

NAME

clearenv – clear the environment

SYNOPSIS

```
#include <stdlib.h>
```

```
int clearenv(void);
```

Feature Test Macro Requirements for glibc (see [feature_test_macros\(7\)](#)):

```
clearenv(): /* Glibc since 2.19: */ _DEFAULT_SOURCE || /* Glibc versions <= 2.19: */ _SVID_SOURCE
|| _BSD_SOURCE
```

DESCRIPTION

The **clearenv()** function clears the environment of all name-value pairs and sets the value of the external variable *environ* to NULL. After this call, new variables can be added to the environment using [putenv\(3\)](#) and [setenv\(3\)](#).

RETURN VALUE

The **clearenv()** function returns zero on success, and a nonzero value on failure.

VERSIONS

Available since glibc 2.0.

ATTRIBUTES

For an explanation of the terms used in this section, see [attributes\(7\)](#).

Interface	Attribute	Value
clearenv()	Thread safety	MT-Unsafe const:env

CONFORMING TO

Various UNIX variants (DG/UX, HP-UX, QNX, ...). POSIX.9 (bindings for FORTRAN77). POSIX.1-1996 did not accept **clearenv()** and [putenv\(3\)](#), but changed its mind and scheduled these functions for some later issue of this standard (see §B.4.6.1). However, POSIX.1-2001 adds only [putenv\(3\)](#), and rejected **clearenv()**.

NOTES

On systems where **clearenv()** is unavailable, the assignment

```
environ = NULL;
```

will probably do.

The **clearenv()** function may be useful in security-conscious applications that want to precisely control the environment that is passed to programs executed using [exec\(3\)](#). The application would do this by first clearing the environment and then adding select environment variables.

Note that the main effect of **clearenv()** is to adjust the value of the pointer [environ\(7\)](#); this function does not erase the contents of the buffers containing the environment definitions.

The DG/UX and Tru64 man pages write: If *environ* has been modified by anything other than the [putenv\(3\)](#), [getenv\(3\)](#), or **clearenv()** functions, then **clearenv()** will return an error and the process environment will remain unchanged.

SEE ALSO

[getenv\(3\)](#), [putenv\(3\)](#), [setenv\(3\)](#), [unsetenv\(3\)](#), [environ\(7\)](#)

COLOPHON

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