

```
\hbox { horizontal mode material }
\hbox to dimen { horizontal mode material }
\hbox spread dimen { horizontal mode material }
```

This command produces an hbox (horizontal box) containing *horizontal mode material*. The braces around *horizontal mode material* define a group. T<sub>E</sub>X doesn't break the *horizontal mode material* into lines, since it's in restricted horizontal mode when it's assembling the box. T<sub>E</sub>X won't change the size of the box once it's been produced.

\hbox is often useful when you want to keep some text all on one line. If your use of \hbox prevents T<sub>E</sub>X from breaking lines in an acceptable way, T<sub>E</sub>X will complain about an overfull hbox.

The width of the hbox depends on the arguments to \hbox:

- If you specify only *horizontal mode material*, the hbox will have its natural width.
- If you specify to *dimen*, the width of the hbox will be *dimen*.
- If you specify spread *dimen*, the width of the hbox will be its natural width plus *dimen*, i.e., the hbox will be spread out by *dimen*.

The \hfil command (p. 'hfil') is useful for filling out an hbox with empty space when the material in the box isn't as wide as the width of the box.

*Example:*

```
\hbox{ugly suburban sprawl}
\hbox to 2in{ugly \hfil suburban \hfil sprawl}
\hbox spread 1in {ugly \hfil suburban \hfil sprawl}
% Without \hfil in the two preceding lines,
% you'd get 'underfull hbox'es.
```

*produces:*

```
ugly suburban sprawl
ugly      suburban      sprawl
ugly      suburban      sprawl
|-----| 3 in
```