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Terminal User Guide

Select version:

| macOS Catalina 10.15   ⌄ |

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Script management with launchd in Terminal on Mac

The `launchd` process is used by macOS to manage daemons and agents, and you can use it to run your shell scripts. You don't interact with launchd directly; instead you use the launchctl command to load or unload `launchd` daemons and agents.

During system startup, `launchd` is the first process the kernel runs to set up the computer. If you want your shell script to be run as a daemon, it should be started by `launchd`. Other mechanisms for starting daemons and agents are subject to removal at Apple's discretion.

You can get an idea of the various daemons and agents managed by `launchd` by looking at the configuration files in the following folders:

Folder	Usage
/System/Library/LaunchDaemons	Apple-supplied system daemons
/System/Library/LaunchAgents	Apple-supplied agents that apply to all users on a per-user basis
/Library/LaunchDaemons	Third-party system daemons
/Library/LaunchAgents	Third-party agents that apply to all users on a per-user basis
~/Library/LaunchAgents	Third-party agents that apply only to the logged-in user

See also

About shell scripts in Terminal on Mac

Apple Support article: Use zsh as the default shell on your Mac

Daemons and Services Programming Guide

launchd.plist man page

Helpful? | Yes | | No |

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