1

☞ {   }
\bgroup   \egroup

The left and right braces are commands that begin and end a group. The \bgroup and \egroup control sequences are equivalent to '{' and '}', except that T_EX treats \bgroup and \egroup like any other control sequence when it's scanning its input.

\bgroup and \egroup can be useful when you're defining paired macros, one of which starts a brace-delimited construct (not necessarily a group) and the other one of which ends that construct. You can't define such macros using ordinary braces—if you try, your macro definitions will contain unmatched braces and will therefore be unacceptable to T_EX. Usually you should use these commands only when you can't use ordinary braces.

Example:
```
Braces define the {\it boundaries\/} of a group.
```
produces:
Braces define the *boundaries* of a group.

Example:
```
\def\a{One \vbox\bgroup}
% You couldn't use { instead of \bgroup  here because
% TeX would not recognize the end of the macro
\def\enda#1{{#1\egroup} two}
% This one is a little tricky, since the \egroup actually
% matches a left brace and the following right brace
% matches the \bgroup.  But it works!
\a \enda{\hrule width 1in}
```
produces:
One ———————— two