**1**

```
\halign { ⟨preamble⟩ \cr ⟨row⟩ \cr ... ⟨row⟩ \cr }
\halign to ⟨dimen⟩{ ⟨preamble⟩ \cr ⟨row⟩ \cr ... ⟨row⟩ \cr }
\halign spread ⟨dimen⟩{ ⟨preamble⟩ \cr ⟨row⟩ \cr ... ⟨row⟩ \cr }
```
This command produces a horizontal alignment consisting of a sequence of rows, where each row in turn contains a sequence of column entries. TeX adjusts the widths of the column entries to accommodate the widest one in each column.

A horizontal alignment can only appear when TeX is in a vertical mode. We recommend that you first study alignments in general (p. '`alignment`') before you attempt to use this command.

An alignment consists of a preamble followed by the text to be aligned. The preamble, which describes the layout of the rows that follow, consists of a sequence of column templates, separated by '`&`' and ended by `\cr`. Each row consists of a sequence of column entries, also separated by '`&`' and ended by `\cr`. Within a template, '`#`' indicates where TeX should insert the corresponding text of a column entry. In contrast, `\settabs` uses a fixed implicit template of '`#`', i.e., it just inserts the text as is.

TeX typesets each column entry in restricted horizontal mode, i.e., as the contents of an hbox, and implicitly encloses it in a group.

The `to` form of this command instructs TeX to make the width of the alignment be ⟨dimen⟩, adjusting the space between columns as necessary. The `spread` form of this command instructs TeX to make the alignment wider by ⟨dimen⟩ than its natural width. These forms are like the corresponding forms of `\hbox` (p. '`\hbox`').

See `\tabskip` (p. '`\tabskip`') for an example using the `to` form.

*Example:*
```
\tabskip = 1em \halign{%
    \hfil\it#\hfil&\hfil#\hfil&#&\hfil\$#\cr
    United States&Washington&dollar&1.00\cr
    France&Paris&franc&0.174\cr
    Israel&Jerusalem&shekel&0.507\cr
    Japan&Tokyo&yen&0.0829\cr}
```
*produces:*

| *United States* | Washington | dollar | $1.00 |
|---:|---:|---|---:|
| *France* | Paris | franc | $0.174 |
| *Israel* | Jerusalem | shekel | $0.507 |
| *Japan* | Tokyo | yen | $0.0829 |