

`\topskip` [*glue* parameter]

T_EX inserts glue at the top of each page in order to ensure that the baseline of the first box on the page always is the same distance d from the top of the page. `\topskip` determines the amount of that glue, called the “`\topskip` glue”, by specifying what d should be (provided that the first box on the page isn’t too tall). d is given by the natural size of the `\topskip` glue. If the height of the first box on the page exceeds d , so that the glue would be negative, T_EX simply inserts no `\topskip` glue at all on that page.

To understand better the effect of these rules, assume that `\topskip` has no stretch or shrink and that the first item on the page is indeed a box. Then if the height of that box is no greater than `\topskip`, its baseline will be `\topskip` from the top of the page independently of its height. On the other hand, if the height of the box is e greater than `\topskip`, its baseline will be `\topskip`+ e from the top of the page. See pages 113–114 of *The T_EXbook* for the remaining details of how `\topskip` works. Plain T_EX sets `\topskip` to 10pt.