

chflags

Change a file or folder’s flags.

Syntax

```
chflags [-fhvx] [-R [-H | -L | -P]] flags file-or-folder ...
```

Options

- R

Recurse: Change the file flags of *file-or-folder* hierarchies rooted in the files instead of just the *file-or-folder* themselves.
So if the given folder contains files or sub-folders, apply the change to them all.

Beware of unintentionally matching the .. hard link to the parent directory when using wildcards like ".*".
- R -H

Follow symbolic links on the command line
by default Symbolic links within the tree are not followed.
- R -L

All symbolic links are followed.
- R -P

No symbolic links are followed. (default)
- f

Do not display a diagnostic message if chflags could not modify the flags for *file-or-folder*, nor modify the exit status to reflect such failures.
- h

If the *file-or-folder* is a symbolic link, change the file flags of the link itself rather than the file to which it points.
- v

Cause chflags to be verbose, listing files as they are flagged or unflagged.
If the -v option is specified, the flags of files modified will also be printed, in octal notation.
- x

Do not cross mount points.

The flags are specified as an octal number or a combination of letters.

hidden Set the hidden flag

Keywords and keyword aliases - Owner or Super-user only

opaque	Set the opaque flag
nodump	Set the nodump flag
uappnd, uappend	Set the uappnd flag
uchg, uchange, uimmutable	Set the uchg flag
uunlnk, unlink	Set the uunlnk flag

Keywords and keyword aliases - Super-user only

arch, archived	Set the arch flag
sappnd, sappend	Set the sappnd flag
schg, schange, simmutable	Set the schg flag
sunlnk, unlink	Set the sunlnk flag

immutable Set the immutable flag

The immutable flag makes the file/folder Locked/Protected

Putting the letters no before an option causes the flag to be removed

For example:

uchg	Means the file cannot be changed
nouchg	Means the file can be changed
hidden	Will set the hidden flag
nohidden	Will remove the hidden flag

In early versions of macOS locked/immutable files could not be deleted from the trashcan. In Mac OS X 10.1 and later locked files can easily be deleted by pressing press Shift-Option or Option [key combination](#) while emptying the Trash.

Symbolic links do not have flags, so unless the -H or -L option is set, chflags on a symbolic link always succeeds and has no effect. The -H, -L and -P options are ignored unless the -R option is specified. In addition, these options override each other and the command’s actions are determined by the last one specified.

The sappnd and schg flags can only be unset when the system is in single-user mode. chflags(2).

Use [ls -l0](#) to see the flags of existing files.

The return status is zero if the mode is successfully changed,and >0 if an error occurs.

Examples

Lock the folder "finance" against changes:

```
$ chflags uchg finance
```

Unlock the folder named "finance" and allow changes to all the contents:


```
$ chflags -R nouchg finance
```


Make the folder ~/Library visible (this was the default setting prior to OS X Lion):


```
$ chflags nohidden ~/Library
```

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An alternative method to view the library is to use the 'Go' drop down menu in Finder and hold down the **option** key:

Hide the folder ~/Library from finder:

```
$ chflags hidden ~/Library
```

Make the file `MyLogs.txt` append-only:

```
$ chflags uappnd MyLogs.txt
```

Unlock your Documents directory and everything in it:

```
$ chflags -R nouchg ~/Documents
```

Related macOS commands

Local man page: [chflags](#) - Command line help page on your local machine.

HT1526 - Empty the (locked) trash with chflags.


ln - Make links between files (hard links, symbolic links).

ls - List information about file(s).


setfile - Set attributes of HFS+ files.

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