

**NAME**

*/etc/anacrontab* – configuration file for anacron

**DESCRIPTION**

The file */etc/anacrontab* describes the jobs controlled by **anacron(8)**. Its lines can be of three kinds: job-description lines, environment assignments, or empty lines.

Job-description lines are of one of these two forms:

period delay job-identifier command

@period\_name delay job-identify command

The *period* is specified in days, the *delay* in minutes. If the *RANDOM\_DELAY* environment variable is set, then a random value between 0 and *RANDOM\_DELAY* minutes will be added to the start up delay of the jobs. For example a *RANDOM\_DELAY* set to 12 would therefore add, randomly, between 0 and 12 minutes to the user defined delay. The *job-identifier* can contain any non-blank character, except slashes. It is used to identify the job in Anacron messages, and as the name for the job's timestamp file. The *command* can be any shell command. The fields can be separated by blank spaces or tabs. The *period\_name* can be set to daily, weekly, monthly, yearly or annually. This will ensure jobs are run once a week, month or year no matter the number of days in this period.

Environment assignment lines are of the form:

VAR = VALUE

Spaces around *VAR* are removed. No spaces around *VALUE* are allowed (unless you want them to be part of the value). The assignment takes effect from the next line to the end of the file, or to the next assignment of the same variable. The environment variable *START\_HOURS\_RANGE* sets the time frame, when the job could started.

Empty lines are either blank lines, line containing white-space only, or lines with white-space followed by a '#' followed by an arbitrary comment.

You can continue a line onto the next line by ending it with a '\ '.

In case there is need for having anacron off, then it can be done by adding cron job *0anacron* into */etc/cron.hourly/jobs.deny* which is part of *crontabs(4)*.

**EXAMPLE**

This example shows how to set up the behaviour similar to previous setting in */etc/crontab* which will start all regular jobs *only* between 6:00 and 8:00. There is added *RANDOM\_DELAY* which will be maximally 30 minutes. Jobs will be running in queue. After one finish, then next will start.

```
# environment variables
SHELL=/bin/sh
PATH=/sbin:/bin:/usr/sbin:/usr/bin
MAILTO=root
RANDOM_DELAY=30
# Anacron jobs will start between 6 and 8 o'clock.
START_HOURS_RANGE=6-8
# delay will be 5 minutes + RANDOM_DELAY for cron.daily
1          5          cron.daily          nice run-parts /etc/cron.daily
7          0          cron.weekly         nice run-parts /etc/cron.weekly
@monthly   0          cron.monthly        nice run-parts /etc/cron.monthly
```

**SEE ALSO**

**anacron(8)**, **crontabs(4)**

The Anacron *README* file.

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