The `alphalph` package

Heiko Oberdiek*

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Abstract

The package provides methods to represent numbers with a limited set of symbols. Both \TeX{} and plain \TeX{} are supported.

Contents

1 Documentation .......... 2
  1.1 Introduction ........ 2
  1.2 Use cases ............ 3
    1.2.1 Number system based on symbols ...... 3
    1.2.2 Wrap symbols around ...... 3
    1.2.3 Multiple symbols ...... 3
  1.3 Glossary ............. 4
  1.4 Package usage ......... 5
  1.5 User commands ......... 5
  1.6 Programmer commands .... 6
  1.7 Design principles ....... 6
    1.7.1 Number presentation commands ...... 6
    1.7.2 General usability ...... 6
2 Implementation ........ 6
  2.1 Begin of package ....... 6
  2.2 Catcodes ............. 8
  2.3 Package loading ........ 9
  2.4 \TeX{} detection ........ 9
  2.5 Help macros ........... 9
  2.6 Symbol provider ........ 10
    2.6.1 Alphabet ........ 10
  2.7 Finding number of symbols .... 11
  2.8 Methods ............ 13
    2.8.1 Common methods .... 13
    2.8.2 Method `alph' .... 13
    2.8.3 Method `wrap' .... 14
    2.8.4 Method `mult' .... 15
  2.9 User interface ....... 16

*Please report any issues at https://github.com/ho-tex/alphalph/issues
1 Documentation

1.1 Introduction

\LaTeX counters can be represented in different ways by using presentation commands:

\begin{verbatim}
\arabic, \roman, \Roman,
\alph, \Alph, \fnsymbol
\end{verbatim}

The ranges of supported counter values are more or less restricted. Only \arabic can be used with any counter value \TeX supports.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation command</th>
<th>Supported domain</th>
<th>Ignored values</th>
<th>Error message</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>\arabic</td>
<td>(-\text{MAX}..\text{MAX})</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Counter too large”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\roman, \Roman</td>
<td>(1..\text{MAX})</td>
<td>(-\text{MAX}..0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\alph, \Alph</td>
<td>(1..26)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(-\text{MAX}..-1, 27..\text{MAX})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\fnsymbol</td>
<td>(1..9)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(-\text{MAX}..-1, 10..\text{MAX})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\text{MAX} = 2147483647

Ordinal numbers are often used in documents: numbering of chapters, sections, figures, footnotes and so on. The layouter chooses \Alph for chapter numbers and \fnsymbol for footnotes. But what can be done if there are more than 26 chapters or more than 10 footnotes? This package \alphalph allows to define new presentation commands. They rely on a existing command and define presentations for values greater the limits. Three different methods are provided by the package. In the following use cases they are presented.
1.2 Use cases

1.2.1 Number system based on symbols

Assume you are writing a book and your lecturer demands that chapter numbers must be letters. But you have already 30 chapters and you have only 26 letters?

In the decimal system the situation would be clear. If you run out of digits, you are using more digits to represent a number. This method can be also be used for letters. After chapter 26 with \(Z\) we use \(AA\), \(AB\), \(AC\), and \(AD\) for the remaining chapters.

Happily this package already defines this presentation command:

```
\usepackage{alphalph}
\renewcommand*{\thechapter}{\AlphAlph{\value{chapter}}}
```

\AlphAlph generates: \(A\), \(B\), \(C\), \ldots, \(Z\), \(AA\), \(AB\), \ldots

The other presentation command is \alphalph for lowercase letters.

1.2.2 Wrap symbols around

Nine footnote symbols are quite a few. Too soon the symbols are consumed and \LaTeX{} complains with the error “Counter too large”. However, it could be acceptable to start again with the symbols from the beginning, especially if there are less than nine symbols on a page. This could be achieved by a counter reset. But finding the right place can be difficult or needs manual actions. Also a unique counter value can be desirable (e.g. for generating unique anchor/link names). Package alphalph allows you to define a macro that implements a “wrap around”, but letting the value of the counter untouched:

```
\usepackage{alphalph}
\makeatletter
\newalphalph{\fnsymbolwrap}{\@fnsymbol}{\@fs@nglephant}
\makeatother
\renewcommand*{\thefootnote}{\fnsymbolwrap{\value{footnote}}}
```

\fnsymbolwrap generates: \(^{*}\)(1), \(^{†}\)(2), \(^{‡}\)(3), \ldots, \(^{‡‡}\)(9), \(^{*}\)(10), \(^{†}\)11, \ldots

1.2.3 Multiple symbols

\LaTeX{}’s standard set of footnote symbols contains doubled symbols at the higher positions. Could this principle be generalized? Yes, but first we need a clean footnote symbol list without doubled entries, example:

```
\usepackage{alphalph}
\makeatletter
\newcommand*{\fnsymbolsingle}{\ifcase#1\or *\or †\or ‡\or \mathsection\or \mathparagraph\else\@ctrerr\fi}
\makeatother
```

```\fnsymbolsingle generates: \(^{*}\)(1), \(^{†}\)(2), \(^{‡}\)(3), \ldots, \(^{‡‡}\)(9), \(^{*}\)(10), \(^{†}\)11, \ldots```
The own definition of \fnsymbolsingle has the advantage that this list can easily modified. Otherwise you can use \@fnsymbol directly, because it uses the same first five symbols.

\usepackage{alphalph}
\makeatletter
\newalphalph{\fnsymbolmult}[mult]{\fnsymbolsingle}{}
\renewcommand*{\thefootnote}{%\fnsymbolmult{\value{footnote}}}%
\makeatother

\fnsymbolmult generates: * (1), † (2), ‡ (3), § (4), ¶ (5), ** (6), . . . , **** 16, †††† 17, . . .

The same method can also be used for the chapter problem in the first discussed use case:

\usepackage{alphalph}
\makeatletter
\newalphalph{\AlphMult}[mult]{\@Alph}{26}
\makeatother
\renewcommand*{\chapter}{\AlphMult{\value{chapter}}}%

\AlphMult then generates AA, BB, CC, and DD for chapters 27–30.

1.3 Glossary

Counter presentation command is a macro that expects a \texttt{B\LaTeX} counter name as argument. Numbers cannot be used. Examples: \arabic, \alph, \fnsymbol.

Number presentation command is a macro that expects a number as argument. A number is anything that \texttt{\LaTeX} accepts as number including \texttt{\value}. Examples: \alphalph, \AlphAlph, \alphalph@alph

However, \alph or \fnsymbol are not number presentation commands because they expect a counter name as argument. Happily \texttt{\LaTeX} counter presentation commands internally uses number presentation commands with the same name, but prefixed by ‘@’. Thus \@alph, \@fnsymbol are number presentation commands.

Symbols provider is a command that can be used to get a list of symbols. For example, \@Alph provides the 26 uppercase letters from ‘A’ to ‘Z’. Basically a symbol provider is a number presentation command, usually with a limited range.

Number of symbols is the number of the last symbol slot of a symbol provider. Thus \@Alph generates 26 symbols, \@fnsymbol provides 9 symbols.
1.4 Package usage

The package alphalph can be used with both plain TeX and \LaTeX:

plain TeX: \input alphalph.sty
\LaTeX 2ε: \usepackage{alphalph}

There aren’t any options.

1.5 User commands

\AlphAlph{⟨number⟩}
\alphalph{⟨number⟩}

Both macros are number presentation commands that expects a number as argument. \LaTeX counters are used with \value.

The macros represents a number by letters. First single letters A..Z are used, then two letters AA..ZZ, three letters AAA...ZZZ, ... follow.

Macro \AlphAlph uses uppercase letters, \alphalph generates the lowercase variant.

\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
⟨number⟩  & \AlphAlph{⟨number⟩}  & \alphalph{⟨number⟩}  \\
\hline
1         & A              & a          \\
2         & B              & b          \\
26        & Z              & z          \\
27        & AA             & aa         \\
30        & AD             & ad         \\
2000      & BXX            & bxx        \\
3752127   & HELLO          & hello      \\
10786572  & WORLD          & world      \\
2147483647 & FXSHRXW        & fxshrxw    \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

\newalphalph{⟨cmd⟩}{⟨method⟩}{⟨symbols provider⟩}{⟨number of symbols⟩}

Macro \newalphalph defines ⟨cmd⟩ as new number presentation command. Like \newcommand an error is thrown, if macro ⟨cmd⟩ already exists.

The ⟨method⟩ is one of alph, wrap, or mult. The default is alph.

As symbol provider a number presentation command can be used, e.g. \@fnsymbol, \@Alph, or \alphalph@alph.

The last argument is the number of symbols. If the argument is empty, then \newalphalph tries to find this number itself. \LaTeX’s number presentation commands throw an error message, if the number is too large. This error message is put in a macro \@ctrerr. Thus \newalphalph calls the symbol provider and tests a number by typesetting it in a temporary box. The error macro \@ctrerr is catched, it proofs that the number is not supported. Also if the width of the result is zero the number is considered as unavailable.

The empty argument is useful for potentially variable lists. However if the end cannot be detected, then the number of symbols must be given. This is also a lot faster. Therefore don’t let the argument empty without reason.
1.6 Programmer commands

\alphalph@Alph {{\{number\}}} \alphalph@alph {{\{number\}}}

They are basically the same as \texttt{\@Alph} and \texttt{\@alph}. Some languages of package \texttt{babel} redefine \LaTeX{}’s macros to include some font setup that breaks expandibility. Therefore \texttt{\AlphAlph} and \texttt{\alphalph} are based on \texttt{\alphalph@Alph} and \texttt{\alphalph@alph} to get the letters. The behaviour of these symbol providers for numbers outside the range 1..26 is undefined.

1.7 Design principles

1.7.1 Number presentation commands

All number presentation commands that this package defines (including \texttt{\alphalph} and \texttt{\AlphAlph}) have the following properties:

- They are fully expandable. This means that they can safely
  - be written to a file,
  - used in moving arguments (\LaTeX: they are \textit{robust}),
  - used in a \texttt{\csname-\endcsname} pair.

- If the argument is zero or negative, the commands expand to nothing like \texttt{\romannumeral}.

- The argument is a \LaTeX{} number. Anything that would be accepted by \texttt{\number} is a valid argument:
  - explicite constants,
  - macros that expand to a number,
  - count registers, \LaTeX{} counter can used via \texttt{\value}, e.g.:
    \texttt{\alphalph{\value\{page\}}} – ...

- $\varepsilon$-\TeX{}’s numeric expressions are supported, if $\varepsilon$-\TeX{} is available. Then \texttt{\numexpr} is applied to the argument. Package \texttt{\calc}’s expressions are not supported. That would violate the expandibility.

1.7.2 General usability

\LaTeX{} format: The package does not depend on \LaTeX{}, it can also be used by plain \TeX{}, for example.

$\varepsilon$-\TeX{}: $\varepsilon$-\TeX{}is supported, the macros are shorter and faster. But $\varepsilon$-\TeX{}’s extensions are not requirements. Without $\varepsilon$-\TeX{}, just the implementation changes. The properties remain unchanged.

2 Implementation

2.1 Begin of package

1 (*package)
Reload check, especially if the package is not used with \LaTeX.
\begin{verbatim}
\PackageWarning{alphalph}{The package is already loaded}
\end{verbatim}

\PackageWarning{alphalph}{The package is already loaded}
2.2 Catcodes

\begingroup\catcode61\catcode48\catcode32=10\relax%
\catcode13=5 % ^^M
\catcode35=6 % #
\catcode64=11 % @
\catcode123=1 % {
\catcode125=2 % }
\def\TMP@EnsureCode#1#2{%
\edef\AlPh@AtEnd{\AlPh@AtEnd
\catcode#1=\the\catcode#1\relax
\catcode#1=#2\relax}
}\TMP@EnsureCode{33}{12}!
\TMP@EnsureCode{39}{12}!
\TMP@EnsureCode{40}{12}!
\TMP@EnsureCode{41}{12}!
\TMP@EnsureCode{43}{12}
\TMP@EnsureCode{44}{12},
\TMP@EnsureCode{46}{12}
\TMP@EnsureCode{47}{12}
\TMP@EnsureCode{59}{12}
\TMP@EnsureCode{60}{12}<
\TMP@EnsureCode{62}{12}>
\TMP@EnsureCode{91}{12}
}\TMP@EnsureCode{93}{12}]
\endgroup
\expandafter\edef\csname AlPh@AtEnd\endcsname{%
\endlinechar=\the\endlinechar\relax
\catcode13=\the\catcode13\relax
\catcode32=\the\catcode32\relax
\catcode35=\the\catcode35\relax
\catcode61=\the\catcode61\relax
\catcode64=\the\catcode64\relax
\catcode123=\the\catcode123\relax
\catcode125=\the\catcode125\relax
}%
\edef\csname AlPh\endcsname{\edef\csname AlPh\endcsname{%
\endlinechar=\the\endlinechar\relax
\catcode13=\the\catcode13\relax
\catcode32=\the\catcode32\relax
\catcode35=\the\catcode35\relax
\catcode61=\the\catcode61\relax
\catcode64=\the\catcode64\relax
\catcode123=\the\catcode123\relax
\catcode125=\the\catcode125\relax
}%
\expandafter\edef\csname AlPh\endcsname{\edef\csname AlPh\endcsname{%
\endlinechar=\the\endlinechar\relax
\catcode13=\the\catcode13\relax
\catcode32=\the\catcode32\relax
\catcode35=\the\catcode35\relax
\catcode61=\the\catcode61\relax
\catcode64=\the\catcode64\relax
\catcode123=\the\catcode123\relax
\catcode125=\the\catcode125\relax
}%
\expandafter\edef\csname AlPh\endcsname{\edef\csname AlPh\endcsname{%
\endlinechar=\the\endlinechar\relax
\catcode13=\the\catcode13\relax
\catcode32=\the\catcode32\relax
\catcode35=\the\catcode35\relax
\catcode61=\the\catcode61\relax
\catcode64=\the\catcode64\relax
\catcode123=\the\catcode123\relax
\catcode125=\the\catcode125\relax
}%
\edef\csname AlPh\endcsname{\edef\csname AlPh\endcsname{%
\endlinechar=\the\endlinechar\relax
\catcode13=\the\catcode13\relax
\catcode32=\the\catcode32\relax
\catcode35=\the\catcode35\relax
\catcode61=\the\catcode61\relax
\catcode64=\the\catcode64\relax
\catcode123=\the\catcode123\relax
\catcode125=\the\catcode125\relax
}
\TMP@EnsureCode{96}\{12}\% \ ' \\
\TMP@EnsureCode{124}\{12}\% | \\
\edef\AlPh@AtEnd{\AlPh@AtEnd\noexpand@endinput}

## 2.3 Package loading

\begingroup\expandafter\expandafter\expandafter\endgroup \\
\expandafter\ifx\csname RequirePackage\endcsname\relax \\
\input infwarerr.sty\relax \\
\input intcalc.sty\relax \\
\else \\
\RequirePackage{infwarerr}[2007/09/09]\% \\
\RequirePackage{intcalc}[2007/09/09]\% \\
\fi

## 2.4 $\varepsilon$-\TeX{} detection

\begingroup\expandafter\expandafter\expandafter\endgroup \\
\expandafter\ifx\csname numexpr\endcsname\relax \\
\catcode124=9 \% '!': ignore \\
\catcode43=14 \% '+': comment \\
\else \\
\catcode124=14 \% '!': comment \\
\catcode43=9 \% '+': ignore \\
\fi

## 2.5 Help macros

\begin{verbatim}
\def\AlPh@Error#1{\begingroup\escapechar=92 \% backslash \\
\PackageError{alphalph}{#1}\@ehc \endgroup} \\
\def\AlPh@IfDefinable#1#2{\ifcase\ifx#1\@undefined\else\ifx#1\relax\else1\fi\fi0 \% #2\% \\
\else \\
\AlPh@Error{\string#1 already defined\%} \\
\fi \\
\else \\
\let\AlPh@IfDefinable\@ifdefinable \\
\fi}
\end{verbatim}

The following commands moves the ‘then’ and ‘else’ part respectively behind the $\if$-construct. This prevents a too deep $\if$-nesting and so a \TeX{} capacity error because of a limited input stack size. I use this trick in several packages, so I
don’t prefix these internal commands in order not to have the same macros with
different names. (It saves memory.)
\longdef\@ReturnAfterElseFi#1\else#2\fi{\fi#1}
\longdef\@ReturnAfterFi#1\fi{\fi#1}
\gobblefour \LaTeX{} defines commands for eating arguments. Define \gobblefour if it is not
defined (plain \TeX{}).
\expandafter\ifx\csname@gobblefour\endcsname\relax
\longdef\@gobblefour#1#2#3#4{}%
\fi
AlPh@IfOptArg
\begingroup\expandafter\expandafter\expandafter\endgroup
\expandafter\ifx\csname kernel@ifnextchar\endcsname\relax
\begingroup\expandafter\expandafter\expandafter\endgroup
\expandafter\ifx\csname @ifnextchar\endcsname\relax
\def\AlPh@IfOptArg#1#2{%
\def\AlPh@TempA{#1}%
\def\AlPh@TempB{#2}%
\futurelet\AlPh@Token\AlPh@IfOptArgNext
}
\else
\expandafter\AlPh@IfOptArgNext
\else
\def\AlPh@IfOptArg{\@ifnextchar[}%
\fi
\else
\def\AlPh@IfOptArg{\kernel@ifnextchar[}%
\fi

2.6 Symbol provider
2.6.1 Alphabet
The output of \alphalph and \AlphAlph should be usable as part of command
names (see \@namedef, \csname, . . . ). Unhappily some languages of package
babel redefine \LaTeX{}’s \@alph and \@Alph in a manner that they cannot be used
in expandable context any more. Therefore package alphalph provides its own
commands.
\alphalph@Alph
\alphalph@alph
The two commands \Alph@Alph and \Alph@alph convert a number into a letter
(uppercase and lowercase respectively). The character @ is used as an error symbol,
if the number isn’t in the range of 1 until 26. Here we need no space after the
number #1, because the error symbol @ for the zero case stops scanning the number.
This error symbol should not appear anywhere (except for bugs).
\def\alphalph@Alph#1{%
\ifcase#1%
@%
\AlPh@ctrerr
\%}
\} def\alphalph@alph#1{
\ifcase#1\%
 \% or \a or b or c or d or e or f or g or h or i or j or k or l or m
 \% or n or o or p or q or r or s or t or u or v or w or x or y or z
 \else
 \AlPh@ctrerr
 \%
 \fi}

\AlPh@ctrerr Macro \AlPh@ctrerr is used as hook for the algorithm to get the available number of symbols.
\def\AlPh@ctrerr{}

2.7 Finding number of symbols

\AlPh@GetNumberOfSymbols #1: symbols provider
\def\AlPh@GetNumberOfSymbols#1{\AlPh@TestNumber1!{#1}\
\ifAlPh@Unavailable\def\AlPh@Number{0}\
\AlPh@Error{No symbols found}\
\else\def\AlPh@Number{1}\
\AlPh@ExpSearch2!{#1}\
\fi}

\ifAlPh@Unavailable
\let\ifAlPh@Unavailable\iffalse
\def\AlPh@Unavailablerue\%
\global\let\ifAlPh@Unavailable\iftrue
\} \def\AlPh@Unavailablefalse\%
\global\let\ifAlPh@Unavailable\iffalse
\}

\AlPh@TestNumber #1: number to be tested
#2: symbols provider
\def\AlPh@TestNumber#1!#2{\AlPh@Unavailablefalse\%
\begingroup\box0=\hbox{\begingroup % color
\let\@ctrerr\AlPh@Unavailability\% 
\let\AlPh@ctrerr\AlPh@Unavailability\%
#2{#1}\
\endgroup
\ifdim\wd0=0pt\
\AlPh@Unavailabletrue\
\fi

\AlPh@Unavailability
\let\ifAlPh@Unavailability\iffalse
\def\AlPh@Unavailabilitytrue\%
\global\let\ifAlPh@Unavailability\iftrue
\} \def\AlPh@Unavailabilityfalse\%
\global\let\ifAlPh@Unavailability\iffalse
\}

\AlPh@Unavailability
\def\AlPh@ExpSearch#1!#2{\let\AlPh@Next\relax\AlPh@TestNumber#1!{#2}\
\ifAlPh@Unavailable\expandafter\AlPh@BinSearch\AlPh@Number!#1!{#2}\
\else\def\AlPh@Number{#1}\
\ifnum#1>1073741823 \AlPh@TestNumber2147483647!{#2}\
\ifAlPh@Unavailable\AlPh@BinSearch#1!2147483647!{#2}\
\else\def\AlPh@Number{0}\
\AlPh@Error{Maximal symbol number not found}\
)\fi\fi\AlPh@Next\fi\else\def\AlPh@Next{\expandafter\AlPh@ExpSearch\number\intcalcShl{#1}!{#2}}\fi\AlPh@Next}

\def\AlPh@BinSearch#1!#2!#3{\expandafter\AlPh@ProcessBinSearch\number\intcalcShr{\intcalcAdd{#1}{#2}}!%#1!#2!{#3}!}

\def\AlPh@ProcessBinSearch#1!#2!#3!#4{\let\AlPh@Next\relax\ifnum#1>#2 \ifnum#1<#3 \AlPh@TestNumber#1!{#4}\
\ifAlPh@Unavailable\def\AlPh@Next{%\AlPh@BinSearch#2!#1!{#4}\
\else\def\AlPh@Next{%\AlPh@BinSearch#1!#3!{#4}\
}\
\fi\fi\AlPh@Next\fi\else\def\AlPh@Next{%\AlPh@BinSearch#1!#3!{#4}\
}\
}
2.8 Methods

The names of method macros start with \AlPh@Method. These macros do the main job in converting a number to its representation. A method command is called with three arguments. The first argument is the number of symbols. The second argument is the basic macro for converting a number with limited number range. The last parameter is the number that needs converting.

2.8.1 Common methods

\AlPh@CheckPositive

#1: number to be checked
#2: continuation macro
#3: number of symbols (hidden here)
#4: symbol provider (hidden here)

\def\AlPh@CheckPositive#1!#2{\ifnum#1<1 \expandafter\@gobblefour \fi #2{#1}\}

2.8.2 Method ‘alph’

\AlPh@Method@alph

#1: number of symbols
#2: symbols provider
#3: number to be converted

\def\AlPh@Method@alph#1#2#3{\expandafter\AlPh@CheckPositive| \number#3!+ \the\numexpr#3!\AlPh@ProcessAlph{#1}{#2}}

\AlPh@ProcessAlph

#1: current number
#2: number of symbols
#3: symbols provider

\def\AlPh@ProcessAlph#1#2#3{\ifnum#1>#2 \@ReturnAfterElseFi{\expandafter\AlPh@StepAlph\number\intcalcInc{\intcalcMod{\intcalcDec{\intcalcInc{\intcalcMod{\intcalcDec{\intcalcDec{\intcalcDec{\intcalcDec{\intcalcDiv{\intcalcDec{\intcalcDec{#1}}{#2}}{#2}}}{#2}}}{#2}}}{#2}}{#2}}{#2}}{#2}}{#2}}}
\AlPh@StepAlph  #1: current last digit
 #2: new current number
 #3: number of symbols
 #4: symbols provider
\begin{verbatim}
def\AlPh@StepAlph#1!#2!#3#4{\AlPh@ProcessAlph{#2}{#3}{#4}{#1}}\end{verbatim}

2.8.3 Method ‘wrap’
\AlPh@Method@wrap  #1: number of symbols
 #2: symbols provider
 #3: number to be converted
\begin{verbatim}
def\AlPh@Method@wrap#1#2#3{\expandafter\AlPh@CheckPositive
| \number#3!\number\numexpr#3!\AlPh@ProcessWrap{#1}{#2}{#3}}\end{verbatim}

\AlPh@ProcessWrap  #1: number to be converted
 #2: number of symbols
 #3: symbols provider
\begin{verbatim}
def\AlPh@ProcessWrap#1#2#3{\ifnum#1>#2\@ReturnAfterElseFi{\expandafter\AlPh@StepWrap
\intcalcInc{\intcalcDec{#1}}{#2}{#3}}\else\@ReturnAfterFi{\AlPh@StepWrap
#3{#1}}\fi}\end{verbatim}

\AlPh@StepWrap  #1: final number
 #2: symbols provider
\begin{verbatim}
def\AlPh@StepWrap#1!#2{\AlPh@StepWrap#1!#2!#3!#4}{#1}!#2\AlPh@ProcessWrap{#2}{#3}{#4}{#1}}\end{verbatim}
2.8.4 Method ‘mult’

After the number of symbols is exhausted, repetitions of the symbol are used.

\[ x := \text{number to be converted} \]
\[ n := \text{number of symbols} \]
\[ r := \text{repetition length} \]
\[ s := \text{symbol slot} \]
\[ r = \left( \frac{x - 1}{n} \right) + 1 \]
\[ s = \left( (x - 1) \mod n \right) + 1 \]

\texttt{\AlPh@Method@mult} \#1: number of symbols
\#2: symbols provider
\#3: number to be converted

\begin{verbatim}
def \AlPh@Method@mult#1#2#3{%
    \expandafter \AlPh@CheckPositive \number#3!
    + \the \numexpr#3!
    \AlPh@ProcessMult
    {#1}{#2}%
}
\end{verbatim}

\texttt{\AlPh@ProcessMult} \#1: number to be converted
\#2: number of symbols
\#3: symbols provider

\begin{verbatim}
def \AlPh@ProcessMult#1#2#3{%
    \ifnum#1>#2 %
    \@ReturnAfterElseFi{%
        \AlPh@StepMult \romannumeral\intcalcInc{\intcalcDiv{\intcalcDec{#1}}{#2}}%
        000%
        \expandafter!\number
        \intcalcInc{\intcalcMod{\intcalcDec{#1}}{#2}}%
        !{#3}%
    }%
    \else
    \@ReturnAfterFi{%
        #3{#1}%
    }%
    \fi
}
\end{verbatim}

\texttt{\AlPh@StepMult} \#1#2: repetitions coded as list of character ‘m’
\#3: symbol slot
\#4: symbols provider

\begin{verbatim}
def \AlPh@StepMult#1#2!#3!#4{%
    \ifx \#2\%
    \else
    \@ReturnAfterElseFi{%
        \AlPh@StepMult \roman numeral
        \intcalcInc{\intcalcDiv{\intcalcDec{#1}}{#2}}%
        000%
        \expandafter!\number
        \intcalcInc{\intcalcMod{\intcalcDec{#1}}{#2}}%
        !{#3}%
    }%
    \else
    \@ReturnAfterFi{%
        #3{#1}%
    }%
    \fi
}
\end{verbatim}
2.9 User interface

Macro \newalphalph had three arguments in versions below 2.0. For the new method argument we use an optional argument in first position.

#1: cmd
[#2]: method name: alph (default), wrap, mult
hash-ok #3: symbols provider
#4: number of symbols

\AlPh@ifDefinable
\newalphalph{%
\def\newalphalph#1{%
\AlPh@ifOptArg{%
\AlPh@newalphalph{#1}%
}{%
\AlPh@newalphalph{#1}[alph]%
}%
}%
}

\AlPh@newalphalph #1: cmd #2: method name
#3: symbols provider
#4: number of symbols
\def\AlPh@newalphalph#1[#2]#3#4{%
\begingroup\expandafter\expandafter\expandafter\endgroup
\expandafter\ifx\csname AlPh@Method@#2\endcsname\relax
\AlPh@Error{%
Unknown method % #2’% #2\detokenize{#2}’% }%
}else
\ifx\number#4%
\AlPh@GetNumberOfSymbols{#3}%
\ifcase\AlPh@Number
\else
\begingroup
\escapechar=92 % backslash
\@PackageInfo{alphalph}{%
Number of symbols for \string#1 is \AlPh@Number
}%
\endgroup
\expandafter\AlPh@NewAlphAlph
\csname AlPh@Method@#2\expandafter\endcsname!{#1}{#3}%
}%
\expandafter\expandafter\expandafter\endgroup
\expandafter\AlPh@NewAlphAlph
\csname AlPh@Method@#2\expandafter\endcsname!{#1}{#3}%
}\fi
\fi
\else
\csname AlPh@Method@#2\expandafter\endcsname!
| \number#4!%
| \the\numexpr#4!%
| #1!{#3}%
}%
\fi

\AlPh@NewAlphAlph #1: method macro
#2: number of symbols
#3: cmd
#4: symbols provider
3 Installation

3.1 Download

Package. This package is available on CTAN:\footnote{\url{CTAN:pkg/alphalph}}:

\url{CTAN:macros/latex/contrib/alphalph/alphalph.dtx} The source file.
\url{CTAN:macros/latex/contrib/alphalph/alphalph.pdf} Documentation.

Bundle. All the packages of the bundle ‘alphalph’ are also available in a TDS compliant ZIP archive. There the packages are already unpacked and the documentation files are generated. The files and directories obey the TDS standard.

\url{CTAN:install/macros/latex/contrib/alphalph.tds.zip}

TDS refers to the standard “A Directory Structure for \TeX Files” (\url{CTAN:pkg/tds}). Directories with texmf in their name are usually organized this way.

3.2 Bundle installation

Unpacking. Unpack the alphalph.tds.zip in the TDS tree (also known as texmf tree) of your choice. Example (linux):

```
unzip alphalph.tds.zip -d ~/texmf
```

3.3 Package installation

Unpacking. The .dtx file is a self-extracting docstrip archive. The files are extracted by running the .dtx through plain \TeX:

```
tex alphalph.dtx
```
Now the different files must be moved into the different directories in your installation TDS tree (also known as texmf tree):

- `alphalph.sty` → `tex/generic/alphalph/alphalph.sty`
- `alphalph.pdf` → `doc/latex/alphalph/alphalph.pdf`
- `alphalph.dtx` → `source/latex/alphalph/alphalph.dtx`

If you have a `docstrip.cfg` that configures and enables docstrip’s TDS installing feature, then some files can already be in the right place, see the documentation of docstrip.

### 3.4 Refresh file name databases

If your TeX distribution (TeX Live, miktex, ...) relies on file name databases, you must refresh these. For example, TeX Live users run `texhash` or `mktexlsr`.

### 3.5 Some details for the interested

**Unpacking with \LaTeX.** The `.dtx` chooses its action depending on the format:

- **plain TeX:** Run `docstrip` and extract the files.
- **\LaTeX:** Generate the documentation.

If you insist on using \LaTeX{} for `docstrip` (really, `docstrip` does not need \LaTeX{}), then inform the autodetect routine about your intention:

```
latex \let\install=y\input{alphalph.dtx}
```

Do not forget to quote the argument according to the demands of your shell.

**Generating the documentation.** You can use both the `.dtx` or the `.drv` to generate the documentation. The process can be configured by the configuration file `ltxdoc.cfg`. For instance, put this line into this file, if you want to have A4 as paper format:

```
\PassOptionsToClass{a4paper}{article}
```

An example follows how to generate the documentation with pdf\LaTeX{}:

```
pdflatex alphalph.dtx
makeindex -s gind.ist alphalph.idx
pdflatex alphalph.dtx
makeindex -s gind.ist alphalph.idx
pdflatex alphalph.dtx
```

### 4 History

[1999/03/19 v0.1]

- The first version was built as a response to a question\(^2\) of Will Douglas\(^3\) and the request\(^4\) of Donald Arsenau\(^5\), published in the newsgroup `comp.text.tex`: “Re: alph counters > 26”\(^6\)

- Copyright: LPPL (CTAN:macros/latex/base/lppl.txt)

\(^2\)Url: [https://groups.google.com/group/comp.text.tex/msg/17a74cd721641038](https://groups.google.com/group/comp.text.tex/msg/17a74cd721641038)
\(^3\)Will Douglas’s email address: william.douglas@wolfson.ox.ac.uk
\(^4\)Url: [https://groups.google.com/group/comp.text.tex/msg/8f9768825640315f](https://groups.google.com/group/comp.text.tex/msg/8f9768825640315f)
\(^5\)Donald Arsenau’s email address: asnd@reg.triumf.ca
\(^6\)Url: [https://groups.google.com/group/comp.text.tex/msg/cec563eef8bf65d0](https://groups.google.com/group/comp.text.tex/msg/cec563eef8bf65d0)
[1999/04/12 v1.0]
  • Documentation added in dtx format.
  • \vTEX support added.

[1999/04/13 v1.1]
  • Minor documentation change.
  • First CTAN release.

[1999/06/26 v1.2]
  • First generic code about \ProvidesPackage improved.
  • Documentation: Installation part revised.

[2006/02/20 v1.3]
  • Reload check (for plain \TeX)
  • New DTX framework.
  • LPPL 1.3

[2006/05/30 v1.4]
  • \newalphalph added.

[2007/04/11 v1.5]
  • Line ends sanitized.

[2007/09/09 v2.0]
  • New implementation that uses package \intcalc. This removes the dependency on \vTEX.
  • \newalphalph is extended to support new methods ‘wrap’ and ‘multi’.
  • Documentation rewritten.

[2008/08/11 v2.1]
  • Code is not changed.
  • URLs updated from www.dejanews.com to groups.google.com.

[2010/03/01 v2.2]
  • Compatibility with ini\TeX.

[2010/04/18 v2.3]
  • Documentation fixes (Martin Münch).
• Documentation fixes (Jim Diamond) and using package hologo for the documentation.

• Catalogue file added.

[2016/05/16 v2.5]
• Documentation updates.

[2019/12/09 v2.6]
• Documentation updates.

5 Index

Numbers written in italic refer to the page where the corresponding entry is described; numbers underlined refer to the code line of the definition; plain numbers refer to the code lines where the entry is used.

Symbols
\@PackageError .......................... 136
\@PackageInfo .......................... 399
\@ReturnAfterElseFi 153, 301, 329, 352
\@ReturnAfterFi 153, 311, 335, 361, 369
\@ctrerr .................................. 224
\@ehc ..................................... 136
\@gobblefour 155, 288
\@ifdefinable ........................................... 151
\@ifnextchar ........................................... 176
\@undefinable ................................. 58, 142
\\ ............................................ 367, 393

A
\@Aftergroup .................................. 29
\Alph@AtEnd 95, 96, 116, 430
\Alph@BinSearch 238, 244, 259, 271, 275
\Alph@BracketLeft ............................... 167, 169
\Alph@CheckPositive 286, 293, 321, 344
\Alph@Cterr 187, 197, 201, 225
\Alph@Error 133, 145, 206, 247, 387, 421
\Alph@ExpSearch 209, 234
\Alph@GetNumberOfSymbols 202, 394
\Alph@IfDefinable 139, 151, 375, 417
\Alph@IfOptArg 158, 162, 176, 179, 377
\Alph@IfOptArgNext 165, 168
\Alph@Method@alph 292
\Alph@Method@mult 343
\Alph@Method@wrap 320
\Alph@NewAlphAlph 403, 408, 416
\Alph@Newalphalph 378, 380, 384
\Alph@Next 235, 252, 257, 265, 270, 274, 284
\Alph@Number 205, 208, 238, 240, 246, 279, 282, 395, 400, 405
\Alph@ProcessAlph 296, 299, 317
\Alph@ProcessBinSearch 260, 264
\Alph@ProcessMult 347, 350
\Alph@ProcessWrap 324, 327
\Alph@StepAlph 302, 321, 344
\Alph@StepMult 353, 366
\Alph@StepWrap 330, 340
\Alph@TempA 163, 170
\Alph@TempB 164, 172
\Alph@TempFalse 216, 220
\Alph@TempTrue 213, 224, 225, 230
\Alph@Token 165, 169
\Alph@Unavailablefalse 5, 428
\Alph@Unavailablerue 6, 181, 428
\Alph@Unavailabletrue 181, 429
\AlphAlph 5, 428
\alphalph 429
\alphalph@Alph 6, 181, 428
\alphalph@alph 181, 429
\catcode 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46,
47, 48, 49, 60, 70, 72, 73, 74, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 88, 89,
91, 92, 93, 97, 99, 127, 128, 130, 131
\csname 14, 21, 50, 66, 76, 118, 126,
140, 155, 159, 161, 386, 404, 409
\detokenize 390
\empty 17, 18
\endcsname 14, 21, 50, 66, 76, 118, 126,
140, 155, 159, 161, 386, 404, 409
\endinput 29, 116