NAME

paste − merge same lines of several files or subsequent lines of one file

SYNOPSIS

paste file1 file2 ...
paste **−d**list file1 file2 ...
paste **−s** [**−d**list] file1 file2 ...

DESCRIPTION

In the first two forms, *paste* concatenates corresponding lines of the given input files *file1, file2* etc. It treats each file as a column or columns of a table and pastes them together horizontally (parallel merging). If you will, it is the counterpart of *cat*(1) which concatenates vertically, i.e. one file after the other. In the last form above, *paste* subsumes the function of an older command with the same name by combining subsequent lines of the input file (serial merging). In all cases, lines are glued together with the *tab* character, or with characters from an optionally specified *list*. Output is to the standard output, so it can be used as the start of a pipe, or as a filter, if − is used in place of a filename.

The meanings of the options are:

−d Without this option, the new-line characters of each but the last file (or last line in case of the **−s** option) are replaced by a *tab* character. This option allows replacing the *tab* character by one or more alternate characters (see below).

list One or more characters immediately following **−d** replace the default *tab* as the line concatenation character. The list is used circularly, i. e. when exhausted, it is reused. In parallel merging (i. e. no **−s** option), the lines from the last file are always terminated with a new-line character, not from the *list*. The list may contain the special escape sequences: \n (new-line), \t (tab), \\ (backslash), \0 (empty string, not a null character). Quoting may be necessary, if characters have special meaning to the shell (e.g. to get one backslash, write "" *−d*"\\\\").

−s Merge subsequent lines rather than one from each input file. Use *tab* for concatenation, unless a *list* is specified with **−d** option. Regardless of the *list*, the very last character of the file is forced to be a new-line.

− May be used in place of any filename, to read a line from the standard input. (There is no prompting).

EXAMPLES

ls | paste −d" " −	list directory in one column
ls | paste − − − −	list directory in four columns
paste −s −d"\t\n" file	combine pairs of lines into lines

SEE ALSO

grep(1), cut(1), pr(1): *pr −t −m* ... works similarly, but creates extra blanks, tabs and new-lines for a nice page layout.

DIAGNOSTICS

line too long: Output lines are restricted to 256 characters.
too many files: Except for **−s** option, no more than 12 input files may be specified.