Customising LaTeX

Up to now we have been using standard LaTeX commands and packages to create documents.

However, LaTeX is highly customisable, and if we find that we need to do something that is not covered by an existing command, environment or package, we can write our own!

Notes

Custom LaTeX Commands/Macros

We specify our own commands using the `\newcommand` command:

```
\newcommand{name}[num]{definition}
```

It requires two arguments, the *name* of the new command, and its *definition*. It also has an optional argument (num) allowing you to specify how many arguments it takes (up to 9).

Notes

Custom LaTeX Commands - example

```
\newcommand{\ual}{UGC Course on Advanced \LaTeX}

This is the \ual.
```

This is the UGC Course on Advanced LaTeX.

Notes

Custom LaTeX Commands - arguments

```
\newcommand{\ualarg}[1]{UGC Course on Advanced \LaTeX\, presented
 by #1}
\newcommand{\ualargtwo}[2]{UGC Course on Advanced \LaTeX\,
presented by #1 and #2}

This is the \ualarg{Martin}.

This is the \ualargtwo{Martin}{Someone}.
```

This is the UGC Course on Advanced LaTeX presented by Martin.
This is the UGC Course on Advanced LaTeX presented by Martin and Someone.

Notes

Custom LaTeX Commands/Macros

You cannot use digits when naming commands/macros, only letters.

LaTeX will not allow you to create new commands with the same name as existing commands.

Notes

Custom LaTeX Commands - changing commands

If you want to re-use the name of an existing command, or change the definition of an existing command, use the `\renewcommand` option:

```
\renewcommand{name}[num]{definition}
```

So, for example, to change Chapter headings from 'Chapter' to 'Bigger Section':

```
\renewcommand{\chaptertitle}{Bigger Section}
```


Notes

Custom LaTeX Environments

We can specify our own environments using the `\newenvironment` command:

```
\newenvironment{name}[num]{before}{after}
```

Any code given in the `before` block is processed after the `\begin{name}`. Any code given in the `after` block is processed at the `\end{name}`.

Notes

Custom LaTeX Environments - example

```
\newenvironment{dotty}{\noindent\textbullet}{\dotfill}

\begin{dotty}
Here is some text
\end{dotty}
```

• Here is some text .....

Notes

Custom LaTeX Environments - counters

We can create environments with counters included, much like the Figure or Table environments, by declaring a counter with the `\newcounter` command:

```
\newcounter{examplecounter}
\newenvironment{numberedexample}{\refstepcounter{
examplecounter}\textbf{Example \arabic{examplecounter
}}\qquad}{}
```


Notes

Custom LaTeX Environments - counters

```
\newcounter{examplecounter}
\newenvironment{numberedexample}{\refstepcounter{examplecounter}\
textbf{Example \arabic{examplecounter}}\qquad}{}

\begin{numberedexample}
An example
\end{numberedexample}
```

Example 1 An example

Notes

Source Code in LaTeX

The `listings` package provides us with an easy way to include source code within our LaTeX documents.

It allows you to use the `lstlistings` environment to add formatted source code into your document, including features such as line numbers and syntax highlighting.

Notes

The `listings` package

Most simply, we use `listings` by first including the package in our document:

```
\usepackage{listings}
```

and then by including our source code within a `lstlistings` environment.

Notes

The listings package - code input

Alternatively, we can input source code directly from the source itself:

```
\lstinputlisting[language=Java]{source_filename.java}
```

or import just part of a file:

```
\lstinputlisting[language=Java, firstline=23, lastline
=31]{source_filename.java}
```


Notes

The listings package - options

The listings package supports many different languages and has many different options to control how the code is displayed, including:

Type	Use
backgroundcolor	set the background colour
basicstyle	set the code font size
captionpos	set the caption position
commentstyle	comment style
frame	add a frame around source code
morekeywords={...}	add extra keywords
numbers=left	where to add line numbers
numbersep	how much space between numbers and code
numberstyle	set the style of the line numbers
showspaces	add underscores to show spaces
showtabs	add underscores to show tabs
stepnumber	how many lines between line numbers

Notes

The listings package - options

So, for example, we could define some options for our code as:

```
\lstset{
    language=C
    backgroundcolor=\color{gray}
    frame=single,
    numbers=left,
    numbersep=6pt,
    numberstyle=\tiny\color{green},
    stepnumber=2,
    breaklines=true
}
```


Notes

The listings package - styles

We can also define styles - or groups of options - so we can format individual pieces of code separately:

```
\lstdefinestyle{python}{
    language=Python
    backgroundcolor=\color{gray}
    frame=single,
    numbers=left,
    numberstyle=\tiny\color{green},
    stepnumber=2,
}

\lstdefinestyle{java}{
    language=Java
    backgroundcolor=\color{blue}
    numbers=right,
    numberstyle=\tiny\color{red},
    stepnumber=1,
}
```


Notes

The listings package - styles

We can then use our different styles by specifying the style as an option on the listing environment:

Notes

LaTeX Tips and Tricks

Use `\thispagestyle{empty}` to suppress page numbers on a page.

Use a starred version of a sectioning command to suppress numbering (`\section*{section_name}`).

Use `\marginpar{notes in margin}` to add some notes in the margin of a document - useful when commenting or giving feedback.

Notes

LaTeX Tips and Tricks

Use the `hyperref` package to add hyperlinks and navigation in your `.pdf` output

```
\usepackage[pdftex,
    pdfauthor={Martin Chorley},
    pdftitle={Advanced LaTeX},
    pdfpagelayout=TwoColumnRight,
    pdfborder=0
]{hyperref}
```


Notes

LaTeX Tips and Tricks

Use the `\input` command to include multiple LaTeX files within the same document.

This allows you to separate your document across multiple files.

```
\begin{document}
    \input{introduction}
    \input{results}
    \input{conclusion}
\end{document}
```


Notes

LaTeX Tips and Tricks

Use the `\rotating` package to rotate items that are too wide to fit on a page.

```
\usepackage{rotating}
\begin{document}
    \begin{sideways}
        % table or item that is too wide goes here
    \end{sideways}
\end{document}
```

Page headers and footers are not affected, only the content within the `sideways` environment

Notes