

# The REBOL Documentation Project

-- EN - Author / Translator --

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Translator

## **Author's Guide**

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## History

Date	Version	Comments	Author	Email
08-mar-05	0.1	initial	REBOLtoF	reboltoF at yahoo dot com
20-mar-05	0.2	some precisions concerning the name of the article illustrations	REBOLtoF	reboltoF at yahoo dot com

## Writing for the REBOL Documentation Project ?

We are always looking passionate programmers who would like to share their knowledge with REBOLers of all kind. If you feel inspired, do not hesitate to submit your documentation to us. It will take a well deserved place in our site. However, some rules are to be followed...

## In which language should I write my documentation ?

All the languages are welcome ! If your chosen one is different from the four principal languages of the project (French, English, Dutch and German), the needed structure for welcoming the new documentation will be installed.

## Will I be paid for my work ?

No ! Nope ! Nada ! Niet !

Your work is a work of a not-remunerated volunteer. Your only reward will be satisfaction to have contributed to the progress of REBOL and to have helped of other REBOLers to better apprehend the language.

## Under which format must I write my documentation ?

REBOL is a programming language going directly to the resolution of the problems. We want that the author of documentation can devote himself to the *words* rather than to the *form*. For this reason we decided to use the official documentation format coming from [REBOL Technologies](#) : *MakeDoc2*. Any documentation which is submitted for publication will have to be it in the form of a full-text file "\*.txt" respecting conventions of formatting of *MakeDoc2*. You will find the needed tools in the page Downloads. MakeDoc2 is being provided as script (r) and as encapsulated script (exe). A [working template](#) is also at your disposal.

## What about do I have to write ?

Our preference goes to technical articles, but we do not exclude to publish contextual articles, as long as those remain in relation to world of REBOL. All the subjects are welcome ! You can for example write a serie of tutorials for newbies, a HOWTO explaining the connection with MySQL or the use of UNISERVE, or a thorough analysis of the internal mechanisms of VID...

Some editorial advises...

(originated of the excellent advises of Yann Rocq, the sympathetic chief editorialist of the "Login :" magazine)

- never use words or abbreviations of the familiar language.
- avoid the repetitions, which slow down considerably the reading of a text. Think of using the pronouns, the synonyms, etc.
- a good documentation must be more pleasant to read than a technical guide. It is thus necessary to avoid the use telegraphic style and bullet lists.
- use your spelling checker.
- banish the tortuous or too long sentences. Avoid the semicolons and the incidental clauses with indents. It is often preferable to make 2 short sentences rather than only one long.
- a documentation must absolutely be structured. It should not give the impression only one jumps permanently from one sentence to the other. Have a precise plan in mind and articulate the various parts of your argumentation using words like "however", "nevertheless", "on the other hand", etc...
- use pedagogy. The reader does not have same knowledge as you. Try to put yourself in his place. Is the needed knowledge not too important ? Are there no ambiguities or elements which should be more clearly explained ?
- be precise in the choice of your words. A variable and a constant indicate two quite different things. Benefit from the non-ambiguous character of the computer vocabulary.
- keep in mind that that a person will read your text. Try to hold his attention.
- read your text again and again and again. A documentation cannot be good at first try. It requires many improvements.

### Structure of documentation

In order to maintain consistency within the documentation, we ask you to respect the following structure :

- Title

The first line of your text is the title. This one will have to remain short and suitably to illustrate the subject of your documentation.

- Boilerplate

In this text immediately following the title, we will find :

- the introduction, which is an text of approximately 300 characters. It summarizes the contents of your documentation, and especially : it must motivate to the reader to continue his reading ! The introduction is followed by a white line.
- the *last version number*.
- the *last version date*.

- History

Documentation that you produce is susceptible to be re-examined or corrected by another author (see [license](#)). It is thus important to be able to identify the person at the origin of the modifications and being able to contact him or her. The history will have FIVE columns :

- Date : date of modifications
- Version : new version number
- Comments : comments on the changes
- Author : name of the author (or alias)
- Email : email address of the author

- Contents

If your document exceeds the A4 page, it is preferable to make appear contents. This one, by defect, is automatically generated by MakeDoc2.

- Contained Place here the body of your documentation, structured as you consider it necessary...
- References If necessary, gather the unit here the whole of the references used in your text. It is preferable, for more clearness, to use a system of reference of the type : *[ CarlS 1 ]* in the text, which refers to *[ CarlS 1 ] MakeDoc in Minutes - Year Example (Article)* in this last part.

Minimal and maximal lengths

We do not impose limits on the length of documentation's.

Illustrations and diagrams

A schema or an illustration strongly facilitate the reading of a text. Try as much as possible to use 2 to 3 schemas or illustrations by page of documentation.

## How to work on an article with several authors ?

In order to help you with this task, we're offering an access to the CVS of SourceForge. This will enable you to work without risk of loss of your document. The procedure for being granted access to the CVS is described in the document Use of the CVS. A possible alternative is to place your document on a [wiki](#). For this purpose, REBOLFrance gives free access (with preliminary inscription) to REBOLers to an [excellent dokuWiki](#).

## My documentation is written... How do I submit it to you ?

Packaging of the files

Your work will have to be sent to us in a zip file containing a directory. In this directory will have to be placed :

- the documentation file(s) in MakeDoc2 format.
- a images directory containing the illustrations which you added in your work.

ATTENTION : the name of all the illustrations must be prefixed by (a part of) the name of your article. By example, if your article is called "Analyze of the 'parse function", your illustrations may be named as "parse-analyze-1", "parse-analyze-2", etc...

Sending at the editorial board

Send simply your work to the coordinator via email. He will take care of the initiation of the procedure of second reading by the [editorial board](#).

## **Does the second reading procedure take long ?**

Periods of several weeks between your initial sending and the acceptance of your article or the sending of comments is fully normal. Do not forget that the editorial board is composed of volunteers having their own work and family life... In order to help you to take patience, you will be able to follow the procedure progress Documentation in progress.

## **I do not have any more time to maintain this documentation. Am I going to die, doctor ?**

Absolutely not ! Maintaining a documentation is a demanding and difficult work... The only thing that we ask you is to warn the editorial board of your decision. We will take care so that your work will find another author.

## **I still have my doubts... To whom can I ask questions ?**

For any question, do not hesitate to contact one of the members of editorial board.

Good luck !