**Extracting Data from RPMs**  
Occasionally you may want to extract data from RPMs without installing the package. For  
instance, this can be a good way to retrieve the original source code from a source RPM for  
compiling the software without the help of the RPM tools or to retrieve fonts or other nonprogram data for use on a non-RPM system.

RPM files are actually modified cpio archives. Thus, converting the files into cpio files is relatively straightforward, whereupon you can use cpio to retrieve the individual files.

To do this job, you need to use the rpm2cpio program that ships with most Linux distributions. (You can even use this tool on distributions that don’t use RPM.) This program takes a single argument—the name of the RPM file—and outputs the cpio archive on standard output. Thus, if you want to create a cpio archive file, you must redirect  
the output:  
$ **rpm2cpio samba-4.1.9-4.fc20.src.rpm** > samba-4.1.9-4.fc20.src.cpio

You can then extract the data using cpio, which takes the -i option to extract an archive and --make-directories to create directories:  
$ **cpio -i --make-directories < samba-4.1.9-4.fc20.src.cpio**

Another option for extracting data from RPMs is to use alien, which is described later  
in “Converting between Package Formats.” This program can convert an RPM into a  
Debian package or a tarball.