

An Overview of Debian Policy (“Potato” — version 3.1.1.1, 1999-11-22)

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Related Policy Documents Debian Packaging Manual (in *packaging-manual*), FSSTND (in *debian-policy*), Authoritative List Of Virtual Package Names (in *debian-policy*), FHS (<http://www.pathname.com/fhs/>), Debian Menu System (in *menu*), Linux allocated devices (in the kernel source linux/Documentation/devices.tex,txt).

Essential and Required Packages base-files base-passwd bash bsdutils debianutils diff dpkg e2fsprogs fileutils findutils grep gzip hostname ldso login mount ncurses-base ncurses-bin perl-base sed shellutils sysvinit tar textutils update-util-linux

Other Required Packages adduser ae comerr2g e2fslibs kbd kbd-data libc6 libncurses5 libpam-modules libpam-runtime libreadline4 libstdc++2.9 libstdc++2.10 makedev mawk mbr modconf modutils passwd procps setserial slang1 ss2g sysklogd syslinux timezones

Sections admin base comm devel doc editors electronics games graphics hamradio interpreters libs mail math misc net news oldlibs otherosfs shells sound tex text utils web x11

Run Levels The scripts for each run level are located at `/etc/rc?.d/[KS][0-9][0-9]pkg` where “?” gives the run level (0-6, S), “K” or “S” tells weather to Kill or Start the service (K scripts run first), [0-9][0-9] specifies the order in which the scripts are run (lower numbers run first) and “pkg” is the name of the package that installed the script. These scripts are actually symbolic links created by the package postinst (using `update-rc.d(8)`). The scripts in `init.d` can take one of the following options: start, stop, restart, force-reload, and reload (optional). These scripts should be robust in case the service is already running or not running and in case of package removal (use `start-stop-daemon(8)`). Scripts should follow the Debian format for console messages. There is an example script: `/etc/init.d/skeleton`.

`/etc/rc.S` Scripts invoked once per machine boot. `/etc/rc.boot` is deprecated.

Keyboard Configuration All keyboard events should be independent of terminal (the console, X11, telnet, etc.). Delete and BS should work like it does on PCs.

Documentation All executables in `{usr,}/s,}bin` should have a nroff source man page installed under `/usr/man`. Info documentation (if available) is installed under `/usr/info` (use `install-info` to add to the info dir file). If appropriate, packages should install a menu in `/usr/lib/menu`. HTML is the preferred documentation format for Debian. `http://localhost/doc/` should provide access to the documentation under `/usr/doc` (if a web server is installed).

Binary Files Should be compiled with the `make(1)` variables “`CC = gcc CFLAGS = -O2 -g -Wall`”. Binaries should be striped using `install -s` or `strip(1)`.

Libraries There must be two packages: the `libraryname` package contains the shared library (compiled with `-fPIC` and stripped with `strip --strip-unneeded`) and the `libraryname-dev` package containing the static version. Always use the `gcc` option `-D_REENTRANT` when compiling libraries.

Package Maintainer Scripts The `{post,pre}{inst,rm}` scripts must be scripts and must fail if any error occurs (sh scripts should use `set -e` or check every command). In order to use `#!/bin/sh`, scripts must be POSIX compliant (`ash(1)`). Must use `tempfile(1)` or `mktemp(1)` or compatible mechanism to write a file in `/tmp` or other world-writable directory.

Conffiles Must live in `/etc`. If more than one package uses a conffile, then only one can declare it as a conffile and it should provide a config script for editing the conffile. It is best to put nothing in `/etc/skel`.

Cron Packages should not touch `/etc/crontab` (a conffile for the `cron` package). Package provided cron jobs should be scripts, listed as conffiles, and placed in `/etc/cron.{d,monthly,weekly,daily}/pkgname`. Note: `/etc/cron.d` is not handled by `anacron`. Scripts should be robust enough to handle the removal of the package.

File Permissions and Owners Generally, files should be owned by `root.root`. Directories should be mode `755` or `2775` (for group writeability), executables should be mode `755`, `setuid` or `setgid` executables should be mode `4755` or `2755`, respectively. Restricted `setuid` binaries should be mode `4754`. There may be exceptions.

`/usr/local` FSSTND: bin, doc, etc, games, lib, info, man, sbin, src; FHS: remove doc, etc, info, man; and add include, share. Debian packages may not make subdirectories of `/usr/local`. Other than their `postinst/prerm` scripts adding/removing directories within the FSSTND specified ones, nothing in `/usr/local` may be touched.

User accessibility Features `update-mime` (replaces `install-mime`), `update-menus`

System UIDs and GIDs

0–99	Statically allocated system accounts
100–999	Dynamically allocated system accounts
1000–29999	Dynamically allocated user accounts
30000–59999	Reserved
60000–64999	Statically allocated by the Debian Project
65000–65533	Reserved
65534	nobody; nogroup
65535	(uid,t)(-1) = (gid,t)(-1) ≡ The error return value