

NAME

system — pass a command to the shell

LIBRARY

Standard C Library (libc, -lc)

SYNOPSIS

```
#include <stdlib.h>

int
system(const char *string);
```

DESCRIPTION

The **system()** function hands the argument *string* to the command interpreter `sh(1)`. The calling process waits for the shell to finish executing the command, ignoring `SIGINT` and `SIGQUIT`, and blocking `SIGCHLD`.

If *string* is a `NULL` pointer, **system()** will return non-zero if the command interpreter `sh(1)` is available, and zero if it is not.

The **system()** function returns the exit status of the shell as returned by `waitpid(2)`, or `-1` if an error occurred when invoking `fork(2)` or `waitpid(2)`. A return value of 127 means the execution of the shell failed.

SEE ALSO

`sh(1)`, `execve(2)`, `fork(2)`, `waitpid(2)`, `popen(3)`

STANDARDS

The **system()** function conforms to ISO/IEC 9899:1990 (“ISO C90”) and is expected to be IEEE Std 1003.2 (“POSIX.2”) compatible.