

**NAME**

**man** - display online manual documentation pages

**SYNOPSIS**

**man** [-adho] [-t | -w] [-M *manpath*] [-P *pager*] [-S *mansect*] [-m *arch[:machine]*] [-p [*eprtv*]] [*mansect*]  
*page* ...  
**man -f** *keyword* ...  
**man -k** *keyword* ...

**DESCRIPTION**

The **man** utility finds and displays online manual documentation pages. If *mansect* is provided, **man** restricts the search to the specific section of the manual.

The sections of the manual are:

1. FreeBSD General Commands Manual
2. FreeBSD System Calls Manual
3. FreeBSD Library Functions Manual
4. FreeBSD Kernel Interfaces Manual
5. FreeBSD File Formats Manual
6. FreeBSD Games Manual
7. FreeBSD Miscellaneous Information Manual
8. FreeBSD System Manager's Manual
9. FreeBSD Kernel Developer's Manual

Options that **man** understands:

**-M** *manpath*

Forces a specific colon separated manual path instead of the default search path. See *manpath(1)*. Overrides the MANPATH environment variable.

**-P** *pager*

Use specified pager. Defaults to "less -sR" if color support is enabled, or "more -s". Overrides the MANPAGER environment variable, which in turn overrides the PAGER environment variable.

**-S** *mansect*

Restricts manual sections searched to the specified colon delimited list. Defaults to "1:8:2:3:n:4:5:6:7:9:l". Overrides the MANSECT environment variable.

**-a** Display all manual pages instead of just the first found for each *page* argument.

- d** Print extra debugging information. Repeat for increased verbosity. Does not display the manual page.
- f** Emulate `whatis(1)`.
- h** Display short help message and exit.
- k** Emulate `apropos(1)`.
- m** *arch[:machine]*  
Override the default architecture and machine settings allowing lookup of other platform specific manual pages. See *IMPLEMENTATION NOTES* for how this option changes the default behavior. Overrides the `MACHINE_ARCH` and `MACHINE` environment variables.
- o** Force use of non-localized manual pages. See *IMPLEMENTATION NOTES* for how locale specific searches work. Overrides the `LC_ALL`, `LC_CTYPE`, and `LANG` environment variables.
- p** [*eprtv*]  
Use the list of given preprocessors before running `nroff(1)` or `troff(1)`. Valid preprocessors arguments:
  - e** `eqn(1)`
  - p** `pic(1)`
  - r** `refer(1)`
  - t** `tbl(1)`
  - v** `vgrind(1)`Overrides the `MANROFFSEQ` environment variable.
- t** Send manual page source through `troff(1)` allowing transformation of the manual pages to other formats.
- w** Display the location of the manual page instead of the contents of the manual page.

## IMPLEMENTATION NOTES

### Locale Specific Searches

The **man** utility supports manual pages in different locales. The search behavior is dictated by the first of three environment variables with a nonempty string: `LC_ALL`, `LC_CTYPE`, or `LANG`. If set, **man** will search for locale specific manual pages using the following logic:

*lang\_country.charset*  
*lang.charset*  
*en.charset*

For example, if LC\_ALL is set to "ja\_JP.eucJP", **man** will search the following paths when considering section 1 manual pages in */usr/share/man*:

*/usr/share/man/ja\_JP.eucJP/man1*  
*/usr/share/man/ja.eucJP/man1*  
*/usr/share/man/en.eucJP/man1*  
*/usr/share/man/man1*

### Platform Specific Searches

The **man** utility supports platform specific manual pages. The search behavior is dictated by the **-m** option or the MACHINE\_ARCH and MACHINE environment variables. For example, if MACHINE\_ARCH is set to "aarch64" and MACHINE is set to "arm64", **man** will search the following paths when considering section 4 manual pages in */usr/share/man*:

*/usr/share/man/man4/aarch64*  
*/usr/share/man/man4/arm64*  
*/usr/share/man/man4*

### Displaying Specific Manual Files

The **man** utility also supports displaying a specific manual page if passed a path to the file as long as it contains a '/' character.

## ENVIRONMENT

The following environment variables affect the execution of **man**:

LC\_ALL, LC\_CTYPE, LANG

Used to find locale specific manual pages. Valid values can be found by running the locale(1) command. See *IMPLEMENTATION NOTES* for details.  
Influenced by the **-o** option.

MACHINE\_ARCH, MACHINE

Used to find platform specific manual pages. If unset, the output of "sysctl hw.machine\_arch" and "sysctl hw.machine" is used respectively. See *IMPLEMENTATION NOTES* for details. Corresponds to the **-m** option.

MANPATH

The standard search path used by man(1) may be changed by specifying a path in

the MANPATH environment variable. Invalid paths, or paths without manual databases, are ignored. Overridden by **-M**. If MANPATH begins with a colon, it is appended to the default list; if it ends with a colon, it is prepended to the default list; or if it contains two adjacent colons, the standard search path is inserted between the colons. If none of these conditions are met, it overrides the standard search path.

**MANROFFSEQ** Used to determine the preprocessors for the manual source before running `nroff(1)` or `troff(1)`. If unset, defaults to `tbl(1)`. Corresponds to the **-p** option.

**MANSECT** Restricts manual sections searched to the specified colon delimited list. Corresponds to the **-S** option.

**MANWIDTH** If set to a numeric value, used as the width manpages should be displayed. Otherwise, if set to a special value "tty", and output is to a terminal, the pages may be displayed over the whole width of the screen.

**MANCOLOR** If set, enables color support.

**MANPAGER** Program used to display files.

If unset, and color support is enabled, "less -sR" is used.

If unset, and color support is disabled, then **PAGER** is used. If that has no value either, "more -s" is used.

## FILES

*/etc/man.conf*

System configuration file.

*/usr/local/etc/man.d/\*.conf*

Local configuration files.

## SEE ALSO

`apropos(1)`, `intro(1)`, `locale(1)`, `manpath(1)`, `nroff(1)`, `troff(1)`, `whatis(1)`, `intro(2)`, `intro(3)`, `intro(4)`, `intro(5)`, `man.conf(5)`, `intro(6)`, `intro(7)`, `intro(8)`, `intro(9)`