

**NAME**

readlink – read value of a symbolic link

**SYNOPSIS**

```
#include <unistd.h>
```

```
ssize_t readlink(const char *path, char *buf, size_t bufsiz);
```

Feature Test Macro Requirements for glibc (see **feature\_test\_macros(7)**):

```
readlink(): _BSD_SOURCE || _XOPEN_SOURCE >= 500 || _POSIX_C_SOURCE >= 200112L
```

**DESCRIPTION**

**readlink()** places the contents of the symbolic link *path* in the buffer *buf*, which has size *bufsiz*. **readlink()** does not append a null byte to *buf*. It will truncate the contents (to a length of *bufsiz* characters), in case the buffer is too small to hold all of the contents.

**RETURN VALUE**

On success, **readlink()** returns the number of bytes placed in *buf*. On error,  $-1$  is returned and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

**ERRORS****EACCES**

Search permission is denied for a component of the path prefix. (See also **path\_resolution(7)**.)

**EFAULT**

*buf* extends outside the process's allocated address space.

**EINVAL**

*bufsiz* is not positive.

**EINVAL**

The named file is not a symbolic link.

**EIO**

An I/O error occurred while reading from the file system.

**ELOOP**

Too many symbolic links were encountered in translating the pathname.

**ENAMETOOLONG**

A pathname, or a component of a pathname, was too long.

**ENOENT**

The named file does not exist.

**ENOMEM**

Insufficient kernel memory was available.

**ENOTDIR**

A component of the path prefix is not a directory.

**CONFORMING TO**

4.4BSD (the **readlink()** function call appeared in 4.2BSD), POSIX.1-2001.

**NOTES**

In versions of glibc up to and including glibc 2.4, the return type of **readlink()** was declared as *int*. Nowadays, the return type is declared as *ssize\_t*, as (newly) required in POSIX.1-2001.

**SEE ALSO**

**lstat(2)**, **readlinkat(2)**, **stat(2)**, **symlink(2)**, **path\_resolution(7)**, **symlink(7)**

**COLOPHON**

This page is part of release 3.22 of the Linux *man-pages* project. A description of the project, and information about reporting bugs, can be found at <http://www.kernel.org/doc/man-pages/>.