## NAME

alarm − set an alarm clock for delivery of a signal

## SYNOPSIS

**#include <unistd.h>**

**unsigned int alarm(unsigned int** *seconds***);**

## DESCRIPTION

**alarm**() arranges for a **SIGALRM** signal to be delivered to the calling process in *seconds* seconds.

If *seconds* is zero, any pending alarm is canceled.

In any event any previously set **alarm**() is canceled.

## RETURN VALUE

**alarm**() returns the number of seconds remaining until any previously scheduled alarm was due to be delivered, or zero if there was no previously scheduled alarm.

## CONFORMING TO

POSIX.1-2001, POSIX.1-2008, SVr4, 4.3BSD.

## NOTES

**alarm**() and **setitimer**(2) share the same timer; calls to one will interfere with use of the other.

Alarms created by **alarm**() are preserved across **execve**(2) and are not inherited by children created via **fork**(2).

**sleep**(3) may be implemented using **SIGALRM**; mixing calls to **alarm**() and **sleep**(3) is a bad idea.

Scheduling delays can, as ever, cause the execution of the process to be delayed by an arbitrary amount of time.

## SEE ALSO

**gettimeofday**(2), **pause**(2), **select**(2), **setitimer**(2), **sigaction**(2), **signal**(2), **timer_create**(2), **timerfd_create**(2), **sleep**(3), **time**(7)

## COLOPHON

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