

NAME [top](#)

alarm - set an alarm clock for delivery of a signal

SYNOPSIS [top](#)

```
#include <unistd.h>
```

```
unsigned int alarm(unsigned int seconds);
```

DESCRIPTION [top](#)

alarm() arranges for a **SIGALRM** signal to be delivered to the calling process in *seconds* seconds.

If *seconds* is zero, any pending alarm is canceled.

In any event any previously set **alarm()** is canceled.

RETURN VALUE [top](#)

alarm() returns the number of seconds remaining until any previously scheduled alarm was due to be delivered, or zero if there was no previously scheduled alarm.

CONFORMING TO [top](#)

POSIX.1-2001, POSIX.1-2008, SVr4, 4.3BSD.

NOTES [top](#)

alarm() and [setitimer\(2\)](#) share the same timer; calls to one will interfere with use of the other.

Alarms created by **alarm()** are preserved across [execve\(2\)](#) and are not inherited by children created via [fork\(2\)](#).

[sleep\(3\)](#) may be implemented using **SIGALRM**; mixing calls to **alarm()** and [sleep\(3\)](#) is a bad idea.

Scheduling delays can, as ever, cause the execution of the process to be delayed by an arbitrary amount of time.

SEE ALSO [top](#)

[gettimeofday\(2\)](#), [pause\(2\)](#), [select\(2\)](#), [setitimer\(2\)](#), [sigaction\(2\)](#), [signal\(2\)](#), [timer_create\(2\)](#), [timerfd_create\(2\)](#), [sleep\(3\)](#), [time\(7\)](#)

COLOPHON [top](#)

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