Let's Learn LaTeX: A hack-to-learn ebook

Parthasarathy S

Abstract

Let's Learn LaTeX is an innovative ebook which aims to speed up your LaTeX learning experience using the "hack-to-learn" approach. It offers many lessons which you can copy and modify freely, to create your own LaTeX document. Each lesson highlights some specific aspects of LaTeX.

Description

Perhaps you have a basic knowledge of LaTeX, or have heard about it vaguely or seen it at work earlier. You are in a hurry to try your hand at LaTeX. You are overwhelmed by the complexity of LaTeX. Reading traditional books and tutorial material to understand LaTeX seems to be too cumbersome for you. You believe in D-I-Y, even for learning. If any or all of this applies to you, now you have a way out [6]. The ebook *Let's Learn LaTeX* gives you a total of 170+ pages in 25+ PDF documents (called lessons), each highlighting some aspect of LaTeX usage.

This book recommends (and encourages) hacking as an effective method of learning LaTeX. In fact, this book starts with two articles devoted to hacking as a means of learning. It gives 25 such lessons, each highlighting certain aspects of LaTeX. The LaTeX source of all the lessons is also given in easily locatable files (hyperlinked to the main text), so that you can hack them and experiment with them. True to the spirit of FLOSS, this book is distributed under a liberal license — Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 [1]. The book can be freely downloaded from [6].

This book does not pretend to teach you LaTeX ab initio. Neither does it claim to answer all your questions about LaTeX. This is a D-I-Y approach to learning LaTeX. It aims to jump-start your LaTeX learning experience. The 25 lessons can be read in any order, and You can see the rendered version (pdf) as well as the source version (LaTeX) of each lesson, by clicking on the hyperlinks (shown in wine-red). This book is therefore best read on the computer screen. A printed version of this book will have all these texts printed and inserted at the appropriate places. Those using the printed version will still need the book in a softcopy form (such as a DVD) to access the LaTeX sources. The softcopy version of this book makes best use of ebook format created by LaTeX.

Availability

Let's Learn LaTeX was prepared and tested under a GNU/Linux system, and will work best there. In any case, you will have to ensure that your PDF reader, your text editor, and your web browser are properly installed, configured, and are working satisfactorily. You will need a live connection to the web to browse the web links in the book. To get the book with all its lessons, download the provided zip bundle, unzip, and follow the instructions in the `aboutme.txt` file.

Finally, this book is not expected to replace any of the traditional and popular books on LaTeX. It is a LaTeX practitioner's attempt to make LaTeX accessible to all who want to get proficient quickly in the use of LaTeX. You may refer to any of the three books [2, 3, 4], or use any of the many resources accessible on the web [5]. Indeed, keep these resources handy as you work on LaTeX using this book.

References

[1] Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 Unported license, `https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/legalcode`

[2] H. Kopka, P. Daly. Guide to LaTeX 2_ε, fourth ed. Addison-Wesley, 2003.

[3] L. Lamport. *LaTeX: A document preparation system*, 2nd ed. Addison-Wesley, 1994.

[4] F. Mittelbach, M. Goossens, J. Braams, D. Carlisle, C. Rowley. *The LaTeX Companion*, 2nd ed. Addison-Wesley, 2004.

[5] S. Parthasarathy. Dr. Partha's LaTeX starter, `http://www.freewebs.com/profpartha/startlatex.htm`

[6] S. Parthasarathy. Let's Learn LaTeX. `http://www.freewebs.com/profpartha/teachlatex.htm`

⋄ Parthasarathy S
Secunderabad, India
`drpartha (at) gmail dot com`
`http://profpartha.webs.com/profpartha.htm`