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$\mathbf{x} \{ \langle text \rangle \}$

This command causes TEX to append a mark containing $\langle mark\ text \rangle$ to whatever list it is currently constructing. Generally you shouldn't use \mark within an "inner" construct such as a math formula or a box you've built with an \hbox, \vbox, or \vtop command, because TEX won't see the mark when it's constructing the main box of the page. But if you use \mark in ordinary horizontal mode or directly in an hbox that's part of the main vertical list, the mark migrates out to the main vertical list. See pages 259–260 of The TEXbook for examples showing how \mark can be used.