

NAME

acct – switch process accounting on or off

LIBRARY

Standard C library (*libc*, *-lc*)

SYNOPSIS

```
#include <unistd.h>
```

```
int acct(const char *_Nullable path);
```

Feature Test Macro Requirements for glibc (see **feature_test_macros(7)**):

acct():

Since glibc 2.21:

`_DEFAULT_SOURCE`

In glibc 2.19 and 2.20:

`_DEFAULT_SOURCE || (_XOPEN_SOURCE && _XOPEN_SOURCE < 500)`

Up to and including glibc 2.19:

`_BSD_SOURCE || (_XOPEN_SOURCE && _XOPEN_SOURCE < 500)`

DESCRIPTION

The **acct()** system call enables or disables process accounting. If called with the pathname of an existing file as its argument, accounting is turned on, and records for each terminating process are appended to the file as it terminates. An argument of `NULL` causes accounting to be turned off.

RETURN VALUE

On success, zero is returned. On error, `-1` is returned, and *errno* is set to indicate the error.

ERRORS**EACCES**

Write permission is denied for the specified file, or search permission is denied for one of the directories in the path prefix of *path* (see also **path_resolution(7)**), or *path* is not a regular file.

EFAULT

path points outside your accessible address space.

EIO Error writing to the file *path*.

EISDIR

path is a directory.

ELOOP

Too many symbolic links were encountered in resolving *path*.

ENAMETOOLONG

path was too long.

ENFILE

The system-wide limit on the total number of open files has been reached.

ENOENT

The specified *path* does not exist.

ENOMEM

Out of memory.

ENOSYS

BSD process accounting has not been enabled when the operating system kernel was compiled. The kernel configuration parameter controlling this feature is **CONFIG_BSD_PROCESS_ACCT**.

ENOTDIR

A component used as a directory in *path* is not in fact a directory.

EPERM

The calling process has insufficient privilege to enable process accounting. On Linux, the **CAP_SYS_PACCT** capability is required.

EROFS

path refers to a file on a read-only filesystem.

EUSERS

There are no more free file structures or we ran out of memory.

STANDARDS

None.

HISTORY

SVr4, 4.3BSD.

NOTES

No accounting is produced for programs running when a system crash occurs. In particular, nonterminating processes are never accounted for.

The structure of the records written to the accounting file is described in **acct(5)**.

SEE ALSO

acct(5)