

**NAME**

**alarm** - set signal timer alarm

**LIBRARY**

Standard C Library (libc, -lc)

**SYNOPSIS**

```
#include <unistd.h>
```

*unsigned int*

```
alarm(unsigned int seconds);
```

**DESCRIPTION**

**This interface is made obsolete by setitimer(2).**

The **alarm()** function sets a timer to deliver the signal SIGALRM to the calling process after the specified number of *seconds*. If an alarm has already been set with **alarm()** but has not been delivered, another call to **alarm()** will supersede the prior call. The request **alarm(0)** voids the current alarm and the signal SIGALRM will not be delivered.

Due to setitimer(2) restriction the maximum number of *seconds* allowed is 100000000.

**RETURN VALUES**

The return value of **alarm()** is the amount of time left on the timer from a previous call to **alarm()**. If no alarm is currently set, the return value is 0.

**SEE ALSO**

setitimer(2), sigaction(2), sigsuspend(2), signal(3), sleep(3), ualarm(3), usleep(3)

**HISTORY**

An **alarm()** system call appeared in the Programmer's Workbench (PWB/UNIX) and was ported to Version 7 AT&T UNIX. For 4.1cBSD, it was reimplemented as a wrapper around the setitimer(2) system call.