

POSIX signals

You can see more about POSIX signals on

- [man7](#)
- [wikipedia](#)

Linux supports both POSIX reliable signals (hereinafter "standard signals") and POSIX real-time signals.

Standard signals

First the signals described in the original POSIX.1-1990 standard.

Signal	Value	Action	Comment
SIGHUP	1	Term	Hangup detected on controlling terminal or death of controlling process
SIGINT	2	Term	Interrupt from keyboard
SIGQUIT	3	Core	Quit from keyboard
SIGILL	4	Core	Illegal Instruction
SIGABRT	6	Core	Abort signal from abort(3) .
SIGFPE	8	Core	Floating point exception
SIGKILL	9	Term	Kill signal
SIGSEGV	11	Core	Invalid memory reference
SIGPIPE	13	Term	Broken pipe: write to pipe with no readers
SIGALRM	14	Term	Timer signal from alarm(2) .
SIGTERM	15	Term	Termination signal
SIGUSR1	30,10,16	Term	User-defined signal 1
SIGUSR2	31,12,17	Term	User-defined signal 2
SIGCHLD	20,17,18	Ign	Child stopped or terminated
SIGCONT	19,18,25	Cont	Continue if stopped
SIGSTOP	17,19,23	Stop	Stop process
SIGTSTP	18,20,24	Stop	Stop typed at terminal
SIGTTIN	21,21,26	Stop	Terminal input for background process
SIGTTOU	22,22,27	Stop	Terminal output for background process

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SIGABRT

The SIGABRT signal is sent to a process to tell it to **abort**, i.e. to terminate. The signal is usually initiated by the process itself when it calls `abort` function of the [C Standard Library](#), but it can be sent to the process from outside like any other signal.

SIGALRM, SIGVTALRM and SIGPROF

The SIGALRM, SIGVTALRM and SIGPROF signal is sent to a process when the time limit specified in a call to a preceding **alarm** setting function (such as `setitimer`) elapses. SIGALRM is sent when real or clock time elapses. SIGVTALRM is sent when CPU time used by the process elapses. SIGPROF is sent when CPU time used by the process and by the system on behalf of the process elapses.

SIGBUS

The SIGBUS signal is sent to a process when it causes a [bus error](#). The conditions that lead to the signal being sent are, for example, incorrect memory access alignment or non-existent physical address.

SIGCHLD

The SIGCHLD signal is sent to a process when a [child process terminates](#), is interrupted, or resumes after being interrupted. One common usage of the signal is to instruct the operating system to clean up the resources used by a child process after its termination without an explicit call to the [wait](#) system call.

SIGCONT

The SIGCONT signal instructs the operating system to **continue** (restart) a process previously paused by the SIGSTOP or SIGTSTP signal. One important use of this signal is in [job control](#) in the [Unix shell](#).

SIGFPE

The SIGFPE signal is sent to a process when it executes an erroneous arithmetic operation, such as [division by zero](#) (the name "FPE", standing for **floating-point exception**, is a misnomer as the signal covers integer-arithmetic errors as well).^[2]

SIGHUP

The SIGHUP signal is sent to a process when its controlling terminal is closed. It was originally designed to notify the process of a [serial line](#) drop (a **hangup**). In modern systems, this signal usually means that the controlling [pseudo or virtual terminal](#) has been closed.^[3] Many [daemons](#) will reload their configuration files and reopen their logfiles instead of exiting when receiving this signal.^[4] [nohup](#) is a command to make a command ignore the signal.

SIGILL

The SIGILL signal is sent to a process when it attempts to execute an **illegal**, malformed, unknown, or privileged [instruction](#).

SIGINT

The SIGINT signal is sent to a process by its controlling terminal when a user wishes to **interrupt** the process. This is typically initiated by pressing [Ctrl-C](#), but on some systems, the "[delete](#)" character or "[break](#)" key can be used.^[5]

SIGKILL

The SIGKILL signal is sent to a process to cause it to terminate immediately (**kill**). In contrast to SIGTERM and SIGINT, this signal cannot be caught or ignored, and the receiving process cannot perform any clean-up upon receiving this signal.

SIGPIPE

The SIGPIPE signal is sent to a process when it attempts to write to a [pipe](#) without a process connected to the other end.

SIGPOLL

The SIGPOLL signal is sent when an event occurred on an explicitly watched file descriptor.^[6] Using it effectively leads to making asynchronous I/O requests since the kernel will **poll** the descriptor in place of the caller. It provides an alternative to active [polling](#).

SIGRTMIN to SIGRTMAX

The SIGRTMIN to SIGRTMAX signals are intended to be used for user-defined purposes. They are **real-time** signals.

SIGQUIT

The SIGQUIT signal is sent to a process by its controlling terminal when the user requests that the process **quit** and perform a [core dump](#).

SIGSEGV

The SIGSEGV signal is sent to a process when it makes an invalid virtual memory reference, or [segmentation fault](#), i.e. when it performs a **segmentation violation**.^[7]

SIGSTOP

The [SIGSTOP](#) signal instructs the operating system to **stop** a process for later resumption.

SIGSYS

The SIGSYS signal is sent to a process when it passes a bad argument to a [system call](#). In practice, this kind of signal is rarely encountered since applications rely on libraries (e.g. [libc](#)) to make the call for them.

SIGTERM

The SIGTERM signal is sent to a process to request its **termination**. Unlike the SIGKILL signal, it can be caught and interpreted or ignored by the process. This allows the process to perform nice termination releasing resources and saving state if appropriate. SIGINT is nearly identical to SIGTERM.

SIGTSTP

The [SIGTSTP](#) signal is sent to a process by its controlling terminal to request it to **stop temporarily**. It is commonly initiated by the user pressing [Ctrl-Z](#). Unlike SIGSTOP, the process can register a signal handler for or ignore the signal.

SIGTTIN and SIGTTOU

The SIGTTIN and SIGTTOU signals are sent to a process when it attempts to read **in** or write **out** respectively from the [tty](#) while in the [background](#). Typically, these signals are received only by processes under [job control](#); [daemons](#) do not have controlling terminals and, therefore, should never receive these signals.

SIGTRAP

The SIGTRAP signal is sent to a process when an exception (or **trap**) occurs: a condition that a [debugger](#) has requested to be informed of — for example, when a particular [function](#) is executed, or when a particular [variable](#) changes value.

SIGURG

The SIGURG signal is sent to a process when a [socket](#) has **urgent** or [out-of-band data](#) available to read.

SIGUSR1 and SIGUSR2

The SIGUSR1 and SIGUSR2 signals are sent to a process to indicate **user-defined conditions**.

SIGXCPU

The SIGXCPU signal is sent to a process when it has used up the [CPU](#) for a duration that **exceeds** a certain predetermined user-settable value.^[8] The arrival of a SIGXCPU signal provides the receiving process a chance to quickly save any intermediate results and to exit gracefully, before it is terminated by the operating system using the SIGKILL signal.

SIGXFSZ

The SIGXFSZ signal is sent to a process when it grows a **file** larger than the maximum allowed **size**.

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