## --- title: Understanding USFMs – Intro (1.2.1)

In this video you learn all about how Paratext uses special tags called USFMs. The tags

* provide the structure of the document by identifying the start of each book, as well as the sections within them.
* help you navigate around the translation using Bible references.
* facilitate the appropriate formatting of the translation by the typesetter according to what each bit of text really is, such as a heading, chapter number, or something special in the Bible text itself such as poetry or a quotation.

USFM stands for **U**nified **S**tandard **F**ormat **M**arker.

USFMs always start with a **backslash**, then a **code**, then a **space**. (e.g. \ft )

With the exception of a closing marker which ends with an asterisk and doesn’t need a space.

* The most common USFMs are:  
  \p (paragraph)  
  \c (chapter)  
  \v (verse)
* The latest USFM standard is online - https://paratext.org/about/usfm  
  then click on **USFM documentation** and **USFM documentation** again a second time.  
  or go directly using [this link](https://paratext.org/download/download-paratext-extras/#usfm-documentation)