

his document describes the groff program, the main front-end for the groff document formatting system. The groff program and macro suite is the implementation of a roff(7) system within the free software collection GNU <<http://www.gnu.org>>. The groff system has all features of the classical roff, but adds many extensions.

When there is a need to run different roff implementations at the same time, groff provides the facility to prepend a prefix to most of its programs that could provoke name clashing at run time (default is to have none). Historically, this prefix was the character g, but it can be anything. For example, gtroff stood for groff's troff, gtbl for the groff version of tbl. By setting GROFF_COMMAND_PREFIX to different values, the different roff installations can be addressed. More exactly, if it is set to prefix xxx then groff as a wrapper program will internally call xxxtroff instead of troff. This also applies to the preprocessors eqn, grn, pic, refer, tbl, soelim, and to the utilities indxbib and lookbib. This feature does not apply to any programs different from the ones above (most notably groff itself) since they are unique to the groff package.

are some directories in which groff installs all of its data files. Due to different installation habits on different operating systems, their locations are not absolutely fixed, but their function is clearly defined and coincides on all systems.

the path separator in the following environment variables is the colon; this may vary depending on the operating system. For example, DOS and Windows use a semicolon instead.