NAME

look - display lines beginning with a given string

SYNOPSIS

look [**-df**] [**-t** *termchar*] *string* [*file ...*]

DESCRIPTION

The **look** utility displays any lines in *file* which contain *string* as a prefix. As **look** performs a binary search, the lines in *file* must be sorted.

If *file* is not specified, the file */usr/share/dict/words* is used, only alphanumeric characters are compared and the case of alphabetic characters is ignored.

The following options are available:

-d, **--alphanum**

Dictionary character set and order, i.e., only alphanumeric characters are compared.

-f, **--ignore-case**

Ignore the case of alphabetic characters.

-t, **--terminate** *termchar*

Specify a string termination character, i.e., only the characters in *string* up to and including the first occurrence of *termchar* are compared.

ENVIRONMENT

The LANG, LC_ALL and LC_CTYPE environment variables affect the execution of the **look** utility. Their effect is described in environ(7).

FILES

/usr/share/dict/words the dictionary

EXIT STATUS

The **look** utility exits 0 if one or more lines were found and displayed, 1 if no lines were found, and >1 if an error occurred.

EXAMPLES

Look for lines starting with 'xylene' in the file */usr/share/dict/words*:

    $ look xylen

    xylene
    xylenol
    xylenyl

Same as above, but do not consider any characters in *string* beyond the first 'e'. Note that **-f** is implicit since we are searching the default file */usr/share/dict/words*:

    $ look -t e xylen
    Xyleborus
    xylem
    xylene
    xylenol
    xylenyl
    xyletic

COMPATIBILITY

The original manual page stated that tabs and blank characters participated in comparisons when the **-d** option was specified. This was incorrect and the current man page matches the historic implementation.

The **-a** and **--alternative** flags are ignored for compatibility.

SEE ALSO

grep(1), sort(1)

HISTORY

A **look** utility appeared in Version 7 AT&T UNIX.

BUGS

Lines are not compared according to the current locale's collating order. Input files must be sorted with LC_COLLATE set to 'C'.