

Linux Filesystem Hierarchy:

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Chapter 1. Linux Filesystem Hierarchy

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1.13. /opt

This directory is reserved for all the software and add-on packages that are not part of the default installation. For example, StarOffice, Kylix, Netscape Communicator and WordPerfect packages are normally found here. To comply with the FSSTND, all third party applications should be installed in this directory. Any package to be installed here must locate its static files (ie. extra fonts, clipart, database files) must locate its static files in a separate /opt/'package' or /opt/'provider' directory tree (similar to the way in which Windows will install new software to its own directory tree C:\Windows\Program Files\'Program Name'), where 'package' is a name that describes the software package and 'provider' is the provider's LANANA registered name.

Although most distributions neglect to create the directories /opt/bin, /opt/doc, /opt/include, /opt/info, /opt/lib, and /opt/man they are reserved for local system administrator use. Packages may provide "front-end" files intended to be placed in (by linking or copying) these reserved directories by the system administrator, but must function normally in the absence of these reserved directories. Programs to be invoked by users are located in the directory

`/opt/'package'/bin`. If the package includes UNIX manual pages, they are located in `/opt/'package'/man` and the same substructure as `/usr/share/man` must be used. Package files that are variable must be installed in `/var/opt`. Host-specific configuration files are installed in `/etc/opt`.

Under no circumstances are other package files to exist outside the `/opt`, `/var/opt`, and `/etc/opt` hierarchies except for those package files that must reside in specific locations within the filesystem tree in order to function properly. For example, device lock files in `/var/lock` and devices in `/dev`. Distributions may install software in `/opt`, but must not modify or delete software installed by the local system administrator without the assent of the local system administrator.

The use of `/opt` for add-on software is a well-established practice in the UNIX community. The System V Application Binary Interface [AT&T 1990], based on the System V Interface Definition (Third Edition) and the Intel Binary Compatibility Standard v. 2 (iBCS2) provides for an `/opt` structure very similar to the one defined here.

Generally, all data required to support a package on a system must be present within `/opt/'package'`, including files intended to be copied into `/etc/opt/'package'` and `/var/opt/'package'` as well as reserved directories in `/opt`. The minor restrictions on

distributions using /opt are necessary because conflicts are possible between distribution installed and locally installed software, especially in the case of fixed pathnames found in some binary software.

The structure of the directories below /opt/'provider' is left up to the packager of the software, though it is recommended that packages are installed in /opt/'provider'/'package' and follow a similar structure to the guidelines for /opt/package. A valid reason for diverging from this structure is for support packages which may have files installed in /opt/ 'provider'/lib or /opt/'provider'/bin.

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