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## Linux: pathmunge Command in Shell Script

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**Q.** I see pathmunge used in few scripts under Red Hat Enterprise Linux. Can you explain the use of pathmunge under RHEL / CentOS / Fedora Linux?



**A.** Red Hat, CentOS, and Fedora Linux has a pathmunge function defined in /etc/profile file. It will add the directories one by one to the default PATH for the root user.

pathmunge() function is defined in /etc/profile



```
pathmunge () {  
    if ! echo $PATH | /bin/egrep -q "(^|:)$1($|:)" ; then  
        if [ "$2" = "after" ] ; then  
            PATH=$PATH:$1  
        else  
            PATH=$1:$PATH  
        fi  
    fi  
}
```

Path manipulation done using pathmunge:

```
# Path manipulation  
if [ "$EUID" = "0" ] ; then  
    pathmunge /sbin  
    pathmunge /usr/sbin  
    pathmunge /usr/local/sbin  
fi
```

As long as you are using Red Hat or CentOS / Fedora Linux, you can use pathmunge. It is best to avoid this function if you need run a shell script on different distributions. I recommend using [export bash command for](#) [3] modifying PATH variable.

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[2] Image: <http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/faq/category/bash-shell/>

[3] export bash command for: <http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/howto-print-path-variable/>

