

Installing \LaTeX

Distributions and editors

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To write a document with L^AT_EX, the user must install specific programs, as for any other text editor. These are:

- a distribution,
- an editor.

The L^AT_EX distribution contains all tools necessary to generate a document (usually a PDF) from the “code”. The editor is a program which simplifies the L^AT_EX writing by providing shortcuts for compilation (cf. next tutorial) and shortcuts for text styling (e.g., CTRL+B creates bold text).

Which distribution to choose

Comparison of LaTeX distributions based on OS compatibility

OS	Distributions		
	T _E X Live	MiK _T E _X	MacT _E X
Windows	yes	yes	pdf
Linux	yes	yes	yes
MacOS	no	yes	yes

Which distribution to choose

Feedback from my own experience

As I have used both Windows and Linux (mainly CentOS) operating systems but never Mac, I cannot provide any feedback about **MacTeX**. Sorry for Mac users...

However, I have used extensively **MiKTeX** (on Windows only) and **TeX Live** (both Linux and Windows):

- I faced problems for using some packages or compilers with **MiKTeX** that were not existing with **TeX Live** such as
 - compilation issues when using **LuaLaTeX** (cf. tutorial B002),
 - **biber** engine not recognised while I was using the **biblatex** package,
- this is what I experienced
 - I compared up-to-date versions,
 - I did it a few years ago so it could have changed since the comparison was done,
- I **recommend** the use of **TeX Live**.

Which editor to choose

Comparison of LaTeX editors based on OS compatibility

OS	Distributions		
	T _E Xstudio	T _E Xmaker	T _E XnicCenter
Windows	yes	yes	yes
Linux	yes	yes	no
MacOS	yes	yes	no

Which editor to choose

Feedback from my own experience

As I have used both \TeX maker and \TeX studio but \TeX nicCenter. Sorry that I cannot provide any feedback about it...

I have used a lot \TeX maker (on Windows only) then I switched to \TeX studio (both Linux and Windows) because to my opinion:

- the tool was more “clever” considering the key management (references, bibliography),
- it proposes automatic alignment in tabular environments (even though this is not working when the `multicolumn` command is used).

However, for those who like a fine control, e.g. for compilation, \TeX maker is providing a more visible interface.

Anyway, the editor is a matter of taste. So try some and do not hesitate to change and to compare them to find yours.

Installation process