

How do I change the “primary group” for an existing user?

My current primary group (the `gid` I see listed by `id`) is `me`, rather than `staff` . I'd like to change it to `staff` , without changing anything else about my user account. How do I change the "primary group" (PrimaryGroupID) for my account?

mountain-lion user-account unix group

asked Feb 8 '13 at 23:53

 **orome**

3,835 38 85 169

1 Answer

One way to change your group is through the MacOS System Preferences panel. Open it, and then open the **Users & Groups** panel. Unlock the lock icon in the bottom-left so that you can enter your password and make changes.

Once the panel is unlocked, you can right-click (or option-click) on the user you want to change and select **Advanced Options** from the popup-menu. The advanced options panel will let you specify your default group.

To change the primary group from the **command line**, first get the ID number of the group and then set the primary group id to that value:

Get a list of groups. You may want to pipe this through `less`.

```
# dsccacheutil -q group
```

Change user "scott"s primary id to 20:

```
# dscl . -create /Users/scott PrimaryGroupID 20
```

This solution is from [Richard York's blog post on dscl](#)
Original link dead Oct 15 - now [archived](#)

edited Oct 4 '15 at 14:10

 **Tetsujin**

51.4k 14 77 163

answered Feb 9 '13 at 3:16

 **ScottYoumans**

88 5

Where it says just "Group"? Is there a way to do it from the command line? – [orome](#) Feb 9 '13 at 4:40

Thanks! My old group was `rax` , which is my user name (both 501). Is there any reason to preserve that by adding myself back as a member of the `rax` group (though not as primary). Without doing so will I still have access to all files with `rax:rax` permissions? – [orome](#) Feb 9 '13 at 14:51

Glad to help. I'd add yourself to that group just in case - no harm in doing so. If you don't add yourself to the group, then you'd run the risk of not being able to access a file. – [ScottYoumans](#) Feb 10 '13 at 14:48

looks like with this steps there's additional field `egid` gets added and which still points to `staff`. is that expected? or is there a way to change that as well – [nir](#) Aug 22 '16 at 23:18

