

NAME

rm**dir** — remove directory

SYNOPSIS

rm**dir** [**-pve**] *directory*...

DESCRIPTION

Removes *directories*, and, with **-p**, their parents.

OPTIONS

-p, --parents Remove parents of each *directory*, up to the first failure.
-v, --verbose Write which directories were removed to the standard output stream.
-e, --ignore-fail-on-non-empty Don't error if removal failed with ENOTEMPTY.

EXIT STATUS

1 if a *directory* (or its parent with **-p**) couldn't be removed, except if **-e** and because ENOTEMPTY.

SEE ALSO

mkdir(1), **rm**(1), **rm****dir**(2)

STANDARDS

Conforms to IEEE Std 1003.1-2024 ("POSIX.1"). **-v** and **--ignore-fail-on-non-empty** are extensions, also present on the GNU system.

Short **-e** is an extension, compatible with the KornShell.

-v is also available in FreeBSD 6.0.

HISTORY

Appears in the first edition of the UNIX Programmer's Manual as **rm****dir**(I):

```
NAME      rm  dir  --  remove directory
SYNOPSIS  rm  dir  dir1 ...
```

Version 7 AT&T UNIX merges that page into **rm**(1) with an updated **SYNOPSIS** of

rm**dir** *dir* ...

As **rm** now forks out to **rm****dir** to remove directories in **-r** mode. This is standardised in X/Open Portability Guide Issue 2 ("XPG2").

4.2BSD and AT&T System V Release 3 UNIX add **rm****dir**(2), reducing both implementations considerably. AT&T System V Release 3 UNIX alone adds **-ps**, with **-p** additionally writing any of

- "rm_{dir}: *directory*: Whole path removed."
- "rm_{dir}: Directory not empty: *directory* not removed" for EEXIST, otherwise "rm_{dir}: **strerror**(*errno*): *directory* not removed"
- "rm_{dir}: Can not remove . or ..: *directory* not removed"
- "rm_{dir}: Can not remove current directory: *directory* not removed"

to the standard output stream for each argument, depending on the situation, and **-s** silencing this.

IEEE Std 1003.2-1992 ("POSIX.2") codifies **-p** in this behavioural shape, but strips the messages (and, hence, **-s**).