The \texttt{ifthen} package

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2022/04/13

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Abstract

This file implements an \texttt{ifthenelse} command for \LaTeX\ 2ε. The algorithm used is compatible with that used in the \LaTeX\ 2.09 \texttt{ifthen} style option. It has been recoded, making the resulting definitions somewhat more compact and efficient.

1 Introduction

\texttt{ifthenelse}\{\langle test\rangle\}\{\langle then clause\rangle\}\{\langle else clause\rangle\}

Evaluates \langle test\rangle as a boolean function, and then executes either \langle then clause\rangle or \langle else clause\rangle.

\langle test\rangle is a boolean expression using the infix connectives, \texttt{\&}, \texttt{\|}, the unary \texttt{\neg} and parentheses \texttt{\(\)} \texttt{\(\)}.

As an alternative notation \texttt{\&\&}, \texttt{\|\|} and \texttt{\neg\neg} can be used. This is safer since it can’t be misinterpreted when appearing inside a \TeX\-conditional in which \texttt{\|} has a different meaning.

The atomic propositions are:
\langle number\rangle < \langle number\rangle
\langle number\rangle = \langle number\rangle
\langle number\rangle > \langle number\rangle
\texttt{\isodd}\{\langle number\rangle\}
\texttt{\isundefined}\{\langle command name\}\}
\texttt{\equal}\{\langle string\}\{\langle string\}\}
\texttt{\lengthtest}\{\langle dimen\}\texttt{\textless}\{\langle dimen\}\}
\texttt{\lengthtest}\{\langle dimen\}\texttt{\textequal}\{\langle dimen\}\}
\texttt{\lengthtest}\{\langle dimen\}\texttt{\textgreater}\{\langle dimen\}\}
\texttt{\boolean}\{\langle name\}\}

The \langle string\rangle s tested by \texttt{\equal} may be any sequence of commands that expand to a list of tokens. If these expansions are equal, then the proposition is true.
\texttt{\isodd} is true if the \langle number\rangle is odd, and false otherwise (even if the argument is not a number).

*This file has version number v1.1d, last revised 2022/04/13.
\texttt{\isundefined{\cmd}} is true if \cmd is not defined.
\texttt{\boolean{xyz}} returns the truth value contained in the primitive \TeX \texttt{\if}, \texttt{\ifxyz}. This is usually used with boolean flags created with \texttt{\newboolean} and \texttt{\provideboolean} described below. It can also be used with the names of \texttt{\newif} created tokens, and primitive \TeX \texttt{\if} constructs, for example \texttt{\boolean{true}} (\texttt{\iftrue}), \texttt{\boolean{mmode}} (\texttt{\ifmmode}) etc.

The commands:
\begin{itemize}
\item \texttt{\newboolean{⟨name⟩}} and \texttt{\provideboolean{⟨name⟩}} are provided so the user can easily create new boolean flags. As for \texttt{\newcommand}, \texttt{\newboolean} generates an error if the command name is not new. \texttt{\provideboolean} silently does nothing in that case.
\item The boolean flags may be set with:
\texttt{\setboolean{⟨name⟩}{⟨value⟩}}
\texttt{⟨value⟩} may be either \texttt{true} or \texttt{false} (any CaSe).
\end{itemize}

Note that there is no precedence between \texttt{\and} and \texttt{\or}. The proposition is evaluated in a left right manner. \texttt{\not} only applies to the immediately following proposition. (This is consistent with Lamport’s \texttt{\ifthen.sty}.) In this style, though the test is ‘lazily’ evaluated, so for instance if the first proposition in an \texttt{\or} is true, the second one is skipped. (On the second pass—the first pass in an \texttt{\edef} expands clauses in all propositions.)

Apart from the addition of the extra atomic propositions \texttt{\isodd}, \texttt{\boolean}, \texttt{\lengthtest} and \texttt{\isundefined}, the only known incompatibility is that in this package the expression \texttt{\not\not⟨P⟩} is equivalent to \texttt{⟨P⟩}. However in the original style it was equivalent to \texttt{\not⟨P⟩}. This is intentional (bug fix:-).

\texttt{\whiledo} The command \texttt{\whiledo} is also defined (copied directly from the \LaTeX\texttt{2.09} definition).
\begin{itemize}
\item \texttt{\whiledo{⟨test⟩}{⟨while clause⟩}}
\item With \texttt{⟨test⟩} as above, repeatedly executes \texttt{⟨while clause⟩} while the test remains true.
\end{itemize}

\section{The Implementation}

1 \texttt{\*package}\texttt{\TE@throw}

In order to support the syntax of \texttt{\ifthen.sty}, which allows access to the primitive \TeX syntax for a numeric test, rather than a {} delimited argument form, it is most convenient to work ‘within’ an \texttt{\ifnum}. \texttt{\ift@throw} ‘throws’ you out of the current \texttt{\ifnum} so that you can (eg) start an \texttt{\ifdim} for the length tests.

2 \texttt{\def\TE@throw{⟨@one=⟨@one\noexpand\fi⟩}}

\texttt{\boolean} A non-standard extension to \texttt{\ifthen}, supporting boolean was previously available, this is a simpler implementation.

3 \texttt{\def\boolean#1#2{%}
4 \ \TE@throw\expandafter\noexpand\csname if#1\endcsname if#1\endcsname#2}

\texttt{\TE@length} Testing lengths. \#1 is the test. The extra argument gobbles spaces.

5 \texttt{\def\TE@length#1#2{⟨\TE@throw\noexpand\ifdim#1#2⟩}}

\texttt{\TE@odd} Testing odd/even. This is true if \#1 is an odd number, and false otherwise (even \texttt{\TE@odd} if \#1 is not a number at all).
It is hard to make this completely reliable. Here I have erred on the side of safety. This should not generate a \TeX error if given any robust commands as its argument. However it returns true on any argument that \textit{starts} with an odd number \texttt{11xx} which is bad, and it can not deal with \TeX’s count registers, although \LaTeX counters work (via \texttt{\value}).

\begin{verbatim}
\def\TE@odd#1#2{\TE@throw\noexpand\TE@@odd#1\noexpand\@nil\noexpand\ifodd\count@#2}
\TE@@odd is not expanded on the first pass.
\def\TE@@odd#1#2\@nil{\@defaultunits\count@\if-#1-0\else0\expandafter#1\fi#2\relax\@nnil}
\end{verbatim}

\texttt{\TE@repl} \ TE@repl replaces the single token \texttt{#1} by \texttt{#2}. (Not within \texttt{\{} groups.) It is used to replace \texttt{or} by \texttt{\TE@or} without the need to redefine \texttt{or}. Earlier versions just \texttt{\let\or\TE@or} but this has a bad effect on the expansion of commands which use the primitive \texttt{or} internally, eg \texttt{\alph}, and so caused surprising results if these commands were used inside \texttt{\equal}.

\begin{verbatim}
\def\TE@repl#1#2{\long\def\@tempc##1#1##2{\def\@tempa{##2}\def\@tempb{\@tempc}\
\ifx\@tempa\@tempb\toks@{#1}\expandafter{\the\toks@}##2\expandafter\@gobble\else\toks@{#1#2}\expandafter\@tempc\the\toks@\fi##2}\expandafter\@tempc\the\toks@#1\@tempc}
\end{verbatim}

\texttt{\ifthenelse} The remaining macros in this file are derived from the ones in \texttt{ifthen.sty} but recoded and simplified. The main simplification is that the original style (and the \texttt{\boolean} extensions) expressed logical values always in terms of \texttt{\ifnum}. As \texttt{\if} is ‘untyped’ this is not necessary, so for example the length tests can return values via \texttt{\ifdim}, the trailing \texttt{\fi} will not complain, even though it was ‘expecting’ an \texttt{\ifnum}. Also the system of passing information via macros expanding to \texttt{T} or \texttt{F} has been completely replaced by a simpler system using \texttt{\iftrue}, which furthermore allows lazy evaluation on the second pass. With a \LaTeX\ 2022/06/01 we have to ensure that \texttt{\pageref} is expandable.

\begin{verbatim}
\@ifl@t@r\fmtversion{2022/06/01}{\def\TE@ref@exp{\let\pageref\@kernel@pageref@exp\let\ref\@kernel@ref@exp}}\def\TE@ref@exp{\def\@setref##1##2##3{\ifx##1\relax\z@\else\expandafter##2##1\fi}}\long\def\ifthenelse#1{\toks@{#1}\TE@repl\or\TE@or\TE@repl\and\TE@and\TE@repl\not\TE@neg}
\end{verbatim}
Support alternate names for the boolean operators (strictly speaking only \or would be necessary).
\repl\or\not
\repl\and\not
\repl\not\not

The original ifthen.sty processed everything inside a box assignment, to catch any extra spaces before they appeared in the output. Instead I have added extra arguments to the commands so they each remove any following space.

Set up the user level names \not etc.
\begingroup
\let\protect\@unexpandable@protect
\TE@ref@exp
\def\value##1{\the\csname c@##1\endcsname}\
\let\equal\TE@equal \let\lparen\TE@lparen \let\rparen\TE@rparen
\let\isodd\TE@odd \let\lengthtest\TE@length
\let\isundefined\TE@undef

For the first pass, in a group, make various tokens non-expandable.

It is unfortunate that in order to remain compatible with ifthen syntax, it is necessary to have a two pass system. The first pass inside an \edef ‘exposes’ the \if...\fi tokens, so the correct clauses may be skipped on the second pass. This means that the whole \ifthenelse command does not work by expansion, and so possibly has only limited usefulness for macro code writers. The main problem with the ifthen: syntax is that (unique for \LaTeX) it does not uses a brace delimited argument form, and exposes the primitive \TeX syntax for \langle number \rangle. Pretty much the only way of parsing \or{1 \or{1<2}}{2<1} is to actually evaluate the primitive \ifnum. A syntax such as:
\or{\numtest{1<2}}{\lengthtest{1pt<1in}}
could easily be evaluated in a one pass way, operating directly via expansion, and leaving no extra tokens in the token stream.

Still, on with the code... make \@tempa and \@tempb tokens non-expandable on the first pass.
\begingroup
\let\@tempa\relax\let\@tempb\relax
\xdef\@gtempa{\expandafter\TE@eval\the\toks@\TE@endeval}\
\endgroup

Now outside the group, execute \@gtempa which causes all the \ifs etc., to be evaluated, the final truth value is contained in the \newif token \ifTE@val. Finally this is tested and either the first or second following argument is chosen accordingly.
\@gtempa
\expandafter\endgroup\ifTE@val
\expandafter\@firstoftwo
\else
\expandafter\@secondoftwo
\fi}

\TE@eval Initialise a term. (Expanded on the first pass).
\def\TE@eval{\noexpand\TE@negatefalse\noexpand\iftrue\noexpand\ifnum}
Two \newifs the first holds the current truth value of the expression. The second is a temporary flag which is true if we need to negate the current proposition.

\TE@val
\TE@negate

Finalize a term. (Expanded on the first pass).

\TE@or
The internal version of \or. Ends the current term. If true skip the remaining terms.

\TE@and
The internal version of \and. If false skip the remaining terms.

\TE@neg
\TE@negswitch
\not. Throw the current context, set a negate flag, then restart the \ifnum.

\TE@lparen
\TE@rparen
\). Throw the current context, then restart a term inside a group.

\TE@paren
\}) end the current term, and the local group started by \l. but pass on the boolean value in \if\@val T. The \noexpand stops the \expandafter from expanding on the first pass.

\TE@equal
\TE@equal greatly simplified from the original. \def may be used rather than \edef as the whole thing is expanded anyway in the first pass. The boolean can be directly encoded with the \ifx, there is no need to start an equivalent \ifnum.

\setboolean \setboolean takes true or false, as \#2, and sets \#1 accordingly.
\newboolean  Define a new 'boolean'.
\provideboolean  Define a new 'boolean' if it is not already defined.
\whiledo  \whiledo copied directly from the original.
\TE@undef  test if csname is defined.  \ifx  test.