

The local builtin command

Synopsis

```
local [option] name[=value] ...
```

Description

`local` is identical to `declare` in every way, and takes all the same options, with 3 exceptions:

- Usage outside of a function is an error. Both `declare` and `local` within a function have the same effect on variable scope, including the `-g` option.
- `local` with no options prints variable names and values in the same format as `declare` with no options, except the variables are filtered to print only locals that were set in the same scope from which `local` was called. Variables in parent scopes are not printed.
- If name is `'-'`, the set of shell options is made local to the function in which `local` is invoked: shell options changed using the `set` builtin inside the function are restored to their original values when the function returns. The restore is effected as if a series of `set` commands were executed to restore the values that were in place before the function.

Portability considerations

- `local` is not specified by POSIX. Most bourne-like shells don't have a builtin called `local`, but some such as `dash` and the busybox shell do.
- The behavior of function scope is not defined by POSIX, however local variables are implemented widely by bourne-like shells, and behavior differs substantially. Even the `dash` shell has local variables.
- In `ksh93`, using POSIX-style function definitions, `typeset` doesn't set `local` variables, but rather acts upon variables of the next-outermost scope (e.g. setting attributes). Using `typeset` within functions defined using `ksh function name {` syntax, variables follow roughly lexical-scoping (<http://community.schemewiki.org/?lexical-scope>), except that functions themselves don't have scope, just like Bash. This means that even functions defined within a "function's scope" don't have access to non-local variables except through `namerefs`.

See also

- http://wiki.bash-hackers.org/scripting/basics#variable_scope (http://wiki.bash-hackers.org/scripting/basics#variable_scope)



Discussion

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