

NAME

comm – compare two sorted files line by line

SYNOPSIS

comm [*OPTION*]... *FILE1 FILE2*

DESCRIPTION

Compare sorted files FILE1 and FILE2 line by line.

When FILE1 or FILE2 (not both) is –, read standard input.

With no options, produce three-column output. Column one contains lines unique to FILE1, column two contains lines unique to FILE2, and column three contains lines common to both files.

-1 suppress column 1 (lines unique to FILE1)

-2 suppress column 2 (lines unique to FILE2)

-3 suppress column 3 (lines that appear in both files)

--check-order

check that the input is correctly sorted, even if all input lines are pairable

--nocheck-order

do not check that the input is correctly sorted

--output-delimiter=STR

separate columns with STR

--total output a summary

-z, --zero-terminated

line delimiter is NUL, not newline

--help display this help and exit

--version

output version information and exit

Comparisons honor the rules specified by 'LC_COLLATE'.

EXAMPLES

comm -12 file1 file2

Print only lines present in both file1 and file2.

comm -3 file1 file2

Print lines in file1 not in file2, and vice versa.

AUTHOR

Written by Richard M. Stallman and David MacKenzie.

REPORTING BUGS

Report bugs to: bug-coreutils@gnu.org

Report Gentoo bugs to: <https://bugs.gentoo.org/>

GNU coreutils home page: <https://www.gnu.org/software/coreutils/>

General help using GNU software: <https://www.gnu.org/gethelp/>

Report any translation bugs to <https://translationproject.org/team/>

SEE ALSO

join(1), uniq(1)

Full documentation <https://www.gnu.org/software/coreutils/comm>
or available locally via: `info '(coreutils) comm invocation'`

Packaged by Gentoo (9.11-r1 (p0))

Copyright © 2026 Free Software Foundation, Inc.

License GPLv3+: GNU GPL version 3 or later <https://gnu.org/licenses/gpl.html>.

This is free software: you are free to change and redistribute it.
There is NO WARRANTY, to the extent permitted by law.