Introduction to Scientific Typesetting
Lesson 1: Getting Started

Ryan Higginbottom

January 5, 2012
Word Processors vs. \LaTeX

Our First \LaTeX Document

Errors

The Structure of a \LaTeX Document

Digging Beneath the Surface

Environments and Commands

Symbols of Interest
Word Processors vs. \LaTeX
The Weaknesses of Word

- WYSIWYG programs combine *composition* and *typesetting*
  - most Word users don’t know much
  - may lose logical structure of a document
- bibliographies, cross-references, figure labels must be completed *by hand*
- different versions mean compatibility issues
- cost!

Even worse …

Word is *terrible* at math!
### The History of \LaTeX

- **\TeX**
  - Donald Knuth, 1978 (frozen in 1989)
  - frustrated at result of *Art of Computer Programming*, realized high quality digital typesetting system was necessary

- **\LaTeX**
  - needed macro package on top of \TeX
  - has become the standard
The Strengths of \texttt{LaTeX}

- portability and compatibility—text files!
- very flexible
- cost (free!)
- consistency throughout document
- allows you to focus on content
- automation of tedious tasks (cross-references, bibliographies, etc.)
- radical, global changes can be implemented consistently with very little work
- decision-making about formatting can be left to an expert (or not)
The Weaknesses of \LaTeX

- undeniable learning curve
- complex formatting may occasionally take more time than a word processor (e.g., tables)
\texttt{\LaTeX} is a \textit{markup language} — think HTML

- all work is done in text files

- \texttt{\LaTeX} then processes this file \textit{in its entirety} and decides how best to typeset the document

- the output is either a device-independent file (DVI) or a PDF; a DVI can be converted easily to postscript (.ps) or PDF

\begin{itemize}
  \item You must remember that \texttt{\LaTeX} is \textit{not} a word processor!
\end{itemize}

Don’t expect it to behave like one.
Our First \LaTeX Document

Congratulations!
The first thing we need to do is set the proper paper size within MikTeX. (The default is A4, which is a size used more in Europe than the U.S.)

1. Find the “MikTeX 2.9” folder from the Start menu.
2. Choose “Maintenance,” then “Settings.”
3. In the middle of the window, set “Letter” to be the default paper size. (Note: do not choose the “letterSize” option.)

You’ll want to do this when you install MikTeX on your machine too.
TeXnicCenter is a free text editor that has very tight integration with \LaTeX. It was dormant for a while, but development has recently resumed.

1. Open TeXnicCenter from the Start Menu.
2. You’ll have to tell TeXnicCenter where to look for the \LaTeX files. For this computer lab, the location is:

\texttt{C:\Program Files (x86)\MiKTeX 2.9\miktex\bin}
1. Create a new document.
\documentclass{article}
\begin{document}
Hello, world!
\end{document}

2. Save your document. (You might want 1 document per folder.)
3. Make sure that LaTeX=>DVI is in the “build” box.
4. “Build” your document. (Ctrl + F7 or use mouse.)
5. View your document. (F5 or use mouse.)
Congratulations!
Errors

When Things Aren’t Perfect
Finding Errors

The Structure of a \LaTeX Document

Digging Beneath the Surface

Environments and Commands

Symbols of Interest
Errors are written on a “log” file. TeXnicCenter displays this at the bottom of the window.

Type this—it will produce an error.

\documentclass{article}

\begin{document}
\includegraphics{globe.eps}
Hello, world!
\end{document}
You should see the following at the bottom of your window:

LaTeX-Result: 1 Error(s), 0 Warning(s), 0 Bad Box(es), 1 Page(s)

2. TeXnicCenter will take you to the error and try to explain it. (Sometimes this is difficult to understand, but you’ll get the hang of it.)

Errors aren’t always “fatal,” but sometimes they are.
3. You may occasionally need to pay attention to the “Warnings,” but not usually.
The Structure of a \LaTeX Document
Here’s the basic idea:

\documentclass{article}
\begin{document}
Hello, world!
\end{document}

Everything before \begin{document} is called the “preamble.”
Everything in the “document” environment is called the “body.”
Preamble
This is where you tell \LaTeX how you want your document handled. A book? An article? Margins? Etc. (We will discuss preamble commands a lot.)

Body
This is where the text of your document goes.
Digging Beneath the Surface

An Overview
Word Processors vs. \LaTeX
Our First \LaTeX Document
Errors
The Structure of a \LaTeX Document
Digging Beneath the Surface
Special Characters
Spaces in the Source File
Periods
More with Periods
Environments and Commands
Symbols of Interest
Remember, \LaTeX{} is *not* a word processor!

Everything after % on a line is called a “comment” and will not show up. This can be really helpful in making notes to yourself!

Other special characters:

```
# $ & ~ _ ^ \ { } |
```

This means that if you want to produce these characters, you need some special code. For example,

```
type “\&” in order to see: &.
```

There will be a list of the commands needed for this in one of the documents on Sakai.
Two or more spaces in text are the same as one. Within the body of document, the following give the same output:

```
Hello world!
Hello          world!
```

Additionally,

- A tab or end-of-line character is the same as a space.
- A blank line indicates the end of a paragraph.
- Two or more blank lines are the same as one.
- Spaces at the beginning of a line are ignored.

Don’t get carried away with the freedom this offers. It is important to maintain the readability of your source file!
**Rule:** A period after a capital letter signifies an abbreviation or an initial. Every other period signifies the end of a sentence. This rule works most of the time.

**Follow-up Rule:** If an abbreviation does not end with a capital letter and is not the last word in the sentence, then follow the period with an interword space (\textbackslash \textspace) or a tie (~).

**Examples:**

- ...birds like ducks, geese, etc.\ are my favorite...
- Dr.\~Smith told me that I had a cavity...
Another Rule: If a capital letter is followed by a period and is at the end of a sentence, precede the period with \@.

Make sure to take your vitamin C\@. It will help you fight your cold.

Last Period Rule: Add thin space (\,) or no space within strings of initials and be consistent.

- R.\,S. Higginbottom
- R.S. Higginbottom
Environments and Commands
Anything between
\begin{name}
and
\end{name}
is called the *content* of the environment.

Then “name” would be the *name* of the environment.

We’ve already seen one environment: the document environment!
The body of the article is the content of the document environment.

We’ll discuss some text environments shortly.
Usual syntax for a command is:

```
\commandname[options]{argument}
```

Arguments are mandatory; options are optional. Note that arguments are enclosed in braces, options (or optional arguments) are enclosed in brackets.

An example:

```
\includegraphics[rotate=90]{globe.eps}
```
Symbols of Interest
You’ll need the left-quote button (usually the same button as the tilde) and the right-quote button to make quotations.

‘Where do we go?’
‘‘Where do we go?’’

If you need both, you might want to separate them:

‘‘She asked, ‘Where do we go?’\,’’
There are three lengths.

- **hyphen**  Type this with a single dash:

  type: third-world country  
  see: third-world country

- **en dash**  This is used for number ranges (and other things). Type with two dashes

  type: office hours are 3--4  
  see: office hours are 3–4
More on Dashes

- **em dash** This is used to mark an abrupt change in thought or to add emphasis. Type this with three dashes:

  type:  an aside---like this one---can be distracting  
  see:  an aside—like this one—can be distracting

Other examples of em dashes:

- You are the friend—the only friend—who offered to help.  
- Never have I met such a lovely person—before you.  
- I wish you would—oh, never mind.

Look at the example .pdf file posted on Sakai and take some time to reproduce it using \LaTeX. I’ll be available to help you if needed.

Pay attention to the details!