

**NAME**

merge - three-way file merge

**SYNOPSIS**

**merge** [ *options* ] *file1 file2 file3*

**DESCRIPTION**

**merge** incorporates all changes that lead from *file2* to *file3* into *file1*. The result ordinarily goes into *file1*. **merge** is useful for combining separate changes to an original. Suppose *file2* is the original, and both *file1* and *file3* are modifications of *file2*. Then **merge** combines both changes.

A conflict occurs if both *file1* and *file3* have changes in a common segment of lines. If a conflict is found, **merge** normally outputs a warning and brackets the conflict with <<<<<<< and >>>>>>> lines. A typical conflict will look like this:

```
<<<<<<< file A
lines in file A
=====
lines in file B
>>>>>>> file B
```

If there are conflicts, the user should edit the result and delete one of the alternatives.

**OPTIONS**

**-A** Output conflicts using the **-A** style of **diff3**(1), if supported by **diff3**. This merges all changes leading from *file2* to *file3* into *file1*, and generates the most verbose output.

**-E, -e**

These options specify conflict styles that generate less information than **-A**. See **diff3**(1) for details. The default is **-E**. With **-e**, **merge** does not warn about conflicts.

**-L label**

This option may be given up to three times, and specifies labels to be used in place of the corresponding file names in conflict reports. That is, **merge -L x -L y -L z a b c** generates output that looks like it came from files **x**, **y** and **z** instead of from files **a**, **b** and **c**.

**-p** Send results to standard output instead of overwriting *file1*.

**-q** Quiet; do not warn about conflicts.

**-V** Print RCS's version number.

## DIAGNOSTICS

Exit status is 0 for no conflicts, 1 for some conflicts, 2 for trouble.

## IDENTIFICATION

Author: Walter F. Tichy.

Manual Page Revision: 5.10.1; Release Date: 2022-02-03.

Copyright (C) 2010-2022 Thien-Thi Nguyen.

Copyright (C) 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995 Paul Eggert.

Copyright (C) 1982, 1988, 1989 Walter F. Tichy.

## SEE ALSO

**diff3(1)**, **diff(1)**, **rcsmerge(1)**, **co(1)**.

The full documentation for RCS is maintained as a Texinfo manual. If the **info(1)** and RCS programs are properly installed at your site, the command

**info rcs**

should give you access to the complete manual. Additionally, the RCS homepage:

**<http://www.gnu.org/software/rcs/>**

has news and links to the latest release, development site, etc.

## BUGS

It normally does not make sense to merge binary files as if they were text, but **merge** tries to do it anyway.