

NAME

gen-passphrase – Generate random passphrases

SYNOPSIS

gen-passphrase [options] initials|word-count min-len max-len

Options:

| | |
|------------------|---|
| -help | Show short usage message |
| -help1 | Show medium usage message |
| -help2 | Show long usage message |
| -man | Show long usage message (invokes pager) |
| -verbose | Show statistics about the strength of the passphrase |
| -dictionary file | Use specified word list |
| | Default is /usr/share/dict/words or \$PASSPHRASE_DICT |
| -dev-random | Use /dev/random rather than /dev/urandom (slow) |
| -debugging | Produce debugging output (developer option) |

DESCRIPTION

gen-passphrase generates random passphrases.

It is part of the **random-passwords** package, available at

<<https://github.com/Keith-S-Thompson/random-passwords>>

More documentation is available there.

gen-passphrase was partly inspired by this XKCD cartoon: <<http://xkcd.com/936/>>, which suggests using long passphrases consisting of randomly selected English words. The example in the cartoon was “correct horse battery staple” (of course you shouldn’t use **that** specific passphrase).

The passphrase consists of a sequence of words randomly selected from the specified word list file. The three command-line arguments (following any options) are:

1. **Either** a string of ASCII lowercase letters **or** a decimal integer specifying the number of words;
2. The minimum length of each word; and
3. The maximum length of each word.

OPTIONS

All options may be abbreviated uniquely. **-help** may be abbreviated as **-h**.

-help

Show short usage message

-help1

Show medium usage message

-help2

Show long usage message

-man

Show long usage message using **perldoc**, invokes pager

-verbose

Show statistics about the strength of the passphrase

-dictionary file

Use specified word list

Default is /usr/share/dict/words or \$PASSPHRASE_DICT

-dev-random

Use /dev/random rather than /dev/urandom

This can be much slower and is probably unnecessary.

-debugging

Produce debugging output (developer option)

SEE ALSO

gen-passphrase, also part of the **random-passwords** package.

<<https://github.com/Keith-S-Thompson/random-passwords>>.

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LICENSE AND COPYRIGHT

random-passphrase is released under GPL version 2 or later.