

Backing Up and Restoring Using the cpio Command in Linux and Unix

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Created 26/05/2006 - 10:31am

Submitted by gg234 on Friday 26th of May 2006 10:31:17 AM Filed under [Linux](#) [1] [Gentoo](#) [2] [Slack](#) [3] [SUSE](#) [4] [Ubuntu](#) [5]

The cpio command is one of the most commonly used Linux back up tools.

The cpio command has two unusual features

Unlike tar , in which the files to back up are typed in as part of the command, cpio reads the files to work with from the standard input (in other words, the screen).

This feature means that cpio must be used as part of a multiple command or with a redirection pipe. Examples of this usage are shown in the tables below.

cpio must always be used with one of three flags. Flags are options that set the mode in which the command runs. Only one flag can be used at a time, and it must come before any other options. In addition, the choice of flags limits the options that can be used. Each flag also has a gnu option that can be used in its place. The gnu option gives a convenient name for each flag: extract, create, and pass-through.

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