NAME

bash − GNU Bourne-Again SHell

SYNOPSIS

bash [options] [file]

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DESCRIPTION

Bash is an **sh**-compatible command language interpreter that executes commands read from the standard input or from a file. **Bash** also incorporates useful features from the *Korn* and *C* shells (**ksh** and **csh**).

Bash is intended to be a conformant implementation of the IEEE POSIX Shell and Tools specification (IEEE Working Group 1003.2).

OPTIONS

In addition to the single-character shell options documented in the description of the **set** builtin command, **bash** interprets the following options when it is invoked:

−c *string* If the **−c** option is present, then commands are read from *string*. If there are arguments after the *string*, they are assigned to the positional parameters, starting with **$0**.

−r If the **−r** option is present, the shell becomes *restricted* (see **RESTRICTED SHELL** below).

−i If the **−i** option is present, the shell is *interactive*.

−s If the **−s** option is present, or if no arguments remain after option processing, then commands are read from the standard input. This option allows the positional parameters to be set when invoking an interactive shell.

−D A list of all double-quoted strings preceded by **$** is printed on the standard ouput. These are the strings that are subject to language translation when the current locale is not C or POSIX. This implies the **−n** option; no commands will be executed.

−− A **−−** signals the end of options and disables further option processing. Any arguments after the **−−** are treated as filenames and arguments. An argument of **−** is equivalent to **−−**.

Bash also interprets a number of multi-character options. These options must appear on the command line before the single-character options in order for them to be recognized.

−−dump−po−strings
Equivalent to **−D**, but the output is in the GNU *gettext* **po** (portable object) file format.

−−dump−strings
Equivalent to **−D**.

−−help Display a usage message on standard output and exit successfully.

−−login
Make **bash** act as if it had been invoked as a login shell (see **INVOCATION** below).

−−noediting
Do not use the GNU **readline** library to read command lines if interactive.

−−noprofile
Do not read either the system-wide startup file */etc/profile* or any of the personal initialization files *~/.bash_profile*, *~/.bash_login*, or *~/.profile*. By default, **bash** reads these files when it is invoked as a login shell (see **INVOCATION** below).

−−norc Do not read and execute the personal initialization file *~/.bashrc* if the shell is interactive. This option is on by default if the shell is invoked as **sh**.

−−posix
Change the behavior of **bash** where the default operation differs from the POSIX 1003.2 standard to match the standard.

−−rcfile *file*
Execute commands from *file* instead of the standard personal initialization file *~/.bashrc* if the shell is interactive (see **INVOCATION** below).

−−restricted
The shell becomes restricted (see **RESTRICTED SHELL** below).

−−verbose
Equivalent to **−v**.

−−version
Show version information for this instance of **bash** on the standard output and exit successfully.

ARGUMENTS

If arguments remain after option processing, and neither the **−c** nor the **−s** option has been supplied, the first argument is assumed to be the name of a file containing shell commands. If **bash** is invoked in this fashion, **$0** is set to the name of the file, and the positional parameters are set to the remaining arguments. **Bash** reads and executes commands from this file, then exits. **Bash**'s exit status is the exit status of the last command executed in the script. If no commands are executed, the exit status is 0.

INVOCATION

A *login shell* is one whose first character of argument zero is a **−**, or one started with the **−−login** option.

An *interactive* shell is one whose standard input and output are both connected to terminals (as determined by *isatty*(3)), or one started with the **−i** option. **PS1** is set and **$−** includes **i** if **bash** is interactive, allowing a shell script or a startup file to test this state.

The following paragraphs describe how **bash** executes its startup files. If any of the files exist but cannot be read, **bash** reports an error. Tildes are expanded in file names as described below under **Tilde Expansion** in the **EXPANSION** section.

When **bash** is invoked as an interactive login shell, or as a non-interactive shell with the **−−login** option, it first reads and executes commands from the file */etc/profile*, if that file exists. After reading that file, it looks for *~/.bash_profile*, *~/.bash_login*, and *~/.profile*, in that order, and reads and executes commands from the first one that exists and is readable. The **−−noprofile** option may be used when the shell is started to inhibit this behavior.

When a login shell exits, **bash** reads and executes commands from the file *~/.bash_logout*, if it exists.

When an interactive shell that is not a login shell is started, **bash** reads and executes commands from *~/.bashrc*, if that file exists. This may be inhibited by using the **−−norc** option. The **−−rcfile** *file* option will force **bash** to read and execute commands from *file* instead of *~/.bashrc*.

When **bash** is started non-interactively, to run a shell script, for example, it looks for the variable **BASH_ENV** in the environment, expands its value if it appears there, and uses the expanded value as the name of a file to read and execute. **Bash** behaves as if the following command were executed:

```
if [ −n "$BASH_ENV" ]; then . "$BASH_ENV"; fi
```

but the value of the **PATH** variable is not used to search for the file name.

If **bash** is invoked with the name **sh**, it tries to mimic the startup behavior of historical versions of **sh** as closely as possible, while conforming to the POSIX standard as well. When invoked as an interactive login shell, or a non-interactive shell with the **−−login** option, it first attempts to read and execute commands from */etc/profile* and *~/.profile*, in that order. The **−−noprofile** option may be used to inhibit this behavior. When invoked as an interactive shell with the name **sh**, **bash** looks for the variable **ENV**, expands its value if it is defined, and uses the expanded value as the name of a file to read and execute. Since a shell invoked as **sh** does not attempt to read and execute commands from any other startup files, the **−−rcfile** option has no effect. A non-interactive shell invoked with the name **sh** does not attempt to read any other startup files. When invoked as **sh**, **bash** enters *posix* mode after the startup files are read.

When **bash** is started in *posix* mode, as with the **−−posix** command line option, it follows the POSIX standard for startup files. In this mode, interactive shells expand the **ENV** variable and commands are read and executed from the file whose name is the expanded value. No other startup files are read.

Bash attempts to determine when it is being run by the remote shell daemon, usually *rshd*. If **bash** determines it is being run by *rshd*, it reads and executes commands from *~/.bashrc*, if that file exists and is readable. It will not do this if invoked as **sh**. The **−−norc** option may be used to inhibit this behavior, and the

−−rcfile option may be used to force another file to be read, but *rshd* does not generally invoke the shell with those options or allow them to be specified.

If the shell is started with the effective user (group) id not equal to the real user (group) id, and the **−p** option is not supplied, no startup files are read, shell functions are not inherited from the environment, the **SHELLOPTS** variable, if it appears in the environment, is ignored, and the effective user id is set to the real user id. If the **−p** option is supplied at invocation, the startup behavior is the same, but the effective user id is not reset.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are used throughout the rest of this document.

blank A space or tab.

word A sequence of characters considered as a single unit by the shell. Also known as a **token**.

name A *word* consisting only of alphanumeric characters and underscores, and beginning with an alphabetic character or an underscore. Also referred to as an **identifier**.

metacharacter

A character that, when unquoted, separates words. One of the following:
| & ; ( ) < > space tab

control operator

A *token* that performs a control function. It is one of the following symbols:
|| & && ; ;; ( ) | <newline>

RESERVED WORDS

Reserved words are words that have a special meaning to the shell. The following words are recognized as reserved when unquoted and either the first word of a simple command (see **SHELL GRAMMAR** below) or the third word of a **case** or **for** command:

! case do done elif else esac fi for function if in select then until while { } time [[ ]]

SHELL GRAMMAR

Simple Commands

A *simple command* is a sequence of optional variable assignments followed by **blank**-separated words and redirections, and terminated by a *control operator*. The first word specifies the command to be executed. The remaining words are passed as arguments to the invoked command.

The return value of a *simple command* is its exit status, or 128+*n* if the command is terminated by signal *n*.

Pipelines

A *pipeline* is a sequence of one or more commands separated by the character **|**. The format for a pipeline is:

[**time** [**−p**]] [!] *command* [**|** *command2 ...*]

The standard output of *command* is connected to the standard input of *command2*. This connection is performed before any redirections specified by the command (see **REDIRECTION** below).

If the reserved word **!** precedes a pipeline, the exit status of that pipeline is the logical NOT of the exit status of the last command. Otherwise, the status of the pipeline is the exit status of the last command. The shell waits for all commands in the pipeline to terminate before returning a value.

If the **time** reserved word precedes a pipeline, the elapsed as well as user and system time consumed by its execution are reported when the pipeline terminates. The **−p** option changes the output format to that specified by POSIX. The **TIMEFORMAT** variable may be set to a format string that specifies how the timing information should be displayed; see the description of **TIMEFORMAT** under **Shell Variables** below.

Each command in a pipeline is executed as a separate process (i.e., in a subshell).

Lists

A *list* is a sequence of one or more pipelines separated by one of the operators **;**, **&**, **&&**, or **||**, and optionally terminated by one of **;**, **&**, or **<newline>**.

Of these list operators, **&&** and **||** have equal precedence, followed by **;** and **&,** which have equal

precedence.

If a command is terminated by the control operator **&**, the shell executes the command in the *background* in a subshell. The shell does not wait for the command to finish, and the return status is 0. Commands separated by a **;** are executed sequentially; the shell waits for each command to terminate in turn. The return status is the exit status of the last command executed.

The control operators **&&** and || denote AND lists and OR lists, respectively. An AND list has the form

command **&&** *command2*

command2 is executed if, and only if, *command* returns an exit status of zero.

An OR list has the form

command || *command2*

command2 is executed if and only if *command* returns a non-zero exit status. The return status of AND and OR lists is the exit status of the last command executed in the list.

Compound Commands

A *compound command* is one of the following:

(*list*) *list* is executed in a subshell. Variable assignments and builtin commands that affect the shell's environment do not remain in effect after the command completes. The return status is the exit status of *list*.

{ *list*; } *list* is simply executed in the current shell environment. *list* must be terminated with a newline or semicolon. This is known as a *group command*. The return status is the exit status of *list*.

((*expression*))

The *expression* is evaluated according to the rules described below under **ARITHMETIC EVALUATION**. If the value of the expression is non-zero, the return status is 0; otherwise the return status is 1. This is exactly equivalent to **let "***expression***"**.

[[*expression* **]]**

Return a status of 0 or 1 depending on the evaluation of the conditional expression *expression*. Expressions are composed of the primaries described below under **CONDITIONAL EXPRESSIONS**. Word splitting and pathname expansion are not performed on the words between the **[[** and **]]**; tilde expansion, parameter and variable expansion, arithmetic expansion, command substitution, process substitution, and quote removal are performed.

When the **==** and **!=** operators are used, the string to the right of the operator is considered a pattern and matched according to the rules described below under **Pattern Matching**. The return value is 0 if the string matches or does not match the pattern, respectively, and 1 otherwise. Any part of the pattern may be quoted to force it to be matched as a string.

Expressions may be combined using the following operators, listed in decreasing order of precedence:

(*expression* **)**

Returns the value of *expression*. This may be used to override the normal precedence of operators.

! *expression*

True if *expression* is false.

expression1 **&&** *expression2*

True if both *expression1* and *expression2* are true.

expression1 || *expression2*

True if either *expression1* or *expression2* is true.

The **&&** and || operators do not execute *expression2* if the value of *expression1* is sufficient to determine the return value of the entire conditional expression.

for *name* [**in** *word*] ; **do** *list* ; **done**

The list of words following **in** is expanded, generating a list of items. The variable *name* is set to each element of this list in turn, and *list* is executed each time. If the **in** *word* is omitted, the **for** command executes *list* once for each positional parameter that is set (see **PARAMETERS** below). The return status is the exit status of the last command that executes. If the expansion of the items following **in** results in an empty list, no commands are executed, and the return status is 0.

select *name* [**in** *word*] ; **do** *list* ; **done**

The list of words following **in** is expanded, generating a list of items. The set of expanded words is printed on the standard error, each preceded by a number. If the **in** *word* is omitted, the positional parameters are printed (see **PARAMETERS** below). The **PS3** prompt is then displayed and a line read from the standard input. If the line consists of a number corresponding to one of the displayed words, then the value of *name* is set to that word. If the line is empty, the words and prompt are displayed again. If EOF is read, the command completes. Any other value read causes *name* to be set to null. The line read is saved in the variable **REPLY**. The *list* is executed after each selection until a **break** or **return** command is executed. The exit status of **select** is the exit status of the last command executed in *list*, or zero if no commands were executed.

case *word* **in** [(*pattern* [| *pattern*] ...) *list* ;;] ... **esac**

A **case** command first expands *word*, and tries to match it against each *pattern* in turn, using the same matching rules as for pathname expansion (see **Pathname Expansion** below). When a match is found, the corresponding *list* is executed. After the first match, no subsequent matches are attempted. The exit status is zero if no pattern matches. Otherwise, it is the exit status of the last command executed in *list*.

if *list*; **then** *list;* [**elif** *list*; **then** *list*;] ... [**else** *list*;] **fi**

The **if** *list* is executed. If its exit status is zero, the **then** *list* is executed. Otherwise, each **elif** *list* is executed in turn, and if its exit status is zero, the corresponding **then** *list* is executed and the command completes. Otherwise, the **else** *list* is executed, if present. The exit status is the exit status of the last command executed, or zero if no condition tested true.

while *list*; **do** *list*; **done**
until *list*; **do** *list*; **done**

The **while** command continuously executes the **do** *list* as long as the last command in *list* returns an exit status of zero. The **until** command is identical to the **while** command, except that the test is negated; the **do** *list* is executed as long as the last command in *list* returns a non-zero exit status. The exit status of the **while** and **until** commands is the exit status of the last **do** *list* command executed, or zero if none was executed.

[**function**] *name* () { *list*; }

This defines a function named *name*. The *body* of the function is the *list* of commands between { and }. This list is executed whenever *name* is specified as the name of a simple command. The exit status of a function is the exit status of the last command executed in the body. (See **FUNCTIONS** below.)

COMMENTS

In a non-interactive shell, or an interactive shell in which the **interactive_comments** option to the **shopt** builtin is enabled (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below), a word beginning with **#** causes that word and all remaining characters on that line to be ignored. An interactive shell without the **interactive_comments** option enabled does not allow comments. The **interactive_comments** option is on by default in interactive shells.

QUOTING

Quoting is used to remove the special meaning of certain characters or words to the shell. Quoting can be used to disable special treatment for special characters, to prevent reserved words from being recognized as such, and to prevent parameter expansion.

Each of the *metacharacters* listed above under **DEFINITIONS** has special meaning to the shell and must be quoted if they are to represent themselves. There are three quoting mechanisms: the *escape character*,

single quotes, and double quotes.

A non-quoted backslash (\) is the *escape character*. It preserves the literal value of the next character that follows, with the exception of <newline>. If a \<newline> pair appears, and the backslash is not itself quoted, the \<newline> is treated as a line continuation (that is, it is removed from the input stream and effectively ignored).

Enclosing characters in single quotes preserves the literal value of each character within the quotes. A single quote may not occur between single quotes, even when preceded by a backslash.

Enclosing characters in double quotes preserves the literal value of all characters within the quotes, with the exception of **$**, **‘**, and ****. The characters **$** and **‘** retain their special meaning within double quotes. The backslash retains its special meaning only when followed by one of the following characters: **$**, **‘**, **"**, ****, or **<newline>**. A double quote may be quoted within double quotes by preceding it with a backslash.

The special parameters ***** and **@** have special meaning when in double quotes (see **PARAMETERS** below).

Words of the form **$**'*string*' are treated specially. The word expands to *string*, with backslash-escaped characters replaced as specifed by the ANSI C standard. Backslash escape sequences, if present, are decoded as follows:

\a	alert (bell)
\b	backspace
\e	an escape character
\f	form feed
\n	new line
\r	carriage return
\t	horizontal tab
\v	vertical tab
****	backslash
*****nnn*	the character whose ASCII code is the octal value *nnn* (one to three digits)
\x*nnn*	the character whose ASCII code is the hexadecimal value *nnn* (one to three digits)

The translated result is single-quoted, as if the dollar sign had not been present.

A double-quoted string preceded by a dollar sign (**$**) will cause the string to be translated according to the current locale. If the current locale is **C** or **POSIX**, the dollar sign is ignored. If the string is translated and replaced, the replacement is double-quoted.

PARAMETERS

A *parameter* is an entity that stores values. It can be a *name*, a number, or one of the special characters listed below under **Special Parameters**. For the shell's purposes, a *variable* is a parameter denoted by a *name*.

A parameter is set if it has been assigned a value. The null string is a valid value. Once a variable is set, it may be unset only by using the **unset** builtin command (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below).

A *variable* may be assigned to by a statement of the form

name=[*value*]

If *value* is not given, the variable is assigned the null string. All *values* undergo tilde expansion, parameter and variable expansion, string expansion, command substitution, arithmetic expansion, and quote removal (see **EXPANSION** below). If the variable has its **integer** attribute set (see **declare** below in **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS**) then *value* is subject to arithmetic expansion even if the $((...)) expansion is not used (see **Arithmetic Expansion** below). Word splitting is not performed, with the exception of **"$@"** as explained below under **Special Parameters**. Pathname expansion is not performed.

Positional Parameters

A *positional parameter* is a parameter denoted by one or more digits, other than the single digit 0. Positional parameters are assigned from the shell's arguments when it is invoked, and may be reassigned using the **set** builtin command. Positional parameters may not be assigned to with assignment statements. The positional parameters are temporarily replaced when a shell function is executed (see **FUNCTIONS** below).

When a positional parameter consisting of more than a single digit is expanded, it must be enclosed in braces (see **EXPANSION** below).

Special Parameters

The shell treats several parameters specially. These parameters may only be referenced; assignment to them is not allowed.

***** Expands to the positional parameters, starting from one. When the expansion occurs within double quotes, it expands to a single word with the value of each parameter separated by the first character of the **IFS** special variable. That is, "**$***" is equivalent to "**$1***c***$2***c***...**", where *c* is the first character of the value of the **IFS** variable. If **IFS** is unset, the parameters are separated by spaces. If **IFS** is null, the parameters are joined without intervening separators.

@ Expands to the positional parameters, starting from one. When the expansion occurs within double quotes, each parameter expands to a separate word. That is, "**$@**" is equivalent to "**$1**" "**$2**" ... When there are no positional parameters, "**$@**" and **$@** expand to nothing (i.e., they are removed).

Expands to the number of positional parameters in decimal.

? Expands to the status of the most recently executed foreground pipeline.

– Expands to the current option flags as specified upon invocation, by the **set** builtin command, or those set by the shell itself (such as the **–i** option).

$ Expands to the process ID of the shell. In a () subshell, it expands to the process ID of the current shell, not the subshell.

! Expands to the process ID of the most recently executed background (asynchronous) command.

0 Expands to the name of the shell or shell script. This is set at shell initialization. If **bash** is invoked with a file of commands, **$0** is set to the name of that file. If **bash** is started with the **–c** option, then **$0** is set to the first argument after the string to be executed, if one is present. Otherwise, it is set to the file name used to invoke **bash**, as given by argument zero.

_ At shell startup, set to the absolute file name of the shell or shell script being executed as passed in the argument list. Subsequently, expands to the last argument to the previous command, after expansion. Also set to the full file name of each command executed and placed in the environment exported to that command. When checking mail, this parameter holds the name of the mail file currently being checked.

Shell Variables

The following variables are set by the shell:

PPID The process ID of the shell's parent. This variable is readonly.

PWD The current working directory as set by the **cd** command.

OLDPWD

The previous working directory as set by the **cd** command.

REPLY

Set to the line of input read by the **read** builtin command when no arguments are supplied.

UID Expands to the user ID of the current user, initialized at shell startup. This variable is readonly.

EUID Expands to the effective user ID of the current user, initialized at shell startup. This variable is readonly.

GROUPS

An array variable containing the list of groups of which the current user is a member. This variable is readonly.

BASH Expands to the full file name used to invoke this instance of **bash**.

BASH_VERSION

Expands to a string describing the version of this instance of **bash**.

BASH_VERSINFO

A readonly array variable whose members hold version information for this instance of **bash**. The values assigned to the array members are as follows:

BASH_VERSINFO[0] The major version number (the *release*).
BASH_VERSINFO[1] The minor version number (the *version*).
BASH_VERSINFO[2] The patch level.

BASH_VERSINFO[3] The build version.
BASH_VERSINFO[4] The release status (e.g., *beta1*).
BASH_VERSINFO[5] The value of **MACHTYPE**.

SHLVL
Incremented by one each time an instance of **bash** is started.

RANDOM
Each time this parameter is referenced, a random integer between 0 and 32767 is generated. The sequence of random numbers may be initialized by assigning a value to **RANDOM**. If **RANDOM** is unset, it loses its special properties, even if it is subsequently reset.

SECONDS
Each time this parameter is referenced, the number of seconds since shell invocation is returned. If a value is assigned to **SECONDS**, the value returned upon subsequent references is the number of seconds since the assignment plus the value assigned. If **SECONDS** is unset, it loses its special properties, even if it is subsequently reset.

LINENO
Each time this parameter is referenced, the shell substitutes a decimal number representing the current sequential line number (starting with 1) within a script or function. When not in a script or function, the value substituted is not guaranteed to be meaningful. If **LINENO** is unset, it loses its special properties, even if it is subsequently reset.

HISTCMD
The history number, or index in the history list, of the current command. If **HISTCMD** is unset, it loses its special properties, even if it is subsequently reset.

DIRSTACK
An array variable (see **Arrays** below) containing the current contents of the directory stack. Directories appear in the stack in the order they are displayed by the **dirs** builtin. Assigning to members of this array variable may be used to modify directories already in the stack, but the **pushd** and **popd** builtins must be used to add and remove directories. Assignment to this variable will not change the current directory. If **DIRSTACK** is unset, it loses its special properties, even if it is subsequently reset.

PIPESTATUS
An array variable (see **Arrays** below) containing a list of exit status values from the processes in the most-recently-executed foreground pipeline (which may contain only a single command).

OPTARG
The value of the last option argument processed by the **getopts** builtin command (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below).

OPTIND
The index of the next argument to be processed by the **getopts** builtin command (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below).

HOSTNAME
Automatically set to the name of the current host.

HOSTTYPE
Automatically set to a string that uniquely describes the type of machine on which **bash** is executing. The default is system-dependent.

OSTYPE
Automatically set to a string that describes the operating system on which **bash** is executing. The default is system-dependent.

MACHTYPE
Automatically set to a string that fully describes the system type on which **bash** is executing, in the standard GNU *cpu-company-system* format. The default is system-dependent.

SHELLOPTS

A colon-separated list of enabled shell options. Each word in the list is a valid argument for the **−o** option to the **set** builtin command (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below). The options appearing in **SHELLOPTS** are those reported as *on* by **set −o**. If this variable is in the environment when **bash** starts up, each shell option in the list will be enabled before reading any startup files. This variable is read-only.

The following variables are used by the shell. In some cases, **bash** assigns a default value to a variable; these cases are noted below.

IFS The *Internal Field Separator* that is used for word splitting after expansion and to split lines into words with the **read** builtin command. The default value is ‘‘<space><tab><newline>’’.

PATH The search path for commands. It is a colon-separated list of directories in which the shell looks for commands (see **COMMAND EXECUTION** below). The default path is system-dependent, and is set by the administrator who installs **bash**. A common value is ‘‘/usr/gnu/bin:/usr/local/bin:/usr/ucb:/bin:/usr/bin:.’’.

HOME

The home directory of the current user; the default argument for the **cd** builtin command. The value of this variable is also used when performing tilde expansion.

CDPATH

The search path for the **cd** command. This is a colon-separated list of directories in which the shell looks for destination directories specified by the **cd** command. A sample value is ‘‘.:~:/usr’’.

BASH_ENV

If this parameter is set when **bash** is executing a shell script, its value is interpreted as a filename containing commands to initialize the shell, as in *~/.bashrc*. The value of **BASH_ENV** is subjected to parameter expansion, command substitution, and arithmetic expansion before being interpreted as a file name. **PATH** is not used to search for the resultant file name.

MAIL If this parameter is set to a file name and the **MAILPATH** variable is not set, **bash** informs the user of the arrival of mail in the specified file.

MAILCHECK

Specifies how often (in seconds) **bash** checks for mail. The default is 60 seconds. When it is time to check for mail, the shell does so before displaying the primary prompt. If this variable is unset, the shell disables mail checking.

MAILPATH

A colon-separated list of file names to be checked for mail. The message to be printed when mail arrives in a particular file may be specified by separating the file name from the message with a ‘?’. When used in the text of the message, **$_** expands to the name of the current mailfile. Example:

MAILPATH=’/usr/spool/mail/bfox?"You have mail":~/shell−mail?"$_ has mail!"’

Bash supplies a default value for this variable, but the location of the user mail files that it uses is system dependent (e.g., /usr/spool/mail/**$USER**).

PS1 The value of this parameter is expanded (see **PROMPTING** below) and used as the primary prompt string. The default value is ‘‘**\s−\v\$** ’’.

PS2 The value of this parameter is expanded as with **PS1** and used as the secondary prompt string. The default is ‘‘**>** ’’.

PS3 The value of this parameter is used as the prompt for the **select** command (see **SHELL GRAMMAR** above).

PS4 The value of this parameter is expanded as with **PS1** and the value is printed before each command **bash** displays during an execution trace. The first character of **PS4** is replicated multiple times, as necessary, to indicate multiple levels of indirection. The default is ‘‘**+** ’’.

TIMEFORMAT

The value of this parameter is used as a format string specifying how the timing information for pipelines prefixed with the **time** reserved word should be displayed. The **%** character introduces an escape sequence that is expanded to a time value or other information. The escape sequences and their meanings are as follows; the braces denote optional portions.

%% A literal **%**.
%[*p*]**[l]R** The elapsed time in seconds.
%[*p*]**[l]U** The number of CPU seconds spent in user mode.
%[*p*]**[l]S** The number of CPU seconds spent in system mode.
%P The CPU percentage, computed as (%U + %S) / %R.

The optional *p* is a digit specifying the *precision*, the number of fractional digits after a decimal point. A value of 0 causes no decimal point or fraction to be output. At most three places after the decimal point may be specified; values of *p* greater than 3 are changed to 3. If *p* is not specified, the value 3 is used.

The optional **l** specifies a longer format, including minutes, of the form *MM*m*SS.FF*s. The value of *p* determines whether or not the fraction is included.

If this variable is not set, **bash** acts as if it had the value **$'\nreal\t%3lR\nuser\t%3lU\nsys%3lS'**. If the value is null, no timing information is displayed. A trailing newline is added when the format string is displayed.

HISTSIZE
The number of commands to remember in the command history (see **HISTORY** below). The default value is 500.

HISTFILE
The name of the file in which command history is saved (see **HISTORY** below). The default value is *~/.bash_history*. If unset, the command history is not saved when an interactive shell exits.

HISTFILESIZE
The maximum number of lines contained in the history file. When this variable is assigned a value, the history file is truncated, if necessary, to contain no more than that number of lines. The default value is 500. The history file is also truncated to this size after writing it when an interactive shell exits.

OPTERR
If set to the value 1, **bash** displays error messages generated by the **getopts** builtin command (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below). **OPTERR** is initialized to 1 each time the shell is invoked or a shell script is executed.

LANG Used to determine the locale category for any category not specifically selected with a variable starting with **LC_**.

LC_ALL
This variable overrides the value of **LANG** and any other **LC_** variable specifying a locale category.

LC_COLLATE
This variable determines the collation order used when sorting the results of pathname expansion, and determines the behavior of range expressions, equivalence classes, and collating sequences within pathname expansion and pattern matching.

LC_CTYPE
This variable determines the interpretation of characters and the behavior of character classes within pathname expansion and pattern matching.

LC_MESSAGES
This variable determines the locale used to translate double-quoted strings preceded by a **$**.

PROMPT_COMMAND
If set, the value is executed as a command prior to issuing each primary prompt.

IGNOREEOF
Controls the action of an interactive shell on receipt of an **EOF** character as the sole input. If set, the value is the number of consecutive **EOF** characters which must be typed as the first characters on an input line before **bash** exits. If the variable exists but does not have a numeric value, or has

no value, the default value is 10. If it does not exist, **EOF** signifies the end of input to the shell.

TMOUT
If set to a value greater than zero, the value is interpreted as the number of seconds to wait for input after issuing the primary prompt. **Bash** terminates after waiting for that number of seconds if input does not arrive.

FCEDIT
The default editor for the **fc** builtin command.

FIGNORE
A colon-separated list of suffixes to ignore when performing filename completion (see **READLINE** below). A filename whose suffix matches one of the entries in **FIGNORE** is excluded from the list of matched filenames. A sample value is ‘‘.o:~’’.

GLOBIGNORE
A colon-separated list of patterns defining the set of filenames to be ignored by pathname expansion. If a filename matched by a pathname expansion pattern also matches one of the patterns in **GLOBIGNORE**, it is removed from the list of matches.

INPUTRC
The filename for the **readline** startup file, overriding the default of *~/.inputrc* (see **READLINE** below).

HISTCONTROL
If set to a value of *ignorespace*, lines which begin with a **space** character are not entered on the history list. If set to a value of *ignoredups*, lines matching the last history line are not entered. A value of *ignoreboth* combines the two options. If unset, or if set to any other value than those above, all lines read by the parser are saved on the history list, subject to the value of **HISTIGNORE**. This variable's function is superseded by **HISTIGNORE**. The second and subsequent lines of a multi-line compound command are not tested, and are added to the history regardless of the value of **HISTCONTROL**.

HISTIGNORE
A colon-separated list of patterns used to decide which command lines should be saved on the history list. Each pattern is anchored at the beginning of the line and must fully specify the line (no implicit ‘*****’ is appended). Each pattern is tested against the line after the checks specified by **HISTCONTROL** are applied. In addition to the normal shell pattern matching characters, ‘**&**’ matches the previous history line. ‘**&**’ may be escaped using a backslash. The backslash is removed before attempting a match. The second and subsequent lines of a multi-line compound command are not tested, and are added to the history regardless of the value of **HISTIGNORE**.

histchars
The two or three characters which control history expansion and tokenization (see **HISTORY EXPANSION** below). The first character is the *history expansion character*, the character which signals the start of a history expansion, normally ‘**!**’. The second character is the *quick substitution* character, which is used as shorthand for re-running the previous command entered, substituting one string for another in the command. The default is ‘**^**’. The optional third character is the character which indicates that the remainder of the line is a comment when found as the first character of a word, normally ‘**#**’. The history comment character causes history substitution to be skipped for the remaining words on the line. It does not necessarily cause the shell parser to treat the rest of the line as a comment.

HOSTFILE
Contains the name of a file in the same format as */etc/hosts* that should be read when the shell needs to complete a hostname. The file may be changed interactively; the next time hostname completion is attempted **bash** adds the contents of the new file to the already existing database.

auto_resume

This variable controls how the shell interacts with the user and job control. If this variable is set, single word simple commands without redirections are treated as candidates for resumption of an existing stopped job. There is no ambiguity allowed; if there is more than one job beginning with the string typed, the job most recently accessed is selected. The *name* of a stopped job, in this context, is the command line used to start it. If set to the value *exact*, the string supplied must match the name of a stopped job exactly; if set to *substring*, the string supplied needs to match a substring of the name of a stopped job. The *substring* value provides functionality analogous to the **%?** job identifier (see **JOB CONTROL** below). If set to any other value, the supplied string must be a prefix of a stopped job's name; this provides functionality analogous to the **%** job identifier.

Arrays

Bash provides one-dimensional array variables. Any variable may be used as an array; the **declare** builtin will explicitly declare an array. There is no maximum limit on the size of an array, nor any requirement that members be indexed or assigned contiguously. Arrays are indexed using integers and are zero-based.

An array is created automatically if any variable is assigned to using the syntax *name*[*subscript*]=*value*. The *subscript* is treated as an arithmetic expression that must evaluate to a number greater than or equal to zero. To explicitly declare an array, use **declare −a** *name* (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below). **declare −a** *name***[***subscript***]** is also accepted; the *subscript* is ignored. Attributes may be specified for an array variable using the **declare** and **readonly** builtins. Each attribute applies to all members of an array.

Arrays are assigned to using compound assignments of the form *name*=**(**value*1* ... value*n***)**, where each *value* is of the form [*subscript*]=*string*. Only *string* is required. If the optional brackets and subscript are supplied, that index is assigned to; otherwise the index of the element assigned is the last index assigned to by the statement plus one. Indexing starts at zero. This syntax is also accepted by the **declare** builtin. Individual array elements may be assigned to using the *name*[*subscript*]=*value* syntax introduced above.

Any element of an array may be referenced using ${*name*[*subscript*]}. The braces are required to avoid conflicts with pathname expansion. If *subscript* is @ or *, the word expands to all members of *name*. These subscripts differ only when the word appears within double quotes. If the word is double-quoted, ${*name*[*]} expands to a single word with the value of each array member separated by the first character of the **IFS** special variable, and ${*name*[@]} expands each element of *name* to a separate word. When there are no array members, ${*name*[@]} expands to nothing. This is analogous to the expansion of the special parameters * and @ (see **Special Parameters** above). ${#*name*[*subscript*]} expands to the length of ${*name*[*subscript*]}. If *subscript* is * or @, the expansion is the number of elements in the array. Referencing an array variable without a subscript is equivalent to referencing element zero.

The **unset** builtin is used to destroy arrays. **unset name**[*subscript*] destroys the array element at index *subscript*. **unset** *name*, where *name* is an array, or **unset** *name*[*subscript*], where *subscript* is * or @, removes the entire array.

The **declare**, **local**, and **readonly** builtins each accept a **−a** option to specify an array. The **read** builtin accepts a **−a** option to assign a list of words read from the standard input to an array. The **set** and **declare** builtins display array values in a way that allows them to be reused as assignments.

EXPANSION

Expansion is performed on the command line after it has been split into words. There are seven kinds of expansion performed: *brace expansion*, *tilde expansion*, *parameter and variable expansion*, *command substitution*, *arithmetic expansion*, *word splitting*, and *pathname expansion*.

The order of expansions is: brace expansion, tilde expansion, parameter, variable and arithmetic expansion and command substitution (done in a left-to-right fashion), word splitting, and pathname expansion.

On systems that can support it, there is an additional expansion available: *process substitution*.

Only brace expansion, word splitting, and pathname expansion can change the number of words of the expansion; other expansions expand a single word to a single word. The only exceptions to this are the expansions of "**$@**" and "**${***name***[@]}**" as explained above (see **PARAMETERS**).

Brace Expansion

Brace expansion is a mechanism by which arbitrary strings may be generated. This mechanism is similar to *pathname expansion*, but the filenames generated need not exist. Patterns to be brace expanded take the form of an optional *preamble*, followed by a series of comma-separated strings between a pair of braces, followed by an optional *postscript*. The preamble is prefixed to each string contained within the braces, and the postscript is then appended to each resulting string, expanding left to right.

Brace expansions may be nested. The results of each expanded string are not sorted; left to right order is preserved. For example, a**{**d,c,b**}**e expands into 'ade ace abe'.

Brace expansion is performed before any other expansions, and any characters special to other expansions are preserved in the result. It is strictly textual. **Bash** does not apply any syntactic interpretation to the context of the expansion or the text between the braces.

A correctly-formed brace expansion must contain unquoted opening and closing braces, and at least one unquoted comma. Any incorrectly formed brace expansion is left unchanged. A **{** or **,** may be quoted with a backslash to prevent its being considered part of a brace expression.

This construct is typically used as shorthand when the common prefix of the strings to be generated is longer than in the above example:

mkdir /usr/local/src/bash/{old,new,dist,bugs}

or

chown root /usr/{ucb/{ex,edit},lib/{ex?.?*,how_ex}}

Brace expansion introduces a slight incompatibility with historical versions of **sh**. **sh** does not treat opening or closing braces specially when they appear as part of a word, and preserves them in the output. **Bash** removes braces from words as a consequence of brace expansion. For example, a word entered to **sh** as *file{1,2}* appears identically in the output. The same word is output as *file1 file2* after expansion by **bash**. If strict compatibility with **sh** is desired, start **bash** with the **+B** option or disable brace expansion with the **+B** option to the **set** command (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below).

Tilde Expansion

If a word begins with an unquoted tilde character ('~'), all of the characters preceding the first unquoted slash (or all characters, if there is no unquoted slash) are considered a *tilde-prefix*. If none of the characters in the tilde-prefix are quoted, the characters in the tilde-prefix following the tilde are treated as a possible *login name*. If this login name is the null string, the tilde is replaced with the value of the shell parameter **HOME**. If **HOME** is unset, the home directory of the user executing the shell is substituted instead. Otherwise, the tilde-prefix is replaced with the home directory associated with the specified login name.

If the tilde-prefix is a '~+', the value of the shell variable **PWD** replaces the tilde-prefix. If the tilde-prefix is a '~−', the value of the shell variable **OLDPWD**, if it is set, is substituted. If the characters following the tilde in the tilde-prefix consist of a number *N*, optionally prefixed by a '+' or a '−', the tilde-prefix is replaced with the corresponding element from the directory stack, as it would be displayed by the **dirs** builtin invoked with the tilde-prefix as an argument. If the characters following the tilde in the tilde-prefix consist of a number without a leading '+' or '−', '+' is assumed.

If the login name is invalid, or the tilde expansion fails, the word is unchanged.

Each variable assignment is checked for unquoted tilde-prefixes immediately following a **:** or **=**. In these cases, tilde expansion is also performed. Consequently, one may use file names with tildes in assignments to **PATH**, **MAILPATH**, and **CDPATH**, and the shell assigns the expanded value.

Parameter Expansion

The '**$**' character introduces parameter expansion, command substitution, or arithmetic expansion. The parameter name or symbol to be expanded may be enclosed in braces, which are optional but serve to protect the variable to be expanded from characters immediately following it which could be interpreted as part of the name.

When braces are used, the matching ending brace is the first '**}**' not escaped by a backslash or within a quoted string, and not within an embedded arithmetic expansion, command substitution, or paramter expansion.

${*parameter*}
The value of *parameter* is substituted. The braces are required when *parameter* is a positional parameter with more than one digit, or when *parameter* is followed by a character which is not to be interpreted as part of its name.

If the first character of *parameter* is an exclamation point, a level of variable indirection is introduced. **Bash** uses the value of the variable formed from the rest of *parameter* as the name of the variable; this variable is then expanded and that value used in the rest of the substitution, rather than the value of *parameter* itself. This is known as *indirect expansion*.

In each of the cases below, *word* is subject to tilde expansion, parameter expansion, command substitution, and arithmetic expansion. When not performing substring expansion, **bash** tests for a parameter that is unset or null; omitting the colon results in a test only for a parameter that is unset.

${*parameter*:-*word*}
Use Default Values. If *parameter* is unset or null, the expansion of *word* is substituted. Otherwise, the value of *parameter* is substituted.

${*parameter*:=*word*}
Assign Default Values. If *parameter* is unset or null, the expansion of *word* is assigned to *parameter*. The value of *parameter* is then substituted. Positional parameters and special parameters may not be assigned to in this way.

${*parameter*:?*word*}
Display Error if Null or Unset. If *parameter* is null or unset, the expansion of *word* (or a message to that effect if *word* is not present) is written to the standard error and the shell, if it is not interactive, exits. Otherwise, the value of *parameter* is substituted.

${*parameter*:+*word*}
Use Alternate Value. If *parameter* is null or unset, nothing is substituted, otherwise the expansion of *word* is substituted.

${*parameter*:*offset*}
${*parameter*:*offset*:*length*}
Substring Expansion. Expands to up to *length* characters of *parameter*, starting at the characters specified by *offset*. If *length* is omitted, expands to the substring of *parameter*, starting at the character specified by *offset*. *length* and *offset* are arithmetic expressions (see **ARITHMETIC EVALUATION** below). *length* must evaluate to a number greater than or equal to zero. If *offset* evaluates to a number less than zero, the value is used as an offset from the end of the value of *parameter*. If *parameter* is @, the result is *length* positional parameters beginning at *offset*. If *parameter* is an array name indexed by @ or *, the result is the *length* members of the array beginning with ${*parameter*[*offset*]}. Substring indexing is zero-based unless the positional parameters are used, in which case the indexing starts at 1.

${#*parameter*}
The length in characters of the value of *parameter* is substituted. If *parameter* is * or @, the value substituted is the number of positional parameters. If *parameter* is an array name subscripted by * or @, the value substituted is the number of elements in the array.

${*parameter*#*word*}
${*parameter*##*word*}
The *word* is expanded to produce a pattern just as in pathname expansion. If the pattern matches the beginning of the value of *parameter*, then the result of the expansion is the expanded value of *parameter* with the shortest matching pattern (the ''#'' case) or the longest matching pattern (the ''##'' case) deleted. If *parameter* is @ or *, the pattern removal operation is applied to each positional parameter in turn, and the expansion is the resultant list. If *parameter* is an array variable subscripted with @ or *, the pattern removal operation is applied to each member of the array in turn, and the expansion is the resultant list.

${*parameter*%*word*}

${*parameter***%%***word*}

The *word* is expanded to produce a pattern just as in pathname expansion. If the pattern matches a trailing portion of the expanded value of *parameter*, then the result of the expansion is the expanded value of *parameter* with the shortest matching pattern (the "**%**" case) or the longest matching pattern (the "**%%**" case) deleted. If *parameter* is @ or *****, the pattern removal operation is applied to each positional parameter in turn, and the expansion is the resultant list. If *parameter* is an array variable subscripted with @ or *****, the pattern removal operation is applied to each member of the array in turn, and the expansion is the resultant list.

${*parameter*/*pattern*/*string*}

${*parameter*//*pattern*/*string*}

The *pattern* is expanded to produce a pattern just as in pathname expansion. *Parameter* is expanded and the longest match of *pattern* against its value is replaced with *string*. In the first form, only the first match is replaced. The second form causes all matches of *pattern* to be replaced with *string*. If *pattern* begins with **#**, it must match at the beginning of the expanded value of *parameter*. If *pattern* begins with **%**, it must match at the end of the expanded value of *parameter*. If *string* is null, matches of *pattern* are deleted and the **/** following *pattern* may be omitted. If *parameter* is @ or *****, the substitution operation is applied to each positional parameter in turn, and the expansion is the resultant list. If *parameter* is an array variable subscripted with @ or *****, the substitution operation is applied to each member of the array in turn, and the expansion is the resultant list.

Command Substitution

Command substitution allows the output of a command to replace the command name. There are two forms:

$(*command* **)**

or

‘*command***‘**

Bash performs the expansion by executing *command* and replacing the command substitution with the standard output of the command, with any trailing newlines deleted. Embedded newlines are not deleted, but they may be removed during word splitting. The command substitution **$(cat** *file***)** can be replaced by the equivalent but faster **$(<** *file***)**.

When the old-style backquote form of substitution is used, backslash retains its literal meaning except when followed by **$**, **‘**, or ****. The first backquote not preceded by a backslash terminates the command substitution. When using the $(*command*) form, all characters between the parentheses make up the command; none are treated specially.

Command substitutions may be nested. To nest when using the backquoted form, escape the inner backquotes with backslashes.

If the substitution appears within double quotes, word splitting and pathname expansion are not performed on the results.

Arithmetic Expansion

Arithmetic expansion allows the evaluation of an arithmetic expression and the substitution of the result. The format for arithmetic expansion is:

$((*expression***))**

The *expression* is treated as if it were within double quotes, but a double quote inside the parentheses is not treated specially. All tokens in the expression undergo parameter expansion, string expansion, command substitution, and quote removal. Arithmetic substitutions may be nested.

The evaluation is performed according to the rules listed below under **ARITHMETIC EVALUATION**. If *expression* is invalid, **bash** prints a message indicating failure and no substitution occurs.

Process Substitution

Process substitution is supported on systems that support named pipes (*FIFOs*) or the **/dev/fd** method of naming open files. It takes the form of **<(***list***)** or **>(***list***)**. The process *list* is run with its input or output connected to a *FIFO* or some file in **/dev/fd**. The name of this file is passed as an argument to the current command as the result of the expansion. If the **>(***list***)** form is used, writing to the file will provide input for *list*. If the **<(***list***)** form is used, the file passed as an argument should be read to obtain the output of *list*.

When available, *process substitution* is performed simultaneously with parameter and variable expansion, command substitution, and arithmetic expansion.

Word Splitting

The shell scans the results of parameter expansion, command substitution, and arithmetic expansion that did not occur within double quotes for *word splitting*.

The shell treats each character of **IFS** as a delimiter, and splits the results of the other expansions into words on these characters. If **IFS** is unset, or its value is exactly **<space><tab><newline>**, the default, then any sequence of **IFS** characters serves to delimit words. If **IFS** has a value other than the default, then sequences of the whitespace characters **space** and **tab** are ignored at the beginning and end of the word, as long as the whitespace character is in the value of **IFS** (an **IFS** whitespace character). Any character in **IFS** that is not **IFS** whitespace, along with any adjacent **IFS** whitespace characters, delimits a field. A sequence of **IFS** whitespace characters is also treated as a delimiter. If the value of **IFS** is null, no word splitting occurs.

Explicit null arguments (**""** or **''**) are retained. Unquoted implicit null arguments, resulting from the expansion of *parameters* that have no values, are removed. If a parameter with no value is expanded within double quotes, a null argument results and is retained.

Note that if no expansion occurs, no splitting is performed.

Pathname Expansion

After word splitting, unless the **–f** option has been set, **bash** scans each word for the characters *****, **?**, **(**, and **[**. If one of these characters appears, then the word is regarded as a *pattern*, and replaced with an alphabetically sorted list of file names matching the pattern. If no matching file names are found, and the shell option **nullglob** is disabled, the word is left unchanged. If the **nullglob** option is set, and no matches are found, the word is removed. If the shell option **nocaseglob** is enabled, the match is performed without regard to the case of alphabetic characters. When a pattern is used for pathname expansion, the character **“.”** at the start of a name or immediately following a slash must be matched explicitly, unless the shell option **dotglob** is set. When matching a pathname, the slash character must always be matched explicitly. In other cases, the **“.”** character is not treated specially. See the description of **shopt** below under **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** for a description of the **nocaseglob**, **nullglob**, and **dotglob** shell options.

The **GLOBIGNORE** shell variable may be used to restrict the set of file names matching a *pattern*. If **GLOBIGNORE** is set, each matching file name that also matches one of the patterns in **GLOBIGNORE** is removed from the list of matches. The file names **“.”** and **“..”** are always ignored, even when **GLOBIGNORE** is set. However, setting **GLOBIGNORE** has the effect of enabling the **dotglob** shell option, so all other file names beginning with a **“.”** will match. To get the old behavior of ignoring file names beginning with a **“.”**, make **“.*”** one of the patterns in **GLOBIGNORE**. The **dotglob** option is disabled when **GLOBIGNORE** is unset.

Pattern Matching

Any character that appears in a pattern, other than the special pattern characters described below, matches itself. The NUL character may not occur in a pattern. The special pattern characters must be quoted if they are to be matched literally.

The special pattern characters have the following meanings:

***** Matches any string, including the null string.

? Matches any single character.

[...] Matches any one of the enclosed characters. A pair of characters separated by a minus sign denotes a *range*; any character lexically between those two characters, inclusive, is matched. If

the first character following the **[** is a **!** or a ^ then any character not enclosed is matched. A **-** may be matched by including it as the first or last character in the set. A **]** may be matched by including it as the first character in the set.

Within **[** and **]**, *character classes* can be specified using the syntax **[:***class***:]**, where *class* is one of the following classes defined in the POSIX.2 standard:
alnum alpha ascii blank cntrl digit graph lower print punct space upper xdigit
A character class matches any character belonging to that class.

Within **[** and **]**, an *equivalence class* can be specified using the syntax **[=***c***=]**, which matches all characters with the same collation weight (as defined by the current locale) as the character *c*.

Within **[** and **]**, the syntax **[.***symbol***.]** matches the collating symbol *symbol*.

If the **extglob** shell option is enabled using the **shopt** builtin, several extended pattern matching operators are recognized. In the following description, a *pattern-list* is a list of one or more patterns separated by a **|**. Composite patterns may be formed using one or more of the following sub-patterns:

?(*pattern-list***)**
Matches zero or one occurrence of the given patterns
(pattern-list***)**
Matches zero or more occurrences of the given patterns
+(*pattern-list***)**
Matches one or more occurrences of the given patterns
@(*pattern-list***)**
Matches exactly one of the given patterns
!(*pattern-list***)**
Matches anything except one of the given patterns

Quote Removal

After the preceding expansions, all unquoted occurrences of the characters ****, **'**, and **"** that did not result from one of the above expansions are removed.

REDIRECTION

Before a command is executed, its input and output may be *redirected* using a special notation interpreted by the shell. Redirection may also be used to open and close files for the current shell execution environment. The following redirection operators may precede or appear anywhere within a *simple command* or may follow a *command*. Redirections are processed in the order they appear, from left to right.

In the following descriptions, if the file descriptor number is omitted, and the first character of the redirection operator is **<**, the redirection refers to the standard input (file descriptor 0). If the first character of the redirection operator is **>**, the redirection refers to the standard output (file descriptor 1).

The word following the redirection operator in the following descriptions, unless otherwise noted, is subjected to brace expansion, tilde expansion, parameter expansion, command substitution, arithmetic expansion, quote removal, and pathname expansion. If it expands to more than one word, **bash** reports an error.

Note that the order of redirections is significant. For example, the command

ls **>** dirlist 2**>&**1

directs both standard output and standard error to the file *dirlist*, while the command

ls 2**>&**1 **>** dirlist

directs only the standard output to file *dirlist*, because the standard error was duplicated as standard output before the standard output was redirected to *dirlist*.

A failure to open or create a file causes the redirection to fail.

Redirecting Input

Redirection of input causes the file whose name results from the expansion of *word* to be opened for reading on file descriptor *n*, or the standard input (file descriptor 0) if *n* is not specified.

The general format for redirecting input is:

[*n*]**<***word*

Redirecting Output

Redirection of output causes the file whose name results from the expansion of *word* to be opened for writing on file descriptor *n*, or the standard output (file descriptor 1) if *n* is not specified. If the file does not exist it is created; if it does exist it is truncated to zero size.

The general format for redirecting output is:

[*n*]**>***word*

If the redirection operator is **>**, and the **noclobber** option to the **set** builtin has been enabled, the redirection will fail if the filename whose name results from the expansion of *word* exists and is a regular file. If the redirection operator is **>|**, or the redirection operator is **>** and the **noclobber** option to the **set** builtin command is not enabled, the redirection is attempted even if the file named by *word* exists.

Appending Redirected Output

Redirection of output in this fashion causes the file whose name results from the expansion of *word* to be opened for appending on file descriptor *n*, or the standard output (file descriptor 1) if *n* is not specified. If the file does not exist it is created.

The general format for appending output is:

[*n*]**>>***word*

Redirecting Standard Output and Standard Error

Bash allows both the standard output (file descriptor 1) and the standard error output (file descriptor 2) to be redirected to the file whose name is the expansion of *word* with this construct.

There are two formats for redirecting standard output and standard error:

&>*word*

and

>&*word*

Of the two forms, the first is preferred. This is semantically equivalent to

>*word* 2**>&**1

Here Documents

This type of redirection instructs the shell to read input from the current source until a line containing only *word* (with no trailing blanks) is seen. All of the lines read up to that point are then used as the standard input for a command.

The format of here-documents is as follows:

<<[**−**]*word*
here−document
delimiter

No parameter expansion, command substitution, pathname expansion, or arithmetic expansion is performed on *word*. If any characters in *word* are quoted, the *delimiter* is the result of quote removal on *word*, and the lines in the here-document are not expanded. If *word* is unquoted, all lines of the here-document are subjected to parameter expansion, command substitution, and arithmetic expansion. In the latter case, the pair **\<newline>** is ignored, and **** must be used to quote the characters ****, **$**, and **‘**.

If the redirection operator is **<<−**, then all leading tab characters are stripped from input lines and the line containing *delimiter*. This allows here-documents within shell scripts to be indented in a natural fashion.

Duplicating File Descriptors

The redirection operator

[*n*]**<&***word*

is used to duplicate input file descriptors. If *word* expands to one or more digits, the file descriptor denoted

by *n* is made to be a copy of that file descriptor. If the digits in *word* do not specify a file descriptor open for input, a redirection error occurs. If *word* evaluates to **−**, file descriptor *n* is closed. If *n* is not specified, the standard input (file descriptor 0) is used.

The operator

[*n*]**>&***word*

is used similarly to duplicate output file descriptors. If *n* is not specified, the standard output (file descriptor 1) is used. If the digits in *word* do not specify a file descriptor open for output, a redirection error occurs. As a special case, if *n* is omitted, and *word* does not expand to one or more digits, the standard output and standard error are redirected as described previously.

Opening File Descriptors for Reading and Writing

The redirection operator

[*n*]**<>***word*

causes the file whose name is the expansion of *word* to be opened for both reading and writing on file descriptor *n*, or on file descriptor 0 if *n* is not specified. If the file does not exist, it is created.

ALIASES

Aliases allow a string to be substituted for a word when it is used as the first word of a simple command. The shell maintains a list of *aliases* that may be set and unset with the **alias** and **unalias** builtin commands (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below). The first word of each command, if unquoted, is checked to see if it has an alias. If so, that word is replaced by the text of the alias. The alias name and the replacement text may contain any valid shell input, including the *metacharacters* listed above, with the exception that the alias name may not contain **=**. The first word of the replacement text is tested for aliases, but a word that is identical to an alias being expanded is not expanded a second time. This means that one may alias **ls** to **ls −F**, for instance, and **bash** does not try to recursively expand the replacement text. If the last character of the alias value is a *blank*, then the next command word following the alias is also checked for alias expansion.

Aliases are created and listed with the **alias** command, and removed with the **unalias** command.

There is no mechanism for using arguments in the replacement text. If arguments are needed, a shell function should be used.

Aliases are not expanded when the shell is not interactive, unless the **expand_aliases** shell option is set using **shopt** (see the description of **shopt** under **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below).

The rules concerning the definition and use of aliases are somewhat confusing. **Bash** always reads at least one complete line of input before executing any of the commands on that line. Aliases are expanded when a command is read, not when it is executed. Therefore, an alias definition appearing on the same line as another command does not take effect until the next line of input is read. The commands following the alias definition on that line are not affected by the new alias. This behavior is also an issue when functions are executed. Aliases are expanded when a function definition is read, not when the function is executed, because a function definition is itself a compound command. As a consequence, aliases defined in a function are not available until after that function is executed. To be safe, always put alias definitions on a separate line, and do not use **alias** in compound commands.

For almost every purpose, aliases are superseded by shell functions.

FUNCTIONS

A shell function, defined as described above under **SHELL GRAMMAR**, stores a series of commands for later execution. Functions are executed in the context of the current shell; no new process is created to interpret them (contrast this with the execution of a shell script). When a function is executed, the arguments to the function become the positional parameters during its execution. The special parameter **#** is updated to reflect the change. Positional parameter 0 is unchanged. All other aspects of the shell execution environment are identical between a function and its caller with the exception that the **DEBUG** trap (see the description of the **trap** builtin under **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below) is not inherited.

Variables local to the function may be declared with the **local** builtin command. Ordinarily, variables and

their values are shared between the function and its caller.

If the builtin command **return** is executed in a function, the function completes and execution resumes with the next command after the function call. When a function completes, the values of the positional parameters and the special parameter **#** are restored to the values they had prior to the function's execution.

Function names and definitions may be listed with the **–f** option to the **declare** or **typeset** builtin commands. The **–F** option to **declare** or **typeset** will list the function names only. Functions may be exported so that subshells automatically have them defined with the **–f** option to the **export** builtin.

Functions may be recursive. No limit is imposed on the number of recursive calls.

ARITHMETIC EVALUATION

The shell allows arithmetic expressions to be evaluated, under certain circumstances (see the **let** builtin command and **Arithmetic Expansion**). Evaluation is done in long integers with no check for overflow, though division by 0 is trapped and flagged as an error. The following list of operators is grouped into levels of equal-precedence operators. The levels are listed in order of decreasing precedence.

– + unary minus and plus
! ~ logical and bitwise negation
****** exponentiation
*** / %** multiplication, division, remainder
+ – addition, subtraction
<< >> left and right bitwise shifts
<= >= < >
comparison
== != equality and inequality
& bitwise AND
^ bitwise exclusive OR
| bitwise OR
&& logical AND
|| logical OR
*expr***?***expr***:***expr*
conditional evaluation
= *= /= %= += –= <<= >>= &= ^= |=
assignment

Shell variables are allowed as operands; parameter expansion is performed before the expression is evaluated. The value of a parameter is coerced to a long integer within an expression. A shell variable need not have its integer attribute turned on to be used in an expression.

Constants with a leading 0 are interpreted as octal numbers. A leading 0x or 0X denotes hexadecimal. Otherwise, numbers take the form [*base#*]n, where *base* is a decimal number between 2 and 64 representing the arithmetic base, and *n* is a number in that base. If *base* is omitted, then base 10 is used. The digits greater than 9 are represented by the lowercase letters, the uppercase letters, _, and @, in that order. If *base* is less than or equal to 36, lowercase and uppercase letters may be used interchangably to represent numbers between 10 and 35.

Operators are evaluated in order of precedence. Sub-expressions in parentheses are evaluated first and may override the precedence rules above.

CONDITIONAL EXPRESSIONS

Conditional expressions are used by the **[[** compound command and the **test** and **[** builtin commands to test file attributes and perform string and arithmetic comparisons. Expressions are formed from the following unary or binary primaries. If any *file* argument to one of the primaries is of the form /dev/fd/*n*, then file descriptor *n* is checked.

–a *file* True if *file* exists.
–b *file* True if *file* exists and is a block special file.

−c *file* True if *file* exists and is a character special file.
−d *file* True if *file* exists and is a directory.
−e *file* True if *file* exists.
−f *file* True if *file* exists and is a regular file.
−g *file* True if *file* exists and is set-group-id.
−h *file* True if *file* exists and is a symbolic link.
−k *file* True if *file* exists and its ''sticky'' bit is set.
−p *file* True if *file* exists and is a named pipe (FIFO).
−r *file* True if *file* exists and is readable.
−s *file* True if *file* exists and has a size greater than zero.
−t *fd* True if file descriptor *fd* is open and refers to a terminal.
−u *file* True if *file* exists and its set-user-id bit is set.
−w *file* True if *file* exists and is writable.
−x *file* True if *file* exists and is executable.
−O *file* True if *file* exists and is owned by the effective user id.
−G *file* True if *file* exists and is owned by the effective group id.
−L *file* True if *file* exists and is a symbolic link.
−S *file* True if *file* exists and is a socket.
−N *file* True if *file* exists and has been modified since it was last read.
file1 **−nt** *file2*
True if *file1* is newer (according to modification date) than *file2*.
file1 **−ot** *file2*
True if *file1* is older than *file2*.
file1 **−ef** *file2*
True if *file1* and *file2* have the same device and inode numbers.
−o *optname*
True if shell option *optname* is enabled. See the list of options under the description of the **−o** option to the **set** builtin below.
−z *string*
True if the length of *string* is zero.
−n *string*
string True if the length of *string* is non-zero.
string1 **==** *string2*
True if the strings are equal. **=** may be used in place of **==**.
string1 **!=** *string2*
True if the strings are not equal.
string1 **<** *string2*
True if *string1* sorts before *string2* lexicographically in the current locale.
string1 **>** *string2*
True if *string1* sorts after *string2* lexicographically in the current locale.
arg1 **OP** *arg2*
OP is one of **−eq**, **−ne**, **−lt**, **−le**, **−gt**, or **−ge**. These arithmetic binary operators return true if *arg1* is equal to, not equal to, less than, less than or equal to, greater than, or greater than or equal to *arg2*, respectively. *Arg1* and *arg2* may be positive or negative integers.

SIMPLE COMMAND EXPANSION

When a simple command is executed, the shell performs the following expansions, assignments, and redirections, from left to right.

1. The words that the parser has marked as variable assignments (those preceding the command name) and redirections are saved for later processing.
2. The words that are not variable assignments or redirections are expanded. If any words remain after expansion, the first word is taken to be the name of the command and the remaining words are the arguments.

3. Redirections are performed as described above under **REDIRECTION**.

4. The text after the **=** in each variable assignment undergoes tilde expansion, parameter expansion, command substitution, arithmetic expansion, and quote removal before being assigned to the variable.

If no command name results, the variable assignments affect the current shell environment. Otherwise, the variables are added to the environment of the executed command and do not affect the current shell environment. If any of the assignments attempts to assign a value to a readonly variable, an error occurs, and the command exits with a non-zero status.

If no command name results, redirections are performed, but do not affect the current shell environment. A redirection error causes the command to exit with a non-zero status.

If there is a command name left after expansion, execution proceeds as described below. Otherwise, the command exits. If one of the expansions contained a command substitution, the exit status of the command is the exit status of the last command substitution performed. If there were no command substitutions, the command exits with a status of zero.

COMMAND EXECUTION

After a command has been split into words, if it results in a simple command and an optional list of arguments, the following actions are taken.

If the command name contains no slashes, the shell attempts to locate it. If there exists a shell function by that name, that function is invoked as described above in **FUNCTIONS**. If the name does not match a function, the shell searches for it in the list of shell builtins. If a match is found, that builtin is invoked.

If the name is neither a shell function nor a builtin, and contains no slashes, **bash** searches each element of the **PATH** for a directory containing an executable file by that name. **Bash** uses a hash table to remember the full file names of executable files (see **hash** under **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below). A full search of the directories in **PATH** is performed only if the command is not found in the hash table. If the search is unsuccessful, the shell prints an error message and returns an exit status of 127.

If the search is successful, or if the command name contains one or more slashes, the shell executes the named program in a separate execution environment. Argument 0 is set to the name given, and the remaining arguments to the command are set to the arguments given, if any.

If this execution fails because the file is not in executable format, and the file is not a directory, it is assumed to be a *shell script*, a file containing shell commands. A subshell is spawned to execute it. This subshell reinitializes itself, so that the effect is as if a new shell had been invoked to handle the script, with the exception that the locations of commands remembered by the parent (see **hash** below under **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS**) are retained by the child.

If the program is a file beginning with **#!**, the remainder of the first line specifies an interpreter for the program. The shell executes the specified interpreter on operating systems that do not handle this executable format themselves. The arguments to the interpreter consist of a single optional argument following the interpreter name on the first line of the program, followed by the name of the program, followed by the command arguments, if any.

COMMAND EXECUTION ENVIRONMENT

The shell has an *execution environment*, which consists of the following:

- open files inherited by the shell at invocation, as modified by redirections supplied to the **exec** builtin
- the current working directory as set by **cd**, **pushd**, or **popd**, or inherited by the shell at invocation
- the file creation mode mask as set by **umask** or inherited from the shell's parent
- current traps set by **trap**
- shell parameters that are set by variable assignment or with **set** or inherited from the shell's parent in the environment

- shell functions defined during execution or inherited from the shell's parent in the environment
- options enabled at invocation (either by default or with command-line arguments) or by **set**
- options enabled by **shopt**
- shell aliases defined with **alias**
- various process IDs, including those of background jobs, the value of **$$**, and the value of **$PPID**

When a simple command other than a builtin or shell function is to be executed, it is invoked in a separate execution environment that consists of the following. Unless otherwise noted, the values are inherited from the shell.

- the shell's open files, plus any modifications and additions specified by redirections to the command
- the current working directory
- the file creation mode mask
- shell variables marked for export, along with variables exported for the command, passed in the environment
- traps caught by the shell are reset to the values the inherited from the shell's parent, and traps ignored by the shell are ignored

A command invoked in this separate environment cannot affect the shell's execution environment.

Command substitution and asynchronous commands are invoked in a subshell environment that is a duplicate of the shell environment, except that traps caught by the shell are reset to the values that the shell inherited from its parent at invocation. Builtin commands that are invoked as part of a pipeline are also executed in a subshell environment. Changes made to the subshell environment cannot affect the shell's execution environment.

ENVIRONMENT

When a program is invoked it is given an array of strings called the *environment*. This is a list of *name−value* pairs, of the form *name=value*.

The shell allows you to manipulate the environment in several ways. On invocation, the shell scans its own environment and creates a parameter for each name found, automatically marking it for *export* to child processes. Executed commands inherit the environment. The **export** and **declare −x** commands allow parameters and functions to be added to and deleted from the environment. If the value of a parameter in the environment is modified, the new value becomes part of the environment, replacing the old. The environment inherited by any executed command consists of the shell's initial environment, whose values may be modified in the shell, less any pairs removed by the **unset** command, plus any additions via the **export** and **declare −x** commands.

The environment for any *simple command* or function may be augmented temporarily by prefixing it with parameter assignments, as described above in **PARAMETERS**. These assignment statements affect only the environment seen by that command.

If the **−k** option is set (see the **set** builtin command below), then *all* parameter assignments are placed in the environment for a command, not just those that precede the command name.

When **bash** invokes an external command, the variable **_** is set to the full file name of the command and passed to that command in its environment.

EXIT STATUS

For the shell's purposes, a command which exits with a zero exit status has succeeded. An exit status of zero indicates success. A non-zero exit status indicates failure. When a command terminates on a fatal signal, **bash** uses the value of 128+**signal** as the exit status.

If a command is not found, the child process created to execute it returns a status of 127. If a command is found but is not executable, the return status is 126.

If a command fails because of an error during expansion or redirection, the exit status is greater than zero.

Shell builtin commands return a status of 0 (*true*) if successful, and non-zero (*false*) if an error occurs while they execute. All builtins return an exit status of 2 to indicate incorrect usage.

Bash itself returns the exit status of the last command executed, unless a syntax error occurs, in which case it exits with a non-zero value. See also the **exit** builtin command below.

SIGNALS

When **bash** is interactive, in the absence of any traps, it ignores **SIGTERM** (so that **kill 0** does not kill an interactive shell), and **SIGINT** is caught and handled (so that the **wait** builtin is interruptible). In all cases, **bash** ignores **SIGQUIT**. If job control is in effect, **bash** ignores **SIGTTIN**, **SIGTTOU**, and **SIGTSTP**.

Synchronous jobs started by **bash** have signal handlers set to the values inherited by the shell from its parent. When job control is not in effect, asynchronous commands ignore **SIGINT** and **SIGQUIT** as well. Commands run as a result of command substitution ignore the keyboard-generated job control signals **SIGTTIN**, **SIGTTOU**, and **SIGTSTP**.

The shell exits by default upon receipt of a **SIGHUP**. Before exiting, it resends the **SIGHUP** to all jobs, running or stopped. Stopped jobs are sent **SIGCONT** to ensure that they receive the **SIGHUP**. To prevent the shell from sending the signal to a particular job, it should be removed from the jobs table with the **disown** builtin (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below) or marked to not receive **SIGHUP** using **disown −h**.

If the **huponexit** shell option has been set with **shopt**, **bash** sends a **SIGHUP** to all jobs when an interactive login shell exits.

When **bash** receives a signal for which a trap has been set while waiting for a command to complete, the trap will not be executed until the command completes. When **bash** is waiting for an asynchronous command via the **wait** builtin, the reception of a signal for which a trap has been set will cause the **wait** builtin to return immediately with an exit status greater than 128, immediately after which the trap is executed.

JOB CONTROL

Job control refers to the ability to selectively stop (*suspend*) the execution of processes and continue (*resume*) their execution at a later point. A user typically employs this facility via an interactive interface supplied jointly by the system's terminal driver and **bash**.

The shell associates a *job* with each pipeline. It keeps a table of currently executing jobs, which may be listed with the **jobs** command. When **bash** starts a job asynchronously (in the *background*), it prints a line that looks like:

[1] 25647

indicating that this job is job number 1 and that the process ID of the last process in the pipeline associated with this job is 25647. All of the processes in a single pipeline are members of the same job. **Bash** uses the *job* abstraction as the basis for job control.

To facilitate the implementation of the user interface to job control, the system maintains the notion of a *current terminal process group ID*. Members of this process group (processes whose process group ID is equal to the current terminal process group ID) receive keyboard-generated signals such as **SIGINT**. These processes are said to be in the *foreground*. *Background* processes are those whose process group ID differs from the terminal's; such processes are immune to keyboard-generated signals. Only foreground processes are allowed to read from or write to the terminal. Background processes which attempt to read from (write to) the terminal are sent a **SIGTTIN** (**SIGTTOU**) signal by the terminal driver, which, unless caught, suspends the process.

If the operating system on which **bash** is running supports job control, **bash** allows you to use it. Typing the *suspend* character (typically **^Z**, Control-Z) while a process is running causes that process to be stopped and returns you to **bash**. Typing the *delayed suspend* character (typically **^Y**, Control-Y) causes the process to be stopped when it attempts to read input from the terminal, and control to be returned to **bash**. The user may then manipulate the state of this job, using the **bg** command to continue it in the background, the **fg** command to continue it in the foreground, or the **kill** command to kill it. A **^Z** takes effect immediately, and has the additional side effect of causing pending output and typeahead to be discarded.

There are a number of ways to refer to a job in the shell. The character **%** introduces a job name. Job number *n* may be referred to as **%n**. A job may also be referred to using a prefix of the name used to start it, or using a substring that appears in its command line. For example, **%ce** refers to a stopped **ce** job. If a prefix matches more than one job, **bash** reports an error. Using **%?ce**, on the other hand, refers to any job containing the string **ce** in its command line. If the substring matches more than one job, **bash** reports an error. The symbols **%%** and **%+** refer to the shell's notion of the *current job*, which is the last job stopped while it was in the foreground or started in the background. The *previous job* may be referenced using **%-**. In output pertaining to jobs (e.g., the output of the **jobs** command), the current job is always flagged with a **+**, and the previous job with a **-**.

Simply naming a job can be used to bring it into the foreground: **%1** is a synonym for **"fg %1"**, bringing job 1 from the background into the foreground. Similarly, **"%1 &"** resumes job 1 in the background, equivalent to **"bg %1"**.

The shell learns immediately whenever a job changes state. Normally, **bash** waits until it is about to print a prompt before reporting changes in a job's status so as to not interrupt any other output. If the **-b** option to the **set** builtin command is enabled, **bash** reports such changes immediately.

If an attempt to exit **bash** is made while jobs are stopped, the shell prints a warning message. The **jobs** command may then be used to inspect their status. If a second attempt to exit is made without an intervening command, the shell does not print another warning, and the stopped jobs are terminated.

PROMPTING

When executing interactively, **bash** displays the primary prompt **PS1** when it is ready to read a command, and the secondary prompt **PS2** when it needs more input to complete a command. **Bash** allows these prompt strings to be customized by inserting a number of backslash-escaped special characters that are decoded as follows:

\a	an ASCII bell character (07)
\d	the date in "Weekday Month Date" format (e.g., "Tue May 26")
\e	an ASCII escape character (033)
\h	the hostname up to the first '.'
\H	the hostname
\n	newline
\r	carriage return
\s	the name of the shell, the basename of **$0** (the portion following the final slash)
\t	the current time in 24-hour HH:MM:SS format
\T	the current time in 12-hour HH:MM:SS format
\@	the current time in 12-hour am/pm format
\u	the username of the current user
\v	the version of **bash** (e.g., 2.00)
\V	the release of **bash**, version + patchlevel (e.g., 2.00.0)
\w	the current working directory
\W	the basename of the current working directory
\!	the history number of this command
\#	the command number of this command
\$	if the effective UID is 0, a **#**, otherwise a **$**
nnn	the character corresponding to the octal number *nnn*
****	a backslash
\[	begin a sequence of non-printing characters, which could be used to embed a terminal control sequence into the prompt
\]	end a sequence of non-printing characters

The command number and the history number are usually different: the history number of a command is its position in the history list, which may include commands restored from the history file (see **HISTORY** below), while the command number is the position in the sequence of commands executed during the current shell session. After the string is decoded, it is expanded via parameter expansion, command substitution, arithmetic expansion, string expansion, and quote removal, subject to the value of the **promptvars**

shell option (see the description of the **shopt** command under **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below).

READLINE

This is the library that handles reading input when using an interactive shell, unless the **−−noediting** option is given at shell invocation. By default, the line editing commands are similar to those of emacs. A vi-style line editing interface is also available. To turn off line editing after the shell is running, use the **+o emacs** or **+o vi** options to the **set** builtin (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below).

Readline Notation

In this section, the emacs-style notation is used to denote keystrokes. Control keys are denoted by C−*key*, e.g., C−n means Control−N. Similarly, *meta* keys are denoted by M−*key*, so M−x means Meta−X. (On keyboards without a *meta* key, M−*x* means ESC *x*, i.e., press the Escape key then the *x* key. This makes ESC the *meta prefix*. The combination M−C−*x* means ESC−Control−*x*, or press the Escape key then hold the Control key while pressing the *x* key.)

Readline commands may be given numeric *arguments*, which normally act as a repeat count. Sometimes, however, it is the sign of the argument that is significant. Passing a negative argument to a command that acts in the forward direction (e.g., **kill−line**) causes that command to act in a backward direction. Commands whose behavior with arguments deviates from this are noted below.

When a command is described as *killing* text, the text deleted is saved for possible future retrieval (*yanking*). The killed text is saved in a *kill ring*. Consecutive kills cause the text to be accumulated into one unit, which can be yanked all at once. Commands which do not kill text separate the chunks of text on the kill ring.

Readline Initialization

Readline is customized by putting commands in an initialization file (the *inputrc* file). The name of this file is taken from the value of the **INPUTRC** variable. If that variable is unset, the default is *~/.inputrc*. When a program which uses the readline library starts up, the initialization file is read, and the key bindings and variables are set. There are only a few basic constructs allowed in the readline initialization file. Blank lines are ignored. Lines beginning with a **#** are comments. Lines beginning with a **$** indicate conditional constructs. Other lines denote key bindings and variable settings.

The default key-bindings may be changed with an *inputrc* file. Other programs that use this library may add their own commands and bindings.

For example, placing

M−Control−u: universal−argument

or

C−Meta−u: universal−argument

into the *inputrc* would make M−C−u execute the readline command *universal−argument*.

The following symbolic character names are recognized: *RUBOUT*, *DEL*, *ESC*, *LFD*, *NEWLINE*, *RET*, *RETURN*, *SPC*, *SPACE*, and *TAB*. In addition to command names, readline allows keys to be bound to a string that is inserted when the key is pressed (a *macro*).

Readline Key Bindings

The syntax for controlling key bindings in the *inputrc* file is simple. All that is required is the name of the command or the text of a macro and a key sequence to which it should be bound. The name may be specified in one of two ways: as a symbolic key name, possibly with *Meta−* or *Control−* prefixes, or as a key sequence. When using the form **keyname**:*function−name* or *macro*, *keyname* is the name of a key spelled out in English. For example:

Control-u: universal−argument
Meta-Rubout: backward-kill-word
Control-o: "> output"

In the above example, *C−u* is bound to the function **universal−argument**, *M−DEL* is bound to the function **backward−kill−word**, and *C−o* is bound to run the macro expressed on the right hand side (that is, to insert the text *> output* into the line).

In the second form, **"keyseq"**:*function−name* or *macro*, **keyseq** differs from **keyname** above in that strings denoting an entire key sequence may be specified by placing the sequence within double quotes. Some GNU Emacs style key escapes can be used, as in the following example.

```
"\C−u": universal−argument
"\C−x\C−r": re−read−init−file
"\e[11~": "Function Key 1"
```

In this example, *C−u* is again bound to the function **universal−argument**. *C−x C−r* is bound to the function **re−read−init−file**, and *ESC [1 1 ~* is bound to insert the text **Function Key 1**. The full set of GNU Emacs style escape sequences is

\C−	control prefix
\M−	meta prefix
\e	an escape character
****	backslash
\"	literal "
\’	literal ’

In addition to the GNU Emacs style escape sequences, a second set of backslash escapes is available:

\a	alert (bell)
\b	backspace
\d	delete
\f	form feed
\n	newline
\r	carriage return
\t	horizontal tab
\v	vertical tab
*****nnn*	the character whose ASCII code is the octal value *nnn* (one to three digits)
\x*nnn*	the character whose ASCII code is the hexadecimal value *nnn* (one to three digits)

When entering the text of a macro, single or double quotes must be used to indicate a macro definition. Unquoted text is assumed to be a function name. In the macro body, the backslash escapes described above are expanded. Backslash will quote any other character in the macro text, including " and ’.

Bash allows the current readline key bindings to be displayed or modified with the **bind** builtin command. The editing mode may be switched during interactive use by using the **−o** option to the **set** builtin command (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below).

Readline Variables

Readline has variables that can be used to further customize its behavior. A variable may be set in the *inputrc* file with a statement of the form

set *variable−name value*

Except where noted, readline variables can take the values **On** or **Off**. The variables and their default values are:

bell−style (audible)
Controls what happens when readline wants to ring the terminal bell. If set to **none**, readline never rings the bell. If set to **visible**, readline uses a visible bell if one is available. If set to **audible**, readline attempts to ring the terminal’s bell.

comment−begin (“#”)
The string that is inserted when the **readline insert−comment** command is executed. This command is bound to **M−#** in emacs mode and to **#** in vi command mode.

completion−ignore−case (Off)
If set to **On**, readline performs filename matching and completion in a case−insensitive fashion.

completion−query−items (100)
This determines when the user is queried about viewing the number of possible completions generated by the **possible−completions** command. It may be set to any integer value greater than or

equal to zero. If the number of possible completions is greater than or equal to the value of this variable, the user is asked whether or not he wishes to view them; otherwise they are simply listed on the terminal.

convert−meta (On)
If set to **On**, readline will convert characters with the eighth bit set to an ASCII key sequence by stripping the eighth bit and prepending an escape character (in effect, using escape as the *meta prefix*).

disable−completion (Off)
If set to **On**, readline will inhibit word completion. Completion characters will be inserted into the line as if they had been mapped to **self-insert**.

editing−mode (emacs)
Controls whether readline begins with a set of key bindings similar to *emacs* or *vi*. **editing−mode** can be set to either **emacs** or **vi**.

enable−keypad (Off)
When set to **On**, readline will try to enable the application keypad when it is called. Some systems need this to enable the arrow keys.

expand−tilde (Off)
If set to **on**, tilde expansion is performed when readline attempts word completion.

horizontal−scroll−mode (Off)
When set to **On**, makes readline use a single line for display, scrolling the input horizontally on a single screen line when it becomes longer than the screen width rather than wrapping to a new line.

input−meta (Off)
If set to **On**, readline will enable eight-bit input (that is, it will not strip the high bit from the characters it reads), regardless of what the terminal claims it can support. The name **meta−flag** is a synonym for this variable.

isearch−terminators (“C−[C−J”)
The string of characters that should terminate an incremental search without subsequently executing the character as a command. If this variable has not been given a value, the characters *ESC* and *C−J* will terminate an incremental search.

keymap (emacs)
Set the current readline keymap. The set of valid keymap names is *emacs, emacs−standard, emacs−meta, emacs−ctlx, vi, vi−command*, and *vi−insert*. *vi* is equivalent to *vi−command*; *emacs* is equivalent to *emacs−standard*. The default value is *emacs*; the value of **editing−mode** also affects the default keymap.

mark−directories (On)
If set to **On**, completed directory names have a slash appended.

mark−modified−lines (Off)
If set to **On**, history lines that have been modified are displayed with a preceding asterisk (*****).

output−meta (Off)
If set to **On**, readline will display characters with the eighth bit set directly rather than as a meta-prefixed escape sequence.

print−completions−horizontally (Off)
If set to **On**, readline will display completions with matches sorted horizontally in alphabetical order, rather than down the screen.

show−all−if−ambiguous (Off)
This alters the default behavior of the completion functions. If set to **on**, words which have more than one possible completion cause the matches to be listed immediately instead of ringing the bell.

visible−stats (Off)
If set to **On**, a character denoting a file’s type as reported by *stat*(2) is appended to the filename when listing possible completions.

Readline Conditional Constructs

Readline implements a facility similar in spirit to the conditional compilation features of the C preprocessor which allows key bindings and variable settings to be performed as the result of tests. There are four parser directives used.

$if The **$if** construct allows bindings to be made based on the editing mode, the terminal being used, or the application using readline. The text of the test extends to the end of the line; no characters are required to isolate it.

mode The **mode=** form of the **$if** directive is used to test whether readline is in emacs or vi mode. This may be used in conjunction with the **set keymap** command, for instance, to set bindings in the *emacs−standard* and *emacs−ctlx* keymaps only if readline is starting out in emacs mode.

term The **term=** form may be used to include terminal-specific key bindings, perhaps to bind the key sequences output by the terminal's function keys. The word on the right side of the **=** is tested against the both full name of the terminal and the portion of the terminal name before the first **−**. This allows *sun* to match both *sun* and *sun−cmd*, for instance.

application

The **application** construct is used to include application-specific settings. Each program using the readline library sets the *application name*, and an initialization file can test for a particular value. This could be used to bind key sequences to functions useful for a specific program. For instance, the following command adds a key sequence that quotes the current or previous word in Bash:

$if Bash
Quote the current or previous word
"\C−xq": "\eb\"\ef\""
$endif

$endif This command, as seen in the previous example, terminates an **$if** command.

$else Commands in this branch of the **$if** directive are executed if the test fails.

$include

This directive takes a single filename as an argument and reads commands and bindings from that file. For example, the following directive would read */etc/inputrc*:

$include */etc/inputrc*

Searching

Readline provides commands for searching through the command history (see **HISTORY** below) for lines containing a specified string. There are two search modes: *incremental* and *non-incremental*.

Incremental searches begin before the user has finished typing the search string. As each character of the search string is typed, readline displays the next entry from the history matching the string typed so far. An incremental search requires only as many characters as needed to find the desired history entry. The characters present in the value of the *isearch-terminators* variable are used to terminate an incremental search. If that variable has not been assigned a value the Escape and Control-J characters will terminate an incremental search. Control-G will abort an incremental search and restore the original line. When the search is terminated, the history entry containing the search string becomes the current line. To find other matching entries in the history list, type Control-S or Control-R as appropriate. This will search backward or forward in the history for the next entry matching the search string typed so far. Any other key sequence bound to a readline command will terminate the search and execute that command. For instance, a *newline* will terminate the search and accept the line, thereby executing the command from the history list.

Non-incremental searches read the entire search string before starting to search for matching history lines. The search string may be typed by the user or be part of the contents of the current line.

Readline Command Names

The following is a list of the names of the commands and the default key sequences to which they are bound. Command names without an accompanying key sequence are unbound by default.

Commands for Moving

beginning−of−line (C−a)
Move to the start of the current line.

end−of−line (C−e)
Move to the end of the line.

forward−char (C−f)
Move forward a character.

backward−char (C−b)
Move back a character.

forward−word (M−f)
Move forward to the end of the next word. Words are composed of alphanumeric characters (letters and digits).

backward−word (M−b)
Move back to the start of this, or the previous, word. Words are composed of alphanumeric characters (letters and digits).

clear−screen (C−l)
Clear the screen leaving the current line at the top of the screen. With an argument, refresh the current line without clearing the screen.

redraw−current−line
Refresh the current line.

Commands for Manipulating the History

accept−line (Newline, Return)
Accept the line regardless of where the cursor is. If this line is non-empty, add it to the history list according to the state of the **HISTCONTROL** variable. If the line is a modified history line, then restore the history line to its original state.

previous−history (C−p)
Fetch the previous command from the history list, moving back in the list.

next−history (C−n)
Fetch the next command from the history list, moving forward in the list.

beginning−of−history (M−<)
Move to the first line in the history.

end−of−history (M−>)
Move to the end of the input history, i.e., the line currently being entered.

reverse−search−history (C−r)
Search backward starting at the current line and moving ‘up’ through the history as necessary. This is an incremental search.

forward−search−history (C−s)
Search forward starting at the current line and moving ‘down’ through the history as necessary. This is an incremental search.

non−incremental−reverse−search−history (M−p)
Search backward through the history starting at the current line using a non-incremental search for a string supplied by the user.

non−incremental−forward−search−history (M−n)
Search forward through the history using a non-incremental search for a string supplied by the user.

history−search−forward
Search forward through the history for the string of characters between the start of the current line and the current cursor position (the *point*). This is a non-incremental search.

history−search−backward
Search backward through the history for the string of characters between the start of the current line and the point. This is a non-incremental search.

yank−nth−arg (M−C−y)
Insert the first argument to the previous command (usually the second word on the previous line) at point (the current cursor position). With an argument *n*, insert the *n*th word from the previous command (the words in the previous command begin with word 0). A negative argument inserts the *n*th word from the end of the previous command.

yank−last−arg (M−., M−_)
Insert the last argument to the previous command (the last word of the previous history entry). With an argument, behave exactly like **yank−nth−arg**. Successive calls to **yank−last−arg** move back through the history list, inserting the last argument of each line in turn.

shell−expand−line (M−C−e)
Expand the line as the shell does. This performs alias and history expansion as well as all of the shell word expansions. See **HISTORY EXPANSION** below for a description of history expansion.

history−expand−line (M−^)
Perform history expansion on the current line. See **HISTORY EXPANSION** below for a description of history expansion.

magic−space
Perform history expansion on the current line and insert a space. See **HISTORY EXPANSION** below for a description of history expansion.

alias−expand−line
Perform alias expansion on the current line. See **ALIASES** above for a description of alias expansion.

history−and−alias−expand−line
Perform history and alias expansion on the current line.

insert−last−argument (M−., M−_)
A synonym for **yank−last−arg**.

operate−and−get−next (C−o)
Accept the current line for execution and fetch the next line relative to the current line from the history for editing. Any argument is ignored.

Commands for Changing Text

delete−char (C−d)
Delete the character under the cursor. If point is at the beginning of the line, there are no characters in the line, and the last character typed was not bound to **delete−char**, then return **EOF**.

backward−delete−char (Rubout)
Delete the character behind the cursor. When given a numeric argument, save the deleted text on the kill ring.

forward−backward−delete−char
Delete the character under the cursor, unless the cursor is at the end of the line, in which case the character behind the cursor is deleted. By default, this is not bound to a key.

quoted−insert (C−q, C−v)
Add the next character typed to the line verbatim. This is how to insert characters like **C−q**, for example.

tab−insert (C−v TAB)
Insert a tab character.

self−insert (a, b, A, 1, !, ...)
Insert the character typed.

transpose−chars (C−t)
Drag the character before point forward over the character at point. Point moves forward as well. If point is at the end of the line, then transpose the two characters before point. Negative arguments don't work.

transpose−words (M−t)
Drag the word behind the cursor past the word in front of the cursor moving the cursor over that word as well.

upcase−word (M−u)
Uppercase the current (or following) word. With a negative argument, uppercase the previous word, but do not move point.

downcase−word (M−l)
Lowercase the current (or following) word. With a negative argument, lowercase the previous word, but do not move point.

capitalize−word (M−c)
Capitalize the current (or following) word. With a negative argument, capitalize the previous word, but do not move point.

Killing and Yanking

kill−line (C−k)
Kill the text from the current cursor position to the end of the line.

backward−kill−line (C−x Rubout)
Kill backward to the beginning of the line.

unix−line−discard (C−u)
Kill backward from point to the beginning of the line. The killed text is saved on the kill-ring.

kill−whole−line
Kill all characters on the current line, no matter where the cursor is.

kill−word (M−d)
Kill from the cursor to the end of the current word, or if between words, to the end of the next word. Word boundaries are the same as those used by **forward−word**.

backward−kill−word (M−Rubout)
Kill the word behind the cursor. Word boundaries are the same as those used by **backward−word**.

unix−word−rubout (C−w)
Kill the word behind the cursor, using white space as a word boundary. The word boundaries are different from **backward−kill−word**.

delete−horizontal−space (M−\)
Delete all spaces and tabs around point.

kill−region
Kill the text between the point and *mark* (saved cursor position). This text is referred to as the *region*.

copy−region−as−kill
Copy the text in the region to the kill buffer.

copy−backward−word
Copy the word before point to the kill buffer. The word boundaries are the same as **backward−word**.

copy−forward−word
Copy the word following point to the kill buffer. The word boundaries are the same as **forward−word**.

yank (C−y)
Yank the top of the kill ring into the buffer at the cursor.

yank−pop (M−y)
Rotate the kill ring, and yank the new top. Only works following **yank** or **yank−pop**.

Numeric Arguments

digit−argument (M−0, M−1, ..., M−−)
Add this digit to the argument already accumulating, or start a new argument. M−− starts a negative argument.

universal−argument
This is another way to specify an argument. If this command is followed by one or more digits, optionally with a leading minus sign, those digits define the argument. If the command is followed by digits, executing **universal−argument** again ends the numeric argument, but is otherwise ignored. As a special case, if this command is immediately followed by a character that is

neither a digit or minus sign, the argument count for the next command is multiplied by four. The argument count is initially one, so executing this function the first time makes the argument count four, a second time makes the argument count sixteen, and so on.

Completing

complete (TAB)
Attempt to perform completion on the text before point. **Bash** attempts completion treating the text as a variable (if the text begins with **$**), username (if the text begins with ~), hostname (if the text begins with @), or command (including aliases and functions) in turn. If none of these produces a match, filename completion is attempted.

possible−completions (M−?)
List the possible completions of the text before point.

insert−completions (M−*)
Insert all completions of the text before point that would have been generated by **possible−completions**.

menu−complete
Similar to **complete**, but replaces the word to be completed with a single match from the list of possible completions. Repeated execution of **menu−complete** steps through the list of possible completions, inserting each match in turn. At the end of the list of completions, the bell is rung and the original text is restored. An argument of *n* moves *n* positions forward in the list of matches; a negative argument may be used to move backward through the list. This command is intended to be bound to **TAB**, but is unbound by default.

delete−char−or−list
Deletes the character under the cursor if not at the beginning or end of the line (like **delete-char**). If at the end of the line, behaves identically to **possible-completions**. This command is unbound by default.

complete−filename (M−/)
Attempt filename completion on the text before point.

possible−filename−completions (C−x /)
List the possible completions of the text before point, treating it as a filename.

complete−username (M−~)
Attempt completion on the text before point, treating it as a username.

possible−username−completions (C−x ~)
List the possible completions of the text before point, treating it as a username.

complete−variable (M−$)
Attempt completion on the text before point, treating it as a shell variable.

possible−variable−completions (C−x $)
List the possible completions of the text before point, treating it as a shell variable.

complete−hostname (M−@)
Attempt completion on the text before point, treating it as a hostname.

possible−hostname−completions (C−x @)
List the possible completions of the text before point, treating it as a hostname.

complete−command (M−!)
Attempt completion on the text before point, treating it as a command name. Command completion attempts to match the text against aliases, reserved words, shell functions, shell builtins, and finally executable filenames, in that order.

possible−command−completions (C−x !)
List the possible completions of the text before point, treating it as a command name.

dynamic−complete−history (M−TAB)
Attempt completion on the text before point, comparing the text against lines from the history list for possible completion matches.

complete−into−braces (M−{)
Perform filename completion and return the list of possible completions enclosed within braces so the list is available to the shell (see **Brace Expansion** above).

Keyboard Macros

start−kbd−macro (C−x ()
Begin saving the characters typed into the current keyboard macro.

end−kbd−macro (C−x))
Stop saving the characters typed into the current keyboard macro and store the definition.

call−last−kbd−macro (C−x e)
Re-execute the last keyboard macro defined, by making the characters in the macro appear as if typed at the keyboard.

Miscellaneous

re−read−init−file (C−x C−r)
Read in the contents of the *inputrc* file, and incorporate any bindings or variable assignments found there.

abort (C−g)
Abort the current editing command and ring the terminal's bell (subject to the setting of **bell−style**).

do−uppercase−version (M−a, M−b, M−*x*, ...)
If the metafied character *x* is lowercase, run the command that is bound to the corresponding uppercase character.

prefix−meta (ESC)
Metafy the next character typed. **ESC f** is equivalent to **Meta−f**.

undo (C−_, C−x C−u)
Incremental undo, separately remembered for each line.

revert−line (M−r)
Undo all changes made to this line. This is like executing the **undo** command enough times to return the line to its initial state.

tilde−expand (M−&)
Perform tilde expansion on the current word.

set−mark (C−@, M−<space>)
Set the mark to the current point. If a numeric argument is supplied, the mark is set to that position.

exchange−point−and−mark (C−x C−x)
Swap the point with the mark. The current cursor position is set to the saved position, and the old cursor position is saved as the mark.

character−search (C−])
A character is read and point is moved to the next occurrence of that character. A negative count searches for previous occurrences.

character−search−backward (M−C−])
A character is read and point is moved to the previous occurrence of that character. A negative count searches for subsequent occurrences.

insert−comment (M−#)
The value of the **readline comment−begin** variable is inserted at the beginning of the current line, and the line is accepted as if a newline had been typed. This makes the current line a shell comment.

glob−expand−word (C−x *)
The word before point is treated as a pattern for pathname expansion, and the list of matching file names is inserted, replacing the word.

glob−list−expansions (C−x g)
The list of expansions that would have been generated by **glob−expand−word** is displayed, and the line is redrawn.

dump−functions
Print all of the functions and their key bindings to the readline output stream. If a numeric argument is supplied, the output is formatted in such a way that it can be made part of an *inputrc* file.

dump−variables
Print all of the settable readline variables and their values to the readline output stream. If a numeric argument is supplied, the output is formatted in such a way that it can be made part of an *inputrc* file.

dump−macros
Print all of the readline key sequences bound to macros and the strings they ouput. If a numeric argument is supplied, the output is formatted in such a way that it can be made part of an *inputrc* file.

display−shell−version (C−x C−v)
Display version information about the current instance of **bash**.

HISTORY

When the **−o history** option to the **set** builtin is enabled, the shell provides access to the *command history*, the list of commands previously typed. The text of the last **HISTSIZE** commands (default 500) is saved in a history list. The shell stores each command in the history list prior to parameter and variable expansion (see **EXPANSION** above) but after history expansion is performed, subject to the values of the shell variables **HISTIGNORE** and **HISTCONTROL**. On startup, the history is initialized from the file named by the variable **HISTFILE** (default *~/.bash_history*). **HISTFILE** is truncated, if necessary, to contain no more than **HISTFILESIZE** lines. When an interactive shell exits, the last **HISTSIZE** lines are copied from the history list to **HISTFILE**. If the **histappend** shell option is enabled (see the description of **shopt** under **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below), the lines are appended to the history file, otherwise the history file is overwritten. If **HISTFILE** is unset, or if the history file is unwritable, the history is not saved. After saving the history, the history file is truncated to contain no more than **HISTFILESIZE** lines. If **HISTFILESIZE** is not set, no truncation is performed.

The builtin command **fc** (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below) may be used to list or edit and reexecute a portion of the history list. The **history** builtin can be used to display or modify the history list and manipulate the history file. When using the command-line editing, search commands are available in each editing mode that provide access to the history list.

The shell allows control over which commands are saved on the history list. The **HISTCONTROL** and **HISTIGNORE** variables may be set to cause the shell to save only a subset of the commands entered. The **cmdhist** shell option, if enabled, causes the shell to attempt to save each line of a multi-line command in the same history entry, adding semicolons where necessary to preserve syntactic correctness. The **lithist** shell option causes the shell to save the command with embedded newlines instead of semicolons. See the description of the **shopt** builtin below under **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** for information on setting and unsetting shell options.

HISTORY EXPANSION

The shell supports a history expansion feature that is similar to the history expansion in **csh.** This section describes what syntax features are available. This feature is enabled by default for interactive shells, and can be disabled using the **+H** option to the **set** builtin command (see **SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS** below). Non-interactive shells do not perform history expansion by default.

History expansions introduce words from the history list into the input stream, making it easy to repeat commands, insert the arguments to a previous command into the current input line, or fix errors in previous commands quickly.

History expansion is performed immediately after a complete line is read, before the shell breaks it into words. It takes place in two parts. The first is to determine which line from the history list to use during substitution. The second is to select portions of that line for inclusion into the current one. The line selected from the history is the *event*, and the portions of that line that are acted upon are *words*. Various *modifiers* are available to manipulate the selected words. The line is broken into words in the same fashion as when reading input, so that several *metacharacter*-separated words surrounded by quotes are considered one word. History expansions are introduced by the appearance of the history expansion character, which is **!** by default. Only backslash (\) and single quotes can quote the history expansion character.

Several shell options settable with the **shopt** builtin may be used to tailor the behavior of history expansion. If the **histverify** shell option is enabled (see the description of the **shopt** builtin), and **readline** is being

used, history substitutions are not immediately passed to the shell parser. Instead, the expanded line is reloaded into the **readline** editing buffer for further modification. If **readline** is being used, and the **histreedit** shell option is enabled, a failed history substitution will be reloaded into the **readline** editing buffer for correction. The **−p** option to the **history** builtin command may be used to see what a history expansion will do before using it. The **−s** option to the **history** builtin may be used to add commands to the end of the history list without actually executing them, so that they are available for subsequent recall.

The shell allows control of the various characters used by the history expansion mechanism (see the description of **histchars** above under **Shell Variables**).

Event Designators

An event designator is a reference to a command line entry in the history list.

! Start a history substitution, except when followed by a **blank**, newline, = or (.

!*n* Refer to command line *n*.

!−*n* Refer to the current command line minus *n*.

!! Refer to the previous command. This is a synonym for '!−1'.

!*string* Refer to the most recent command starting with *string*.

!?*string***[?]**
Refer to the most recent command containing *string*. The trailing **?** may be omitted if *string* is followed immediately by a newline.

^*string1***^***string2***^**
Quick substitution. Repeat the last command, replacing *string1* with *string2*. Equivalent to ''!!:s/*string1*/*string2*/'' (see **Modifiers** below).

!# The entire command line typed so far.

Word Designators

Word designators are used to select desired words from the event. A **:** separates the event specification from the word designator. It may be omitted if the word designator begins with a **^**, **$**, *****, **−**, or **%**. Words are numbered from the beginning of the line, with the first word being denoted by 0 (zero). Words are inserted into the current line separated by single spaces.

0 (zero)
The zeroth word. For the shell, this is the command word.

n The *n*th word.

^ The first argument. That is, word 1.

$ The last argument.

% The word matched by the most recent '?*string*?' search.

x−*y* A range of words; '−*y*' abbreviates '0−*y*'.

***** All of the words but the zeroth. This is a synonym for '*1−$*'. It is not an error to use ***** if there is just one word in the event; the empty string is returned in that case.

x* Abbreviates *x−$*.

x− Abbreviates *x−$* like **x***, but omits the last word.

If a word designator is supplied without an event specification, the previous command is used as the event.

Modifiers

After the optional word designator, there may appear a sequence of one or more of the following modifiers, each preceded by a ':'.

h Remove a trailing file name component, leaving only the head.

t Remove all leading file name components, leaving the tail.

r Remove a trailing suffix of the form *.xxx*, leaving the basename.

e Remove all but the trailing suffix.

p Print the new command but do not execute it.

q Quote the substituted words, escaping further substitutions.

x Quote the substituted words as with **q**, but break into words at **blanks** and newlines.

s/*old***/***new***/**
Substitute *new* for the first occurrence of *old* in the event line. Any delimiter can be used in place of /. The final delimiter is optional if it is the last character of the event line. The delimiter may be quoted in *old* and *new* with a single backslash. If & appears in *new*, it is replaced by *old*. A single backslash will quote the &. If *old* is null, it is set to the last *old* substituted, or, if no previous history substitutions took place, the last *string* in a **!?***string***[?]** search.

& Repeat the previous substitution.

g Cause changes to be applied over the entire event line. This is used in conjunction with '**:s**' (e.g., '**:gs/***old***/***new***/**') or '**:&**'. If used with '**:s**', any delimiter can be used in place of /, and the final delimiter is optional if it is the last character of the event line.

SHELL BUILTIN COMMANDS

Unless otherwise noted, each builtin command documented in this section as accepting options preceded by **–** accepts **––** to signify the end of the options.

: [*arguments*]
No effect; the command does nothing beyond expanding *arguments* and performing any specified redirections. A zero exit code is returned.

. *filename* [*arguments*]
source *filename* [*arguments*]
Read and execute commands from *filename* in the current shell environment and return the exit status of the last command executed from *filename*. If *filename* does not contain a slash, file names in **PATH** are used to find the directory containing *filename*. The file searched for in **PATH** need not be executable. The current directory is searched if no file is found in **PATH**. If the **sourcepath** option to the **shopt** builtin command is turned off, the **PATH** is not searched. If any *arguments* are supplied, they become the positional parameters when *filename* is executed. Otherwise the positional parameters are unchanged. The return status is the status of the last command exited within the script (0 if no commands are executed), and false if *filename* is not found or cannot be read.

alias [**–p**] [*name*[=*value*] ...]
Alias with no arguments or with the **–p** option prints the list of aliases in the form **alias** *name*=*value* on standard output. When arguments are supplied, an alias is defined for each *name* whose *value* is given. A trailing space in *value* causes the next word to be checked for alias substitution when the alias is expanded. For each *name* in the argument list for which no *value* is supplied, the name and value of the alias is printed. **Alias** returns true unless a *name* is given for which no alias has been defined.

bg [*jobspec*]
Resume the suspended job *jobspec* in the background, as if it had been started with **&**. If *jobspec* is not present, the shell's notion of the *current job* is used. **bg** *jobspec* returns 0 unless run when job control is disabled or, when run with job control enabled, if *jobspec* was not found or started without job control.

bind [**–m** *keymap*] [**–lpsvPSV**]
bind [**–m** *keymap*] [**–q** *function*] [**–u** *function*] [**–r** *keyseq*]
bind [**–m** *keymap*] **–f** *filename*
bind [**–m** *keymap*] *keyseq*:*function–name*
Display current **readline** key and function bindings, or bind a key sequence to a **readline** function or macro. The binding syntax accepted is identical to that of *.inputrc*, but each binding must be passed as a separate argument; e.g., '"\C–x\C–r": re–read–init–file'. Options, if supplied, have the following meanings:

–m *keymap*
Use *keymap* as the keymap to be affected by the subsequent bindings. Acceptable *keymap* names are *emacs, emacs–standard, emacs–meta, emacs–ctlx, vi, vi–command*, and *vi–insert*. *vi* is equivalent to *vi–command*; *emacs* is equivalent to *emacs–standard*.

−l List the names of all **readline** functions.
−p Display **readline** function names and bindings in such a way that they can be re-read.
−P List current **readline** function names and bindings.
−v Display **readline** variable names and values in such a way that they can be re-read.
−V List current **readline** variable names and values.
−s Display **readline** key sequences bound to macros and the strings they output in such a way that they can be re-read.
−S Display **readline** key sequences bound to macros and the strings they output.
−f *filename*
Read key bindings from *filename*.
−q *function*
Query about which keys invoke the named *function*.
−u *function*
Unbind all keys bound to the named *function*.
−r *keyseq*
Remove any current binding for *keyseq*.

The return value is 0 unless an unrecognized option is given or an error occurred.

break [*n*]
Exit from within a **for**, **while**, **until**, or **select** loop. If *n* is specified, break *n* levels. *n* must be ≥ 1. If *n* is greater than the number of enclosing loops, all enclosing loops are exited. The return value is 0 unless the shell is not executing a loop when **break** is executed.

builtin *shell−builtin* [*arguments*]
Execute the specified shell builtin, passing it *arguments*, and return its exit status. This is useful when defining a function whose name is the same as a shell builtin, retaining the functionality of the builtin within the function. The **cd** builtin is commonly redefined this way. The return status is false if *shell−builtin* is not a shell builtin command.

cd [**−LP**] [*dir*]
Change the current directory to *dir*. The variable **HOME** is the default *dir*. The variable **CDPATH** defines the search path for the directory containing *dir*. Alternative directory names in **CDPATH** are separated by a colon (:). A null directory name in **CDPATH** is the same as the current directory, i.e., ‘‘**.**’’. If *dir* begins with a slash (*/*), then **CDPATH** is not used. The **−P** option says to use the physical directory structure instead of following symbolic links (see also the **−P** option to the **set** builtin command); the **−L** option forces symbolic links to be followed. An argument of **−** is equivalent to **$OLDPWD**. The return value is true if the directory was successfully changed; false otherwise.

command [**−pVv**] *command* [*arg* ...]
Run *command* with *args* suppressing the normal shell function lookup. Only builtin commands or commands found in the **PATH** are executed. If the **−p** option is given, the search for *command* is performed using a default value for **PATH** that is guaranteed to find all of the standard utilities. If either the **−V** or **−v** option is supplied, a description of *command* is printed. The **−v** option causes a single word indicating the command or file name used to invoke *command* to be displayed; the **−V** option produces a more verbose description. If the **−V** or **−v** option is supplied, the exit status is 0 if *command* was found, and 1 if not. If neither option is supplied and an error occurred or *command* cannot be found, the exit status is 127. Otherwise, the exit status of the **command** builtin is the exit status of *command*.

continue [*n*]
Resume the next iteration of the enclosing **for**, **while**, **until**, or **select** loop. If *n* is specified, resume at the *n*th enclosing loop. *n* must be ≥ 1. If *n* is greater than the number of enclosing loops, the last enclosing loop (the ‘‘top-level’’ loop) is resumed. The return value is 0 unless the shell is not executing a loop when **continue** is executed.

declare [**−afFirx**] [**−p**] [*name*[=*value*]]
typeset [**−afFirx**] [**−p**] [*name*[=*value*]]

Declare variables and/or give them attributes. If no *name*s are given then display the values of variables. The **−p** option will display the attributes and values of each *name*. When **−p** is used, additional options are ignored. The **−F** option inhibits the display of function definitions; only the function name and attributes are printed. The **−F** option implies **−f**. The following options can be used to restrict output to variables with the specified attribute or to give variables attributes:

−a Each *name* is an array variable (see **Arrays** above).
−f Use function names only.
−i The variable is treated as an integer; arithmetic evaluation (see **ARITHMETIC EVALUATION**) is performed when the variable is assigned a value.
−r Make *name*s readonly. These names cannot then be assigned values by subsequent assignment statements or unset.
−x Mark *name*s for export to subsequent commands via the environment.

Using '+' instead of '−' turns off the attribute instead, with the exception that **+a** may not be used to destroy an array variable. When used in a function, makes each *name* local, as with the **local** command. The return value is 0 unless an invalid option is encountered, an attempt is made to define a function using "−f foo=bar", an attempt is made to assign a value to a readonly variable, an attempt is made to assign a value to an array variable without using the compound assignment syntax (see **Arrays** above), one of the *names* is not a valid shell variable name, an attempt is made to turn off readonly status for a readonly variable, an attempt is made to turn off array status for an array variable, or an attempt is made to display a non-existent function with −f.

dirs [−clpv] [+*n*] [−*n*]

Without options, displays the list of currently remembered directories. The default display is on a single line with directory names separated by spaces. Directories are added to the list with the **pushd** command; the **popd** command removes entries from the list.

+*n* Displays the *n*th entry counting from the left of the list shown by **dirs** when invoked without options, starting with zero.
−*n* Displays the *n*th entry counting from the right of the list shown by **dirs** when invoked without options, starting with zero.
−c Clears the directory stack by deleting all of the entries.
−l Produces a longer listing; the default listing format uses a tilde to denote the home directory.
−p Print the directory stack with one entry per line.
−v Print the directory stack with one entry per line, prefixing each entry with its index in the stack.

The return value is 0 unless an invalid option is supplied or *n* indexes beyond the end of the directory stack.

disown [**−ar**] [**−h**] [*jobspec ...*]

Without options, each *jobspec* is removed from the table of active jobs. If the **−h** option is given, each *jobspec* is not removed from the table, but is marked so that **SIGHUP** is not sent to the job if the shell receives a **SIGHUP**. If no *jobspec* is present, and neither the **−a** nor the **−r** option is supplied, the *current job* is used. If no *jobspec* is supplied, the **−a** option means to remove or mark all jobs; the **−r** option without a *jobspec* argument restricts operation to running jobs. The return value is 0 unless a *jobspec* does not specify a valid job.

echo [**−neE**] [*arg ...*]

Output the *arg*s, separated by spaces, followed by a newline. The return status is always 0. If **−n** is specified, the trailing newline is suppressed. If the **−e** option is given, interpretation of the following backslash-escaped characters is enabled. The **−E** option disables the interpretation of these escape characters, even on systems where they are interpreted by default. **echo** does not interpret **−−** to mean the end of options. **echo** interprets the following escape sequences:

\a	alert (bell)
\b	backspace
\c	suppress trailing newline
\e	an escape character
\f	form feed
\n	new line
\r	carriage return
\t	horizontal tab
\v	vertical tab
****	backslash
*****nnn*	the character whose ASCII code is the octal value *nnn* (one to three digits)
\x*nnn*	the character whose ASCII code is the hexadecimal value *nnn* (one to three digits)

enable [**−adnps**] [**−f** *filename*] [*name* ...]
Enable and disable builtin shell commands. Disabling a builtin allows a disk command which has the same name as a shell builtin to be executed with specifying a full pathname, even though the shell normally searches for builtins before disk commands. If **−n** is used, each *name* is disabled; otherwise, *names* are enabled. For example, to use the **test** binary found via the **PATH** instead of the shell builtin version, run `enable -n test`. The **−f** option means to load the new builtin command *name* from shared object *filename*, on systems that support dynamic loading. The **−d** option will delete a builtin previously loaded with **−f**. If no *name* arguments are given, or if the **−p** option is supplied, a list of shell builtins is printed. With no other option arguments, the list consists of all enabled shell builtins. If **−n** is supplied, only disabled builtins are printed. If **−a** is supplied, the list printed includes all builtins, with an indication of whether or not each is enabled. If **−s** is supplied, the output is restricted to the POSIX *special* builtins. The return value is 0 unless a *name* is not a shell builtin or there is a problem loading a new builtin from a shared object.

eval [*arg* ...]
The *arg*s are read and concatenated together into a single command. This command is then read and executed by the shell, and its exit status is returned as the value of **eval**. If there are no *args*, or only null arguments, **eval** returns 0.

exec [**−cl**] [**−a** *name*] [*command* [*arguments*]]
If *command* is specified, it replaces the shell. No new process is created. The *arguments* become the arguments to *command*. If the **−l** option is supplied, the shell places a dash in the zeroth arg passed to *command*. This is what *login*(1) does. The **−c** option causes *command* to be executed with an empty environment. If **−a** is supplied, the shell passes *name* as the zeroth argument to the executed command. If *command* cannot be executed for some reason, a non-interactive shell exits, unless the shell option **execfail** is enabled, in which case it returns failure. An interactive shell returns failure if the file cannot be executed. If *command* is not specified, any redirections take effect in the current shell, and the return status is 0. If there is a redirection error, the return status is 1.

exit [*n*] Cause the shell to exit with a status of *n*. If *n* is omitted, the exit status is that of the last command executed. A trap on **EXIT** is executed before the shell terminates.

export [**−fn**] [*name*[=*word*]] ...
export −p
The supplied *names* are marked for automatic export to the environment of subsequently executed commands. If the **−f** option is given, the *names* refer to functions. If no *names* are given, or if the **−p** option is supplied, a list of all names that are exported in this shell is printed. The **−n** option causes the export property to be removed from the named variables. **export** returns an exit status of 0 unless an invalid option is encountered, one of the *names* is not a valid shell variable name, or **−f** is supplied with a *name* that is not a function.

fc [**−e** *ename*] [**−nlr**] [*first*] [*last*]

fc −s [*pat=rep*] [*cmd*]

Fix Command. In the first form, a range of commands from *first* to *last* is selected from the history list. *First* and *last* may be specified as a string (to locate the last command beginning with that string) or as a number (an index into the history list, where a negative number is used as an offset from the current command number). If *last* is not specified it is set to the current command for listing (so that **fc −l −10** prints the last 10 commands) and to *first* otherwise. If *first* is not specified it is set to the previous command for editing and −16 for listing.

The **−n** option suppresses the command numbers when listing. The **−r** option reverses the order of the commands. If the **−l** option is given, the commands are listed on standard output. Otherwise, the editor given by *ename* is invoked on a file containing those commands. If *ename* is not given, the value of the **FCEDIT** variable is used, and the value of **EDITOR** if **FCEDIT** is not set. If neither variable is set, *vi* is used. When editing is complete, the edited commands are echoed and executed.

In the second form, *command* is re-executed after each instance of *pat* is replaced by *rep*. A useful alias to use with this is `r='fc -s'`, so that typing `r cc` runs the last command beginning with `cc` and typing `r` re-executes the last command.

If the first form is used, the return value is 0 unless an invalid option is encountered or *first* or *last* specify history lines out of range. If the **−e** option is supplied, the return value is the value of the last command executed or failure if an error occurs with the temporary file of commands. If the second form is used, the return status is that of the command re-executed, unless *cmd* does not specify a valid history line, in which case **fc** returns failure.

fg [*jobspec*]

Resume *jobspec* in the foreground, and make it the current job. If *jobspec* is not present, the shell's notion of the *current job* is used. The return value is that of the command placed into the foreground, or failure if run when job control is disabled or, when run with job control enabled, if *jobspec* does not specify a valid job or *jobspec* specifies a job that was started without job control.

getopts *optstring name* [*args*]

getopts is used by shell procedures to parse positional parameters. *optstring* contains the option letters to be recognized; if a letter is followed by a colon, the option is expected to have an argument, which should be separated from it by white space. Each time it is invoked, **getopts** places the next option in the shell variable *name*, initializing *name* if it does not exist, and the index of the next argument to be processed into the variable **OPTIND**. **OPTIND** is initialized to 1 each time the shell or a shell script is invoked. When an option requires an argument, **getopts** places that argument into the variable **OPTARG**. The shell does not reset **OPTIND** automatically; it must be manually reset between multiple calls to **getopts** within the same shell invocation if a new set of parameters is to be used.

When the end of options is encountered, **getopts** exits with a return value greater than zero. **OPTIND** is set to the index of the first non-option argument, and **name** is set to ?.

getopts normally parses the positional parameters, but if more arguments are given in *args*, **getopts** parses those instead.

getopts can report errors in two ways. If the first character of *optstring* is a colon, *silent* error reporting is used. In normal operation diagnostic messages are printed when invalid options or missing option arguments are encountered. If the variable **OPTERR** is set to 0, no error messages will be displayed, even if the first character of *optstring* is not a colon.

If an invalid option is seen, **getopts** places ? into *name* and, if not silent, prints an error message and unsets **OPTARG**. If **getopts** is silent, the option character found is placed in **OPTARG** and no diagnostic message is printed.

If a required argument is not found, and **getopts** is not silent, a question mark (**?**) is placed in *name*, **OPTARG** is unset, and a diagnostic message is printed. If **getopts** is silent, then a colon (**:**) is placed in *name* and **OPTARG** is set to the option character found.

getopts returns true if an option, specified or unspecified, is found. It returns false if the end of options is encountered or an error occurs.

hash [**−r**] [**−p** *filename*] [*name*]
For each *name*, the full file name of the command is determined by searching the directories in **$PATH** and remembered. If the **−p** option is supplied, no path search is performed, and *filename* is used as the full file name of the command. The **−r** option causes the shell to forget all remembered locations. If no arguments are given, information about remembered commands is printed. The return status is true unless a *name* is not found or an invalid option is supplied.

help [*pattern*]
Display helpful information about builtin commands. If *pattern* is specified, **help** gives detailed help on all commands matching *pattern*; otherwise help for all the builtins and shell control structures is printed. The return status is 0 unless no command matches *pattern*.

history [**−c**] [*n*]
history −anrw [*filename*]
history −p *arg* [*arg ...*]
history −s *arg* [*arg ...*]
With no options, display the command history list with line numbers. Lines listed with a ***** have been modified. An argument of *n* lists only the last *n* lines. If *filename* is supplied, it is used as the name of the history file; if not, the value of **HISTFILE** is used. Options, if supplied, have the following meanings:

- **−a** Append the ''new'' history lines (history lines entered since the beginning of the current **bash** session) to the history file.
- **−n** Read the history lines not already read from the history file into the current history list. These are lines appended to the history file since the beginning of the current **bash** session.
- **−r** Read the contents of the history file and use them as the current history.
- **−w** Write the current history to the history file, overwriting the history file's contents.
- **−c** Clear the history list by deleting all the entries.
- **−p** Perform history substitution on the following *args* and display the result on the standard output. Does not store the results in the history list. Each *arg* must be quoted to disable normal history expansion.
- **−s** Store the *args* in the history list as a single entry. The last command in the history list is removed before the *args* are added.

The return value is 0 unless an invalid option is encountered or an error occurs while reading or writing the history file.

jobs [**−lnprs**] [*jobspec ...*]
jobs −x *command* [*args ...*]
The first form lists the active jobs. The options have the following meanings:

- **−l** List process IDs in addition to the normal information.
- **−p** List only the process ID of the job's process group leader.
- **−n** Display information only about jobs that have changed status since the user was last notified of their status.
- **−r** Restrict output to running jobs.
- **−s** Restrict output to stopped jobs.

If *jobspec* is given, output is restricted to information about that job. The return status is 0 unless an invalid option is encountered or an invalid *jobspec* is supplied.

If the **−x** option is supplied, **jobs** replaces any *jobspec* found in *command* or *args* with the corresponding process group ID, and executes *command* passing it *args*, returning its exit status.

kill [**−s** *sigspec* | **−n** *signum* | **−***sigspec*] [*pid* | *jobspec*] ...
kill −l [*sigspec* | *exit_status*]
Send the signal named by *sigspec* or *signum* to the processes named by *pid* or *jobspec*. *sigspec* is either a signal name such as **SIGKILL** or a signal number; *signum* is a signal number. If *sigspec* is a signal name, the name may be given with or without the **SIG** prefix. If *sigspec* is not present, then **SIGTERM** is assumed. An argument of **−l** lists the signal names. If any arguments are supplied when **−l** is given, the names of the signals corresponding to the arguments are listed, and the return status is 0. The *exit_status* argument to **−l** is a number specifying either a signal number or the exit status of a process terminated by a signal. **kill** returns true if at least one signal was successfully sent, or false if an error occurs or an invalid option is encountered.

let *arg* [*arg* ...]
Each *arg* is an arithmetic expression to be evaluated (see **ARITHMETIC EVALUATION**). If the last *arg* evaluates to 0, **let** returns 1; 0 is returned otherwise.

local [*name*[=*value*] ...]
For each argument, a local variable named *name* is created, and assigned *value*. When **local** is used within a function, it causes the variable *name* to have a visible scope restricted to that function and its children. With no operands, **local** writes a list of local variables to the standard output. It is an error to use **local** when not within a function. The return status is 0 unless **local** is used outside a function, or an invalid *name* is supplied.

logout Exit a login shell.

popd [**−n**] [+*n*] [−*n*]
Removes entries from the directory stack. With no arguments, removes the top directory from the stack, and performs a **cd** to the new top directory. Arguments, if supplied, have the following meanings:
+*n* Removes the *n*th entry counting from the left of the list shown by **dirs**, starting with zero. For example: ‘‘popd +0’’ removes the first directory, ‘‘popd +1’’ the second.
−*n* Removes the *n*th entry counting from the right of the list shown by **dirs**, starting with zero. For example: ‘‘popd -0’’ removes the last directory, ‘‘popd -1’’ the next to last.
−n Suppresses the normal change of directory when removing directories from the stack, so that only the stack is manipulated.

If the **popd** command is successful, a **dirs** is performed as well, and the return status is 0. **popd** returns false if an invalid option is encountered, the directory stack is empty, a non-existent directory stack entry is specified, or the directory change fails.

printf *format* [*arguments*]
Write the formatted *arguments* to the standard output under the control of the *format*. The *format* is a character string which contains three types of objects: plain characters, which are simply copied to standard output, character escape sequences, which are converted and copied to the standard output, and format specifications, each of which causes printing of the next successive *argument*. In addition to the standard *printf*(1) formats, %b causes **printf** to expand backslash escape sequences in the corresponding *argument*, and %q causes **printf** to output the corresponding *argument* in a format that can be reused as shell input.

The *format* is reused as necessary to consume all of the *arguments*. If the *format* requires more *arguments* than are supplied, the extra format specifications behave as if a zero value or null string, as appropriate, had been supplied.

pushd [**−n**] [*dir*]
pushd [**−n**] [+*n*] [−*n*]
Adds a directory to the top of the directory stack, or rotates the stack, making the new top of the stack the current working directory. With no arguments, exchanges the top two directories and returns 0, unless the directory stack is empty. Arguments, if supplied, have the following meanings:

+*n* Rotates the stack so that the *n*th directory (counting from the left of the list shown by **dirs**, starting with zero) is at the top.

−*n* Rotates the stack so that the *n*th directory (counting from the right of the list shown by **dirs**, starting with zero) is at the top.

−n Suppresses the normal change of directory when adding directories to the stack, so that only the stack is manipulated.

dir Adds *dir* to the directory stack at the top, making it the new current working directory.

If the **pushd** command is successful, a **dirs** is performed as well. If the first form is used, **pushd** returns 0 unless the cd to *dir* fails. With the second form, **pushd** returns 0 unless the directory stack is empty, a non-existent directory stack element is specified, or the directory change to the specified new current directory fails.

pwd [**−LP**]

Print the absolute file name of the current working directory. The file name printed contains no symbolic links if the **−P** option is supplied or the **−o physical** option to the **set** builtin command is enabled. If the **−L** option is used, symbolic links are followed. The return status is 0 unless an error occurs while reading the name of the current directory or an invalid option is supplied.

read [**−er**] [**−a** *aname*] [**−p** *prompt*] [*name ...*]

One line is read from the standard input, and the first word is assigned to the first *name*, the second word to the second *name*, and so on, with leftover words and their intervening separators assigned to the last *name*. If there are fewer words read from the standard input than names, the remaining names are assigned empty values. The characters in **IFS** are used to split the line into words. The backslash character (\) may be used to remove any special meaning for the next character read and for line continuation. Options, if supplied, have the following meanings:

−r Backslash does not act as an escape character. The backslash is considered to be part of the line. In particular, a backslash-newline pair may not be used as a line continuation.

−p Display *prompt*, without a trailing newline, before attempting to read any input. The prompt is displayed only if input is coming from a terminal.

−a The words are assigned to sequential indices of the array variable *aname*, starting at 0. *aname* is unset before any new values are assigned. Other *name* arguments are ignored.

−e If the standard input is coming from a terminal, **readline** (see **READLINE** above) is used to obtain the line.

If no *names* are supplied, the line read is assigned to the variable **REPLY**. The return code is zero, unless end-of-file is encountered.

readonly [**−apf**] [*name ...*]

The given *names* are marked readonly; the values of these *names* may not be changed by subsequent assignment. If the **−f** option is supplied, the functions corresponding to the *names* are so marked. The **−a** option restricts the variables to arrays. If no *name* arguments are given, or if the **−p** option is supplied, a list of all readonly names is printed. The **−p** option causes output to be displayed in a format thatmay be reused as input. The return status is 0 unless an invalid option is encountered, one of the *names* is not a valid shell variable name, or **−f** is supplied with a *name* that is not a function.

return [*n*]

Causes a function to exit with the return value specified by *n*. If *n* is omitted, the return status is that of the last command executed in the function body. If used outside a function, but during execution of a script by the **.** (**source**) command, it causes the shell to stop executing that script and return either *n* or the exit status of the last command executed within the script as the exit status of the script. If used outside a function and not during execution of a script by **.**, the return status is false.

set [**−−abefhkmnptuvxBCHP**] [**−o** *option*] [*arg ...*]

Without options, the name and value of each shell variable are displayed in a format that can be reused as input. The output is sorted according to the current locale. When options are specified, they set or unset shell attributes. Any arguments remaining after the options are processed are

treated as values for the positional parameters and are assigned, in order, to **$1**, **$2**, **...** **$***n*. Options, if specified, have the following meanings:

−a Automatically mark variables which are modified or created for export to the environment of subsequent commands.

−b Report the status of terminated background jobs immediately, rather than before the next primary prompt. This is effective only when job control is enabled.

−e Exit immediately if a *simple command* (see **SHELL GRAMMAR** above) exits with a non-zero status. The shell does not exit if the command that fails is part of an *until* or *while* loop, part of an *if* statement, part of a **&&** or || list, or if the command's return value is being inverted via **!**.

−f Disable pathname expansion.

−h Remember the location of commands as they are looked up for execution. This is enabled by default.

−k All arguments in the form of assignment statements are placed in the environment for a command, not just those that precede the command name.

−m Monitor mode. Job control is enabled. This option is on by default for interactive shells on systems that support it (see **JOB CONTROL** above). Background processes run in a separate process group and a line containing their exit status is printed upon their completion.

−n Read commands but do not execute them. This may be used to check a shell script for syntax errors. This is ignored by interactive shells.

−o *option−name*

The *option−name* can be one of the following:

allexport
Same as **−a**.

braceexpand
Same as **−B**.

emacs Use an emacs-style command line editing interface. This is enabled by default when the shell is interactive, unless the shell is started with the **−−noediting** option.

errexit Same as **−e**.

hashall Same as **−h**.

histexpand
Same as **−H**.

history Enable command history, as described above under **HISTORY**. This option is on by default in interactive shells.

ignoreeof
The effect is as if the shell command `IGNOREEOF=10` had been executed (see **Shell Variables** above).

keyword
Same as **−k**.

monitor Same as **−m**.

noclobber
Same as **−C**.

noexec Same as **−n**.

noglob Same as **−f**.

notify Same as **−b**.

nounset Same as **−u**.

onecmd Same as **−t**.

physical Same as **−P**.

posix Change the behavior of **bash** where the default operation differs from the POSIX 1003.2 standard to match the standard.

privileged
Same as **−p**.
verbose Same as **−v**.
vi Use a vi-style command line editing interface.
xtrace Same as **−x**.

If **−o** is supplied with no *option−name*, the values of the current options are printed. If **+o** is supplied with no *option−name*, a series of **set** commands to recreate the current option settings is displayed on the standard output.

−p Turn on *privileged* mode. In this mode, the **$ENV** and **$BASH_ENV** files are not processed, shell functions are not inherited from the environment, and the **SHELLOPTS** variable, if it appears in the environment, is ignored. If the shell is started with the effective user (group) id not equal to the real user (group) id, and the **−p** option is not supplied, these actions are taken and the effective user id is set to the real user id. If the **−p** option is supplied at startup, the effective user id is not reset. Turning this option off causes the effective user and group ids to be set to the real user and group ids.

−t Exit after reading and executing one command.

−u Treat unset variables as an error when performing parameter expansion. If expansion is attempted on an unset variable, the shell prints an error message, and, if not interactive, exits with a non-zero status.

−v Print shell input lines as they are read.

−x After expanding each *simple command*, display the expanded value of **PS4**, followed by the command and its expanded arguments.

−B The shell performs brace expansion (see **Brace Expansion** above). This is on by default.

−C If set, **bash** does not overwrite an existing file with the **>**, **>&**, and **<>** redirection operators. This may be overridden when creating output files by using the redirection operator **>|** instead of **>**.

−H Enable **!** style history substitution. This option is on by default when the shell is interactive.

−P If set, the shell does not follow symbolic links when executing commands such as **cd** that change the current working directory. It uses the physical directory structure instead. By default, **bash** follows the logical chain of directories when performing commands which change the current directory.

−− If no arguments follow this option, then the positional parameters are unset. Otherwise, the positional parameters are set to the *arg*s, even if some of them begin with a **−**.

− Signal the end of options, cause all remaining *arg*s to be assigned to the positional parameters. The **−x** and **−v** options are turned off. If there are no *arg*s, the positional parameters remain unchanged.

The options are off by default unless otherwise noted. Using + rather than − causes these options to be turned off. The options can also be specified as arguments to an invocation of the shell. The current set of options may be found in **$−**. The return status is always true unless an invalid option is encountered.

shift [*n*]

The positional parameters from *n*+1 ... are renamed to **$1 ....** Parameters represented by the numbers **$#** down to **$#**−*n*+1 are unset. *n* must be a non-negative number less than or equal to **$#**. If *n* is 0, no parameters are changed. If *n* is not given, it is assumed to be 1. If *n* is greater than **$#**, the positional parameters are not changed. The return status is greater than zero if *n* is greater than **$#** or less than zero; otherwise 0.

shopt [**−pqsu**] [**−o**] [*optname ...*]

Toggle the values of variables controlling optional shell behavior. With no options, or with the **−p** option, a list of all settable options is displayed, with an indication of whether or not each is set. The **−p** option causes output to be displayed in a form that may be reused as input. Other options have the following meanings:

−s Enable (set) each *optname*.
−u Disable (unset) each *optname*.
−q Suppresses normal output (quiet mode); the return status indicates whether the *optname* is set or unset. If multiple *optname* arguments are given with **−q**, the return status is zero if all *optnames* are enabled; non-zero otherwise.
−o Restricts the values of *optname* to be those defined for the **−o** option to the **set** builtin.

If either **−s** or **−u** is used with no *optname* arguments, the display is limited to those options which are set or unset, respectively. Unless otherwise noted, the **shopt** options are disabled (unset) by default.

The return status when listing options is zero if all *optnames* are enabled, non-zero otherwise. When setting or unsetting options, the return status is zero unless an *optname* is not a valid shell option.

The list of **shopt** options is:

cdable_vars
If set, an argument to the **cd** builtin command that is not a directory is assumed to be the name of a variable whose value is the directory to change to.
cdspell If set, minor errors in the spelling of a directory component in a **cd** command will be corrected. The errors checked for are transposed characters, a missing character, and one character too many. If a correction is found, the corrected file name is printed, and the command proceeds. This option is only used by interactive shells.
checkhash
If set, **bash** checks that a command found in the hash table exists before trying to execute it. If a hashed command no longer exists, a normal path search is performed.
checkwinsize
If set, **bash** checks the window size after each command and, if necessary, updates the values of **LINES** and **COLUMNS**.
cmdhist If set, **bash** attempts to save all lines of a multiple-line command in the same history entry. This allows easy re-editing of multi-line commands.
dotglob If set, **bash** includes filenames beginning with a '.' in the results of pathname expansion.
execfail If set, a non-interactive shell will not exit if it cannot execute the file specified as an argument to the **exec** builtin command. An interactive shell does not exit if **exec** fails.
expand_aliases
If set, aliases are expanded as described above under **ALIASES**. This option is enabled by default for interactive shells.
extglob If set, the extended pattern matching features described above under **Pathname Expansion** are enabled.
histappend
If set, the history list is appended to the file named by the value of the **HISTFILE** variable when the shell exits, rather than overwriting the file.
histreedit
If set, and **readline** is being used, a user is given the opportunity to re-edit a failed history substitution.
histverify
If set, and **readline** is being used, the results of history substitution are not immediately passed to the shell parser. Instead, the resulting line is loaded into the **readline** editing buffer, allowing further modification.
hostcomplete
If set, and **readline** is being used, **bash** will attempt to perform hostname completion when a word containing a @ is being completed (see **Completing** under **READLINE** above). This is enabled by default.
huponexit
If set, **bash** will send **SIGHUP** to all jobs when an interactive login shell exits.

interactive_comments
If set, allow a word beginning with **#** to cause that word and all remaining characters on that line to be ignored in an interactive shell (see **COMMENTS** above). This option is enabled by default.

lithist If set, and the **cmdhist** option is enabled, multi-line commands are saved to the history with embedded newlines rather than using semicolon separators where possible.

mailwarn
If set, and a file that **bash** is checking for mail has been accessed since the last time it was checked, the message "The mail in *mailfile* has been read" is displayed.

nocaseglob
If set, **bash** matches filenames in a case−insensitive fashion when performing pathname expansion (see **Pathname Expansion** above).

nullglob
If set, **bash** allows patterns which match no files (see **Pathname Expansion** above) to expand to a null string, rather than themselves.

promptvars
If set, prompt strings undergo variable and parameter expansion after being expanded as described in **PROMPTING** above. This option is enabled by default.

restricted_shell
The shell sets this option if it is started in restricted mode (see **RESTRICTED SHELL** below). The value may not be changed. This is not reset when the startup files are executed, allowing the startup files to discover whether or not a shell is restricted.

shift_verbose
If set, the **shift** builtin prints an error message when the shift count exceeds the number of positional parameters.

sourcepath
If set, the **source** (**.**) builtin uses the value of **PATH** to find the directory containing the file supplied as an argument. This option is enabled by default.

suspend [**−f**]
Suspend the execution of this shell until it receives a **SIGCONT** signal. The **−f** option says not to complain if this is a login shell; just suspend anyway. The return status is 0 unless the shell is a login shell and **−f** is not supplied, or if job control is not enabled.

test *expr*
[*expr* **]** Return a status of 0 or 1 depending on the evaluation of the conditional expression *expr*. Each operator and operand must be a separate argument. Expressions are composed of the primaries described above under **CONDITIONAL EXPRESSIONS**.

Expressions may be combined using the following operators, listed in decreasing order of precedence.

! *expr* True if *expr* is false.

(*expr* **)** Returns the value of *expr*. This may be used to override the normal precedence of operators.

expr1 **−a** *expr2*
True if both *expr1* and *expr2* are true.

expr1 **−o** *expr2*
True if either *expr1* or *expr2* is true.

test and **[** evaluate conditional expressions using a set of rules based on the number of arguments.

0 arguments
The expression is false.

1 argument
The expression is true if and only if the argument is not null.

2 arguments
If the first argument is **!**, the expression is true if and only if the second argument is null. If the first argument is one of the unary conditional operators listed above under

CONDITIONAL EXPRESSIONS, the expression is true if the unary test is true. If the first argument is not a valid unary conditional operator, the expression is false.

3 arguments
: If the second argument is one of the binary conditional operators listed above under **CONDITIONAL EXPRESSIONS**, the result of the expression is the result of the binary test using the first and third arguments as operands. If the first argument is **!**, the value is the negation of the two-argument test using the second and third arguments. If the first argument is exactly **(** and the third argument is exactly **)**, the result is the one-argument test of the second argument. Otherwise, the expression is false. The **−a** and **−o** operators are considered binary operators in this case.

4 arguments
: If the first argument is **!**, the result is the negation of the three-argument expression composed of the remaining arguments. Otherwise, the expression is parsed and evaluated according to precedence using the rules listed above.

5 or more arguments
: The expression is parsed and evaluated according to precedence using the rules listed above.

times Print the accumulated user and system times for the shell and for processes run from the shell. The return status is 0.

trap [**−lp**] [*arg*] [*sigspec* ...]
: The command *arg* is to be read and executed when the shell receives signal(s) *sigspec*. If *arg* is absent or **−**, all specified signals are reset to their original values (the values they had upon entrance to the shell). If *arg* is the null string the signal specified by each *sigspec* is ignored by the shell and by the commands it invokes. If *arg* is **−p** then the trap commands associated with each *sigspec* are displayed. If no arguments are supplied or if only **−p** is given, **trap** prints the list of commands associated with each signal number. Each *sigspec* is either a signal name defined in <*signal.h*>, or a signal number. If a *sigspec* is **EXIT** (0) the command *arg* is executed on exit from the shell. If a *sigspec* is **DEBUG**, the command *arg* is executed after every *simple command* (see **SHELL GRAMMAR** above). The **−l** option causes the shell to print a list of signal names and their corresponding numbers. Signals ignored upon entry to the shell cannot be trapped or reset. Trapped signals are reset to their original values in a child process when it is created. The return status is false if any *sigspec* is invalid; otherwise **trap** returns true.

type [**−atp**] *name* [*name* ...]
: With no options, indicate how each *name* would be interpreted if used as a command name. If the **−t** option is used, **type** prints a string which is one of *alias*, *keyword*, *function*, *builtin*, or *file* if *name* is an alias, shell reserved word, function, builtin, or disk file, respectively. If the *name* is not found, then nothing is printed, and an exit status of false is returned. If the **−p** option is used, **type** either returns the name of the disk file that would be executed if *name* were specified as a command name, or nothing if `type -t name` would not return *file*. If a command is hashed, **−p** prints the hashed value, not necessarily the file that appears first in **PATH**. If the **−a** option is used, **type** prints all of the places that contain an executable named *name*. This includes aliases and functions, if and only if the **−p** option is not also used. The table of hashed commands is not consulted when using **−a**. **type** returns true if any of the arguments are found, false if none are found.

ulimit [**−SHacdflmnpstuv** [*limit*]]
: Provides control over the resources available to the shell and to processes started by it, on systems that allow such control. The value of *limit* can be a number in the unit specified for the resource, or the value **unlimited**. The **−H** and **−S** options specify that the hard or soft limit is set for the given resource. A hard limit cannot be increased once it is set; a soft limit may be increased up to the value of the hard limit. If neither **−H** nor **−S** is specified, both the soft and hard limits are set. If *limit* is omitted, the current value of the soft limit of the resource is printed, unless the **−H** option is given. When more than one resource is specified, the limit name and unit are printed before the value. Other options are interpreted as follows:

−a All current limits are reported
−c The maximum size of core files created
−d The maximum size of a process's data segment
−f The maximum size of files created by the shell
−l The maximum size that may be locked into memory
−m The maximum resident set size
−n The maximum number of open file descriptors (most systems do not allow this value to be set)
−p The pipe size in 512-byte blocks (this may not be set)
−s The maximum stack size
−t The maximum amount of cpu time in seconds
−u The maximum number of processes available to a single user
−v The maximum amount of virtual memory available to the shell

If *limit* is given, it is the new value of the specified resource (the **−a** option is display only). If no option is given, then **−f** is assumed. Values are in 1024-byte increments, except for **−t**, which is in seconds, **−p**, which is in units of 512-byte blocks, and **−n** and **−u**, which are unscaled values. The return status is 0 unless an invalid option is encountered, a non-numeric argument other than **unlimited** is supplied as *limit*, or an error occurs while setting a new limit.

umask [**−p**] [**−S**] [*mode*]
The user file-creation mask is set to *mode*. If *mode* begins with a digit, it is interpreted as an octal number; otherwise it is interpreted as a symbolic mode mask similar to that accepted by *chmod*(1). If *mode* is omitted, or if the **−S** option is supplied, the current value of the mask is printed. The **−S** option causes the mask to be printed in symbolic form; the default output is an octal number. If the **−p** option is supplied, and *mode* is omitted, the output is in a form that may be reused as input. The return status is 0 if the mode was successfully changed or if no *mode* argument was supplied, and false otherwise.

unalias [**−a**] [*name ...*]
Remove *name*s from the list of defined aliases. If **−a** is supplied, all alias definitions are removed. The return value is true unless a supplied *name* is not a defined alias.

unset [**−fv**] [*name ...*]
For each *name*, remove the corresponding variable or function. If no options are supplied, or the **−v** option is given, each *name* refers to a shell variable. Read-only variables may not be unset. If **−f** is specifed, each *name* refers to a shell function, and the function definition is removed. Each unset variable or function is removed from the environment passed to subsequent commands. If any of **RANDOM**, **SECONDS**, **LINENO**, **HISTCMD**, or **DIRSTACK** are unset, they lose their special properties, even if they are subsequently reset. The exit status is true unless a *name* does not exist or is readonly.

wait [*n*]
Wait for the specified process and return its termination status. *n* may be a process ID or a job specification; if a job spec is given, all processes in that job's pipeline are waited for. If *n* is not given, all currently active child processes are waited for, and the return status is zero. If *n* specifies a non-existent process or job, the return status is 127. Otherwise, the return status is the exit status of the last process or job waited for.

RESTRICTED SHELL

If **bash** is started with the name **rbash**, or the **−r** option is supplied at invocation, the shell becomes restricted. A restricted shell is used to set up an environment more controlled than the standard shell. It behaves identically to **bash** with the exception that the following are disallowed or not performed:

- changing directories with **cd**
- setting or unsetting the values of **SHELL**, **PATH**, **ENV**, or **BASH_ENV**
- specifying command names containing **/**

- specifying a file name containing a **/** as an argument to the **.** builtin command
- importing function definitions from the shell environment at startup
- parsing the value of **SHELLOPTS** from the shell environment at startup
- redirecting output using the >, >|, <>, >&, &>, and >> redirection operators
- using the **exec** builtin command to replace the shell with another command
- adding or deleting builtin commands with the **−f** and **−d** options to the **enable** builtin command
- specifying the **−p** option to the **command** builtin command
- turning off restricted mode with **set +r** or **set +o restricted**.

These restrictions are enforced after any startup files are read.

When a command that is found to be a shell script is executed (see **COMMAND EXECUTION** above), **rbash** turns off any restrictions in the shell spawned to execute the script.

SEE ALSO

Bash Features, Brian Fox and Chet Ramey
The Gnu Readline Library, Brian Fox and Chet Ramey
The Gnu History Library, Brian Fox and Chet Ramey
Portable Operating System Interface (POSIX) Part 2: Shell and Utilities, IEEE
sh(1), *ksh*(1), *csh*(1)
emacs(1), *vi*(1)
readline(3)

FILES

/bin/bash
The **bash** executable
/etc/profile
The systemwide initialization file, executed for login shells
~/.bash_profile
The personal initialization file, executed for login shells
~/.bashrc
The individual per-interactive-shell startup file
~/.bash_logout
The individual login shell cleanup file, executed when a login shell exits
~/.inputrc
Individual *readline* initialization file

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BUG REPORTS

If you find a bug in **bash,** you should report it. But first, you should make sure that it really is a bug, and that it appears in the latest version of **bash** that you have.

Once you have determined that a bug actually exists, use the *bashbug* command to submit a bug report. If you have a fix, you are encouraged to mail that as well! Suggestions and 'philosophical' bug reports may be mailed to *bug-bash@gnu.org* or posted to the Usenet newsgroup **gnu.bash.bug**.

ALL bug reports should include:

The version number of **bash**
The hardware and operating system

The compiler used to compile
A description of the bug behaviour
A short script or 'recipe' which exercises the bug

bashbug inserts the first three items automatically into the template it provides for filing a bug report.

Comments and bug reports concerning this manual page should be directed to *chet@ins.CWRU.Edu*.

BUGS

It's too big and too slow.

There are some subtle differences between **bash** and traditional versions of **sh**, mostly because of the **POSIX** specification.

Aliases are confusing in some uses.

Shell builtin commands and functions are not stoppable/restartable.

Compound commands and command sequences of the form 'a ; b ; c' are not handled gracefully when process suspension is attempted. When a process is stopped, the shell immediately executes the next command in the sequence. It suffices to place the sequence of commands between parentheses to force it into a subshell, which may be stopped as a unit.

Commands inside of **$(...)** command substitution are not parsed until substitution is attempted. This will delay error reporting until some time after the command is entered.

Array variables may not (yet) be exported.