

A TEX Macro Package for Screenplays and Scripts

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Contents

Chapter 1

Preface

The purpose of this document is to describe `ScriptTEX` 1.03, a package of `TEX` macros for formatting scripts and screenplays. The tone here is informal, but this is intended to be complete documentation. The first part of this document is aimed at those who wish to use the macros as they are, and the second is for those who wish to understand the details of how the macros operate.

The purpose of this document is *not* to be an all-encompassing how-to-write-scripts tutorial; the bibliography at the end of this document should point you in the right direction if that's what you're looking for. On the other hand, this document does have some stylistic details presented as a justification of why `ScriptTEX` behaves certain ways when a better way may seem to exist.

Typewriter text is used to indicate file names, macro names, user-typed input, and computer output. *Slanted text* is used for the names of television series, movies, and books. In this document, punctuation is always placed outside quotation marks unless it is to be considered part of the quoted material. My bias for the modern spellings of *dialog*, *prolog*, and *epilog* are evident in this document, but the macros allow the traditional *-gue* spellings, too.

Chapter 2

Overview

I would like to begin this overview by stating the motivation and goals of the package. If you find yourself thinking, kWhy in the world did he design `ScriptTEX` this way?l, please read this section again.

In some regards, a script is a script is a script. All scripts have acts, scenes, stage directions, and dialog. It would be nice, therefore, to have a consistent set of `TEX` macros for scripts. The format of a script, however, varies depending upon the target media n stage, screen, published. Yet, the basic elements do not change. The first release of `ScriptTEX` supported manuscript-style screenplays; this version has support for simple stageplay format. Support of additional formats and variations are planned for the future.

And therefore my design goals for `ScriptTEX` were:

- There should be a simple set of macros which can format to the strict manuscript requirements expected by agents and producers.

- The macros should be general enough to support other sorts script formats without changing the source file. Other script formats considered included: shooting scripts, stageplays, and published screenplays. I plan to follow up with macro sets to meet these needs.

- In the same vain as `LATEX`, the macros should be geared toward describing the chunks of text rather than formatting them, so `ScriptTEX` macros like `?`, `?`, and `?` are roughly analogous to `LATEX`'s `?`

Chapter 3

?

3.1

and ?

3.1.1

macros.

Since I am also a programmer with an interest in tools to help writers, I added the requirement that the files should be easy to parse, so that other script-specific tools could be designed to read them. Since, as I will explain in more detail later, screenplays do not require true typesetting capabilities, it is conceivable that I will also want to write a program that can format my manuscripts without `TEX`. The simplicity of parsing the source makes this task relatively trivial.

With these goals in mind, `ScriptTEX` began to take shape. Rather than starting from scratch, `ScriptTEX` relies on several facilities of plain `TEX`. A later version may become a `TEX` format in its own right.

Chapter 4

Writing a script with `ScriptTEX`

The macros for preparing a script with `TEX` are now presented in what the author hopes is a logical order. To best understand these, it is recommended that you read along with a copy of the `stdemo.tex` source and a formatted copy of the demo file.

First of all, you need the command to include the `ScriptTEX` macro definitions. Assuming you want the standard screenplay definitions, put `k?screenplay.texl` at the beginning of your file. Stageplays should begin with `k?stageplay.texl`. To format your file, refer to your local system guides for how to feed your file to `TEX`. You may have to make a local copy of `screenplay.tex`.