

## NAME

dpkg-parsechangelog - parse Debian changelog files

## SYNOPSIS

**dpkg-parsechangelog** [*option...*]

## DESCRIPTION

**dpkg-parsechangelog** reads and parses the changelog of an unpacked Debian source tree and outputs the information in it to standard output in a machine-readable form.

## OPTIONS

**-l***changelog-file*

Specifies the changelog file to read information from. A '-' can be used to specify reading from standard input. The default is **debian/changelog**.

**-F***changelog-format*

Specifies the format of the changelog. By default the format is read from a special line near the bottom of the changelog or failing that defaults to the *debian* standard format. See also **CHANGELOG FORMATS**.

**-L***libdir*

Specify an additional directory to search for parser scripts. This directory is searched before the default directories which are currently **/usr/local/lib/dpkg/parsechangelog** and **/usr/lib/dpkg/parsechangelog**.

**-S, --show-field** *field*

Specifies the name of the field to show (since dpkg 1.17.0). The field name is not printed, only its value.

**-, --help**

Show the usage message and exit.

**--version**

Show the version and exit.

### Parser Options

The following options can be used to influence the output of the changelog parser, e.g. the range of entries or the format of the output. They need to be supported by the parser script in question. See also **NOTES**.

**--file** *file*

Set the changelog filename to parse. Default is '-' (standard input).

**-l, --label** *file*

Set the name of the changelog file to use in error messages, instead of using the name from the **--file** option, or its default value.

**--format** *output-format*

Set the output format. Currently supported values are *dpkg* and *rfc822*. *dpkg* is the classic output format (from before this option existed) and the default. It consists of one paragraph in Debian control format (see **deb-control(5)**). If more than one entry is requested, then most fields are taken from the most recent entry, except otherwise stated:

**Source:** *pkg-name*

**Version:** *version*

**Distribution:** *target-distribution*

**Urgency:** *urgency*

The highest urgency of all included entries is used, followed by the concatenated (space-separated) comments from all the versions requested.

**Maintainer:** *author*

**Date:** *date*

**Closes:** *bug-number*

The Closes fields of all included entries are merged.

**Changes:** *changelog-entries*

The text of all changelog entries is concatenated. To make this field a valid Debian control format multiline field empty lines are replaced with a single full stop and all lines is intended by one space character. The exact content depends on the changelog format.

The **Version**, **Distribution**, **Urgency**, **Maintainer** and **Changes** fields are mandatory.

There might be additional user-defined fields present.

The **rfc822** format uses the same fields but outputs a separate paragraph for each changelog entry so that all metadata for each entry is preserved.

**--since** *version*, **-s***version*, **-v***version*

include all changes later than *version*.

**--until** *version*, **-u***version*

include all changes earlier than *version*.

**--from** *version*, **-f***version*

include all changes equal or later than *version*.

**--to** *version*, **-t***version*

include all changes up to or equal than *version*.

**--count** *number*, **-c***number*, **-n***number*

include *number* entries from the top (or the tail if *number* is lower than 0).

**--offset** *number*, **-o***number*

change the starting point for **--count**, counted from the top (or the tail if *number* is lower than 0).

**--all** include all changes. Note: other options have no effect when this is in use.

## CHANGELOG FORMATS

It is possible to use a different format to the standard one, by providing a parser for that alternative format.

In order to have **dpkg-parsechangelog** run the new parser, a line must be included within the last 40 lines of the changelog file, matching the Perl regular expression: “**schangelog-format:s+([0-9a-z]+)W**”. The part in parentheses should be the name of the format. For example:

```
@@@ changelog-format: otherformat @@@
```

Changelog format names are non-empty strings of alphanumerics.

If such a line exists then **dpkg-parsechangelog** will look for the parser as `/usr/lib/dpkg/parsechangelog/otherformat` or `/usr/local/lib/dpkg/parsechangelog/otherformat`; it is an error for it not being present or not being an executable program. The default changelog format is **debian**, and a parser for it is provided by default.

The parser will be invoked with the changelog open on standard input at the start of the file. It should read the file (it may seek if it wishes) to determine the information required and return the parsed information to standard output in the format specified by the **--format** option. It should accept all **Parser Options**.

If the changelog format which is being parsed always or almost always leaves a blank line between individual change notes, these blank lines should be stripped out, so as to make the resulting

output compact.

If the changelog format does not contain date or package name information this information should be omitted from the output. The parser should not attempt to synthesize it or find it from other sources.

If the changelog does not have the expected format the parser should exit with a nonzero exit status, rather than trying to muddle through and possibly generating incorrect output.

A changelog parser may not interact with the user at all.

## NOTES

All **Parser Options** except for **-v** are only supported since dpkg 1.14.16. Third party parsers for changelog formats other than *debian* might not support all options.

## FILES

### **debian/changelog**

The changelog file, used to obtain version-dependent information about the source package, such as the urgency and distribution of an upload, the changes made since a particular release, and the source version number itself.