

Mardown and Pillar: syntax review

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Illustrations



Introduction

Pillar is a document generator written in Pharo. It allows you to publish books, documentation or even slides support from files written in Pillar, the associated markup syntax. Pillar can generate LaTeX, PDF, HTML documents.

Nonetheless, Pillar is only able to read and parse Pillar syntax for now. We aim to parse more common syntax to make our tool more approachable and friendlier.

Thus you will find in this review the equivalence of notation between Pillar and Markdown. It will be useful for writing a parser based on Markdown conventions for Pillar. We focus here on the most common notations used in Markdown so we are not exhaustive.

We use the Markdown specifications detailed by CommonMark¹

¹<https://spec.commonmark.org/0.29/#images>



Equivalence of notations

2.1 Headers for sections

In Markdown: #

```
# Title 1  
## Title 2  
### Title 3
```

In Pillar: !

```
! Title 1  
!! Title 2  
!!! Title 3
```

2.2 Bulleted lists

In Markdown: *

```
* element a  
* element b  
* element c
```

In Pillar: -

```
- element a  
- element b  
- element c
```

2.3 Numbered lists

In Markdown: n.

```
1. first element
2. second element
3. third element
```

In Pillar: #

```
# first element
# second element
# third element
```

2.4 Nested lists

In Markdown: just a tab

```
1. chap1
  1. chap 1-1
  2. chap 1-2
    - element a
    - element b
2. chap 2
```

In Pillar: write associated symbols after one another

```
# chap 1
## chap 1-1
## chap 1-2
##- element a
##- element b
# chap 2
```

It gives:

1. chap 1
 - a) chap 1-1
 - b) chap 1-2
 - element a
 - element b
2. chap 2

2.5 Formatting

You surround the text you want to format with the following symbol:

- **bold:** `**your text**` in Markdown, `"your text"` in Pillar
- *italic:* `*your text*` in Markdown, `'your text'` in Pillar
- **code:** ``your text`` in Markdown, `==your text==` in Pillar

2.6 Links

In Markdown:

```
[ [name_of_link](url)
```

In Pillar:

```
[ *name_of_link>url*
```

2.7 Images

In Markdown:

```
[ ![name_of_picture](link_to_picture)
```

In Pillar:

```
[ +name_of_picture>link_to_picture+
```

2.8 Code blocks

In Markdown: a new line, then a tab and a new line at the end of your code

```
[  
    type your code with a tab  
]
```

In Pillar:

```
[ [[  
  type your code  
/]]
```

2.9 Notes & Quotes

Note and quote are not exactly equivalent, but both are used to insert a text in another context.

In Markdown:

```
[ > your quote
```

In Pillar: use an anchor

```
[ @@note your note
```


Missing figures in Markdown

The following figures are not covered by Markdow syntax :

- reference through anchor to refer to a section in your document
- definition list
- comment
- format: strikethrough, subscript, superscript, underlined
- environment: `{{{ ... }}}`
- tables: they seem to exist in some particular spec, but we didn't find them in CommonMark ones

As a consequence we can think of using Pillar syntax to generate those figures, as the current Pillar parser is working.

Bibliography

