OBTAINING NEW LATEX PACKAGES

This page describes how to go about getting access to new LaTeX packages, either by installing them yourself in your home directory or by requesting them to be installed system-wide.

FIND THE NAME OF THE PACKAGE THAT YOU NEED

If you need a package to perform a particular task, but you do not know the actual name of the package, there are several resources you can use to find out:

- The Comprehensive TeX Archive Network (CTAN), an online repository of TeX-related software. You can search the archive for a package name or a keyword.
- The books The LaTeX Companion, The LaTeX Graphics Companion and The LaTeX Web Companion provide descriptions of a number of useful packages.

CHECK IF IT IS INSTALLED ALREADY

Once you have determined the name of the package that you want to use, you should check if it is already installed on Informatics systems. There are two places to check for this:

- The teTeX manual describes the packages that came with the locally-installed version of TeX, teTeX.
- The local additions page lists the additional packages that have been installed on all Informatics machines.

If the package is listed on one of the above pages, it is already available. These pages also provide documentation on how to use the packages that they list; if you have difficulty in using a particular package, send mail to your local computing support person.

IF IT IS NOT INSTALLED

The remainder of this document describes how to go about making a new package available for use. There are two basic options available:

1. Ask that the package be added to the local installation; or
2. Download and install the package yourself in your home directory.

ASKING FOR A PACKAGE TO BE ADDED

If the package that you want to use is likely to be useful to other people as well, you can ask that it be added to the common Informatics installation. To request that a package be added, please ask your local computing support personnel.

INSTALLING A PACKAGE YOURSELF

The following are the steps that you should follow to install a new LaTeX package into your own home directory.

1. Download the package file(s) from wherever they are available. Most packages are available from CTAN; enter appropriate keywords in the search fields to find the files.
2. Packages may be distributed in different ways. Many packages on CTAN, for instance, come with a `.dtx`

file and a `.ins` file. If the package you are installing comes with these files, you will have to process them with latex to create the actual files that make up the package. That is, type

`latex filename.dtx` *and/or* `latex filename.ins`

to unpackage the various `.sty` and other files in the package.

3. Create a directory `texmf` in your home directory, if there is not one there already.
4. Install the various package files into subdirectories of `texmf` as follows:
   - All `.bst` and `.bib` files into `texmf/bibtex` (or subdirectories)
   - All font-related files into `texmf/fonts` (or subdirectories)
   - All documentation files into `texmf/docs`
   - All other files (`.sty`, `.cls`, `.tex`, etc.) should go into `texmf/tex`.

Alternatively, you could put all of the `.sty` etc. files into the same directory as the document you are editing. However, if you end up wanting to use them again later, you will have to copy them into the new directory as well, so in the long term it is probably better to put them into `~/texmf`.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information than you probably ever wanted to know about the `~/texmf` directory and how (La)TeX searches for files, you can read the documentation on the TeX Directory Structure.

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