

filesystems make a remote computer's files appear as if they're part of your computer's directory tree. For instance, a computer in Los Angeles might have a directory named *boston* with some of the directory tree from a company's computer in Boston. Or individual users' home directories may come from various computers, but all be available on your computer as if they were local files. The system staff can help you understand and configure your computer's filesystems to make your work easier.

Absolute Pathnames

As you saw earlier, the Unix filesystem organizes its files and directories in an inverted tree structure with the root directory at the top. An *absolute pathname* tells you the path of directories you must travel to get from the root to the directory or file you want. In a pathname, put slashes (/) between the directory names.

For example, */users/john* is an absolute pathname. It locates one (*only* one!) directory. Here's how:

- The root is the first "/"
- The directory *users* (a subdirectory of *root*)
- The directory *john* (a subdirectory of *users*)

Be sure that you do not type spaces anywhere in the pathname. Figure 3-2 shows this structure.

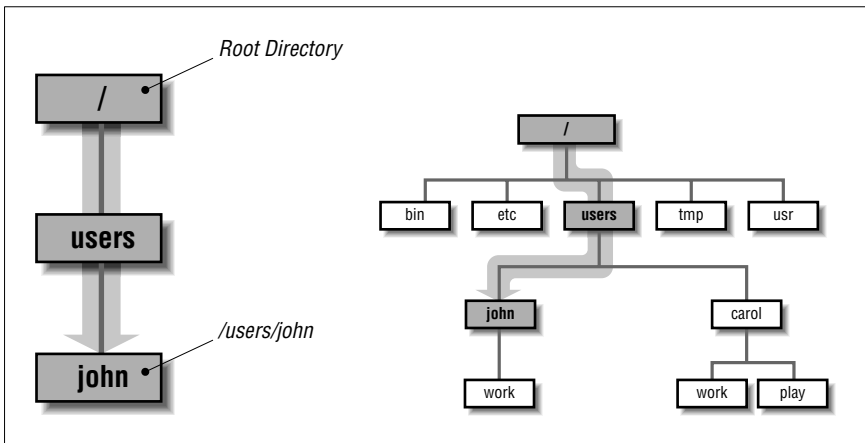


Figure 3-2. Absolute path of directory *john*

In Figure 3-2, you'll see that the directory *john* has a subdirectory named *work*. Its absolute pathname is */users/john/work*.