

HDF5 File Organization

An HDF5 file is a container for storing a variety of scientific data and is composed of two primary types of objects: groups and datasets.

- **HDF5 group:** a grouping structure containing zero or more HDF5 objects, together with supporting metadata
- **HDF5 dataset:** a multidimensional array of data elements, together with supporting metadata

Any HDF5 group or dataset may have an associated attribute list. An **HDF5 attribute** is a user-defined HDF5 structure that provides extra information about an HDF5 object.

Working with groups and datasets is similar in many ways to working with directories and files in UNIX. As with UNIX directories and files, an HDF5 object in an HDF5 file is often referred to by its **full path name** (also called an **absolute path name**).

/ signifies the root group.

/foo signifies a member of the root group called foo.

/foo/zoo signifies a member of the group foo, which in turn is a member of the root group.