

**NAME**

**column** — columnate lists

**SYNOPSIS**

**column** [**-entx**] [**-c** *columns*] [**-s** *sep*] [*file* . . .]

**DESCRIPTION**

The **column** utility formats its input into multiple columns. Rows are filled before columns. Input is taken from *file* operands, or, by default, from the standard input. Empty lines are ignored unless the **-e** option is used.

The options are as follows:

- c** Output is formatted for a display *columns* wide.
- s** Specify a set of characters to be used to delimit columns for the **-t** option.
- t** Determine the number of columns the input contains and create a table. Columns are delimited with whitespace, by default, or with the characters supplied using the **-s** option. Useful for pretty-printing displays.
- x** Fill columns before filling rows.
- n** By default, the column command will merge multiple adjacent delimiters into a single delimiter when using the **-t** option; this option disables that behavior. This option is a Debian GNU/Linux extension.
- e** Do not ignore empty lines.

**ENVIRONMENT**

The **COLUMNS**, **LANG**, **LC\_ALL** and **LC\_CTYPE** environment variables affect the execution of **column** as described in [environ\(7\)](#).

**EXIT STATUS**

The **column** utility exits 0 on success, and >0 if an error occurs.

**EXAMPLES**

```
(printf "PERM LINKS OWNER GROUP SIZE MONTH DAY " ; \  
printf "HH:MM/YEAR NAME\n" ; \  
ls -l | sed 1d) | column -t
```

**SEE ALSO**

[colrm\(1\)](#), [ls\(1\)](#), [paste\(1\)](#), [sort\(1\)](#)

**HISTORY**

The **column** command appeared in 4.3BSD-Reno.

**BUGS**

Input lines are limited to **LINE\_MAX** (2048) bytes in length.