logrotate Log rotation

CONCEPTS

logrotate is not a daemon: cron or a systemd timer runs it (daily by default). It decides per log whether a rotation is due and records the last rotation date in a state file.

prerotate optional script
↓ rename
Rotate app.log to app.log.1
↓ create
New log empty file
↓ postrotate
Reload app reopen log files
↓ compress
Compress app.log.2.gz
What happens to one log when it is due

The main file /etc/logrotate.conf sets global defaults and ends with include /etc/logrotate.d; packages drop one small file each into that directory.

Options set before any log path act as defaults for the rest of the file; options inside a block { } apply to that block only.

RUNNING

logrotate *<conf>*
Run with a config file (or directory)

logrotate -d *<conf>*
Debug: show what would happen, change nothing

logrotate -f *<conf>*
Force rotation even if not due

logrotate -v *<conf>*
Print what is being done

logrotate -s *<file>* *<conf>*
Use another state file

/var/lib/logrotate.status
State file: last rotation per log

CONFIG STRUCTURE

/path/to/app.log { ... }
Block: log path(s) and their directives

/var/log/a.log /var/log/b.log { ... }
One block for several logs

CONFIG STRUCTURE (cont.)

/var/log/app/*.log { ... }
Glob for the log files

include /etc/logrotate.d
Read all files of a directory

su *<user>* *<group>*
Rotate as this user and group

SCHEDULE AND SIZE

daily
Rotate once a day

weekly
Rotate once a week

monthly
Rotate once a month

rotate *<count>*
Keep this many old logs

size *<size>*
Rotate only when larger (k, M, G)

maxsize *<size>*
Rotate when too big, even before due

COMPRESSION

compress
Compress rotated logs (gzip)

delaycompress
Compress one cycle later

FILES AND NAMING

missingok
No error if the log does not exist

notifempty
Skip rotation if the log is empty

create *<mode>* *<user>* *<group>*
Make a new log after rotation

copytruncate
Copy, then truncate in place

dateext
Use a date instead of a number

SCRIPTS

postrotate ... endscript
Run commands after rotation

sharedscripts
Run scripts once per block, not per log