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Every character in a T_EX font has an “italic correction” associated with it, although the italic correction is normally zero for a character in an unslanted (upright) font. The italic correction specifies the extra space that’s needed when you’re switching from a slanted font (not necessarily an italic font) to an unslanted font. The extra space is needed because a slanted character projects into the space that follows it, making the space look too small when the next character is unslanted. The metrics file for a font includes the italic correction of each character in the font.

The `\/` command produces an italic correction for the preceding character. You should insert an italic correction when you’re switching from a slanted font to an unslanted font, except when the next character is a period or comma.

Example:

However, `{\it somebody}` ate `{\it something}`: that’s clear.

However, `{\it somebody\/}` ate `{\it something\/}`:
that’s clear.

produces:

However, *somebody* ate *something*: that’s clear.

However, *somebody* ate *something*: that’s clear.