

NAME

sigprocmask, rt_sigprocmask - examine and change blocked signals

SYNOPSIS

```
#include <signal.h>

/* Prototype for the glibc wrapper function */
int sigprocmask(int how, const sigset_t *set, sigset_t *oldset);

/* Prototype for the underlying system call */
int rt_sigprocmask(int how, const kernel_sigset_t *set,
kernel_sigset_t *oldset, size_t sigsetsize);

/* Prototype for the legacy system call (deprecated) */
int sigprocmask(int how, const old_kernel_sigset_t *set,
old_kernel_sigset_t *oldset);
```

Feature Test Macro Requirements for glibc (see [feature_test_macros\(7\)](#)):

sigprocmask(): _POSIX_C_SOURCE

DESCRIPTION

sigprocmask() is used to fetch and/or change the signal mask of the calling thread. The signal mask is the set of signals whose delivery is currently blocked for the caller (see also [signal\(7\)](#) for more details).

The behavior of the call is dependent on the value of *how*, as follows.

SIG_BLOCK

The set of blocked signals is the union of the current set and the *set* argument.

SIG_UNBLOCK

The signals in *set* are removed from the current set of blocked signals. It is permissible to attempt to unblock a signal which is not blocked.

SIG_SETMASK

The set of blocked signals is set to the argument *set*.

If *oldset* is non-NULL, the previous value of the signal mask is stored in *oldset*.

If *set* is NULL, then the signal mask is unchanged (i.e., *how* is ignored), but the current value of the signal mask is nevertheless returned in *oldset* (if it is not NULL).

A set of functions for modifying and inspecting variables of type *sigset_t* ("signal sets") is described in [sigsetops\(3\)](#).

The use of **sigprocmask()** is unspecified in a multithreaded process; see [pthread_sigmask\(3\)](#).

RETURN VALUE

sigprocmask() returns 0 on success and -1 on error. In the event of an error, *errno* is set to indicate the cause.

ERRORS**EFAULT**

The *set* or *oldset* argument points outside the process's allocated address space.

EINVAL

Either the value specified in *how* was invalid or the kernel does not support the size passed in *sigsetsize*.

CONFORMING TO

POSIX.1-2001, POSIX.1-2008.

NOTES

It is not possible to block **SIGKILL** or **SIGSTOP**. Attempts to do so are silently ignored.

Each of the threads in a process has its own signal mask.

A child created via [fork\(2\)](#) inherits a copy of its parent's signal mask; the signal mask is preserved across [execve\(2\)](#).

If **SIGBUS**, **SIGFPE**, **SIGILL**, or **SIGSEGV** are generated while they are blocked, the result is undefined, unless the signal was generated by [kill\(2\)](#), [sigqueue\(3\)](#), or [raise\(3\)](#).

See [sigsetops\(3\)](#) for details on manipulating signal sets.

C library/kernel differences

The kernel's definition of *sigset_t* differs in size from that used by the C library. In this manual page, the former is referred to as *kernel_sigset_t* (it is nevertheless named *sigset_t* in the kernel sources).

The glibc wrapper function for **sigprocmask()** silently ignores attempts to block the two real-time signals that are used internally by the NPTL threading implementation. See [nptl\(7\)](#) for details.

The original Linux system call was named **sigprocmask()**. However, with the addition of real-time signals in Linux 2.2, the fixed-size, 32-bit *sigset_t* (referred to as *old_kernel_sigset_t* in this manual page) type supported by that system call was no longer fit for purpose. Consequently, a new system call, **rt_sigprocmask()**, was added to support an enlarged *sigset_t* type (referred to as *kernel_sigset_t* in this manual page). The new system call takes a fourth argument, *size_t sigsetsize*, which specifies the size in bytes of the signal sets in *set* and *oldset*. This argument is currently required to have the value 8 (*sizeof(kernel_sigset_t)*).

The glibc **sigprocmask()** wrapper function hides these details from us, transparently calling **rt_sigprocmask()** when the kernel provides it.

SEE ALSO

[kill\(2\)](#), [pause\(2\)](#), [sigaction\(2\)](#), [signal\(2\)](#), [sigpending\(2\)](#), [sigsuspend\(2\)](#), [pthread_sigmask\(3\)](#), [sigqueue\(3\)](#), [sigsetops\(3\)](#), [signal\(7\)](#)

COLOPHON

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