin` parameter also offers the option to specify a plugin by its prefix, like this:

```
# mvn help:describe -Dplugin=help
```

### ➔ The `mojo` Parameter

You can use the `mojo` parameter of the `describe` goal to show or display relative information about a particular goal of the plugin you specified.

For example, when you execute the following command:

```
# mvn help:describe -Dmojo=describe -DgroupId=org.apache.maven.plugins -DartifactId=maven-help-plugin
```

This would display brief information about the `describe` goal only.

### ➔ The `cmd` Parameter

You could also ask for a single Maven command, i.e. a goal or a phase or a lifecycle. It is the command when you call Maven, i.e.:

```
# mvn -help

usage: mvn [options] [<goal(s)>] [<phase(s)>]
...
```

The following are some examples:

```
# mvn help:describe -Dcmd=clean
...
```

```
[INFO] [help:describe]
[INFO] 'clean' is a lifecycle with the following phases:
* pre-clean: NOT DEFINED
* clean: org.apache.maven.plugins:maven-clean-plugin:clean
* post-clean: NOT DEFINED
...
```

```
# mvn help:describe -Dcmd=compile
...
[INFO] [help:describe]
[INFO] 'compile' is a phase corresponding to this plugin:
org.apache.maven.plugins:maven-compiler-plugin:compile

It is a part of the lifecycle for the POM packaging 'jar'. This lifecycle includes the following phases:
* validate: NOT DEFINED
* initialize: NOT DEFINED
* generate-sources: NOT DEFINED
* process-sources: NOT DEFINED
* generate-resources: NOT DEFINED
* process-resources: org.apache.maven.plugins:maven-resources-plugin:resources
* compile: org.apache.maven.plugins:maven-compiler-plugin:compile
* process-classes: NOT DEFINED
* generate-test-sources: NOT DEFINED
* process-test-sources: NOT DEFINED
* generate-test-resources: NOT DEFINED
* process-test-resources: org.apache.maven.plugins:maven-resources-plugin:testResources
* test-compile: org.apache.maven.plugins:maven-compiler-plugin:testCompile
* process-test-classes: NOT DEFINED
* test: org.apache.maven.plugins:maven-surefire-plugin:test
* package: org.apache.maven.plugins:maven-jar-plugin:jar
* pre-integration-test: NOT DEFINED
* integration-test: NOT DEFINED
* post-integration-test: NOT DEFINED
* verify: NOT DEFINED
* install: org.apache.maven.plugins:maven-install-plugin:install
* deploy: org.apache.maven.plugins:maven-deploy-plugin:deploy
...
```

```
# mvn help:describe -Dcmd=compiler:compile
...
[INFO] 'compiler:compile' is a plugin goal (aka mojo).
Mojo: 'compiler:compile'
compiler:compile
  Description: Compiles application sources
  Deprecated. No reason given

For more information, run 'mvn help:describe [...] -Ddetail'
...
```

## ➔ The minimal, medium and full Parameters

If you want to display less or more detailed information, you can use the minimal, medium or full parameters.

The minimal parameter adds a minimal list of information:

```
# mvn help:describe -Dplugin=help -Dminimal=true
...
[INFO] [help:describe]
[INFO] org.apache.maven.plugins:maven-help-plugin:2.1-SNAPSHOT
Group Id: org.apache.maven.plugins
Artifact Id: maven-help-plugin
```

```

Version: 2.1-SNAPSHOT
Goal Prefix: help
Description: The Maven Help plugin provides goals aimed at helping to make
  sense out of the build environment. It includes the ability to view the
  effective POM and settings files, after inheritance and active profiles have
  been applied, as well as a describe a particular plugin goal to give usage
  information.

For more information, run 'mvn help:describe [...] -Ddetail'
...

```

The `medium` parameter is the default since 2.1 and adds a list with the mojos of the plugin and their descriptions:

```

# mvn help:describe -Dplugin=help
...
[INFO] org.apache.maven.plugins:maven-help-plugin:2.1-SNAPSHOT
Group Id: org.apache.maven.plugins
Artifact Id: maven-help-plugin
Version: 2.1-SNAPSHOT
Goal Prefix: help
Description: The Maven Help plugin provides goals aimed at helping to make
  sense out of the build environment. It includes the ability to view the
  effective POM and settings files, after inheritance and active profiles have
  been applied, as well as a describe a particular plugin goal to give usage
  information.

This plugin has 9 goals:

help:active-profiles
  Description: Displays a list of the profiles which are currently active for
  this build.
  Deprecated. No reason given

help:all-profiles
  Description: Displays a list of available profiles under the current
  project.
  Note: it will list all profiles for a project. If a profile comes up with a
  status inactive then there might be a need to set profile activation
  switches/property.
  Deprecated. No reason given

help:describe
  Description: Displays a list of the attributes for a Maven Plugin and/or
  Mojo (Maven plain Old Java Object).
  Deprecated. No reason given

help:effective-pom
  Description: Displays the effective POM as an XML for this build, with the
  active profiles factored in.
  Deprecated. No reason given

help:effective-settings
  Description: Displays the calculated settings as XML for this project,
  given any profile enhancement and the inheritance of the global settings
  into the user-level settings.
  Deprecated. No reason given

help:evaluate
  Description: Evaluates Maven expressions given by the user in an
  interactive mode.
  Deprecated. No reason given

help:expressions
  Description: Displays the supported Plugin expressions used by Maven.
  Deprecated. No reason given

```

```
help:help
  Description: Display help information on maven-help-plugin.
  Call
    mvn help:help -Ddetail=true -Dgoal=<goal-name>
  to display parameter details.
  Deprecated. No reason given

help:system
  Description: Displays a list of the platform details like system properties
  and environment variables.
  Deprecated. No reason given

For more information, run 'mvn help:describe [...] -Ddetail'
...
```

The full parameter also displays information about the mojos's implementation, their parameters and component requirements, among others.

```
# mvn help:describe -Dplugin=help -Dfull=true
```

**Note:** The `medium` parameter was added in version 2.0.2 and the `minimal` parameter was added in version 2.1 of this Help plugin.

### The output Parameter

This `describe` goal can use the optional `output` parameter to redirect the output to a file. Here is an example of that:

```
# mvn help:describe -Dplugin=help -Ddetail=true -Doutput=/path/to/file
```