

Man, oh man.

2013-12-03

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Man pages

Man pages are the helpful pages available to tell you how to use a piece of software, what the invocation options are, etc. There are a number of different categories of man pages:

#/Cat	Description
1 user	commands
2 syst	em calls
3 C li	brary functions (on some platforms 3c for C, 3f for FORTRAN, etc.)
4 devi	ces and network interfaces
5 file	formats
6 game	s and demos
7 envi	ronments, tables, and troff macros
8 main	tenance commands
9 x wi	ndow system
l loca	l commands
n new	commands (tcl and tk use this)

(for the source, see reference under format)

Format

Reference

Example man page

```
.TH HELLO 1 LOCAL
.SH NAME
hello - print "Hello world" on stdout
.SH SYNOPSIS
.B hello [options]
.I option option
.B ["
.I -yy -zz
.B ..."]
.SH AVAILABILITY
All UNIX flavors
.SH DESCRIPTION
hello prints the string "Hello world" on standard output.
.SH OPTIONS
There are no options, but we'll make some up.
.TP 5
-yy
is one option
.TP
-zz
is another option
.SH AUTHOR
Joe Aggie
```

(Also from above reference)

How to include man pages

Man pages can be included with two steps:

1. Move your produce man page to `debian/{package-name}.1`
2. Set the content of `debian/manpages` to `debian/{package}.1`

You can, of course, list more manual pages and store them in different locations. However, this is generally accepted as the standard behaviour.

Exercise

In this exercise, we will be adding a pre-written manual page to a package.

On your own

If you ever have to write man pages on your own, I strongly, strongly recommend against writing [gnt]roff syntax. It's quite unpleasant. There are alternatives! I use a piece of software called **Ronn** which allows one to write markdown syntax and convert directly to man pages.