easyformat

the manual for the 2017/06/03 version (v1.4.0)

Evert Provoost

Abstract

easyformat is a package that allows the use of `_` to begin/end *italics* or **boldface** and ˆ to begin/end SMALLCAPS. As an alternative to the standard LaTeX `\textit{italic}`, `\textbf{bold}` and `\textsc{smallcaps}`.

Contents

1 Introduction

Usually when you want to make something *italic* or **bold** in LaTeX you insert `\textit{italic}` or `\textbf{bold}` respectively.

However when writing a book or another text where this formatting is common, this quickly becomes annoying to type.

> **Quick disclaimer:**
> I'm not saying that the LaTeX way is bad. I just want to explain that it's not ideal under all circumstances.

Simple markuplanguages (eg. Markdown) have a more elegant solution. If you, for example, wanted to write:

> **Stop!** You *have* to wait!

In Markdown, you'd type:

```
**Stop!** You *have* to wait!
```

As you can see it's a matter of *wanting* italic or bold formatting, adding *'s where needed and done; no (long) macros to type.

With the help of easyformat we can do something similar, here we get the same result with:

```
__Stop!__ You _have_ to wait!
```

(Why underscores? See: 5.1)

And since it is good practice to add abbreviations using SMALLCAPS, easyformat gives you `^smallcaps^`.

So:

```
^nasa^ and ^esa^ are probably the best known space agencies.
```

Results in:

> NASA and ESA are probably the best known space agencies.

2 Usage, syntax and examples

Like usual you import the package with: `\usepackage{easyformat}`

easyformat makes `_` an active character, however it was already 'special' before so you still have to type `\_` if you want to insert an underscore.

The same can be said of `^`, however since this one is difficult to add in ordinary LaTeX, the easyformat package gives you `\cir` to get ^.

As already said, easyformat uses a Markdown-like syntax, so:

```
_italic,_ __bold,__ ___bolditalic___ and ^smallcaps!^
```

Gives:

italic, **bold,** ***bolditalic*** and SMALLCAPS!

However we can also do more complex stuff, eg.:

```
_Lorem __ipsum_ totalem__ ^da^ __givea _zin_ doram__
_zet_tim, liefkan.
```

Becomes:

Lorem ***ipsum*** **totalem** DA **givea *zin* doram** *zet*tim, liefkan.

Those with a good eye might have noticed that easyformat adds italics correction when needed. Just like `\textit{zet}tim` would have.

3 Troubleshooting

easyformat tends to conflict with the loading of other packages, therefore you should probably load easyformat last.

> “For some or other reason I get some weird formatting. . . ”

It could be a bug—in which case I’d love to hear from you (see 6)—however, you probably forgot to close your formatting somewhere and because of how easyformat works you can get weird results.

4 Macros

4.1 Special characters

`\cir` `\cir`

Insert a circumflex (ˆ) character.

4.2 **easyformat**-syntax

`\enableeasyformat` `\enableeasyformat`

Enables the easyformat-syntax.

`\disableeasyformat` `\disableeasyformat`

Disables the easyformat-syntax.

5 Technical details

5.1 Why `_` and not *?

To make * work we would have to make it an active character, however this would break things like `\section*{Art}`. The `_` is already protected by TEX because of it's meaning in mathmode. However, it has little to no use in textmode. This is why we can use `_` for this purpose and not *.

5.2 Does this break mathmode?

No it doesn't. `_` and `^` keep behaving like before in mathmode, their meaning only changes in textmode. (We first check whether we are in mathmode or not and then behave accordingly.)

6 Contact

If you want to make suggestions or have any questions whose answer could be included in a future version of this document, you can email to this address: `mailto:evert.provoost@gmail.com`

7 Changelog

We only include important changes from v1.0.0 onwards, since earlier versions barely worked.

2017/06/03 v1.4.0

Improved code readability. We now fully use expl3, which eliminates most of the possible future issues with LaTeX3. Fixed a kerning issue with `\cir` in mathmode. Removed: `\setundact`, `\setundsub`, `\setciract`, `\setcirsup`, `\nrfamily`, `\nrshape`, `\nrseries`, `\setffamily`, `\setfshape` and `\setfseries` as these do not add any value to the package.

2017/05/28 v1.3.0

Removed forced re-enabling of the easyformat-syntax at the start of the document. Rewritten to use expl3, this makes the code shorter and a future move to LaTeX3 easier. Fixed an error that could occur with `\cir`. easyformat now also behaves correctly when a fontpackage is loaded.

2017/04/17 v1.2.0

Improved handling of mixed styles. Added `^smallcaps^` for SMALLCAPS.

2017/04/09 v1.1.0

Made usage of syntax in `\section{}`, and similar macros, possible. Changed the behaviour so it works more like `\emph{}` (this also simplifies the code).

2017/04/07 v1.0.0

First stable version.

Made with ♡ in Berlaar, Belgium.