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How do I find the package that provides a file?

193

Simple enough question: is there some shell command (or GUI method) I can use that, given the path to a file on my system, tells me what package put it there? Assuming the file did in fact come from a package, that is.

Bonus question: what if it's a file that isn't installed on my system? Is there, say, a website that will let me look up a file and see what packages, if any, provide it?

package-management

share improve this question   edited Jan 22 '14 at 2:20   Braiam 37k ● 19 ● 87 ● 151   asked Jan 30 '10 at 0:10   David Z 2,401 ● 4 ● 15 ● 19

asked 5 years ago
viewed 92060 times
active 1 year ago

5   I've always wondered this myself - I know with YUM you can do yum whatprovides <filepath>/<filename> but I never really have found an alternative to that in Aptitude other than the Packages website – Marco Ceppi ♦ Jan 30 '10 at 13:44

Same on SU superuser.com/questions/10997/... – Ciro Santilli 巴拿馬文件 六四事件 法轮功 May 21 '15 at 11:07

2   You can use dpkg -S /usr/lib/tracker/tracker-store to find out which package it is part of. Then google the package name. – mbiber Nov 29 '15 at 15:57

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6 Answers

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169
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You can use dpkg command to find out which package owns a file:

From man dpkg:

```
-S, --search filename-search-pattern...
        Search for a filename from installed packages.
```

Example:

```
$ dpkg -S /bin/ls
coreutils: /bin/ls
```

You can either search with a full path or with just the filename.

If you wish to search for files not yet installed on your computer, you can use the Ubuntu Packages Search

share improve this answer   edited Oct 21 '14 at 13:38   Pandya 6,063 ● 13 ● 52 ● 101   answered Jan 30 '10 at 8:42   Ressu 5,674 ● 1 ● 21 ● 29

2   I highly recommend using dlocate, which is updated daily for faster lookups. – Lekensteyn Dec 23 '10 at 21:29

5   Hint: if you do not know the full path, but just the command name, use which to find the program: dpkg -S `which firefox` – Lekensteyn Oct 23 '14 at 14:41

1   @DanielTChen, but `dlocate` may not do the job. If dlocate's database is out of date. You have to call `sudo update-dlocatedb` to update it. – jaimo Jun 14 '15 at 14:40

1   If dpkg the exact path doesn't return anything (e.g. dpkg /usr/bin/java), try just the executable's name (e.g. dpkg java). – Dan Dascalescu Jan 21 at 1:05

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78

The apt-file command can do this for you from the command line. I use it frequently when building packages from source. For files provided by packages that are already installed on your system, apt-cache is another choice.

To install apt-file, do:

```
sudo apt-get install apt-file
```

Then, you need to update it's database:

```
apt-file update
```

And, finally, search the file:

```
$ apt-file find kvallet.h
kdelibs5-dev: /usr/include/kvallet.h
libkf5wallet-dev: /usr/include/KF5/KWallet/kwallet.h
```

However a much friendlier way is to use the Ubuntu Packages Search website. They have an option to "search the contents of packages" for a specific filename.

share improve this answer   edited Dec 3 '14 at 11:34   Danielella 4 ● 1   answered Jan 30 '10 at 2:43   jbowtie 3,971 ● 16 ● 29

In my opinion this should be the accepted answer. But in response to Ubuntu Packages Search, I might argue that a shell program this simple is extremely friendly and easy to remember (once you know it). If you use dpkg, apt-get, or aptitude as your standard tools, there is nothing friendly about firing up Chrome to surf the internet! – user2097818 Apr 1 at 6:00

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14

There's also apt-file for looking up files in packages that aren't installed.

share improve this answer   answered Jan 30 '10 at 0:49   ptman 7,461 ● 4 ● 5

exactly what i was searching for. thanks – NES Feb 5 '11 at 12:29

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8

You can search the contents of packages included in the various Ubuntu releases on the Ubuntu Packages website. Look under the heading "Search the contents of packages".

For example, here are the search results for libnss3.so in lucid (10.04):

http://packages.ubuntu.com/search?searchon=contents&keywords=libnss3.so&mode=exactfilename&suite=lucid&arch=any

share improve this answer   answered Aug 10 '10 at 2:42   moberley 727 ● 6 ● 13

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4

Software Center

You mean, which package and not which application. The application is your package manager. Using dpkg

```
dpkg -S /usr/lib/tracker/tracker-store
dpkg -S tracker-extract
dpkg -S tracker-miner-fs
```

Example

```
% dpkg -S /usr/lib/tracker/tracker-store
tracker: /usr/lib/tracker/tracker-store
```

Using apt-file:

```
apt-file search /usr/lib/tracker/tracker-store
```

or also possible:

```
apt-file search --regex /tracker-extract$
apt-file search --regex /tracker-miner-fs$
```

Example

```
% apt-file search /usr/lib/tracker/tracker-store
```

Or online here, in the section Search the contents of packages

Example

- Search for tracker-store within filenames
- Search for paths ending with tracker-store

Search in other suite: [precise] [trusty] [vivid] [wily] [xenial]
Limit search to a specific architecture: [amd64] [i386]

You searched for files named tracker-store in suite wily, all sections, and all architectures. Found 1 results.

File	Packages
/usr/lib/tracker/tracker-store tracker	

share improve this answer   edited Nov 29 '15 at 19:03   A B 44.6k ● 9 ● 90 ● 162   answered Nov 29 '15 at 15:57

You mean, which package and not which application. The application is your package manager. Software Center. Okay. Thank you! :) – RayKev Nov 29 '15 at 17:14

Thank you for all the help! None of these suggestions helped me find which package installed this/these applications though. All searches just lead back to "Tracker". I suspected it was Enthoughts' Canopy though. That mile long EULA reminded me of my old Microsoft Windows daze, which which, I am so glad I am no longer involved. I saw that Tracker was installed yesterday, so as root, I got rid of it, along with Enthoughts' Canopy and, all problems are solved. I really thank you for all your help. It is such a great thing to have such support. Thanks again! Kevin – RayKev Nov 29 '15 at 17:22

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2

One reason you might have to do this is if you are compiling software which there already is an ubuntu package, you can run apt-get build-dep $PACKAGENAME . That will install all packages that you need to compile $PACKAGENAME .

share improve this answer   answered Aug 11 '10 at 19:31   Roy 934 ● 1 ● 11 ● 20

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