Table Of Contents

nixCraft: Linux Tips, Hacks, Tutorials, And Ideas In Blog Format
http://www.cyberciti.biz/

Home > Faq > FAQ

Linux/UNIX: Determine file type

Posted by Vivek Gite <vivek@nixcraft.com>

Use file command to determine file type. File tests each argument in an attempt to classify it. There are three sets of tests, performed in this order: filesystem tests, magic number tests, and language tests. The first test that succeeds causes the file type to be printed.

Examples

$ file /etc/passwd

/etc/passwd: ASCII text

$ file /home/voffice/letter.doc

/home/voffice/letter.doc: Microsoft Office Document

$ file file.c

file.c: C program text

$ file $(which ls)

/bin/ls: ELF 32-bit LSB executable, Intel 80386, version 1 (SYSV), for GNU/Linux 2.2.0, dynamically linked (uses shared libs), stripped

$ file /dev/sda{1,2,3}

/dev/sda1: block special (8/1)
/dev/sda2: block special (8/2)
/dev/sda3: block special (8/3)

4000+ howtos and counting! Want to read more Linux / UNIX howtos, tips and tricks? Subscribe to our daily email newsletter or weekly newsletter to make sure you don't miss a single tip/tricks. Alternatively, subscribe via RSS/XML feed.

Article printed from Frequently Asked Questions About Linux / UNIX: **http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/**

URL to article: **http://www.cyberciti.biz/faq/linuxunix-determine-file-type/**