HOSTS(5) Linux Programmer's Manual HOSTS(5)

NAME

hosts - The static table lookup for host names

SYNOPSIS

/etc/hosts

DESCRIPTION

This manual page describes the format of the _____ file. This file is a simple text file that associates IP addresses with hostnames, one line per IP address. For each host a single line should be present with the following information:

IP_address canonical_hostname [aliases...]

Fields of the entry are separated by any number of blanks and/or tab characters. Text from a "#" character until the end of the line is a comment, and is ignored. Host names may contain only alphanumeric characters, minus signs ("-"), and periods (".") . They must begin with an alphabetic character and end with an alphanumeric character. Optional aliases provide for name changes, alternate spellings, shorter hostnames, or generic hostnames (for example, _____).

The Berkeley Internet Name Domain (BIND) Server implements the Internet name server for UNIX systems. It augments or replaces the _____ file or host name lookup, and frees a host from relying on _____ being up to date and complete.

In modern systems, even though the host table has been superseded by DNS, it is still widely used for:

bootstrapping

Most systems have a small host table containing the name and address information for important hosts on the local network. This is useful when DNS is not running, for example during system bootup.

NIS Sites that use NIS use the host table as input to the NIS host database. Even though NIS can be used with DNS, most NIS sites still use the host table with an entry for all local hosts as a backup.

isolated nodes

Very small sites that are isolated from the network use the host table instead of DNS. If the local information rarely changes, and the network is not connected to the Internet, DNS offers little advantage.

FILES

_____

NOTES

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       Modifications  to this file normally take effect immediately, except in
       cases where the file is cached by applications.

   Historical Notes
       RFC 952 gave the original format for the  host  table,  though  it  has
       since changed.

       Before  the advent of DNS, the host table was the only way of resolving
       hostnames on the fledgling Internet.  Indeed, this file could  be  cre-
       ated  from the official host data base maintained at the Network Infor-
       mation Control Center (NIC), though local changes were  often  required
       to  bring  it  up  to  date regarding unofficial aliases and/or unknown
       hosts.  The NIC no longer maintains the hosts.txt files, though looking
       around  at  the  time  of  writing  (circa  2000), there are historical
       hosts.txt files on the WWW.  I just found three, from 92, 94, and 95.

EXAMPLE
       127.0.0.1       localhost
       192.168.1.10    foo.mydomain.org       foo
       192.168.1.13    bar.mydomain.org       bar
       146.82.138.7    master.debian.org      master
       209.237.226.90  www.opensource.org

SEE ALSO
       hostname(1), resolver(3), resolver(5), hostname(7), named(8),  Internet
       RFC 952

COLOPHON
       This  page  is  part of release 2.77 of the Linux _________ project.  A
       description of the project, and information about reporting  bugs,  can
       be found at http://www.kernel.org/doc/man-pages/.



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