NAME

perror − print a system error message

SYNOPSIS

```
#include <stdio.h>

void perror(const char *s);

#include <errno.h>

const char * const sys_errlist[];
int sys_nerr;
int errno;      /* Not really declared this way; see errno(3) */
```

Feature Test Macro Requirements for glibc (see **feature_test_macros**(7)):

sys_errlist, *sys_nerr*:
Since glibc 2.19:
_DEFAULT_SOURCE
Glibc 2.19 and earlier:
_BSD_SOURCE

DESCRIPTION

The **perror**() function produces a message on standard error describing the last error encountered during a call to a system or library function.

First (if *s* is not NULL and *s is not a null byte ('\0')), the argument string *s* is printed, followed by a colon and a blank. Then an error message corresponding to the current value of *errno* and a new-line.

To be of most use, the argument string should include the name of the function that incurred the error.

The global error list *sys_errlist*[], which can be indexed by *errno*, can be used to obtain the error message without the newline. The largest message number provided in the table is *sys_nerr*−1. Be careful when directly accessing this list, because new error values may not have been added to *sys_errlist*[]. The use of *sys_errlist*[] is nowadays deprecated; use **strerror**(3) instead.

When a system call fails, it usually returns −1 and sets the variable *errno* to a value describing what went wrong. (These values can be found in<*errno.h*>.) Many library functions do likewise. The function**perror**() serves to translate this error code into human-readable form. Note that *errno* is undefined after a successful system call or library function call: this call may well change this variable, even though it succeeds, for example because it internally used some other library function that failed. Thus, if a failing call is not immediately followed by a call to **perror**(), the value of *errno* should be saved.

ATTRIBUTES

For an explanation of the terms used in this section, see **attributes**(7).

Interface	Attribute	Value
perror()	Thread safety	MT-Safe race:stderr

CONFORMING TO

perror(), *errno*: POSIX.1-2001, POSIX.1-2008, C89, C99, 4.3BSD.

The externals *sys_nerr* and *sys_errlist* derive from BSD, but are not specified in POSIX.1.

NOTES

The externals *sys_nerr* and *sys_errlist* are defined by glibc, but in<*stdio.h*>.

SEE ALSO

err(3), **errno**(3), **error**(3), **strerror**(3)

COLOPHON

This page is part of release 5.05 of the Linux *man-pages* project. A description of the project, information about reporting bugs, and the latest version of this page, can be found at

https://www.kernel.org/doc/man−pages/.