

**NAME**

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

**SYNOPSIS**

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

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

**apt-file -D**[ **options** ] **search** **h** [ **binary-packet.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 [perlreference\(1\)](#) 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 work-around, 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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