

Resources

Users' Guide to LaTeX-help

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All sites with L^AT_EX should have one or more L^AT_EX experts to help users. Those experts communicate with each other about difficult problems through various forums, including the T_EXhax mailing list.

Lately, many sites have installed L^AT_EX without having, acquiring, or developing a L^AT_EX expert. Many simple L^AT_EX questions from those sites have been posted directly to T_EXhax, clogging it and prompting redundant replies.

Therefore, a number of T_EXhax subscribers have formed a volunteer L^AT_EX question answering corps. L^AT_EX users with questions should take the following steps:

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- Read the manual very carefully, including a careful check of the index. Most questions are answered there.
- Check whether anyone locally can answer your question. Consider not only paid systems staff but also more experienced users. Similarly, if you paid a commercial company good money for L^AT_EX, you should demand customer support from them—after all L^AT_EX is available for free.
- See if you can work it out yourself, and in the process build L^AT_EX expertise, by use of careful test cases, tracing mode, examining the L^AT_EX source files, etc. Don't go crazy if you're a non-programmer, but give it a shot.
- If all of the above fail, *don't* send mail to T_EXhax. Instead, send mail to

LaTeX-help@sumex-aim.Stanford.EDU.

Your mail will automatically be forwarded to a member of the volunteer corps, in a round-robin rotation. You should hear back shortly, either with a solution to your problem, a request for additional information, or the remark that it exceeded the volunteer's abilities and has been forwarded to other experts, including further volunteers and the T_EXhax mailing list. If you don't hear anything after waiting a reasonable period, write to

LaTeX-help-coordinator@

sumex-aim.Stanford.EDU

with as much information about your original

mailing as you have, and the coordinator will try to track down how it got lost.

Please do not abuse this service. We volunteers have lots of work of our own to do, and will not continue volunteering if the burden is excessive. Make sure you try steps 1-3 before step 4, and always be eager to help others locally who are a step behind you. Also, join TUG (the T_EX Users Group) if you haven't and avail yourself of their classes and publications to develop in-house L^AT_EX expertise.

If you have any questions or comments on this, please write to

LaTeX-help-coordinator@

sumex-aim.Stanford.EDU

not directly to the current person holding that position, as it may change.

Editor's note: Additional volunteers for this project are welcome. Anyone who wishes to lend a hand should get in touch with the coordinator.

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T_EX-Ed

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At the T_EX User's Group 10th Anniversary Conference (September 1989), many attendees expressed similar concerns on the courses that are currently being offered by the T_EX User's Group. In general, it was believed that the T_EX user community is evolving and that training materials and courses need to be developed for the changing nature of the T_EX user community. As a result, several proposals were drawn-up and discussed at the conference. To continue discussing and refining the proposals, T_EX-Ed, a listserv mailing list has been created at the University of Illinois at Chicago. T_EX-Ed will also serve as a forum on all educational aspects of T_EX in general, and teaching materials such as templates, macros, etc. will also be obtainable from T_EX-Ed archives. The teaching materials may

eventually be of interest to T_EX User's Group, and will be removed, in which case, from the archive and be handled by them.

To Subscribe or Signoff T_EX-Ed

T_EX-Ed is accessible to all through Bitnet or Internet via a LISTSERV machine. To add your name to a list, IBM/VM users should send an interactive message as follows:

```
TELL LISTSERV AT UICVM SUB TeX-Ed <your name>
```

For example,

```
TELL LISTSERV AT UICVM SUB TeX-Ed John Doe
LISTSERV picks up your userid and node name automatically.
```

VAX/VMS sites running JNET version 2 can send an interactive message such as:

```
SEND LISTSERV@UICVM SUB TeX-Ed <your name>
```

Users with other environments can contact their local user services group for assistance. Users without interactive messaging capability can send "Command jobs" to LISTSERV via RFC822, PROFS, or IBM NOTE formatted mail.

To remove your name from any list substitute SIGNOFF for SUB as:

```
SEND LISTSERV@UICVM SIGNOFF TeX-Ed
```

Submitting the Archives

The archives is maintained by the Computer Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The archives consist of course materials which any individual or groups have developed and find effective for the teaching of T_EX. The material submitted must include the author's name, the person to contact for more information if different than the author, a description of the environment under which the program or file operates, date of the current version, and a comment if further development is expected. Send the file for the teaching archive to

```
U46491@UICVM
```

or

```
U46491@uicvm.cc.uic.edu
```

to be reviewed and installed.

Retrieving the Archives

Information in the archives can be retrieved as individual files describing single programs. If you have access to BITNET through a VM system you can communicate with the LISTSERV virtual machine by using the command

```
tell listserv at uicvm get [(filename) (filetype)]
```

where "*(filename) (filetype)*" will be replaced by the filename and filetype of the file in which you are interested.

If you are on the Internet, send a standard note addressed to

```
listserv@uicvm.cc.uic.edu
```

The note should contain just the appropriate LISTSERV commands, such as

```
get [(filename1) (filetype1)]
get [(filename2) (filetype2)]
```

substituting the names of the files of interest.

Individual files can be retrieved once you know the name of the appropriate file. For example,

```
tell listserv at uicvm get filename filetype
```

would retrieve the file FILENAME FILETYPE.

Other useful LISTSERV commands

The LISTSERV software allows you to request to be informed of any updates to certain files by means of the AFD ("Automatic File Distribution") and FUI ("File Update Information") commands. LISTSERV will send you information about its own commands if you request it. You can get this information by using the commands like:

```
info ?
info refcard
get listafd memo
```

These commands are used as the message of "tell listserv at uicvm" or the contents of standard notes sent to the LISTSERV machine.

Anonymous FTP

The archive files are also available via anonymous FTP at UICVM. After logging on to userid

```
ANONYMOUS@UICVM.CC.UIC.EDU
```

issue the command

```
CD TeX-Ed.191
```

to access the T_EX-Ed directory.

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