

NAME

FIGlet – display large characters made up of ordinary screen characters

SYNOPSIS

```
figlet [ -cklnoprstvxDELNRSWX ] [ -d fontdirectory ]
      [ -f fontfile ] [ -m layoutmode ]
      [ -w outputwidth ] [ -C controlfile ]
      [ -I infocode ] [ message ]
```

DESCRIPTION

FIGlet prints its input using large characters (called “FIGcharacters”) made up of ordinary screen characters (called “sub-characters”). **FIGlet** output is generally reminiscent of the sort of “signatures” many people like to put at the end of e-mail and UseNet messages. It is also reminiscent of the output of some banner programs, although it is oriented normally, not sideways.

FIGlet can print in a variety of fonts, both left-to-right and right-to-left, with adjacent FIGcharacters kerned and “smushed” together in various ways. **FIGlet** fonts are stored in separate files, which can be identified by the suffix “.ff”. In systems with UTF-8 support **FIGlet** may also support TOLlet “.tlf” fonts. Most **FIGlet** font files will be stored in **FIGlet**’s default font directory.

FIGlet can also use “control files”, which tell it to map certain input characters to certain other characters, similar to the Unix **tr** command. Control files can be identified by the suffix “.flc”. Most **FIGlet** control files will be stored in **FIGlet**’s default font directory.

You can store **FIGlet** fonts and control files in compressed form. See **COMPRESSED FONTS**.

USAGE

Just start up **FIGlet** (type “**figlet**”) and then type whatever you want. Alternatively, pipe a file or the output of another command through **FIGlet**, or put input on the command line after the options. See **EXAMPLES** for other things to do.

OPTIONS

FIGlet reads command line options from left to right, and only the last option that affects a parameter has any effect. Almost every option has an inverse, so that, for example, if **FIGlet** is customized with a shell **alias**, all the options are usually still available.

Commonly-used options are **-f**, **-c**, **-k**, **-t**, **-p** and **-v**.

-f fontfile

Select the font. The .ff suffix may be left off of *fontfile*, in which case **FIGlet** automatically appends it. **FIGlet** looks for the file first in the default font directory and then in the current directory, or, if *fontfile* was given as a full pathname, in the given directory. If the **-f** option is not specified, **FIGlet** uses the font that was specified when it was compiled. To find out which font this is, use the **-I3** option.

-d fontdirectory

Change the default font directory. **FIGlet** looks for fonts first in the default directory and then in the current directory. If the **-d** option is not specified, **FIGlet** uses the directory that was specified when it was compiled. To find out which directory this is, use the **-I2** option.

-c**-l****-r****-x**

These options handle the justification of **FIGlet** output. **-c** centers the output horizontally. **-l** makes the output flush-left. **-r** makes it flush-right. **-x** (default) sets the justification according to whether left-to-right or right-to-left text is selected. Left-to-right text will be flush-left, while right-to-left text will be flush-right. (Left-to-right versus right-to-left text is controlled by **-L**, **-R**

and **-X**.)

-t

-w *outputwidth*

These options control the *outputwidth*, or the screen width **FIGlet** assumes when formatting its output. **FIGlet** uses the *outputwidth* to determine when to break lines and how to center the output. Normally, **FIGlet** assumes 80 columns so that people with wide terminals won't annoy the people they e-mail **FIGlet** output to. **-t** sets the *outputwidth* to the terminal width. If the terminal width cannot be determined, the previous *outputwidth* is retained. **-w** sets the *outputwidth* to the given integer. An *outputwidth* of 1 is a special value that tells **FIGlet** to print each non-space FIGcharacter, in its entirety, on a separate line, no matter how wide it is.

-p

-n

These options control how **FIGlet** handles newlines. **-p** puts **FIGlet** into “paragraph mode”, which eliminates some unnecessary line breaks when piping a multi-line file through **FIGlet**. In paragraph mode, **FIGlet** treats line breaks within a paragraph as if they were merely blanks between words. (Specifically, **-p** causes **FIGlet** to convert any newline which is not preceded by a newline and not followed by a space character into a blank.) **-n** (default) puts **FIGlet** back to normal, in which every newline **FIGlet** reads causes it to produce a line break.

-D

-E

-D switches to the German (ISO 646-DE) character set. Turns ‘[’, ‘\’ and ‘]’ into umlauted A, O and U, respectively. ‘{’, ‘|’ and ‘}’ turn into the respective lower case versions of these. ‘~’ turns into s-z. **-E** turns off **-D** processing. These options are deprecated, which means they probably will not appear in the next version of **FIGlet**.

-C *controlfile*

-N

These options deal with **FIGlet** *controlfiles*. A *controlfile* is a file containing a list of commands that **FIGlet** executes each time it reads a character. These commands can map certain input characters to other characters, similar to the Unix **tr** command or the **FIGlet -D** option. **FIGlet** maintains a list of *controlfiles*, which is empty when **FIGlet** starts up. **-C** adds the given *controlfile* to the list. **-N** clears the *controlfile* list, cancelling the effect of any previous **-C**. **FIGlet** executes the commands in all *controlfiles* in the list. See the file *figfont.txt*, provided with **FIGlet**, for details on how to write a *controlfile*.

-s

-S

-k

-W

-o

These options control how **FIGlet** spaces the FIGcharacters that it outputs. **-s** (default) and **-S** cause “smushing”. The FIGcharacters are displayed as close together as possible, and overlapping sub-characters are removed. Exactly which sub-characters count as “overlapping” depends on the font’s *layoutmode*, which is defined by the font’s author. **-k** causes “kerning”. As many blanks as possible are removed between FIGcharacters, so that they touch, but the FIGcharacters are not smushed. **-W** makes **FIGlet** display all FIGcharacters at their full width, which may be fixed or variable, depending on the font.

The difference between **-s** and **-S** is that **-s** will not smush a font whose author specified kerning or full width as the default *layoutmode*, whereas **-S** will attempt to do so.

If there is no information in the font about how to smush, or if the **-o** option is specified, then the FIGcharacters are “overlapped”. This means that after kerning, the first subcharacter of each FIGcharacter is removed. (This is not done if a FIGcharacter contains only one subcharacter.)

-m *layoutmode*

Specifies an explicit *layoutmode* between **1** and **63**. *Smushmodes* are explained in *figfont.txt*, which also provides complete information on the format of a **FIGlet** font. For the sake of backward compatibility with versions of **FIGlet** before 2.2, **-m0** is equivalent to **-k**, **-m-1** is equivalent to **-W**, and **-m-2** is equivalent to **-s**. The **-m** switch is normally used only by font designers testing the various *layoutmodes* with a new font.

-v**-I** *infocode*

These options print various information about **FIGlet**, then exit. If several of these options are given on the command line, only the last is executed, and only after all other command-line options have been dealt with.

-v prints version and copyright information, as well as a “Usage: ...” line. **-I** prints the information corresponding to the given *infocode* in a consistent, reliable (i.e., guaranteed to be the same in future releases) format. **-I** is primarily intended to be used by programs that use **FIGlet**. *infocode* can be any of the following.

-1 Normal operation (default).

This *infocode* indicates that **FIGlet** should operate normally, not giving any informational printout, printing its input in the selected font.

0 Version and copyright.

This is identical to **-v**.

1 Version (integer).

This will print the version of your copy of **FIGlet** as a decimal integer. The main version number is multiplied by 10000, the sub-version number is multiplied by 100, and the sub-sub-version number is multiplied by 1. These are added together, and the result is printed out. For example, **FIGlet** 2.2 will print “**20200**”, version 2.2.1 will print “**20201**”. Similarly, version 3.7.2 would print “**30702**”. These numbers are guaranteed to be ascending, with later versions having higher numbers. Note that the first major release of **FIGlet**, version 2.0, did not have the **-I** option.

2 Default font directory.

This will print the default font directory. It is affected by the **-d** option.

3 Font. This will print the name of the font **FIGlet** would use. It is affected by the **-f** option. This is not a filename; the “.**ff**” suffix is not printed.**4** Output width.

This will print the value **FIGlet** would use for *outputwidth*, the number of columns wide **FIGlet** assumes the screen is. It is affected by the **-w** and **-t** options.

5 Supported font formats.

This will list font formats supported by **FIGlet**. Possible formats are “**ff2**” for FIGfont Version 2 **.ff** files and “**tf2**” for TOIlet **.tif** files.

If *infocode* is any other positive value, **FIGlet** will simply exit without printing anything.

-L**-R****-X**

These options control whether **FIGlet** prints left-to-right or right-to-left. **-L** selects left-to-right printing. **-R** selects right-to-left printing. **-X** (default) makes **FIGlet** use whichever is specified in the font file.

Once the options are read, if there are any remaining words on the command line, they are used instead of standard input as the source of text. This feature allows shell scripts to generate large letters without having to dummy up standard input files.

An empty argument, obtained by two sequential quotes, results in a line break.

EXAMPLES

To use **FIGlet** with its default settings, simply type

```
example% figlet
```

and then type whatever you like.

To change the font, use the **-f** option, for example,

```
example% figlet -f script
```

Use the **-c** option if you would prefer centered output:

```
example% figlet -c
```

We have found that the most common use of **FIGlet** is making up large text to be placed in e-mail messages. For this reason, **FIGlet** defaults to 80 column output. If you are using a wider terminal, and would like **FIGlet** to use the full width of your terminal, use the **-t** option:

```
example% figlet -t
```

If you don't want **FIGlet** to smush FIGcharacters into each other, use the **-k** option:

```
example% figlet -k
```

If **figlet** gets its input from a file, it is often a good idea to use **-p**:

```
example% figlet -p < myfile
```

Of course, the above can be combined:

```
example% figlet -ptk -f shadow < anotherfile
example% figlet -cf slant
```

Finally, if you want to have **FIGlet** take the input from the command line instead of a file:

```
example% figlet Hello world
```

Other Things to Try

On many systems nice effects can be obtained from the **lean** font by piping it through **tr**. Some you might want to try are the following:

```
example% figlet -f lean | tr ' _/ ' ()'
example% figlet -f lean | tr ' _/ ' .\^'
example% figlet -f lean | tr ' _/ ' //'
example% figlet -f lean | tr ' _/ ' / '
```

Similar things can be done with the **block** font and many of the other **FIGlet** fonts.

COMPRESSED FONTS

You can compress the fonts and controlfiles using the **zip** archiving program. Place only one font or controlfile in each archive, and rename the archive file (which will have a name ending in **.zip**) back to **.fff** or **.flc** as the case may be. If you don't rename the file appropriately, **FIGlet** won't be able to find it.

FIGlet does not care what the filename within the **.zip** archive is, and will process only the first file.

The **.zip** format was chosen because tools to create and manipulate it are widely available for free on many platforms.

THE STANDARD FONTS

Here are a few notes about some of the fonts provided with *FIGlet*. You can get many other font from the Web site

<http://www.figlet.org/>

This location should also contain the latest version of **FIGlet** and other related utilities.

The font *standard* is the basic **FIGlet** font, used when no other font is specified. (This default can be changed when **FIGlet** is compiled on your system.) The *controlfiles* 8859-2, 8859-3, 8859-4, and 8859-9 are provided for interpreting those character sets, also known as ISO Latin-2 through Latin-5 respectively. The character set 8859-1 (ISO Latin-1) is **FIGlet's** default and requires no special *controlfile*.

Closely related are the fonts *slant*, *shadow*, *small*, *smslant* (both small and slanted), *smshadow*, (both small and shadowed), and *big*. These fonts support only Latin-1, except that *big* supports Greek FIGcharacters as well; the *controlfiles* *frango* (for Greek text written in Latin characters, so-called “*frangovlakhika*”), and 8859-7 (for mixed Latin/Greek text) are provided.

The *ivrit* font is a right-to-left font including both Latin and Hebrew FIGcharacters; the Latin characters are those of the *standard* font. The available *controlfiles* are *ilhebrew*, which maps the letters you get by typing on a U.S. keyboard as if it were a Hebrew keyboard; *ushebrew*, which makes a reasonable mapping from Latin letters to Hebrew ones; and 8859-8, which supports mixed Latin/Hebrew text. **Warning:** **FIGlet** doesn't support bidirectional text, so everything will come out right-to-left, even Latin letters.

The fonts *terminal*, *digital*, and *bubble* output the input character with some decoration around it (or no decoration, in the case of *terminal*). The characters coded 128 to 159, which have varying interpretations, are output as-is. You can use the appropriate *controlfiles* to process Latin-2, Latin-3, or Latin-4 (but not Latin-5) text, provided your output device has screen or printer fonts that are appropriate for these character sets.

Two script fonts are available: *script*, which is larger than *standard*, and *smscript*, which is smaller.

The font *lean* is made up solely of ‘*l*’ and ‘*_*’ sub-characters; *block* is a straight (non-leaning) version of it.

The font *mini* is very small, and especially suitable for e-mail signatures.

The font *banner* looks like the output of the **banner** program; it is a capitals and small capitals font that doesn't support the ISO Latin-1 extensions to plain ASCII. It does, however, support the Japanese *katakana* syllabary; the *controlfile* *uskata* maps the upper-case and lower-case Latin letters into the 48 basic *katakana* characters, and the *controlfile* *jis0201* handles JIS 0201X (JIS-Roman) mixed Latin and *katakana* text. Furthermore, the *banner* font also supports Cyrillic (Russian) FIGcharacters; the *controlfile* 8859-5 supports mixed Latin and Cyrillic text, the *controlfile* *koi8r* supports the popular KOI8-R mapping of mixed text, and the *controlfile* *moscow* supports a sensible mapping from Latin to Cyrillic, compatible with the *moscow* font (not supplied).

The fonts *mnemonic* and *safemnem* support the mnemonic character set documented in RFC 1345. They implement a large subset of Unicode (over 1800 characters) very crudely, using ASCII-based mnemonic sequences, and are good for getting a quick look at UTF-8 unicode files, using the *controlfile* *utf8*.

ENVIRONMENT

FIGLET_FONTPATH

If \$FIGLET_FONTPATH is set, its value is used as a path to search for font files.

FILES

<i>file.fff</i>	FIGlet font file
<i>file.flc</i>	FIGlet control file

DIAGNOSTICS

FIGlet's diagnostics are intended to be self-explanatory. Possible messages are

Usage: ...
Out of memory

Unable to open font file
Not a FIGlet 2 font file
Unable to open control file
Not a FIGlet 2 control file
"-t" is disabled, since ioctl is not fully implemented.

This last message is printed when the **-t** option is given, but the operating system in use does not include the system call **FIGlet** uses to determine the terminal width.

FIGlet also prints an explanatory message if the **-F** option is given on the command line. The earlier version of **FIGlet**, version 2.0, listed the available fonts when the **-F** option was given. This option has been removed from **FIGlet** 2.1. It has been replaced by the **figlist** script, which is part of the standard **FIGlet** package.

ORIGIN

“**FIGlet**” stands for “Frank, Ian and Glenn’s LETters”. Inspired by Frank’s .sig, Glenn wrote (most of) it, and Ian helped.

Most of the standard **FIGlet** fonts were inspired by signatures on various UseNet articles. Since typically hundreds of people use the same style of letters in their signatures, it was often not deemed necessary to give credit to any one font designer.

BUGS

Very little error checking is done on font and control files. While **FIGlet** tries to be forgiving of errors, and should (hopefully) never actually crash, using an improperly-formatted file with **FIGlet** will produce unpredictable output.

FIGlet does not handle format characters in a very intelligent way. A tab character is converted to a blank, and vertical-tab, form-feed and carriage-return are each converted to a newline. On many systems, tabs can be handled better by piping files through **expand** before piping through **FIGlet**.

FIGlet output is quite ugly if it is displayed in a proportionally-spaced font. I suppose this is to be expected.

Please report any errors you find in this man page or the program to <info@figlet.org>

WEBSITE AND MAILING LIST

You can get many fonts which are not in the basic **FIGlet** package from the Web site <http://www.figlet.org/>. It should also contain the latest version of **FIGlet** and other utilities related to **FIGlet**.

There is a mailing list for **FIGlet** for general discussions about **FIGlet** and a place where you can ask questions or share ideas with other **FIGlet** users. It is also the place where we will publish news about new fonts, new software updates etc.

To subscribe or unsubscribe from the **FIGlet** mailing list, please send email to figlet-subscribe@figlet.org or figlet-unsubscribe@figlet.org or visit the following web page: <http://www.figlet.org/mail-man/listinfo/figlet>

AUTHORS

Glenn Chappell did most of the work. You can e-mail him but he is not an e-mail fanatic; people who e-mail Glenn will probably get answers, but if you e-mail his best friend:

Ian Chai, who *is* an e-mail fanatic, you’ll get answers, endless conversation about the mysteries of life, invitations to join some 473 mailing lists and a free toaster. (Well, ok, maybe not the free toaster.)

Frank inspired this whole project with his .sig, but don’t e-mail him; he’s decidedly an un-e-mail-fanatic.

Gilbert "The Mad Programmer" Heaton added the **-A** option for version 2.1.1. This option specified input from the command line; it is still allowed, but has no effect.

John Cowan added the **-o**, **-s**, **-k**, **-S**, and **-W** options, and the support for Unicode mapping tables, ISO

2022/HZ/Shift-JIS/UTF-8 input, and compressed fonts and control files. He also revised this documentation, with a lot of input from Paul Burton.

Claudio Matsuoka added the support for **.tlf** files for version 2.2.4 and performs random hacks and bugfixes.

As a fan of FIGlet, Christiaan Keet revised the official FIGlet documentation and set up the new FIGlet website at <http://www.figlet.org/> (and the corresponding <ftp://ftp.figlet.org/pub/figlet/>)

SEE ALSO

[figlist\(6\)](#), [chkfont\(6\)](#), [showfigfonts\(6\)](#), [toilet\(1\)](#)