

Using packages to use dynamic acronyms instead of hard-coding them

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In this document I will try to show you how to create and use a list of acronyms in your document the \TeX way. One might ask: 'Why you need this? I can type everything manually and it will be alright...' I guess that if you write your thesis which is 200 pages long, checking whether you have included the definition of the acronym the first time you used a phrase is the least you want.

1 The acronym package

1.1 An example

List of used acronyms:

D₂O deuterated water

H₂O water

DMF di-methyl-formamide

There are only 2 differences between deuterated water (**D₂O**) and water (**H₂O**). On the other hand, both **D₂O** and **H₂O** should behave chemically identically. Also di-methyl-formamide (**DMF**) is in the acronym list.

1.2 Code used for the example

```
1 List of used acronyms:
2 \indent
3 \begin{acronym}
4   \acro{d2o}{\ce{D2O}}{deuterated water}
5   \acro{h2o}{\ce{H2O}}{water}
6   \acro{dmf}{\ce{DMF}}{di-methyl-formamide}
7   \acro{dmso}{\ce{DMSO}}{di-methyl-sulfoxide}
8 \end{acronym}
9
```

```

10 There are only 2 differences between \ac{d2o} and \ac{h2o}. On the other
    hand,
11 both \ac{d2o} and \ac{h2o} should behave chemically identically. Also
12 \ac{dmf} is in the acronym list.

```

As you see, I have defined more acronyms than I have actually used. But, since I have initiated the package with `printonlyused` option as follows:

```

1 \usepackage[printonlyused]{acronym}

```

I do not have to worry about unused acronyms being printed in the list.

If by any chance you want some acronyms to be printed out without them using in the text, you can achieve it by issuing `\acused{}` command, where in the brackets you put the respective label of the acronym. Then the acronym will be printed regardless whether it is mentioned or not as the package will think, that it was used. Also, only short version will occur in the text if it will be used after issuing the mentioned command.

If the `printonlyused` option is omitted, then all defined acronyms will be printed out as a result.

2 The glossaries package

Glossaries package is another possible way to get a similar kind of functionality. It has much more functionality and is probably more suited towards people who want to create extensive lists and have more than one glossary at a time. With this extensibility comes complexity as it is slightly harder to get the glossaries being generated as you need to open command line shell and execute some commands. However for simple acronym usage the `acronym` package is more than enough. But for people who are interested in trying out alternatives, please refer to these web-pages and the documentation of the package.