journalctl Query the journal

CONCEPTS

The journal is a binary, indexed log. Filters narrow it before output, so combine them freely: different fields are ANDed.

Journal all entries
↓ `-b -u -p`
Filters boot, unit, priority
↓ `--since -g`
Time and text narrowed set
↓ `-o -n -r`
Output pager or stdout

Reading the system journal needs root or membership of the systemd-journal, adm or wheel group; otherwise you only see your own entries.

SELECT ENTRIES

`journalctl -u <unit>`
Logs of a unit

`journalctl -b`
Current boot only

`journalctl -b -1`
Previous boot

`journalctl -k`
Kernel messages (dmesg)

`journalctl -t <name>`
Entries by syslog identifier

TIME AND PRIORITY

`journalctl -p err`
Errors and worse

`journalctl --since "<date>"`
From a point in time

`journalctl --until "<date>"`
Up to a point in time

`journalctl -S -1h`
Last hour

SEARCH AND FOLLOW

`journalctl -f`
Follow new entries

`journalctl -f -u <unit>`
Follow one unit

`journalctl -n <num>`
Last N entries

`journalctl -g <regex>`
Search messages by pattern

`journalctl -e`
Open pager at the end

`journalctl -r`
Newest entries first

`journalctl --no-pager`
Print without a pager

`journalctl -x`
Add catalog explanations

OUTPUT

`journalctl -o json-pretty`
Entries as readable JSON

`journalctl -o json`
One JSON object per line

`journalctl -o cat`
Messages only

`journalctl -o short-iso`
ISO timestamps

FIELDS AND BOOTS

`journalctl --list-boots`
List recorded boots

DISK AND MAINTENANCE

`journalctl --disk-usage`
Total journal size

`sudo journalctl --vacuum-time=<time>`
Delete archives older than a time

`sudo journalctl --vacuum-size=<size>`
Shrink archives to a size