



Figure 3-1. Example of a directory tree

bin, *etc*, *users*, *tmp*, and *usr* are some of the *subdirectories* (child directories) of the root directory. These subdirectories are fairly standard directories; they usually contain specific kinds of system files. For instance, *bin* contains many Unix programs. Not all systems have a directory named *users*. It may be called *u* or *home*, and/or it may be located in some other part of the filesystem.

In our example, the parent directory of *users* (one level above) is the root directory. It has two subdirectories (one level below), *john* and *carol*. On a Unix system, each directory has only one parent directory, but it may have one or more subdirectories.* A subdirectory (such as *carol*) can have its own subdirectories (such as *work* and *play*), up to a limitless depth for practical purposes.

To specify a file or directory location, write its *pathname*. A pathname is like the address of the directory or file in the Unix filesystem. We look at pathnames in a moment.

On a basic Unix system, all files in the filesystem are stored on disks connected to your computer. It isn't always easy to use the files on someone else's computer or for someone on another computer to use your files. Your system may have an easier way: a *networked filesystem*. Networked

* On most Unix systems, the root directory, at the top of the tree, is *its own* parent. Some systems have another directory above the root.