

NAME

apt-file - APT package searching utility -- command-line interface

SYNOPSIS

apt-file [options] [action] [pattern]

apt-file -f [options] search [file ...]

apt-file -D [options] search [binary-package.deb ...]

DESCRIPTION

apt-file is a command line tool for searching files in packages for the APT package management system.

Some actions are required to run the search:

find Alias for **search**.

list List the contents of a package matching the **pattern** pattern. This action is very close to the **dpkg -L** command except the package does not need to be installed or fetched.

purge remove all *Contents-** files from the cache directory.

search Search in which package a file is included. A list of all packages containing the **pattern** pattern is returned.

apt-file will only search for filenames, not directory names. This is due to the format of the *Contents* files it searches.

show Alias for **list**.

update Resynchronize the package contents from their sources. The lists of the contents of packages are fetched from the location(s) specified in */etc/apt/sources.list*. This command attempts to fetch the *Contents-<ARCH>.gz* files from remote sources. For downloading these uses either the curl or wget commands as specified in *apt-file.conf*.

OPTIONS**-a, --architecture architecture**

Sets architecture to architecture. This option is useful if you search a package for a different architecture from the one installed on your system. It determines how the \$ARCH variable in sources.list is expanded (but it does not influence the search in any other way).

-c, --cache cache-directory

Sets the cache directory to *cache-directory* instead of its default. If executed as non-root user, the default is *\$HOME/.cache/apt-file* with fall-back to */var/cache/apt/apt-file*. The latter is also the default if apt-file is called as root.

-d, --cdrom-mount cdrom-mount-point

Use cdrom-mount-point instead of **apt**'s.

-D, --from-deb

Use contents of the given .deb archives(s) as patterns. Useful for searching for file conflicts with other packages. Implies **-F**.

-f, --from-file

Read patterns from the given file(s), one per line. Use - as filename for stdin. If no files are given, then the list will be read from stdin. This is much faster than invoking apt-file many times.

-F, --fixed-string

Do not expand search pattern with generic characters at pattern's start and end.

-i, --ignore-case

Ignore case when searching for pattern.

-l, --package-only

Only display package name; do not display file names.

-N, --non-interactive

Skip schemes that are listed in the interactive line in *apt-file.conf*. This is useful if you want to call 'apt-file update' in cron jobs and skip all schemes that may require user input.

-s, --sources-list sources.list

Sets the *sources.list* file to a different value from its default */etc/apt/sources.list*.

-v, --verbose

Run **apt-file** in verbose mode.

-x, --regexp

Treat pattern as a (perl) regular expression. See [perlref\(1\)](#) for details. Without this option, pattern is treated as a literal string to search for.

-y, --dummy

Run in dummy mode (no action).

-h, --help

Display a short help screen.

CONFIGURATION FILE

The **apt-file** configuration file can be found in */etc/apt/apt-file.conf*.

A string expansion is done on several values. See the string expansion section.

destination

This variable describes how cached files will be named.

http | ftp | ssh | rsh | file | cdrom

Defines the commands used to fetch files.

STRING EXPANSION

A *sources.list* entry is defined as:

```
deb uri dist component1 component2 ...
```

A uri is defined as:

```
proto://[user[:password]@]host[:port][/path]
```

<**host**> replace with the hostname

<**port**> replace with the port number

<**uri**> replace with full uri

<**path**> replace with full path (relative to / on the host)

<**dist**> replace with distribution name

<**comp**>

replace with component name

<**cache**>

replace with cache directory

<**dest**> replace with destination expanded value.

<**cdrom**>

replace with cdrom-mount-point.

BUGS

The cdrom backend has not been tested.

Non-release lines in *sources.list* are not handled by **apt-file**.

There is only one Contents file per distribution that contains all components (i.e. main, contrib, and non-free). Therefore, **apt-file** will display search results from all components, even if not all components are

included in the `sources.list` file.

When a new line has been added to the `sources.list` and `apt-file` update has not been run, `apt-file` does not print a warning message.

Complex regular expressions that match the leading slash may not work correctly. As a workaround, try to pull the leading slash to the beginning of the regular expression. For example, use `"/(usr/bin/vim|sbin/lvm)"` instead of `"/usr/bin/vim|sbin/lvm"`.

FILES

/etc/apt/sources.list

Locations to fetch package contents from.

/etc/apt/sources.list.d/

Directory with additional `sources.list` snippets

/etc/apt/apt-file.conf

Configuration file for **apt-file**.

SEE ALSO

auto-apt(1), **apt-cache(8)**, **apt-cdrom(8)**, **dpkg(8)**, **dselect(8)**, *sources.list(5)*, *apt.conf(5)*, **apt_preferences(5)**.

The APT users guide in */usr/share/doc/apt/*

AUTHOR

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