

## Link 5. Search Libraries (II) Using RPATH

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## 1 Based on

## 2 Search libraries (II)

- `-rpath-link`
- `-rpath`
- `LD_RUN_PATH`
- BFD linkers
- Gold linkers

"Study of ELF loading and relocs", 1999

[http://netwinder.osuosl.org/users/p/patb/public\\_html/elf\\_relocs.html](http://netwinder.osuosl.org/users/p/patb/public_html/elf_relocs.html)

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# Compiling 32-bit program on 64-bit gcc

- `gcc -v`
- `gcc -m32 t.c`
- `sudo apt-get install gcc-multilib`
- `sudo apt-get install g++-multilib`
- `gcc-multilib`
- `g++-multilib`
- `gcc -m32`
- `objdump -m i386`

-rpath-link

- rpath-link DIR
  - when using ELF or SunOS, one shared library may require *another*
  - this happens when an `ld -shared` link includes a shared library as one of the input files.
  - may specify a sequence of directory names
    - by specifying a list of names separated by colons, or
    - by appearing multiple times

[https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html\\_node/ld\\_3.html](https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html_node/ld_3.html)

- `rpath-link` DIR
  - when the linker encounters such a dependency when doing a non-shared, non-relocateable **link**, it will automatically try to *locate* the required shared library and include it in the link, if it is not included explicitly.
- in such a case, the `-rpath-link` option specifies the first set of directories to search.

[https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html\\_node/ld\\_3.html](https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html_node/ld_3.html)

- the linker uses the following search paths to locate required shared libraries.
  - 1 Any directories specified by `-rpath-link` options.
  - 2 Any directories specified by `-rpath` options.
  - 3 On an ELF system, if the `-rpath` and `-rpath-link` options were not used, search the contents of the environment variable `LD_RUN_PATH`

[https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html\\_node/ld\\_3.html](https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html_node/ld_3.html)



- The difference between `-rpath` and `-rpath-link`
  - directories specified by `-rpath` options are included in the executable and used at runtime,
- the `-rpath-link` option is only effective at link time

[https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html\\_node/ld\\_3.html](https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html_node/ld_3.html)

- the linker uses the following search paths to locate required shared libraries.
  - ① On SunOS, if the `-rpath` option was not used, search any directories specified using `-L` options.
  - ② For a native linker, the contents of the environment variable `LD_LIBRARY_PATH`
  - ③ The default directories, normally `/lib` and `/usr/lib`
- If the required shared library is not found, the linker will issue a warning and continue with the link.

[https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html\\_node/ld\\_3.html](https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html_node/ld_3.html)

# (1) informs the linker

- The `-rpath-link=dir` option tells the linker that when it encounters an input file that requests **dynamic dependencies** it should search `dir` to resolve them.
- `libfoobar.so` needs `libfoo.so` and `libbar.so`
  - if `rpath-link` is used,
    - no need to specify **dynamic dependencies**
    - no need to know what they are
    - no need to use `-lfoo -lbar`

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/49138195/whats-the-difference-between-rpath-1>

## (2) dynamic dependencies in `.dynamic` section

- the **dynamic dependencies** is defined in the `.dynamic` section of `libfoobar.so`
  - (NEEDED shared library file names)
  - therefore, just need to provide a directory where the required shared libraries can be found

```
$ readelf -d libfoobar.so
```

```
Dynamic section at offset 0xdf8 contains 26 entries:
```

Tag	Type	Name/Value
0x0000000000000001	(NEEDED)	Shared library: [libfoo.so]
0x0000000000000001	(NEEDED)	Shared library: [libbar.so]
0x0000000000000001	(NEEDED)	Shared library: [libc.so.6]
...		
...		

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/49138195/whats-the-difference-between-rpath-1>

### (3) the loader at runtime

- But does `-rpath-link=dir` give us a executable prog? – No.

```
$ ./prog
./prog: error while loading shared libraries: libfoobar.so: \
cannot open shared object file: No such file or directory
```

- at runtime, `libfoo.so`, `libbar.so`, and `libfoobar.so` might not be where they were linked
- but the loader might be able to locate them by other means:
  - through the `ldconfig` cache
  - by setting the `LD_LIBRARY_PATH` environment variable

```
$ export LD_LIBRARY_PATH=.; ./prog
foo
bar
```

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/49138195/whats-the-difference-between-rpath-1>

## (4) effective at link time

- `-rpath-link=dir` gives the linker (ld) the information that the loader (ld.so) would need to resolve some of the **dynamic dependencies** of prog at runtime
  - directories specified by `-rpath` options are *included* in the executable and *used* at runtime,
  - the `-rpath-link` option is only *effective* at link time

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/49138195/whats-the-difference-between-rpath-1>

## (5) no need using `-l` options

- assuming the **dynamic dependencies** *remained* true at runtime
- but it doesn't write that information into the **.dynamic** section of `prog`
- it just lets the linkage succeed, without spelling out all the recursive dynamic dependencies of the linkage by using `-l` options

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/49138195/whats-the-difference-between-rpath-1>

## -rpath-link (5)

- `rpath=dir`
  - provides the linker with the same information as `rpath-link=dir` does
  - instructs the linker to bake that information into the `.dynamic` section of the output file  
(`DT_RPATH` / `DT_RUNPATH` entry in `.dynamic` section)

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/49138195/whats-the-difference-between-rpath-l>



## -rpath-link (6-1)

- by using `-rpath=$(pwd)`, `prog` contains the information that `$(pwd)` is a **runtime search path** for shared libraries that it depends on

```
$ export LD_LIBRARY_PATH=
$ gcc -o prog main.o -L. -lfoobar -Wl,-rpath=$(pwd)
$ ./prog
foo
bar
```

- as we can see:

```
$ readelf -d prog
```

Dynamic section at offset 0xe08 contains 26 entries:

Tag	Type	Name/Value
0x0000000000000001	(NEEDED)	Shared library: [libfoobar.so]
0x0000000000000001	(NEEDED)	Shared library: [libc.so.6]
0x000000000000000f	(RPATH)	Library rpath: [/home/imk/develop/so/scrap]
...		.....
...		

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/49138195/whats-the-difference-between-rpath-link>

## -rpath-link (6-2)

- That search path will be tried (RPATH) `/home/imk/develop/so/scrap` after the directories listed in `LD_LIBRARY_PATH`, if any are set, and before the system defaults- the `ldconfig`-ed directories, plus `/lib` and `/usr/lib`

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/49138195/whats-the-difference-between-rpath-l>

-rpath

# -rpath (1)

- **rpath** designates the **run-time** search path *hard-coded* in an executable file or library
- **dynamic linking loaders** use the **rpath** to find required libraries.
  - **dynamic linking** is a sort of “lazy” linking of required shared libraries not during the stage of **compiling** but the later stage of **running** an executable.
- the **rpath** can be *stored there* at **link** time by the **linker**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end\\_src](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end_src)

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>

- Specifically, it *encodes* a path to shared libraries into the header of an executable (or another shared library).
- this **RPATH header** value (so named in the ELF header standards) may either *override* or *supplement* the system default dynamic linking search paths.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end\\_src](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end_src)

- The `rpath` of an executable or shared library is an *optional entry* in the `.dynamic` section of the `ELF` executable or shared libraries, with the type `DT_RPATH`, called the `DT_RPATH` attribute
- tools such as `chrpath` and `patchelf` can *create* or *modify* the entry `DT_RPATH` later.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end\\_src](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end_src)

# rpath and runpath (1)

- **rpath** and **runpath** are the most complex items in runtime search path
- the **rpath** and **runpath** of an executable or shared library are *optional entries* in the **.dynamic** section
- they are both a list of directories to search for

Name	Value	d_un	Executable	Shared Object
DT_RPATH*	15	d_val	optional	ignored
DT_RUNPATH	29	d_val	optional	optional

<https://refspecs.linuxbase.org/elf/gabi4+/ch5.dynamic.html>

## rpath and runpath (2)

- The only difference between **rpath** and **runpath** is the order they are searched in.
- Specifically, their relation to **LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH**
  - **rpath** is searched in before **LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH**
  - **runpath** is searched in after **LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH**
- ① search **rpath**
- ② search **LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH**
- ③ search **runpath**
- **rpath** cannot be changed dynamically
- **runpath** can be changed dynamically with environment variables

<https://refspecs.linuxbase.org/elf/gabi4+/ch5.dynamic.html>



## rpath and runpath (3)

- The ld dynamic linker does not search DT\_RUNPATH locations for transitive dependencies, unlike DT\_RPATH. [3]
- Instead of specifying the -rpath to the linker, the environment variable LD\_RUN\_PATH can be set to the same effect.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end\\_src](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end_src)

# Displaying RPATH / RUNPATH

- `readelf -d <binary_name> | grep 'R.*PATH'`
  - displays the RPATH or RUNPATH of a binary file.
  - In gcc, for instance, one could specify RPATH by `-Wl,-rpath,/custom/rpath/`

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end\\_src](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end_src)

## --inhibit-rpath LIST

- the option `--inhibit-rpath LIST` of the dynamic linker instructs it to ignore `DT_RPATH` and `DT_RUNPATH` attributes of the **object names** in `LIST`.
- to specify a main program in the `LIST`, give empty string

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#+end\\_src](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#+end_src)

# LD\_PRELOAD environment variable

- libraries specified by the environment variable LD\_PRELOAD and then those listed in /etc/ld.so.preload are loaded before the search begins.
- a preload can thus be used to replace some (or all) of the requested library's normal functionalities, or it can simply be used to supply a library that would otherwise not be found.
- **static libraries** are searched and linked into the ELF file at **link** time and are not searched at **run** time.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end\\_src](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end_src)

## --enable-new-dtags (1)

- The GNU Linker (`ld`) implements a feature which it calls `new-dtags`, which can be used to insert an `rpath` that has lower precedence than the `LD_LIBRARY_PATH` environment variable.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end\\_src](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end_src)

## --enable-new-dtags (2)

- If the `new-dtags` feature is enabled in the linker (`--enable-new-dtags`), GNU `ld`, besides setting the `DT_RPATH` attribute, also sets the `DT_RUNPATH` attribute to the same string. At run time, if the dynamic linker finds a `DT_RUNPATH` attribute, it ignores the value of the `DT_RPATH` attribute, with the effect that `LD_LIBRARY_PATH` is checked first and the paths in the `DT_RUNPATH` attribute are only searched afterwards.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end\\_src](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rpath#end_src)

- If an object file participates in **dynamic linking**, its **program header table** will have an element of type **PT\_DYNAMIC**.
- this **segment** contains the **.dynamic section**
- a special symbol, **\_DYNAMIC**, labels the section, which contains an array of the following structures

<https://refspecs.linuxbase.org/elf/gabi4+/ch5.dynamic.html>

# Dynamic structure

```
typedef struct {
    Elf32_Sword    d_tag;
    union {
        Elf32_Word    d_val;
        Elf32_Addr    d_ptr;
    } d_un;
} Elf32_Dyn;

extern Elf32_Dyn  _DYNAMIC[];

typedef struct {
    Elf64_Sxword    d_tag;
    union {
        Elf64_Xword    d_val;
        Elf64_Addr    d_ptr;
    } d_un;
} Elf64_Dyn;

extern Elf64_Dyn  _DYNAMIC[];
```

- `d_tag` controls the interpretation of `d_un` (*union*)
- `d_val` these objects represent integer values with various interpretations.
- `d_ptr` these objects represent program virtual addresses

<https://refspecs.linuxbase.org/elf/gabi4+/ch5.dynamic.html>



# Dynamic array tags d\_tag of the .dynamic section (1)

Name	Value	d_un	Executable	Shared Object
DT_NULL	0	ignored	mandatory	mandatory
DT_NEEDED	1	d_val	optional	optional
DT_PLTRELSZ	2	d_val	optional	optional
DT_PLTGOT	3	d_ptr	optional	optional
DT_HASH	4	d_ptr	mandatory	mandatory
DT_STRTAB	5	d_ptr	mandatory	mandatory
DT_SYMTAB	6	d_ptr	mandatory	mandatory
DT_RELA	7	d_ptr	mandatory	optional
DT_RELASZ	8	d_val	mandatory	optional
DT_RELAENT	9	d_val	mandatory	optional
DT_STRSZ	10	d_val	mandatory	mandatory
DT_SYMENT	11	d_val	mandatory	mandatory
DT_INIT	12	d_ptr	optional	optional
DT_FINI	13	d_ptr	optional	optional
DT_SONAME	14	d_val	ignored	optional
DT_RPATH*.....	15.....	d_val.....	optional.....	ignored
DT_SYMBOLIC*	16	ignored	ignored	optional
DT_REL	17	d_ptr	mandatory	optional
DT_RELSZ	18	d_val	mandatory	optional
DT_RELENT	19	d_val	mandatory	optional

<https://refspecs.linuxbase.org/elf/gabi4+/ch5.dynamic.html>

## Dynamic array tags d\_tag of the .dynamic section (2)

Name	Value	d_un	Executable	Shared Object
DT_PLTREL	20	d_val	optional	optional
DT_DEBUG	21	d_ptr	optional	ignored
DT_TEXTREL*	22	ignored	optional	optional
DT_JMPREL	23	d_ptr	optional	optional
DT_BIND_NOW*	24	ignored	optional	optional
DT_INIT_ARRAY	25	d_ptr	optional	optional
DT_FINI_ARRAY	26	d_ptr	optional	optional
DT_INIT_ARRAYSZ	27	d_val	optional	optional
DT_FINI_ARRAYSZ	28	d_val	optional	optional
DT_RUNPATH.....	29.....	d_val.....	optional....	optional
DT_FLAGS	30	d_val	optional	optional
DT_ENCODING	32	unspecified	unspecified	unspecified
DT_PREINIT_ARRAY	32	d_ptr	optional	ignored
DT_PREINIT_ARRAYSZ	33	d_val	optional	ignored
DT_LOOS	0x60000000	unspecified	unspecified	unspecified
DT_HIOS	0x6ffff000	unspecified	unspecified	unspecified
DT_LOPROC	0x70000000	unspecified	unspecified	unspecified
DT_HIPROC	0x7fffffff	unspecified	unspecified	unspecified

<https://refspecs.linuxbase.org/elf/gabi4+/ch5.dynamic.html>

- an example of readelf output with RUNPATH and \$ORIGIN:

Dynamic section at offset 0x210268 contains 30 entries:

Tag	Type	Name/Value
(d_tag)	(DT_RUNPATH)	(d_val)
0x0000000000000001d	(RUNPATH)	Shared library: [\$ORIGIN]

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>

- **DT\_RPATH** element holds the string table offset of a null-terminated search library search path string
- the offset is an index into the table recorded in the **DT\_STRTAB** entry.
- this entry is at level 2.
- its use has been superseded by **DT\_RUNPATH**

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>

- **DT\_RUNPATH** element holds the string table offset of a null-terminated library search path string
- the offset is an index into the table recorded in the **DT\_STRTAB** entry.

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>

# \$ORIGIN (1)

- paths in `rpath` and `runpath` can be
  - 1 absolute (e.g., `/path/to/my/libs/`)
  - 1 relative to the current working directory (e.g., `.`)
  - 1 relative to the executable  
by using the `$ORIGIN` variable  
in the `rpath` definition:

`https://amir.rachum.com/shared-libraries/`

## \$ORIGIN (2)

- when the **dynamic linker** loads an object that uses \$ORIGIN, it must calculate the pathname of the directory containing the object
- the pathname will contain
  - no symbolic links
  - no use of `.` or `..` components.

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>

## \$ORIGIN (3)

- within a string provided by dynamic array entries with the `DT_NEEDED` or `DT_RUNPATH` tags and in pathnames passed as parameters to the `dlopen()` routine, a dollar sign (`$`) introduces a **substitution sequence**.
- **substitution sequence** consists of the `$` sign immediately followed by
  - either the longest name sequence
  - or a name contained within `{` and `}`

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>



## \$ORIGIN (4)

- If the name is **ORIGIN**, then the **dynamic linker** replaces the **substitution sequence** with the absolute pathname of the directory containing the object which the **substitution sequence** originated.
- Otherwise (when the name is not **ORIGIN**) the behavior of the **dynamic linker** is unspecified

[https://refspecs.linuxbase.org/elf/gabi4+/ch5.dynamic.html#shobj\\_dependencies](https://refspecs.linuxbase.org/elf/gabi4+/ch5.dynamic.html#shobj_dependencies)

# how to *check* the value of RPATH / RUNPATH

- `$ objdump -x path/to/executable | grep RPATH`
- `$ readelf -d path/to/executable | head -20`
- `$ chrpath -l path/to/executable`

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>

# how to set the value of RPATH / RUNPATH (1)

- during **compilation** time, use `configure -rpath=`

```
$ ./configure LDFLAGS=-Wl,-rpath=$ORIGIN/lib_path
```

- this will tell the **linker** to build and run the **executable** under the *specified* library path, usually used to override the *default* library paths.

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>

## how to set the value of RPATH / RUNPATH (2)

- after **compilation** before **execution**

```
$ chrpath -r “\$\ORIGIN/lib_path” <executable>
```

- this command could fail  
if no **rpath** was set previously for the executable.

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>

## how to set the value of RPATH / RUNPATH (3)

- try below command with `patchelf` utility, which won't complain about an unset `rpath`, and will get `RUNPATH` set to achieve similar target.

```
$ patchelf --set-rpath '$ORIGIN/lib_path' <executable>
```

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>

- `objdump -x`
  - display all available *header* information, including the symbol table and relocation entries
  - Using `-x` is equivalent to specifying all of
    - `-a` archive header information
    - `-f` file headers, summary from the overall header
    - `-h` section header
    - `-p` private headers, specific to the object file format
    - `-r` relocation entries
    - `-t` symbol table entries

`objdump man page`

- `readelf -d`
  - displays the contents of the file's dynamic section, if it has one.

`readelf man page`

# Configure the software (1)

- The configure script is responsible for getting ready to build the software on your specific system.
- It makes sure all of the **dependencies** for the rest of the build and install process are available, and finds out whatever it needs to know to use those **dependencies**

<https://thoughtbot.com/blog/the-magic-behind-configure-make-make-install>



## Configure the software (2)

- Unix programs are often written in C, so we'll usually need a C compiler to build them.
- in these cases the configure script will establish that your system does indeed have a C *compiler*, and find out what it's *called* and where to *find* it.

<https://thoughtbot.com/blog/the-magic-behind-configure-make-make-install>

# Build the software

- Once `configure` has done its job, we can invoke `make` to build the software.
- this runs a series of tasks defined in a `Makefile` to build the finished program from its source code.
- The tarball you download usually doesn't include a finished `Makefile`.
- Instead it comes with a *template* called `Makefile.in` and the `configure script` produces a *customised* `Makefile` specific to your system.

<https://thoughtbot.com/blog/the-magic-behind-configure-make-make-install>

# Install the software (1)

- when the software is built and ready to run, the files can be copied to their final destinations
- The `make install` command will copy
  - the built program, and
  - its libraries and
  - documentation,to the correct locations.

<https://thoughtbot.com/blog/the-magic-behind-configure-make-make-install>

## Install the software (2)

- the program's binary will be copied to a directory on your **PATH**,
- the program's manual page will be copied to a directory on your **MANPATH**, and
- any other files it depends on will be safely stored in the appropriate place.

<https://thoughtbot.com/blog/the-magic-behind-configure-make-make-install>

## Install the software (3)

- since the *install step* is also defined in the **Makefile**, where the software is installed can change based on options passed to the **configure script**, or things the **configure script** discovered about your system.
- depending on where the software is being installed, you might need escalated permissions for this step so you can copy files to system directories.
- Using **sudo** will often do the trick.

<https://thoughtbot.com/blog/the-magic-behind-configure-make-make-install>

# Configure script

- a shell script (generally written by GNU **Autoconf**) that goes up and looks for software and even tries various things to see what works.
- it then takes its *instructions* from **Makefile.in** and *builds* **Makefile** (and possibly some other files) that work on the current system.

<https://tldp.org/LDP/LG/current/smith.html>

# Configure, make, makeinstall

- You run `configure`, type `./configure`  
this builds a new `Makefile`
- Type `make`  
this *builds* the program.  
look for the first target in `Makefile` and  
do what the instructions said.  
The expected end result would be to build an `executable program`
- Now, as root, type `make install`  
this again invokes `make`,  
finds the target install in `Makefile` and  
copies files to the directories to install the program.

<https://tldp.org/LDP/LG/current/smith.html>

- PatchELF is a simple utility for modifying existing ELF executables and libraries.
  - can change the **dynamic loader** ("ELF interpreter") of executables
  - can change the RPATH of executables and libraries.

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>



- patchelf

- `--set-rpath` RUNPATH

Change the DT\_RUNPATH of the executable or library to RUNPATH

- `--add-rpath` RUNPATH

Add RUNPATH to the existing DT\_RUNPATH of the executable or library.

- `--remove-rpath`

Removes the DT\_RPATH or DT\_RUNPATH entry of the executable or library.

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>

- patchelf

- `--shrink-rpath`

Remove from the DT\_RUNPATH or DT\_RPATH all directories that do not contain a library referenced by DT\_NEEDED fields of the executable or library.

For instance, if an executable references one library `libfoo.so`, has an RPATH `"/lib:/usr/lib:/foo/lib"`, and `libfoo.so` can only be found in `/foo/lib`, then the new RPATH will be `"/foo/lib"`.

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>

- patchelf

- `--allowed-rpath-prefixes` PREFIXES

Combined with the "`--shrink-rpath`" option, this can be used for further rpath tuning.

for instance, if an executable has

an RPATH "`/tmp/build-foo/.libs:/foo/lib`",

it is probably desirable to keep the "`/foo/lib`" reference instead of the "`/tmp`" entry.

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>

- patchelf

- **--print-rpath**

- Prints the DT\_RUNPATH or DT\_RPATH for an executable or library.

- **--force-rpath**

- Forces the use of the obsolete DT\_RPATH in the file instead of DT\_RUNPATH.

- By default DT\_RPATH is converted to DT\_RUNPATH

<https://nehck10.medium.com/creating-relocatable-linux-executables-by-setting-rpath>

- `-rpath dir`
  - add a directory to the runtime library search path
  - used when linking an ELF executable with shared objects
  - also used when locating shared objects which are *needed* by shared objects explicitly included in the link see the description of the `-rpath-link` option.
  - all `-rpath` arguments are concatenated and passed to the **runtime linker**
  - the **runtime linker** uses them to locate shared objects at runtime

[https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html\\_node/ld\\_3.html](https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html_node/ld_3.html)

- `-rpath dir`
  - if `-rpath` is not used when linking an ELF executable, the contents of the environment variable `LD_RUN_PATH` will be used if it is defined.
  - if a `-rpath` option is used, the runtime search path will be formed exclusively using the `-rpath` options, ignoring the `-L` options.
  - this can be useful when using `gcc`, which adds many `-L` options which may be on NFS mounted filesystems.

[https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html\\_node/ld\\_3.html](https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html_node/ld_3.html)

- `-rpath dir`
  - for compatibility with other ELF linkers, if the `-R` option is followed by a directory name, rather than a file name, it is treated as the `-rpath` option.

[https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html\\_node/ld\\_3.html](https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html_node/ld_3.html)





# LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH and LD\_RUN\_PATH (0)

LD_RUN_PATH	LD_LIBRARY_PATH
link time resolution linker	run time resolution dynamic loader

[https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html\\_node/ld\\_3.html](https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/ld-2.9.1/html_node/ld_3.html)

# LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH and LD\_RUN\_PATH (1)

---

**LD\_RUN\_PATH** is used for the *link time* resolution of libraries  
**LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH** is used for *run time* resolution of libraries.

---

**LD\_RUN\_PATH** is used by the *linker* to specify  
where to search libraries only at *run time*

**LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH** is used by the *dynamic loader* to specify  
where to search the libraries required to *execute* the binary  
(at the *run time* of the binary)

---

**LD\_RUN\_PATH** is the *runtime* library search path

**LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH** paths are *not* searched during *link time*

---

[https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-difference-between-LD\\_LIBRARY\\_PATH-and-LD\\_RUN\\_PATH](https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-difference-between-LD_LIBRARY_PATH-and-LD_RUN_PATH)

## LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH and LD\_RUN\_PATH (2)

- `LD_RUN_PATH` variable is used by the linker (`ld`) the same way as `-rpath` argument to `ld` is used
- `LD_RUN_PATH` is used if `-rpath` is not specified
- However, if some binary is linked `LD_RUN_PATH` is not used and `-rpath` is specified on `ld` command line and you want to change the paths used to look for libraries at run time, `LD_LIBRARY_PATH` variable must be specified which is used by the dynamic linker (`/lib/ld-linux.so.*`)

[https://bugzilla.redhat.com/show\\_bug.cgi?id=20218](https://bugzilla.redhat.com/show_bug.cgi?id=20218)

## LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH and LD\_RUN\_PATH (3)

- When you use the `-l` option, you must inform the dynamic linker about the directories of the dynamically linked libraries that are to be linked with your program at execution
- The environment variable `LD_RUN_PATH` lets you do this at link time
- to set `LD_RUN_PATH`, list the colon separated absolute pathnames of the directories in the order you want them searched

```
LD_RUN_PATH=/home/mylibs
export LD_RUN_PATH
```

[http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs\\_linkedit\\_dynamic\\_dirsearch.html](http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs_linkedit_dynamic_dirsearch.html)

## LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH and LD\_RUN\_PATH (4)

- the command:  
`cc -static -fpic -o prog file1.c file2.c -L/home/mylibs -lfoo`  
directs the dynamic linker to search for `libfoo.so` in `/home/mylibs` when you execute your program `prog`
- the dynamic linker searches the standard place by default, after the directories you have assigned to **LD\_RUN\_PATH**
- Note that as far as the dynamic linker is concerned, the standard place for libraries is `/usr/lib`.
- Any executable versions of libraries supplied by the compilation system kept in `/usr/lib`

[http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs\\_linkedit\\_dynamic\\_dirsearch.html](http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs_linkedit_dynamic_dirsearch.html)

## LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH and LD\_RUN\_PATH (5)

- The environment variable **LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH** lets you do the same thing at run time.
- Suppose you have moved libfoo.so to /home/sharedobs /home/mylibs → /home/sharedobs
- It is too late to change **LD\_RUN\_PATH**, at least without link editing your program again

```
LD_RUN_PATH=/home/sharedobs
export LD_RUN_PATH    (--> not woking)
```

- however, you can change **LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH**

```
LD_LIBRARY_PATH=/home/sharedobs
export LD_LIBRARY_PATH
```

[http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs\\_linkedit\\_dynamic\\_dirsearch.html](http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs_linkedit_dynamic_dirsearch.html)

## LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH and LD\_RUN\_PATH (6)

- compile command

```
cc -static -fpic -o prog file1.c file2.c -L/home/mylibs -lfoo
```

- now when you execute your program prog

- the dynamic linker

searches for `libfoo.so` first in `/home/mylibs`  
and, not finding it there, in `/home/sharedobs`.

```
LD_RUN_PATH=/home/mylibs
```

```
LD_LIBRARY_PATH=/home/sharedobs
```

- the directory assigned to `LD_RUN_PATH` is searched before the directory assigned to `LD_LIBRARY_PATH`.

[http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs\\_linkedit\\_dynamic\\_dirsearch.html](http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs_linkedit_dynamic_dirsearch.html)

## LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH and LD\_RUN\_PATH (7)

- because the pathname of `libfoo.so` is not hard-coded in `prog`,  
you can *direct* the dynamic linker to *search* a different directory when you execute your program. (`LD_LIBRARY_PATH`)
- You can move a dynamically linked library without breaking your application.

```
LD_RUN_PATH=/home/mylibs  
LD_LIBRARY_PATH=/home/sharedobs
```

[http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs\\_linkedit\\_dynamic\\_dirsearch.html](http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs_linkedit_dynamic_dirsearch.html)



## LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH and LD\_RUN\_PATH (8)

- You can set `LD_LIBRARY_PATH` *without* first having set `LD_RUN_PATH`
- once you have used `LD_RUN_PATH` for an application, the dynamic linker searches the specified directories whenever the application is executed  
unless you have relinked the application in a different environment
  - first `LD_RUN_PATH`, then `LD_LIBRARY_PATH`
  - `LD_RUN_PATH` overrides `LD_LIBRARY_PATH`

[http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs\\_linkedit\\_dynamic\\_dirsearch.html](http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs_linkedit_dynamic_dirsearch.html)

## LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH and LD\_RUN\_PATH (9)

- can assign different directories to **LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH** whenever you execute the application.
- **LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH** directs the dynamic linker to search the assigned directories before it searches the standard place.
- directories, including those in the optional second list, are searched in the order listed.

[http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs\\_linkedit\\_dynamic\\_dirsearch.html](http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs_linkedit_dynamic_dirsearch.html)

- when linking a set-user or set-group program, the dynamic linker ignores any directories that are not built into the dynamic linker.
- Currently, the only built-in directory is /usr/lib

[http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs\\_linkedit\\_dynamic\\_dirsearch.html](http://osr507doc.sco.com/en/tools/ccs_linkedit_dynamic_dirsearch.html)

## LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH and LD\_RUN\_PATH (11)

- can use the environment variable `LD_LIBRARY_PATH` which takes a colon(:) separated list of directories, to add to the `link-editor's` library search path.
- In its most general form, `LD_LIBRARY_PATH` takes two directory lists separated by a semicolon(;)
  - The first list is searched before the list(s) supplied on the command-line
  - the second list is searched after

<https://docs.oracle.com/cd/E19455-01/816-0559/chapter2-48927/index.html>

## LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH and LD\_RUN\_PATH (12)

- Here is the combined effect of setting `LD_LIBRARY_PATH` and calling the `link-editor` with several `-L` occurrences:

```
$ LD_LIBRARY_PATH=dir1:dir2;dir3
$ export LD_LIBRARY_PATH
$ cc -o prog main.c -Lpath1 ... -Lpath2 ... -Lpathn -lfoo
```

- the first path list `dir1:dir2`
  - the second path list `dir3`
- The effective search path will be

```
dir1:dir2:path1:path2... pathn:dir3:/usr/ccs/lib:/usr/lib.
```

<https://docs.oracle.com/cd/E19455-01/816-0559/chapter2-48927/index.html>

## LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH and LD\_RUN\_PATH (13)

- If no semicolon(;) is specified as part of the **LD\_LIBRARY\_PATH** definition, the specified directory list is interpreted after any -L options (the second list)

```
$ LD_LIBRARY_PATH=dir1:dir2
$ export LD_LIBRARY_PATH
$ cc -o prog main.c -Lpath1 ... -Lpath2 ... -Lpathn -lfoo
```

- Here the effective search path will be

```
path1:path2... pathn:dir1:dir2:/usr/ccs/lib:/usr/lib.
```

<https://docs.oracle.com/cd/E19455-01/816-0559/chapter2-48927/index.html>

- This environment variable can also be used to augment the search path of the runtime linker (see "Directories Searched by the Runtime Linker" for more details).
- To prevent this environment variable from influencing the **link-editor**, use the **-i** option.

<https://docs.oracle.com/cd/E19455-01/816-0559/chapter2-48927/index.html>

# Executable File (1)

- executable files of various formats can be directly executed by the CPU once loaded by a suitable executable loader, rather than being interpreted by other software

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison\\_of\\_executable\\_file\\_formats](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_executable_file_formats)



# Executable File (2)

- typical executables contain

---

- binary application code

---

- headers and tables

with relocation and fixup information

---

- various kinds of meta data

---

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison\\_of\\_executable\\_file\\_formats](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_executable_file_formats)

# Executable File Formats

- the examples executable file formats

---

PE	on Microsoft Windows
ELF	on Linux and most other versions of Unix
Mach-O	on macOS and iOS
MZ	on DOS

---

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison\\_of\\_executable\\_file\\_formats](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_executable_file_formats)

# BFD (Binary File Descriptor) (1)

- **BFD** is a package which allows applications to use the *same routines* to operate on object files whatever the **object file format**.
- **BFD** consists of two parts:
  - the **front end** - common for various object file formats
  - the **back ends** - one for each object file format
  - a *new object file format* can be supported simply by creating a new BFD back end and adding it to the library

[https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/bfd-2.9.1/html\\_mono/bfd.html#SEC1](https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/bfd-2.9.1/html_mono/bfd.html#SEC1)

# BFD (Binary File Descriptor) (2)

- the **front end** of **BFD** provides the interface to the user.
  - manages memory and various canonical data structures
  - decides which **back end** to use and when to call **back end** routines.
- the **back ends** provide **BFD** its view of the real world.
  - provides a set of calls which the **BFD front end** can use to maintain its canonical form
  - may keep around information for their own use, for greater efficiency.

[https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/bfd-2.9.1/html\\_mono/bfd.html#SEC1](https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/bfd-2.9.1/html_mono/bfd.html#SEC1)

## BFD (Binary File Descriptor) (3)

- to use the **BFD** library,
  - include `bfd.h`
  - link with `libbfd.a`
- **BFD** provides a common interface to the parts of an object file for a *calling application*
- when an application successfully opens a target file (object, archive, or whatever), a pointer to an internal structure is returned

[https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/bfd-2.9.1/html\\_mono/bfd.html#SEC1](https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/bfd-2.9.1/html_mono/bfd.html#SEC1)

## BFD (Binary File Descriptor) (4)

- this returned pointer points to a structure called `bfd`, described in `bfd.h`
- our convention is to call this pointer, a `BFD`, and instances of it within code, `abfd`.
- all operations on the target object file are applied as methods to the `BFD`
- the mapping is defined within `bfd.h` in a set of macros, all beginning with `bfd_` to reduce namespace pollution

[https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/bfd-2.9.1/html\\_mono/bfd.html#SEC1](https://ftp.gnu.org/old-gnu/Manuals/bfd-2.9.1/html_mono/bfd.html#SEC1)

# BFD Libraries (1)

- **BFD libraries** : the GNU Project's *main mechanism* for the portable manipulation of object files
  - as of 2003, it supports approximately 50 file formats for some 25 instruction set architectures.
- **BFD libraries**'s main clients

---

<b>gas</b>	GNU Assembler
<b>gld</b>	GNU Linker
<b>binutil</b>	other GNU Binary Utilities tools
<b>gdb</b>	the GNU Debugger

---

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/49138195/whats-the-difference-between-rpath-1>

- the general purpose **BFD libraries** allows **ld**
  - to read, combine, and write *object files* in many different formats
    - for example, COFF or a.out
  - to link different formats together to produce *any available kind* of object file
  - to read the structured data out of a **core dump**

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/49138195/whats-the-difference-between-rpath-1>



## BFD Libraries (3)

- the frequent need to tinker with the API to accommodate new systems' capabilities has tended to limit its use
- as a result, **BFD** is not distributed separately, but is always included with releases of **binutils** and **GDB**
- Nevertheless, **BFD** is a critical component in the use of GNU tools for **embedded systems** development

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/49138195/whats-the-difference-between-rpath-1>

# BFD linker (1)

- **ld** combines a number of object and archive files, relocates their data and ties up symbol references.
- Usually the *last step* in compiling a program is to *run ld*
- **ld** accepts Linker Command Language files written in a superset of AT&T's **Link Editor Command Language** syntax, to provide explicit and total control over the linking process.

<https://manpages.debian.org/testing/binutils-common/ld.bfd.1.en.html>

## BFD linker (2)

- **ld** uses the general purpose **BFD libraries** to operate on object files
- allows to read, combine, and write object files in many different formats
  - for example, COFF or "a.out".
- *different formats* may be linked together to produce *any* available kind of object file.

<https://manpages.debian.org/testing/binutils-common/ld.bfd.1.en.html>

- flexibility
- diagnostic information
  - many linkers abandon execution immediately upon encountering an error; whenever possible,
  - **ld** continues executing, allowing you to identify other errors (or, in some cases, to get an output file in spite of the error).

<https://manpages.debian.org/testing/binutils-common/ld.bfd.1.en.html>

# gold linker (1)

- **gold** is a linker for ELF files.
  - became an official GNU package was added to binutils in March 2008 and first released in binutils version 2.19.
  - **gold** was developed by Ian Lance Taylor and a small team at Google
  - to make a linker that is faster than the GNU linker, especially for large applications coded in C++.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gold\\_\(linker\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gold_(linker))

## gold linker (2)

- Unlike the GNU linker, **gold** does not use the **BFD** library
- While this *limits* the object file formats to **ELF** only, a *cleaner* and *faster* implementation is claimed to be achieved without an additional abstraction layer.
- the author cited complete removal of **BFD** as a reason to create a new linker /from scratch / rather than incrementally improve the GNU linker.
- This rewrite also *fixes* some *bugs* in old ld that break ELF files in various minor ways.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gold\\_\(linker\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gold_(linker))

- To specify **gold** in a makefile, one sets the LD or LD environmental variable to `ld.gold`.
- to specify **gold** through a compiler option, one can use the gcc option `-fuse-ld=gold`

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gold\\_\(linker\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gold_(linker))