

NAME

`mblen` - determine number of bytes in next multibyte character

SYNOPSIS

```
#include <stdlib.h>
```

```
int mblen(const char *s, size_t n);
```

DESCRIPTION

If `s` is not `NULL`, the `mblen()` function inspects at most `n` bytes of the multibyte string starting at `s` and extracts the next complete multibyte character. It uses a static anonymous shift state known only to the `mblen()` function. If the multibyte character is not the null wide character, it returns the number of bytes that were consumed from `s`. If the multibyte character is the null wide character, it returns 0.

If the `n` bytes starting at `s` do not contain a complete multibyte character, `mblen()` returns -1. This can happen even if `n` is greater than or equal to `MB_CUR_MAX`, if the multibyte string contains redundant shift sequences.

If the multibyte string starting at `s` contains an invalid multibyte sequence before the next complete character, `mblen()` also returns -1.

If `s` is `NULL`, the `mblen()` function resets the shift state, known to only this function, to the initial state, and returns nonzero if the encoding has nontrivial shift state, or zero if the encoding is stateless.

RETURN VALUE

The `mblen()` function returns the number of bytes parsed from the multibyte sequence starting at `s`, if a non-null wide character was recognized. It returns 0, if a null wide character was recognized. It returns -1, if an invalid multibyte sequence was encountered or if it couldn't parse a complete multibyte character.

ATTRIBUTES

Multithreading (see `pthread(7)`)

The `mblen()` function is not thread-safe.

CONFORMING TO

C99.

NOTES

The behavior of `mblen()` depends on the `LC_CTYPE` category of the current locale.

The function `mbrlen(3)` provides a better interface to the same functionality.

SEE ALSO

[mbrlen\(3\)](#)

COLOPHON

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