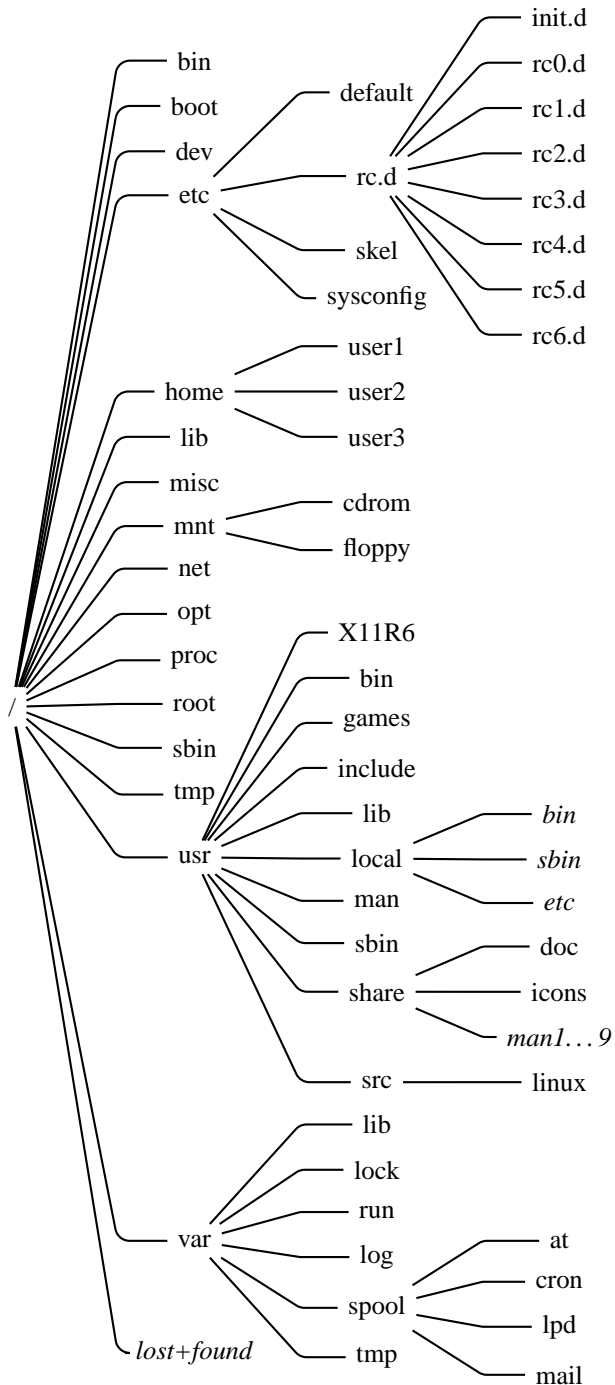


Overview: The filesystem tree



Note on symbols

† tags directories required to boot properly and should be part of the root file system rather than being a separate file system.
‡ tags directories that are sometimes created as separate file systems and/or have file system quotas applied in order to limit the damage that a user or application may cause.

/bin †

Short for “binaries”, this directory holds common programs used by regular users, systems administrators and the system itself. /bin normally does not contain any sub-directories.

/boot †

Holds startup files and the kernel. These files are accessed before the rest of the file system is even mounted and thus this file system must be available to the boot loader. For that reason it is often a separate file system in it’s own partition. /boot normally does not contain any sub-directories unless the boot loader (such as `grub`) needs one for it’s own files.

/dev †

Contains special files which reference hardware. On older systems all possible hardware is represented by files. On newer systems /dev is generated dynamically (and is thus a *virtual* file system) and only contains files for hardware that actually exists in the system. /dev may contain sub-directories (representing “classes” of hardware).

/etc †

Important (and global) system configuration files reside here. It contains data similar to the Control Panel or the Registry in Microsoft Windows. /etc contains many sub-directories to represent config files for particular applications.

/home ‡

/home contains one directory per “normal” (non-system) user. The user stores their personal data, binaries and configuration files in their own sub-directory here. It is sometimes mounted over a network from a central file server in order to provide users with their files wherever they login. /home often contains sub-directories, one per user.

/lib †

Library files (similar to `dll` files in Microsoft Windows) reside here. /lib contains sub-directories to store the libraries for special entities such as the (kernel).

/misc

Mandated by the FHS, /misc is rarely used. It’s purpose is to hold miscellaneous files.

/mnt

Sub-directories in /mnt are used as mount points for temporary media. It normally does not contain regular files on the local computer.

/net

Used as a mount point for remote file systems, normally managed by `amd` and the auto-mounter daemon. /net contains sub-directories, one per remote file system mount. It normally does not contain regular files on the local computer.

/opt

Mandated by the FHS, `opt` contains optional or third-party software. In most respects it is identical to `/usr/local/` on other Unix variants. /opt contains sub-directories, one per application.

/proc †

/proc is a *virtual* file system. It contains “files” that represent processes, system resources, and other pieces of kernel information. Programs such as `ps` and `top` use /proc to access information about processes rather than talking directly to the kernel as they do in other Unix variants. As a virtual file-system, /proc is in the root file system. If it is not mounted some tools may cease to function properly. /proc contains many sub-directories. Each process is represented by a sub-directory, as is each category of special information.

/root †

This is the home directory for the root user. It is located in the root file system rather than in /home so that root’s files are available even when /home is not mounted.

