

## NAME

`cut` - cut out selected fields of each line of a file

## SYNOPSIS

```
cut -c list [file1 file2 ...]
cut -f list [-d char] [-s] [file1 file2 ...]
```

## DESCRIPTION

Use `cut` to cut out columns from a table or fields from each line of a file; in data base parlance, it implements the projection of a relation. The fields as specified by *list* can be fixed length, i.e. character positions as on a punched card (`-c` option), or the length can vary from line to line and be marked with a field delimiter character like *tab* (`-f` option). `Cut` can be used as a filter; if no input files are given, the standard input is used.

The meanings of the options are:

- list* A comma-separated list of integer field numbers, with optional `-` to indicate ranges as in the `-o` option of *nroff*/*troff* for page ranges; e.g. "1,4,7" or "1-3,8" or "-5,10" (short for "1-5,10") or "3-" (short for third through last field).
- `-c list` The *list* following `-c` (no space) specifies character positions, e.g. "`-c1-72`" would pass the first 72 characters of each line.
- `-f list` The *list* following `-f` is a list of fields assumed to be separated in the file by a delimiter character (see `-d`); e.g. "`-f1,7`" copies the first and seventh field only. Lines with no field delimiters will be passed through intact (useful for table subheadings), unless `-s` is specified.
- `-d char` The character following `-d` is the field delimiter (`-f` option only). Default is *tab*. Space or other characters with special meaning to the shell must be quoted.
- `-s` Suppresses lines with no delimiter characters in case of `-f` option. Unless specified, lines with no delimiters will be passed through untouched.

Either `-c` or `-f` option must be specified.

## EXAMPLES

```
ls -l | cut -c1,40-           lists current directory preceded by file type
cut -c-75 file ; cut -c76- file  to print a file with lines too long for terminal
cut -f1,7 table | tbl | nroff ... prints columns 1 and 7 of table
cut -d: -f1,5 /etc/passwd      mapping of userids to names
name='who am i | cut -f1 -d" "'  to set name to current userid
```

## DIAGNOSTICS

*line too long* A line can have no more than 511 characters or fields.

*bad list for c/f option* Missing `-c` or `-f` option or incorrectly specified *list*. No error occurs, if a line has fewer fields than the *list* calls for.

*no fields* The *list* is empty.

## SEE ALSO

`grep(1)` allows horizontal "cuts" (by context) through a file.

`paste(1)` allows to put files together columnwise, i. e. horizontally. To reorder columns in a table, use `cut` and `paste`.