

**NAME**

putenv – change or add an environment variable

**SYNOPSIS**

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

```
int putenv(char *string);
```

Feature Test Macro Requirements for glibc (see [feature\\_test\\_macros\(7\)](#)):

```
putenv(): _XOPEN_SOURCE || /* Glibc since 2.19: */ _DEFAULT_SOURCE || /* Glibc versions <= 2.19:
*/ _SVID_SOURCE
```

**DESCRIPTION**

The **putenv()** function adds or changes the value of environment variables. The argument *string* is of the form *name=value*. If *name* does not already exist in the environment, then *string* is added to the environment. If *name* does exist, then the value of *name* in the environment is changed to *value*. The string pointed to by *string* becomes part of the environment, so altering the string changes the environment.

**RETURN VALUE**

The **putenv()** function returns zero on success, or nonzero if an error occurs. In the event of an error, *errno* is set to indicate the cause.

**ERRORS****ENOMEM**

Insufficient space to allocate new environment.

**ATTRIBUTES**

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

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

**CONFORMING TO**

POSIX.1-2001, POSIX.1-2008, SVr4, 4.3BSD.

**NOTES**

The **putenv()** function is not required to be reentrant, and the one in glibc 2.0 is not, but the glibc 2.1 version is.

Since version 2.1.2, the glibc implementation conforms to SUSv2: the pointer *string* given to **putenv()** is used. In particular, this string becomes part of the environment; changing it later will change the environment. (Thus, it is an error to call **putenv()** with an automatic variable as the argument, then return from the calling function while *string* is still part of the environment.) However, glibc versions 2.0 to 2.1.1 differ: a copy of the string is used. On the one hand this causes a memory leak, and on the other hand it violates SUSv2.

The 4.4BSD version, like glibc 2.0, uses a copy.

SUSv2 removes the *const* from the prototype, and so does glibc 2.1.3.

**SEE ALSO**

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

**COLOPHON**

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