

reStructuredText

reStructuredText (**RST**, **ReST**, or **reST**) is a file format for textual data used primarily in the [Python programming language](#) community for [technical documentation](#).

It is part of the Docutils project of the Python Doc-SIG (Documentation Special Interest Group), aimed at creating a set of tools for Python similar to [Javadoc](#) for [Java](#) or [Plain Old Documentation](#) (POD) for [Perl](#). Docutils can extract comments and information from Python programs, and format them into various forms of program documentation.^[1]

In this sense, reStructuredText is a [lightweight](#) markup language designed to be both (a) processable by documentation-processing software such as Docutils, and (b) easily readable by human programmers who are reading and writing Python [source code](#).

reStructuredText

<i>reStructuredText</i>	
Filename extension	.rst
Developed by	David Goodger
Initial release	April 2, 2002
Latest release	Revision 8407 (October 29, 2019)
Open format?	Public domain
Website	docutils .readthedocs.io/en/sphinx-docs/user/rst/quickstart.html (https://docutils.readthedocs.io/en/sphinx-docs/user/rst/quickstart.html)

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History

There were a number of problems with the earlier lightweight markup language StructuredText (developed by Zope), and reST was developed to address them.^[2] The name reStructuredText was chosen to indicate that reST is a "revised, reworked, and reinterpreted StructuredText."^[3]

reST began to see significant use in the Python community in 2002.

Reference implementation

The reference implementation of the reST parser is a component of the Docutils text processing framework in the Python programming language, but other parsers are available.

There is no official mime type registered for ReStructured Text, but the unofficial one is `text/x-rst`.^[4]

Applications

reStructuredText is commonly used for technical documentation, for example, in documentation of Python libraries.^[5] However, it is suitable for a wide range of texts.

Since 2008, reST has been a core component of Python's Sphinx document generation system.

Trac also supports reStructuredText,^[6] as do GitHub and Bitbucket.

In 2011, Distributed Proofreaders, which prepared texts for Project Gutenberg, was considering adoption of reST as a basic format from which other ebook formats could be generated.^[7]

In July 2016 the Linux kernel project decided to transition from DocBook based documentation to reStructuredText and the Sphinx toolchain.^[8]

The software build tool CMake switched from a custom markup language to reStructuredText in version 3.0 for its documentation.^[9]

Examples of reST markup

Headers

```
Section Header
=====

Subsection Header
-----
```

Lists

```
- A bullet list item
- Second item

  - A sub item

- Spacing between items separates list items
* Different bullet symbols create separate lists

- Third item

1) An enumerated list item
2) Second item

  a) Sub item that goes on at length and thus needs
     to be wrapped. Note the indentation that must
     match the beginning of the text, not the
     enumerator.

    i) List items can even include
       paragraph breaks.
```

```
3) Third item
#) Another enumerated list item
#) Second item
```

Images

```
.. image:: /path/to/image.jpg
```

Named links

```
A sentence with links to `Wikipedia`_ and the `Linux kernel archive`_.
.. _Wikipedia: https://www.wikipedia.org/
.. _Linux kernel archive: https://www.kernel.org/
```

Anonymous links

```
Another sentence with an `anonymous link to the Python website`_.
__ https://www.python.org/
```

N.B.: named links and anonymous links are enclosed in grave accents (`), and not in apostrophes (').

Literal blocks

```
::
    some literal text

This may also be used inline at the end of a paragraph, like so::
    some more literal text

.. code:: python
    print("A literal block directive explicitly marked as python code")
```

See also

- [Comparison of document markup languages](#)
- [Comparison of documentation generators](#)
- [Comparison of notetaking software](#)

References

1. Mertz, David (2003-02-01). "XML Matters: reStructuredText" (<https://www.ibm.com/developerworks/library/x-matters24/>). IBM developerWorks. Retrieved 2016-10-05.
2. Goodger, David (2016-05-24). "reStructuredText: Markup Syntax and Parser Component of Docutils" (<https://docutils.readthedocs.io/en/sphinx-docs/dev/rst/problems.html>). Docutils Project. Retrieved 2016-10-05.

3. Goodger, David (2016-02-26). "Docutils FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)" (<http://docutils.sourceforge.net/FAQ.html#why-is-it-called-restructuredtext>). Docutils Project. Retrieved 2016-10-05.
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5. Goodger, David (2002-04-02). "PEP 287 -- reStructuredText Docstring Format" (<https://www.python.org/dev/peps/pep-0287/>). Python Software Foundation. Retrieved 2016-10-05.
6. "reStructuredText Support in Trac" (<https://trac.edgewall.org/wiki/WikiRestructuredText>). Trac. 2016-09-13. Retrieved 2016-10-05.
7. Newby, Greg (2011-01-08). "Minutes of 2010 December 11 meeting" (<http://www.pgdp.net/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=44456>). Distributed Proofreaders. Retrieved 2011-01-08.
8. "Kernel documentation with Sphinx, part 1: how we got here" (<http://lwn.net/Articles/692704/>). LWN.net. 2016-07-06. Retrieved 2016-10-27.
9. "CMake 3.0.0 Release Notes" (<https://cmake.org/cmake/help/v3.0/release/3.0.0.html>). Kitware, Inc. 2014-06-10. Retrieved 2016-10-05.

External links

- [Official reStructuredText website with reference pages](http://docutils.sourceforge.net/rst.html) (<http://docutils.sourceforge.net/rst.html>)

Retrieved from "<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=ReStructuredText&oldid=975810477>"

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