

**NAME**

groff\_filenames — filename extensions for roff and groff

**DESCRIPTION**

Since the evolution of *roff* in the 1970s, a whole bunch of filename extensions for *roff* files were used.

The *roff* extensions refer to preprocessors or macro packages. These extensions are fixed in all *Unix*-like operating systems.

Later on, **groff** added some more extensions. We will now write a *man-page about these filename extensions*.

**COMPRESSION OF ROFF FILES**

Each *roff* file can be optionally *compressed*. That means that the *total filename* ends with a *compressor name*. So the whole filename has the structure `<name>.<extension>[.<compressor>]`.

Mostly known are the *compressor extensions* **.Z**, **.gz**, and **.bzip2**. Relatively new is **.xz**.

From now on, we will ignore the *compressions* and only comment the structure `<name>.<extension>`.

**MAN-PAGES**

The *Unix manual pages* are shortly named *man-pages*. The *man-page style* is the best known part of the *roff* language.

The extensions for *man* should be better documented. So this is documented here.

Files written in the *man* language use the following extension: `*.<section>[<group>]`.

**Man-page Sections**

The traditional *man-page <section>* is a digit from **1** to **8**.

`<name>.1`

`<name>.2`

`<name>.3`

`<name>.4`

`<name>.5`

`<name>.6`

`<name>.7`

`<name>.8`

Classic *man-page sections*.

Linux added the section number **9** for kernel *man-pages*.

`<name>.9`

*Linux* kernel *man-pages*

In older commercial *Unix* systems, the 3 characters **l**, **n**, and **o** were also used as *section* names. This is today *deprecated*, but there are still documents in this format.

`<name>.l`

`<name>.n`

`<name>.o`

*Deprecated old man-page sections*.

**Man-page Group Extensions**

The `<group>` extension in `<section>[<group>]` is optional, but it can be any string of word characters. Usually programmers use a group name that is already used, e.g. **x** for *X Window System* documents or **tk** to refer to the *tk* programming language.

Examples:

**groff.1**

is the man-page for **groff** in *section 1* without a *group*

**xargs.1posix.gz**

is the man-page for the program **xargs** in *section 1* and *group posix*; moreover it is *compressed* with **gz** (**gzip**).

**config.5ssl**

*OpenSSL CONF* library configuration files from *section 5* with *group ssl*.

**dpkg-reconfigure.8cdebconf**

man-page for the program **dpkg-reconfigure** in *section 8* and *group cdebconf*.

**Source of Man-pages**

There are 2 *roff* languages for writing man-pages: **man** and **mdoc**.

The names of these 2 styles are taken as *extensions* for the source code files of man-pages in the *groff* package.

**<name>.man**

*traditional* Unix-like man-page format within *groff* source files.

**<name>.n**

A temporary man-page file produced from a *name.man* man-page by a run of **make** within the **groff** source package.

**<name>.mdoc**

Man-page format in BSD.

**<name>.1b**

Man-page format in *heirloom roff* .

**<name>.mandoc**

Files using this extension recognize both man-page formats in **groff** and other processors.

**TRADITIONAL TROFF EXTENSIONS****Files Using Macro Packages**

The *classical roff* languages were interpreted by the traditional **troff** and **nroff** programs.

There were several *roff* languages, each represented by a *macro-package*. Each of these provided a suitable file name *extension*:

**<name>.me**

*roff* file using the **me** *macro package*.

**<name>.mm**

*roff* file using the **mm** *macro package*

**<name>.ms**

*roff* file using the **ms** *macro package*

All of these classical *roff* languages and their extensions are still very active in **groff**.

**Source Code for Macro Packages (TMAC Files)**

In traditional *roff* the source code for the macro packages was stored in *TMAC* files. Their file names have the form:

**tmac.<package>**,

*<package>* is the name of the macro package without the leading **m** character, which is reintegrated by the option **-m**.

For example, **tmac.an** is the source for the **man** macro package.

In the **groff** source, more suitable file names were integrated, see later on.

**Preprocessors**

Moreover, the following *preprocessors* were used as filename extension:

- <name>.**chem**  
for the integration of chemical formulas
- <name>.**eqn**  
for the mathematical use of equations
- <name>.**pic**  
graphical tool
- <name>.**tbl**  
for tables with *tbl*
- <name>.**ref**  
for files using the **prefer** *preprocessor*

**Classical Roff Files**

- <name>.**t**
- <name>.**tr**  
for files using the *roff* language of any kind

**NEW GROFF EXTENSIONS**

*GNU roff groff* is the actual *roff* standard, both for classical *roff* and new extensions. So even the used new extensions in the source code should be regarded as actual standard. The following extensions are used instead of classical **.t** or **.tr**:

- <name>.**groff**
- <name>.**roff**  
general ending for files using the *groff* language

**Source Code for Macro Packages (TMAC Files)**

As the classical form **tmac.<package\_without\_m>**, of the *TMA C* file names is quite strange, *groff* added the following structures:

- <package\_without\_m>.**tmac**
- m<package>.tmac**
- groff\_m<package>.tmac**

**Files Using new Macro Packages**

*Groff* uses the following new macro packages:

- <name>.**mmse**  
file with swedish **mm** *macros* for **groff**
- <name>.**mom**  
files written in the *groff* macro package **mom**
- <name>.**www**  
files written in **HTML**-like *groff* macros.

**Preprocessors and Postprocessors**

- <name>.**hdtbl**  
a new *tbl* format. See [groff\\_hdtbl\(7\)](#).
- <name>.**grap**  
files written for the graphical **grap** processor.
- <name>.**grn**  
for including **gremlin(1)**, pictures, see [grn\(1\)](#).
- <name>.**pdfroff**  
transform this file with **pdfroff** of the *groff* system

## SEE ALSO

History and future

[roff\(7\)](#), [man-pages\(7\)](#), [groff\\_diff\(7\)](#), [groff\(7\)](#)

*Compression*

[uncompress\(1posix\)](#), [gzip2\(1\)](#), [bzip2\(1\)](#), [xz\(1\)](#)

A man-page of the naming form *name(n)* can be read in text mode by

**man** *n name*

or in graphical mode (PDF) by

**groffer** *n name*

[.I Gunnar Ritters Heirloom roff project](#). You can get this package with the shell command:

```
$ git clone https://github.com/n-t-roff/heirloom-doctools
```

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## AUTHORS

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