Use this document as a template

Example and documentation of the kaobook class

Customise this page according to your needs

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Preface

I am of the opinion that every LaTeX geek, at least once during his life, feels the need to create his or her own class: this is what happened to me and here is the result, which, however, should be seen as a work still in progress. Actually, this class is not completely original, but it is a blend of all the best ideas that I have found in a number of guides, tutorials, blogs and tex.stackexchange.com posts. In particular, the main ideas come from two sources:

- Ken Arroyo Ohori's Doctoral Thesis, which served, with the author's permission, as a backbone for the implementation of this class;
- The Tufte-Latex Class, which was a model for the style.

The first chapter of this book is introductory and covers the most essential features of the class. Next, there is a bunch of chapters devoted to all the commands and environments that you may use in writing a book; in particular, it will be explained how to add notes, figures and tables, and references. The second part deals with the page layout and design, as well as additional features like coloured boxes and theorem environments.

I started writing this class as an experiment, and as such it should be regarded. Since it has always been intended for my personal use, it may not be perfect but I find it quite satisfactory for the use I want to make of it. I share this work in the hope that someone might find here the inspiration for writing his or her own class.

Federico Marotta

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1.1 The Main Ideas

Many modern printed textbooks have adopted a layout with prominent margins where small figures, tables, remarks and just about everything else can be displayed. Arguably, this layout helps to organise the discussion by separating the main text from the ancillary material, which at the same time is very close to the point in the text where it is referenced.

This document does not aim to be an apology of wide margins, for there are many better suited authors for this task; the purpose of all these words is just to fill the space so that the reader can see how a book written with the kaobook class looks like. Meanwhile, I shall also try to illustrate the features of the class.

The main ideas behind kaobook come from this blog post, and actually the name of the class is dedicated to the author of the post, Ken Arroyo Ohori, which has kindly allowed me to create a class based on his thesis. Therefore, if you want to know more reasons to prefer a 1.5-column layout for your books, be sure to read his blog post.

Another source of inspiration, as you may have noticed, is the Tufte-Latex Class. The fact that the design is similar is due to the fact that it is very difficult to improve something which is already so good. However, I like to think that this class is more flexible than Tufte-Latex. For instance, I have tried to use only standard packages and to implement as little as possible from scratch;[1] therefore, it should be pretty easy to customise anything, provided that you read the documentation of the package that provides that feature.

In this book I shall illustrate the main features of the class and provide information about how to use and change things. Let us get started.

1: This also means that understanding and contributing to the class development is made easier. Indeed, many things still need to be improved, so if you are interested, check out the repository on github!

1.2 What This Class Does

The `kaobook` class focuses more about the document structure than about the style. Indeed, it is a well-known LaTeX principle that structure and style should be separated as much as possible (see also Section Section 1.3 on the following page). This means that this class will only provide commands, environments and in general, the opportunity to do things, which the user may or may not use. Actually, some stylistic matters are embedded in the class, but the user is able to customise them with ease.

The main features are the following:

Page Layout The text width is reduced to improve readability and make space for the margins, where any sort of elements can be displayed.

Chapter Headings As opposed to Tufte-Latex, we provide a variety of chapter headings among which to choose; examples will be seen in later chapters.

Page Headers They span the whole page, margins included, and, in twoside mode, display alternatively the chapter and the section name.[2]

Matters The commands `\frontmatter`, `\mainmatter` and `\backmatter` have been redefined in order to have automatically wide margins in the main matter, and narrow margins in the front and back matters. However, the page style can be changed at any moment, even in the middle of the document.

Margin text We provide commands `\sidenote` and `\marginnote` to put text in the margins.[3]

Margin figs/tabs A couple of useful environments is `marginfigure` and `margintable`, which, not surprisingly, allow you to put figures and tables in the margins (*cfr.* Figure 1.1).

Margin toc Finally, since we have wide margins, why don't add a little table of contents in them? See `\margintoc` for that.

Hyperref `hyperref` is loaded and by default we try to add bookmarks in a sensible way; in particular, the bookmarks levels are automatically reset at `\appendix` and `\backmatter`. Moreover, we also provide a small package to ease the hyperreferencing of other parts of the text.

Bibliography We want the reader to be able to know what has been cited without having to go to the end of the document every time, so citations go in the margins as well as at the end, as in Tufte-Latex. Unlike that class, however, you are free to customise the citations as you wish.

The order of the title pages, table of contents and preface can be easily changed, as in any LaTeX document. In addition, the class is based on KOMA-Script's `scrbook`, therefore it inherits all the goodies of that.

2: This is another departure from Tufte's design.

3: Sidenotes (like this!) are numbered while marginnotes are not

Figure 1.1: The Mona Lisa. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mona_Lisa,_by_Leonardo_da_Vinci,_from_C2RMF_retouched.jpg

1.3 What This Class Does Not Do

As anticipated, further customisation of the book is left to the user. Indeed, every book may have sidenotes, margin figures and so on, but each book will have its own fonts, toc style, special environments and so on. For this reason, in addition to the class, we provide only sensible defaults, but if these features are not needed, they can be left out. These special packages are located in the `style` directory, which is organised as follows:

kao.sty This package contains the most important definitions of macros and specifications of page layout. It is the heart of the `kaobook`. Special features include: most commonly used LaTeX packages are already loaded; there is some flexibility to change the default layout; some fancy environments (with coloured boxes around them, floating, and/or with a counter) are predefined.

kaobiblio.sty Where commands to print citations in the margins are defined.[4] It is the `kao-` analog of `biblatex`.

kaorefs.sty It contains some useful commands to manage labeling and referencing, again to ensure that the same elements are referenced always in a consistent way.

kaotheorems.sty For the style of mathematical environments, which can be optionally wrapped in a colourful `mdframed` environment, like in this document, or not.

4: See Chapter **??**.

In the rest of the book, I shall assume that the reader is not a novice in the use of LaTeX, and refer to the documentation of the packages used in this class for things that are already explained there. Moreover, I assume that the reader is willing to make minor edits to the provided packages for styles, environments and commands, if he or she does not like the default settings.

The audacious users might feel tempted to edit some of these packages. I'd be immensely happy if they sent me examples of what they have been able to do!

1.4 How to Use This Class

Either if you are using the template from latextemplates, or if you cloned the GitHub repository, there are infinite ways to use the `kaobook` class in practice, but we will discuss only two of them. The first is to find the `main.tex` file which I used to write this book, and edit it; this will probably involve a lot of text-deleting, copying-and-pasting, and rewriting. The second way is to start almost from scratch and use the `./examples/minimal_book/main.tex` file, which is a cleaned-up version of the `./examples/documentation/main.tex`; even if you choose the second way, you may find it useful to draw inspiration from the `./examples/documentation/main.tex` file.

To compile the document, assuming that its name is `main.tex`, you will have to run the following sequence of commands:

```
pdflatex main # Compile template
makeindex main.nlo -s nomencl.ist -o main.nls # Compile nomenclature
makeindex main # Compile index
biber main # Compile bibliography
makeglossaries main # Compile glossary
pdflatex main # Compile template again
pdflatex main # Compile template again
```

You may need to compile the template some more times in order for some errors to disappear. For any support requests, please ask a question on `tex.stackexchange.org` with the tag 'kaobook', open an issue on GitHub, or contact the author via e-mail.

Bibliography

Here are the references in citation order.

[1] Peter M Visscher, William G Hill, and Naomi R Wray. 'Heritability in the genomics era–concepts and misconceptions.' In: *Nat. Rev. Genet.* 9.4 (2008), pp. 255–266. DOI: 10.1038/nrg2322.

[2] Gareth James et al. *An Introduction to Statistical Learning*. 2013.

[3] You Nakai. *Reminded by the instruments: David Tudor's music*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020.

[4] Alexis Battle et al. 'Characterizing the genetic basis of transcriptome diversity through RNA-sequencing of 922 individuals'. In: *Genome Res.* 24.1 (2014), pp. 14–24. DOI: 10.1101/gr.155192.113.

[5] Hui Zou and Trevor Hastie. 'Regularization and variable selection via the elastic-net'. In: *J. R. Stat. Soc.* 67.2 (2005), pp. 301–320. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9868.2005.00503.x.