

NAME

tbl – format tables for *nroff* or *troff*

SYNOPSIS

tbl [files] ...

DESCRIPTION

Tbl is an *nroff*(I) or *troff*(I) preprocessor for formatting tables. The input files are copied to the standard output, except for lines between .TS and .TE command lines, which are assumed to describe tables, and which are reformatted. There are several global options; if any are desired, they are specified on the first line after .TS as a series of keywords separated by blanks or commas and followed by a semicolon. The possible words are:

- center - center the table
- expand - format the table to fill the current line length
- box - enclose the table in a box
- allbox - draw all possible lines so that every item is in a box

After this line (or after .TS if no global options are given) are the lines describing the table format. Each line describes a line of the actual table. One letter is used for each column. As many lines are as needed to describe the table are given; the last line should end with the character “.” to signal the end of the format information. The last line of the description will apply to all following lines of the table. The legal characters to describe a column are:

- c center within the column
- r right-adjust
- l left-adjust
- n numerical adjustment: the units digits of numbers are aligned.
- s span the previous entry over this column.
- _ replace this entry with a horizontal line
- = replace this entry with a double horizontal line

A column letter may be followed by an integer giving the number of spaces between this column and the next; 3 is default. A column letter may be preceded by a “|” character to indicate that a vertical line is to be drawn to the left of this column. Letting \t represent a tab (which must be typed as a genuine tab), the input:

```
.TS
c s s
c c s
c c c
l n n.
Household Population
Town\tHouseholds
\tNumber\tSize
Bedminster\t789\t3.26
Bernards Twp.\t3087\t3.74
Bernardsville\t2018\t3.30
Bound Brook\t3425\t3.04
Branchburg\t1644\t3.49
Bridgewater\t7897\t3.81
Far Hills\t240\t3.19
.TE
```

yields:

Household Population		
Town	Households	
	Number	Size
Bedminster	789	3.26
Bernards Twp.	3087	3.74
Bernardsville	2018	3.30
Bound Brook	3425	3.04
Branchburg	1644	3.49
Bridgewater	7897	3.81
Far Hills	240	3.19

If a table element contains only “_” or “=”, a single or double line (respectively) is drawn across the *column* at that point. If a table line contains only “_” or “=”, a single or double line (respectively) is drawn all the way across the *table*.

If a column describer contains the character “|”, a vertical line is drawn to the left of that column beginning at the point in the column corresponding to the position of the vertical bar in the describer, and extending to the bottom of the table.

If no arguments are given, *tbl* reads the standard input, so it may be used as a filter. When it is used with *eqn* or *neqn*, the *tbl* command should be first, to minimize the volume of data passed through pipes.

SEE ALSO

TBL – A Program to Format Tables by M. E. Lesk.