

What is L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X?

A (very brief) History of L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X

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# Traversing L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X

## The Harried Undergraduate's Guide

Hera Brown

The Oxford University Computer Science and Technology Society

February 22, 2025

## What is $\text{\LaTeX}$ ?

A (very brief) History of  $\text{\LaTeX}$

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- $\text{\LaTeX}$  is a tool used to typeset technical documents.

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- It's different from other document preparation systems you've probably used before (e.g. Word); instead of the output looking just like the input, in  $\text{\LaTeX}$  you type both the text, and macros (like commands or functions) that control how the text looks.

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```
\section{What is \LaTeX?}

\begin{frame}
\frametitle{What is \LaTeX?}
\begin{columns}
\begin{column}{0.5\textwidth}
\begin{itemize}[]
\item \LaTeX{} is a tool
used to typeset technical
documents.

\item It's different from
...
\end{column}
\end{columns}
\end{frame}
```

*Fig. 1. A sample of the code used to typeset this slide*

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- L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X documents look quite different before and after they've been processed!
- It might look a little scary at first, but once you get over the learning curve L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X becomes a very powerful tool.

```

\section{What is \LaTeX?}

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\frametitle{What is \LaTeX?}
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\begin{column}{0.5\textwidth}
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- $\text{\LaTeX}$  was developed by Leslie Lamport in the early 1980s, as a package of macros on top of  $\text{\TeX}$ . The current standard,  $\text{\LaTeX} 2_{\epsilon}$ , was released in 1994.  $\text{\LaTeX}$  has been designed with the intention of separating presentation from content; the intention is that you just need to type up your document semantically, and  $\text{\LaTeX}$  will handle the difficult formatting bits. We'll see a lot of ways in which  $\text{\LaTeX}$  makes things easier for us in this way in the talk.

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- It's the way to write papers and texts to the academic standard.

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- If you're doing a third- or fourth-year project, you'll need to write a report. That report will probably need to be written in L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X.

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- If you're doing a third- or fourth-year project, you'll need to write a report. That report will probably need to be written in L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X.
- It's just fun to use L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X! It's very rewarding to make beautiful documents.

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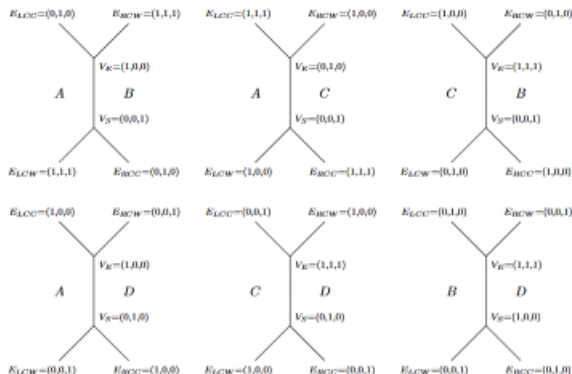
# Some examples of what I've done

Want some examples? Well, here's what I've made so far this year:



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If using B-rep, then, the winged-edge structure starts off looking like:



The final convex hull has an identical structure, but with every instance of  $(1, 1, 1)$  replaced with  $(3, 3, 3)$ , with new corresponding faces. Said replacements are the intermediate edges added during the algorithm's running.

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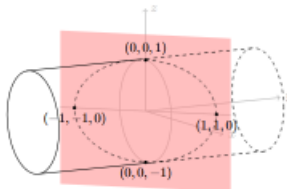
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**Q5.** (a) We got a cylinder lying on its side, cut diagonally, as below::



Note that the ends of the cylinders are only included above to make the diagram look like a cylinder; the cylinder really should be infinitely long.

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Want some examples? Well, here's what I've made so far this year:

1. We may encode the transition relation on the above LTS as such:

Transition	$x_1$	$x'_1$	$x_2$	$x'_2$
(0,0)	0	0	0	0
(0,1)	0	0	0	1
(0,2)	0	1	0	0
(0,3)	0	1	0	1
(1,0)	0	0	1	0
(1,1)	0	0	1	1
(1,2)	0	1	1	0
(1,3)	0	1	1	1
(2,2)	1	1	0	0
(2,3)	1	1	0	1
(3,2)	1	1	1	0
(3,3)	1	1	1	1

From this and by inspection, we can write out an equivalent Boolean formula which captures the relation as:

$$\neg x_1 \vee x'_1$$

Which seems quite simplified.

Want some examples? Well, here's what I've made so far this year:

(e) Again, we'll follow Sider in LfP 9.7:

- (1)  $\forall \alpha \Box \phi \rightarrow \Box \phi$
- (2)  $\Box (\forall \alpha \Box \phi \rightarrow \Box \phi)$
- (3)  $\Diamond \forall \alpha \Box \phi \rightarrow \Diamond \Box \phi$
- (4)  $\Diamond \Box \phi \rightarrow \phi$
- (5)  $\Diamond \forall \alpha \Box \phi \rightarrow \phi$
- (6)  $\forall \alpha (\Diamond \forall \alpha \Box \phi \rightarrow \phi)$
- (7)  $\Diamond \forall \alpha \Box \phi \rightarrow \forall \alpha \phi$
- (8)  $\Box (\Diamond \forall \alpha \Box \phi \rightarrow \forall \alpha \phi)$
- (9)  $\Box \Diamond \forall \alpha \Box \phi \rightarrow \Box \forall \alpha \phi$
- (10)  $\forall \alpha \Box \phi \rightarrow \Box \Diamond \forall \alpha \Box \phi$
- (11)  $\forall \alpha \Box \phi \rightarrow \Box \forall \alpha \phi$

and so it follows that  $\vdash_{\text{SQML}} \Box \forall \alpha \phi \rightarrow \forall \alpha \Box \phi$ .

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All these were put together in a week or so, for problem sheets. Once you get the hang of it, it's pretty easy to make pretty documents pretty fast.

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- If at any point you have any questions, do stop me and ask them!



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- For a proper editor that's free and open source, I'd recommend getting T<sub>E</sub>Xworks (which is what I'm using to edit these slides in!). It's quick and easy to set up, and comes with a bunch of useful features (compiles many distributions of L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, manages references, lets you split up your project into many files) and is easily extensible with your own features.

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- If you just want to play around and follow these slides for a bit, though, there are online editors as well — I've heard that Overleaf is good for this.

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## A Final Word

Goodbye!

- Now you've got an editor open.  
How do you get started?

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A (very brief) History of L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X

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Hera Brown

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Hera Brown

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  - `amsmath`,
  - `amssymb`, and
  - `enumitem`.packages.

```
\documentclass{article}
```

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\documentclass{article}
\usepackage{amsmath}
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Hera Brown

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Hera Brown

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```
\documentclass{article}
\usepackage{amsmath}
\usepackage{amssymb}
\usepackage{enumitem}

\begin{document}
  Hello, world!
\end{document}
```



Hera Brown

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```
\documentclass{article}
\usepackage{amsmath}
\usepackage{amssymb}
\usepackage{enumitem}

\title{Discrete Maths 1}
\author{Hera Brown}

\begin{document}
  \maketitle
  Hello, world!
\end{document}
```

Hera Brown

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- And now you have a proper name and title.

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# Discrete Maths 1

Hera Brown

February 21, 2025

Hello world!

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## Organising Your Document

```
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```

Question 1 (i). Here there are no elements of the set  $\{n \mid n \text{ in } \mathbb{Z} \text{ and } n^2 < 0\}$ , and so the following set would be 0.

(ii). Here we want the solutions of the equation  $n^4 - 3n^2 + 2n$ , and the set formed by these would be  $\{-2, 0, 1\}$ .

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February 21, 2025

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Question 2. (i) This set has at least  $\min(-A-, -B-)$  elements, and at most  $-A+ -B-$  elements. (ii) This set has at least 0 elements, and at most  $\min(-A-, -B-)$  elements.

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Hera Brown

February 21, 2025

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- That doesn't look quite right. Some of the symbols have gone missing, or look different to how they should do. The text also hasn't been formatted very well; it's all one big block.
- Let's fix the latter issue first. How do we lay things out more nicely?

## Discrete Maths 1

Hera Brown

February 21, 2025

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Goodbye!

- Let's start by splitting things up into sections.

## Sections and Subsections

```
\begin{document}
\maketitle
```

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## Discrete Maths 1

Hera Brown

February 21, 2025

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## 2 Question 2

(i) This set has at least  $\min(-A, -B)$  elements, and at most  $-A + -B$  elements. (ii) This set has at least 0 elements, and at most  $\min(-A, -B)$  elements.

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## Discrete Maths 1

Hera Brown

February 21, 2025

## Question 1

1. Here there are no elements of the set  $n - n$  in  $\mathbb{Z}$  and  $n^2 < 0$ , and so the following set would be 0.
2. Here we want the solutions of the equation  $n^4 - 3n^2 + 2n$ , and the set formed by these would be  $-2, 0, 1$ .
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- The answer lies in maths mode. Maths mode is where the hard word of typesetting mathematical symbols happens in L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X.
- Typically, maths mode is entered with a `$` symbol, and escaped with another `$` symbol. So, for instance, `$\pi + \sqrt{e^3}$` would be typeset as  $\pi + \sqrt{e^3}$ .

## Question 1

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- Brilliant! Let's get the rest of the document done...

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## Discrete Maths 1

Hera Brown

February 21, 2025

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- For instance, `$\alpha$` typesets to  $\alpha$ , `$\beta$` typesets to  $\beta$ , and `$\gamma$` typesets to  $\gamma$ .

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- Most of the L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X macros used to typeset mathematics are pretty obvious. Probably the most obvious are the Greek letters, where you just type a backslash followed by the name of a letter. If you want the lowercase letter, write the name in lowercase. Otherwise, make the first letter of the macro a capital.
- For instance, `$$\alpha$` typesets to  $\alpha$ , `$$\beta$` typesets to  $\beta$ , and `$$\gamma$` typesets to  $\gamma$ . Similarly, `$$\Gamma$` typesets to  $\Gamma$ , `$$\Pi$` typesets to  $\Pi$ , and `$$\Sigma$` typesets to  $\Sigma$ .

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  - The set-theoretic symbols  $\{$ ,  $\}$ ,  $\cup$ ,  $\cap$ ,  $\subseteq$ ,  $\in$ ,  $\mathcal{P}$ ,  $\mathbb{N}$ ,  $\mathbb{Z}$  and  $\mathbb{Q}$  can be typeset by `\{`, `\}`, `\cup`, `\cap`, `\subseteq`, `\in`, `\mathcal{P}`, `\mathbb{N}`, `\mathbb{Z}` and `\mathbb{Q}` respectively.

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  - Superscripts such as  $x^2$  and  $e^\pi$ , and subscripts such as  $p_0$  and  $\tau_i$ , can be typeset using `^` and `_` respectively: so we could write `x^2`, `e^\pi`, `p_0` and `\tau_i`.

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  - Equalities and inequalities such as  $\leq$ ,  $\geq$ ,  $\neq$ ,  $\sim$ ,  $\approx$ ,  $\prec$  and  $\preceq$  are typeset by `\leq`, `\geq`, `\neq`, `\sim`, `\approx`, `\prec` and `\preceq` respectively.

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- If you ever see a symbol out in the wild, and can't recognise it, do visit <https://detexify.kirelabs.org>. It lets you draw in the symbol by hand, and gives you a list of what macros might typeset that symbol — it's very comprehensive!

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- But L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X comes to the rescue. You can define a new macro yourself by typing `\newcommand{\name}{...}`.  
So, in this case, we'd write:

```
\newcommand{\g}{[g]^{\alpha u}_{f\beta}}
```



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$$\texttt{\backslash newcommand{\g}\{[g]^{\alpha u}_{f\beta}\}}$$

and then wherever we wanted to typeset  $[g]_{f\beta}^{\alpha u}$ , we'd just type `$\g$` instead. Neat!

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- Instead of defining a family of macros, each with a different variable in place of  $A$ , you can parametrise your macro as follows:

```
\newcommand{\exeq}[1]{[#1|\longlefttrightarrow|\emptyset]}
```

and then all you need to do is type, say, `$\exeq{\Sigma}$`, which then typesets as  $[\Sigma] \longleftrightarrow |\emptyset|$ .

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and then all you need to do is type, say, `$_\exeq{\Sigma}$`, which then typesets as  $[\Sigma| \longleftrightarrow |\emptyset]$ .

- This generalises; if you replace the “1” in the above with “2” or “3”, for instance, you can then define a macro with two or three parameters!

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$$f(a) + \frac{f'(a)}{1!}(x-a) + \frac{f''(a)}{2!}(x-a)^2 + \frac{f'''(a)}{3!}(x-a)^3 + \dots \quad (1)$$



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- One limitation of the above is that you can't write two long equations close to each other; you have to use two separate environments. What if we want to align two equations?

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- L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X (more specifically the `amsmath` package) provides for this. We can create an `align` environment by writing the following:

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```
\begin{align}

\end{align}
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```
\begin{align}
x &= \pi^2 - 3 \\
y &= 6x
\end{align}
```

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$$x = \pi^2 - 3 \quad (1)$$

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- Again, to get rid of the reference numbers, just write `align*` instead:

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$$\begin{aligned}x &= \pi^2 - 3 \\ y &= 6x\end{aligned}$$

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\begin{tabbing}  
  
\end{tabbing}
```



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- And now we set the tab-stops. Tab-stops tell L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X how large you want your indentations to be. Here we'll set them to be one `em`, which is about the width of "M" on the page.

```
\begin{tabbing}

\end{tabbing}
```

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```
\begin{tabbing}
  \hspace{1em}\=\hspace{1em}\=\kill
\end{tabbing}
```

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\begin{tabbing}  
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\end{tabbing}
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```
\begin{tabbing}
  \hspace{1em}\!=\hspace{1em}\!=\kill
\\
\end{tabbing}
```

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```
\begin{tabbing}
  \hspace{1em}\=\hspace{1em}\=\kill
  int x = 1; \\
  while(x <= len)\{\
    \> xs = x:xs\
  \}
\end{tabbing}
```

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- This ends up looking like:

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int x = 1;
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```



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Which is just how the code examples in these slides were made.

```
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- How to typeset more complex mathematical formulae, and



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- How to typeset code.

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What is L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X?A (very brief) History of L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X

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Hopefully that's given you an idea of the power and extensibility of L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X! It really is a wonderful tool, and I hope you're feeling confident enough to start typing up some of your problem sheets and projects.



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If you ever need help with something  $\text{\LaTeX}$ -related, fire me a message! I'd be happy to help out.

Hera Brown

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# Thanks for listening!

## Any questions?