

**NAME**

merge – three-way file merge

**SYNOPSIS**

**merge** [ *options* ] *file1 file2 file3*

**DESCRIPTION**

**merge** incorporates all changes that lead from *file2* to *file3* into *file1*. The result ordinarily goes into *file1*. **merge** is useful for combining separate changes to an original. Suppose *file2* is the original, and both *file1* and *file3* are modifications of *file2*. Then **merge** combines both changes.

A conflict occurs if both *file1* and *file3* have changes in a common segment of lines. If a conflict is found, **merge** normally outputs a warning and brackets the conflict with <<<<<<< and >>>>>>> lines. A typical conflict will look like this:

```
<<<<<<< file A
lines in file A
=====
lines in file B
>>>>>>> file B
```

If there are conflicts, the user should edit the result and delete one of the alternatives.

**OPTIONS**

- A** Output conflicts using the **-A** style of **diff3(1)**, if supported by **diff3**. This merges all changes leading from *file2* to *file3* into *file1*, and generates the most verbose output.
- E, -e** These options specify conflict styles that generate less information than **-A**. See **diff3(1)** for details. The default is **-E**. With **-e**, **merge** does not warn about conflicts.
- L label**  
This option may be given up to three times, and specifies labels to be used in place of the corresponding file names in conflict reports. That is, **merge -L x -L y -L z a b c** generates output that looks like it came from files **x**, **y** and **z** instead of from files **a**, **b** and **c**.
- p** Send results to standard output instead of overwriting *file1*.
- q** Quiet; do not warn about conflicts.
- V** Print RCS's version number.

**DIAGNOSTICS**

Exit status is 0 for no conflicts, 1 for some conflicts, 2 for trouble.

**IDENTIFICATION**

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**SEE ALSO**

**diff3(1)**, **diff(1)**, **rcsmerge(1)**, **co(1)**.

**BUGS**

It normally does not make sense to merge binary files as if they were text, but **merge** tries to do it anyway.