NAME
dialog – display dialog boxes from shell scripts

SYNOPSIS
dialog --clear
dialog --create-rc *file*
dialog [−−**title** *title*] [−−**clear**] **box-options**

DESCRIPTION
Dialog is a program that will let you to present a variety of questions or display messages using dialog boxes from a shell script. Currently, these types of dialog boxes are implemented:

yes/no box, **menu** box, **input** box, **message** box, **text** box, **info** box, and **checklist** box.

OPTIONS
−−**clear**
>   The screen will be cleared to the **screen attribute** on exit.

−−**create-rc** *file*
>   Since **dialog** supports run-time configuration, this can be used to dump a sample configuration file to the file specified by *file*.

−−**title** *title*
>   Specifies a *title* string to be displayed at the top of the dialog box.

Box Options

−−**yesno** *text height width*
>   A **yes/no** dialog box of size *height* rows by *width* columns will be displayed. The string specified by *text* is displayed inside the dialog box. If this string is too long to be fitted in one line, it will be automatically divided into multiple lines at appropriate places. The *text* string may also contain the sub-string *"\n"* or newline characters '\n´ to control line breaking explicitly. This dialog box is useful for asking questions that require the user to answer either yes or no. The dialog box has a **Yes** button and a **No** button, in which the user can switch between by pressing the *TAB* key.

−−**msgbox** *text height width*
>   A **message** box is very similar to a **yes/no** box. The only difference between a **message** box and a **yes/no** box is that a **message** box has only a single **OK** button. You can use this dialog box to display any message you like. After reading the message, the user can press the *ENTER* key so that **dialog** will exit and the calling shell script can continue its operation.

−−**infobox** *text height width*
>   An **info** box is basically a **message** box. However, in this case, **dialog** will exit immediately after displaying the message to the user. The screen is not cleared when **dialog** exits, so that the message will remain on the screen until the calling shell script clears it later. This is useful when you want to inform the user that some operations are carrying on that may require some time to finish.

−−**inputbox** *text height width*
>   An **input** box is useful when you want to ask questions that require the user to input a string as the answer. When inputing the string, the *BACKSPACE* key can be used to correct typing errors. If the input string is longer than can be fitted in the dialog box, the input field will be scrolled. On exit, the input string will be printed on *stderr*.

−−**textbox** *file height width*

A **text** box lets you display the contents of a text file in a dialog box. It is like a simple text file viewer. The user can move through the file by using the *UP/DOWN*, *PGUP/PGDN* and *HOME/END* keys available on most keyboards. If the lines are too long to be displayed in the box, the *LEFT/RIGHT* keys can be used to scroll the text region horizontally. For more convenience, forward and backward searching functions are also provided.

−−**menu** *text height width menu-height* [*tag item*] ...

As its name suggests, a **menu** box is a dialog box that can be used to present a list of choices in the form of a menu for the user to choose. Each menu entry consists of a *tag* string and an *item* string. The *tag* gives the entry a name to distinguish it from the other entries in the menu. The *item* is a short description of the option that the entry represents. The user can move between the menu entries by pressing the *UP/DOWN* keys, the first letter of the *tag* as a hot-key, or the number keys *1-9*. There are *menu-height* entries displayed in the menu at one time, but the menu will be scrolled if there are more entries than that. When **dialog** exits, the *tag* of the chosen menu entry will be printed on *stderr*.

−−**checklist** *text height width list-height* [*tag item status*] ...

A **checklist** box is similar to a **menu** box in that there are multiple entries presented in the form of a menu. Instead of choosing one entry among the entries, each entry can be turned on or off by the user. The initial on/off state of each entry is specified by *status*. On exit, a list of the *tag* strings of those entries that are turned on will be printed on *stderr*.

RUN-TIME CONFIGURATION

1. Create a sample configuration file by typing:

        "dialog --create-rc <file>"

2. At start, **dialog** determines the settings to use as follows:

    a) if environment variable **DIALOGRC** is set, it's value determines the name of the configuration file.

    b) if the file in (a) can't be found, use the file *$HOME/.dialogrc* as the configuration file.

    c) if the file in (b) can't be found, use compiled in defaults.

3. Edit the sample configuration file and copy it to some place that **dialog** can find, as stated in step 2 above.

ENVIRONMENT

DIALOGRC   Define this variable if you want to specify the name of the configuration file to use.

FILES

$HOME/.dialogrc   default configuration file

DIAGNOSTICS

Exit status is 0 if **dialog** is exited by pressing the **Yes** or **OK** button, and 1 if the **No** or **Cancel** button is pressed. Otherwise, if errors occur inside **dialog** or **dialog** is exited by pressing the *ESC* key, the exit status is -1.

BUGS

Text files containing *tab* characters may cause problems with **text** box. *Tab* characters in text files must first be expanded to spaces before being displayed by **text** box.

Screen update is too slow.

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