

# User's guide to xml2ly

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## Abstract

This document presents the design principles behind `xml2ly`, as well as the way to use it. It is part of the `libmusicxml2` documentation, to be found at <https://github.com/grame-cncm/libmusicxml/tree/lilypond/doc>.

All the examples mentioned can be downloaded from <https://github.com/grame-cncm/libmusicxml/tree/lilypond/files/samples/musicxml>. They are grouped by subject in sub-directories, such as `basic/HelloWorld.xml`.

## 1 Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Dominique Fober, the designer and maintainer of the `libmusicxml2` library. This author would not have attempted to work on a MusicXML to LilyPond translator without it already available.

## 2 Overview of xml2ly

### 2.1 Why xml2ly?

LilyPond comes with `musicxml2ly`, a translator of MusicXML files to LilyPond syntax, which has some limitations. Also, being written in Python, it is not in the main stream of the LilyPond development group. The latter has much to do with C++ and Scheme code already.

After looking at the `musicxml2ly` source code, and not being a Python developer, this author decided to go for a new translator written in C++.

The desing goals for `xml2ly` were:

- to perform at least as well as `musicxml2ly`;
- to provide as many options as needed to adapt the LilyPond code generated to the user's needs.

### 2.2 What xml2ly does

**Listings**

**Contents**