A LaTeX 2ε class for Draft Screenplays

by
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This paper describes class `screenplay`
version v1.6, released 2012/06/30

1 Introduction

Every year *The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences* runs a competition for screenplay writers, the *Nicholl Fellowships in Screenwriting*. Full-length feature film screenplays are submitted (for a fee). You can win money but, more importantly, placing in the competition will make agents take notice. *The Academy* recommends a particular format which this `class` file attempts to duplicate, using a `.pdf` available from *The Academy* website as the model. This format has various functions, amongst which is a gate-keeping function to show you have at least a first idea. It also gives readers a better chance of assessing how long, in filmic terms, your screenplay would be. Formatted along the lines recommended, you should aim to have your screenplay in the region of 120 pages long. Although they say A4 paper is acceptable, it is widely held that you severely handicap yourself if you don't use American 8.5" by 11" Letter size paper. I have a ream on my lap as I type: 20 pound, 106 bright, acid free. My sister brought it from America for me—it's very expensive to buy outside the US and not easy to find. One might imagine it's at the photocopy stage that dealing with A4 in America becomes a nuisance—one more reason to put your magnum opus to the bottom of the pile.

Of course, if you didn't know this already you likely need to do some serious reading and research *before* you start writing. I guess trying to understand what's going on here is a start.

The format specifications are pretty straightforward. You'll have to believe me when I say it wasn't quite so straightforward for me to start from a minimal understanding of TeX and LaTeX 2ε to a usable `.dtx` file.

This is an attempt to turn TeX into a typewriter emulator. A crazy idea—which is why it appealed to me, obviously. Fortunately I'm easily entertained.

I hope `screenplay.dtx` proves of use (and instruction) to others as it has to me.

Anyhoo, on with the show...

2   Getting started

You should have:

- `README`—plain text file

- `screenplay.dtx`—the source file

- `screenplay.ins`—driver file

- `screenplay.pdf`—the file I assume you're reading right now

- `test.pdf`—format test `.pdf` result

- `COPYING`—GNU General Public License

If not, get `screenplay.zip` via,
`http://dvc.org.uk/sacrific.txt/screenplay.zip`
Use the command,
`> latex screenplay.ins`
to generate from `screenplay.dtx`...

- `screenplay.cls`—class file

- `hardmarg.sty`—optional style package

- `example.tex`—example (very) mini-screenplay

- `test.tex`—format test source file

Once you've unpacked the bundle and generated the `class` file do,
`> latex test`
to generate the `test.dvi` you can compare with the `test.pdf`.

Make sure everything in the printing chain can deal properly with 8.5ins by 11ins Letter paper. Print out your version of `test` and the provided `test.pdf` (on Letter paper of course!) and compare them. The two printouts should be dimensionally identical. The left margin should measure as *exactly* 1.5ins. If not you have an old version of `dvips` and/or your printer driver is configured incorrectly and you'll need to fix things before you proceed further.

3   Some example markup

Although `screenplay.cls` builds on the standard TEX document class `article`, it is not intended you pass it any options (except for the release date specification, see below). The formatting required is minimalist. `screenplay.cls` will issue an error message if you use any options.

`\documentclass{screenplay}[2012/06/30]`
is your first command, you can give the optional date argument in case of any earlier copies of `screenplay.cls` lying around.

You are now in the *document preamble* where you should initialise the values of some commands.

You must define the title of the screenplay...

```
\title{The Title of Your Opus}
```

...it will be uppercased automagically so don't fuss. If it's for the *Nicholl Competition* you're done. However, you may as well also initialise...

```
\author{Your Name}
```

...capitalised as in ordinary writing, it's not munged in the typesetting, and...

```
\address{99 Any Street \\
Any Town \\ Postcode / Zip \\
Phone \\
email@whereami }
```

...which you will need for a "proper" title page.

The preamble is closed, of course, by...

```
\begin{document}
```

The first typesetting command, in the body of the document, should be one to build the title page. For the *Nicholl Competition* this is `\nicholl`, *alternatively* for the style used when submitting to an Agent, etc. use `\coverpage` (which uses your address and name from the preamble).

The first thing you need to see in your screenplay is FADE IN: left justified with a blank line underneath. Screenplays always start this way, because they do. You deploy the `\fadein` command for this.

Next would typically be a slugline,

```
\intslug[day]{Johnny's House}
```

which would produce...

INT. JOHNNY'S HOUSE   DAY

I made the time of day optional because my screenplay had stuff happening in space where there is no time of day. You will likely *always* use either *day* or *night*. (Refer to *The Academy's* information on formatting.) Likewise there's an `\extslug[]{}` for EXT.

After a slugline you would typically have some description. This is simply ordinary text with paragraph breaks as per usual.

When you get to dialogue, you have the `dialogue environment`.

```
\begin{dialogue}{Johnny} After some description you
would typically have  some dialogue. \end{dialogue}
```

Directions (short) can be put inside dialogue text either as an optional argument to the dialogue environment, `\begin{dialogue}[shouting]{Johnny}` which will result in parenthesized text below the dialogue name, or the `\paren{}` command can be used to put parentheticals into the blocks of dialogue text.

Do not put any blank lines in dialogue text.

So you wander on with your screenplay requiring little in the way of LaTeX 2ε's powers until you reach the end of the final scene. Personally I use `Elvis` with a selection of macros in my `.exrc` to save me having to type the commands I've invented.

The command at the end of the final scene is always `\fadeout` to produce the words FADE OUT: flushright.

Then it's simply a case of \theend and \end{document}.

The only tricky part of the formatting is deciding where to put any *pagebreaks* that are required to help TeX out with formatting.

Do not put in pagebreaks until you have really, really, really finished editing.

The bottom margin should be between a half and one and a half inches. screenplay will format pages avoiding breaks in blocks of dialogue or titleover passages, will not widow sluglines or "TITLE OVER" headers.

Putting in manual pagebreaks will likely involve using the \dialbreak command, though for description text \pagebreak is all that is required.

The \dialbreak command needs to know the character name and any optional directions as required.

If you've used the \titleover environment you may need the \titbreak command (more tea, vicar?). However, mostly for TITLE OVER: you'll be doing a date to accommodate flashbacks or flashforwards, I expect, so use the \centretitle command as in
\centretitle{December 21, 2012}.
Yes, that's the English (or for that matter French and Canadian) "centre" not "center" in a stunning break from tradition.

For further enlightenment, you should scrutinise the markup of example.tex and peruse **The Coding** section of this document where other useful commands may be found.

Here are lists of the screenplay commands you should familiarise yourself with.

For the title page. . .

- \title{}

- \author{}

- \realauthor{}

- \address{}

- \agent{}

- \coverpage

- \nicholl

In your screenplay text. . .

- \fadein

- \intslug[]{}

- \extslug[]{}

- \intextslug[]{}

- `\extintslug[]{}`

- `\begin{dialogue}[]{}` ... `\end{dialogue}`

- `\paren{}` (for use inside dialogue environment);

- `\dialbreak[]{}` for pagebreak in dialogue environment;

- `\begin{titleover}` ... `\end{titleover}`

- `\titbreak` for pagebreak in titleover environment;

- `\centretitle{}`

- `\intercut` gives "INTERCUT WITH:" flushright;

- `\pov\␣` gives "P.O.V." as a "word" (n.b. the ␣ symbol denotes a space);

- `\revert\␣` gives "REVERSE P.O.V." as a "word";

- `\fadeout`

- `\theend`

(`\fadeout` and `\fadein` should not be confused with "FADE TO:" which is, IMHO, unnecessary in a Draft Screenplay.)

You can see a completed screenplay marked-up via LaTeX 2_ε and typeset with the latest revision of `screenplay.cls` at `http://dvc.org.uk/sacrific.txt/`. There is also, at time of writing, a "work-in-progress" uncompleted screenplay that has not had manual pagebreaks inserted.

4   Hard Margins package

Here we're emulating a typewriter. On a typewriter, the left margin is a hard stop, whereas the right margin was signified by a bell warning you to to hit the carriage return (those of us who typed in the stone age well remember that "ding"). Even the best typist (let alone me) would hit the margin release and run past the right margins by a character or two once in a while, sometimes deliberately. Hence the "fudge factors" interpolated by me, which in days of yore would perhaps have been referred to as the *gutter*.

The provided `hardmarg.sty` shows you what happens with the *fudge factors* eliminated. Place the command `usepackage{hardmarg}` in the document preamble (i.e. between `\documentclass{...}` and `\begin{document}`) and judge for yourself. Personally I'll stick with my *fudge*. All the brain-work makes me crave carbs anyway. But if you want then use it to fix your screenplay to tighter margins, or perhaps compose an amended version to give your interpretation of "the standard."

5 User customisation

Don't! It really is a case of KISS for Draft Screenplay formatting. The margins are already "relaxed," unless you use `hardmarg.sty`. There are a few things you might get away with though...

You may want to change how the time of day is spaced from the rest of the slugline. You can do this without editing the class file by redefining the `\slugspace` command e.g. `\renewcommand*{\slugspace}{ - }` which will change the default 3em space to `em hyphen em` spacing. Likewise you could `\renewcommand*{\pov}{POV}` to lose the dots. If for some strange reason you don't like *The Academy's* use of uppercase for (MORE) and (CONT'D) you can `\renewcommand*` the `\more` and `\contd` macros.

Should you not want page number 1 to appear on the first page of the body of the screenplay put the `\thispagestyle{empty}` command in your document source file immediately *after* the command to build the title page.

Likely, in the usual LATEX 2$_\varepsilon$ fashion, you should develop your own style package depending on what conventions you want to use. If you feel you must, the lengths/widths and texts used are defined as macros you can redefine in your own style packages without having to amend the `class` file—refer to **The Coding**.

6 Specs from *The Academy*

Be sure to read, carefully, and inwardly digest and re-read,
`http://www.oscars.org/awards/nicholl/resources.html`
and,
`http://www.oscars.org/awards/nicholl/scriptsample.pdf`,
(the model document).

- 20lb Letter paper (8.5"x11.0")
  Courier 12pt, 10 pitch

- **Page**
  Top margin: 1.0"
  Bottom margin: 0.5"-1.5"
  Left margin: 1.5"
  Right margin: 1.0"

- **Dialogue**
  tab NAME to: 4.2"
  Left margin: 3.0"
  Right margin: 2.5"
  Parenthetical
  Left margin: 3.7"
  Right margin: 3.3"

- **Numbering**
  top right, Arabic
  Top margin: 0.5"
  Right margin: 0.75"

  INT/EXT. SLUG LINE DESCRIPTION   DAY/NIGHT
(with some kind of extra spacing before time of day)

7   The Coding

`screenplay.cls v1.538` was tested with. . .

- pdfeTeX 3.141592-1.21a-2.2 (Web2C 7.5.4)

- `dvips(k)` 5.95a

- `kpathsea` version 3.5.4

- `article` 2004/02/16 v1.4f

We are a LaTeX 2$_\varepsilon$ thang. . .

1 `\NeedsTeXFormat{LaTeX2e}[2003/12/01]`

Say it like it is. . .

2 `\ProvidesClass{screenplay}[2012/06/30 v1.6`
3 `LaTeX2e Draft Screenplay document class`
4 `(C)2006 John Pate`
5 `released under the GNU General Public License]`

Whinge if the user is being a bozo. . .

6 `\DeclareOption*{%`
7 `    \PackageError{screenplay}{Unwanted option '\CurrentOption'}%`
8 `    {There are no options available for class screenplay v1.538}}`
9 `\ProcessOptions\relax`

`ifthen` needed for testing for optional args. . .

10 `\RequirePackage{ifthen}[2001/05/26]`

Use `article` class for its base functionality, *must* be American Letter paper *not* A4, `screenplay.cls` eats any papersize options and ignores them. . .

11 `\LoadClass[12pt,letterpaper,onecolumn,oneside]{article}[2004/02/16]`

`geometry` package puts marks in to suggest to dvi interpretors to do the right thang for Letter paper. . .

12 `\RequirePackage[dvips,letterpaper]{geometry}[2002/07/08]`

. . . and make sure your printer driver (which means *Ghostscript* in my case) knows Letter. I say again, you *must* use American 8.5"x11" Letter paper— stationers in the UK may call it "US Quarto" if they've even heard of it, see. . .
`http://www.gwydir.demon.co.uk/jo/units/print.htm`

13 `\setlength{\paperheight}{11in}`
14 `\setlength{\paperwidth}{8.5in}`

7

Must have `Courier` as font (may cause warnings about font stuff, ignore)...

15 `\RequirePackage{courier}[2004/09/15]`
16 `\renewcommand*{\familydefault}{\ttdefault}`

You should *not* hyphenate or full justify for Nicholl format...

17 `\raggedright`

Page Nums   Arabic top right, I'll live with where TEX puts the margin...

18 `\pagenumbering{arabic}`
19 `\pagestyle{myheadings}`

(You can force the page numbers out towards the right with
`\markright{\hspace*{6.2in}}`
in the document preamble, at the cost of 'Overfull hbox' warnings, if you like.)

CR/LF   Line spacing / pitch—it looks to me the standard LATEX 2$_\varepsilon$ `courier` font is correct pitch, 12pt skip is what's in `scriptsample.pdf`...

20 `\setlength{\baselineskip}{12pt plus 0pt minus 0pt}`

and this `\baselinestretch` appears to emulate `scriptsample.pdf` closely and, more importantly, measures up as matching the effect of the `\baselineskip` value—it matches what *Movie Magic Screenwriter* does, for instance...

21 `\renewcommand*{\baselinestretch}{0.8}`

vspace adjustment in `\minipage` and `\parbox` in dialogue to correct line spacing, should likely be adjusted if `\baselinestretch` is altered for some (crazy) reason...

22 `\newcommand*{\dialfix}{\vspace{2pt}}`

skip one line between paras...

23 `\setlength{\parskip}{\baselineskip}`

no paragraph indent...

24 `\setlength{\parindent}{0in}`

\slugspace   Extra inter-word spacing in sluglines...

25 `\newcommand*{\slugspace}{\hspace{2.0em plus 0em minus 0em}}`

(will result in a total of 3em space). See also, `\placesep` and `\sepintext`, below.

Margins/tabs   See specs, fudge factors (i.e. a "gutter") are needed to resemble the "correct" layout—take a ruler to it and `scriptsample.pdf`.
     0.1" represents `1 em` in `courier` 12pt 10 pitch.

left margin   1.5", default 1" +

26 `\setlength{\evensidemargin}{0.5in}`
27 `\setlength{\oddsidemargin}{0.5in}`

top margin   0.5" to number, 1" to body...

28 `\setlength{\topmargin}{-0.5in}`
29 `\setlength{\headsep}{0.4in}`
30 `\setlength{\topskip}{0in}`

8

bottom margin	11" - (1" top margin) - (0.5" bottom) =

31 `\setlength{\textheight}{9.5in}`

...bottom can go to 1.5" for page breaking purposes.

right margin	6" width for description text to give 1" right margin, +0.1" fudge...

32 `\setlength{\textwidth}{6.0in}`
33 `\newlength{\widthgutter}`
34 `\setlength{\widthgutter}{0.1in}`
35 `\addtolength{\textwidth}{\widthgutter}`

(later on, we must adjust centring and flush right to the "correct" margin by subtracting `\widthgutter`).

Tabbing / spacing dialogues

Width of dialogue text, 3" with 0.2" fudge...

36 `\newlength{\dialwidth}`
37 `\setlength{\dialwidth}{3.0in}`
38 `\newlength{\dialgutter}`
39 `\setlength{\dialgutter}{0.2in}`
40 `\addtolength{\dialwidth}{\dialgutter}`

3" from left edge of page (1.5" left margin + 1.5")...

41 `\newcommand*{\dialtab}{\hspace*{1.5in}}`

name, tab in 4.2" (margin + `\dialtab` + `\dialnametab`) from left edge of page...

42 `\newcommand*{\dialnametab}{\hspace*{1.2in}}`

parenthetical 1.5" with 0.2" fudge...

43 `\newlength{\parenwidth}`
44 `\setlength{\parenwidth}{1.5in}`
45 `\addtolength{\parenwidth}{\dialgutter}`

parenthetical, tab in 3.7" (margin + `\dialtab` + `\parentab`) from left edge of page...

46 `\newcommand*{\parentab}{\hspace{0.7in}}`

AFAICS floats not involved...

47 `\renewcommand*{\textfraction}{1}`
48 `\renewcommand*{\topfraction}{0}`
49 `\renewcommand*{\bottomfraction}{0}`

Title Pages	Use one of `\nicholl` or `\coverpage` to taste. This should be the first typesetting command after `\begin{document}`, presuming you want screenplay to generate a title page for you.

\title	`\title{The Title}` with `\\` if you feel you must.

The code is already defined in the article class, here I helpfully set a default title in case you can't decide...

50 `\title{My First Screenplay}`

\titheadskip Distance down from top of page for title...

```
51 \newlength{\titheadskip}
52 \setlength{\titheadskip}{2.25in}
```

\nicholl For Nicholl Competition—just the title...

```
53 \newcommand{\nicholl}{
54 \thispagestyle{empty}
55 \vspace*{\titheadskip}
56 \begin{center}\MakeUppercase{\@title}\end{center}
57 \newpage\setcounter{page}{1}
58 }
```

\author `\author{Author Details}`
The code is already defined in the `article` class, here I helpfully define a default author in case you can't decide...

```
59 \author{Alan Smithee}
```

\realauthor `\realauthor{Your Name}` with no formatting code.
This is for when you've used a pseudonym for `\author{}`, or if there are multiple authors and/or formatting code in `\author{}`. It's used by `\coverpage` when typesetting the "author's address details." It will default to the whatever is set as `\author{}` if you don't set it...

```
60 \newcommand{\@realauthor}{\@author}
61 \newcommand{\realauthor}[1]{\renewcommand{\@realauthor}{#1}}
```

\address `\address{Contact Address}` (*without* name) with \\ as appropriate.
Your address details for the title page...

```
62 \newcommand{\@address}{Contact via Agency}
63 \newcommand{\address}[1]{\renewcommand{\@address}{#1}}
```

...see also...

\agent `\agent{Agent name and address details}` with \\ as appropriate.
Some people like to put copyright and WGA registration details on their submitted screenplays—although the received wisdom is that this marks you as an amateur, you can use this macro.

I'm calling this `\agent{}` to pretend you're putting your Agent's details instead of your own address—hence if you don't define `\address{}` (and use `\coverpage`) you'll get the boilerplate text "Contact via Agency" under the name in the "author's address details" area. What you would do is omit your own contact details and only have your Agent's address (you could define `\realauthor{}` and `\address{}` as a non-printing character, e.g. ~, to make your contact details blank if you like). Putting this the other side of the page makes it immediately clear what's who. No really, there's no need to use this *unless* you're with an agency but it's your screenplay...

```
64 \newcommand{\@agent}{~}
65 \newcommand{\agent}[1]{\renewcommand{\@agent}{#1}}
```

`\titskip`	Determines how far down below the title the extra info on the title page is written. You may have to adjust the `\titskip` if you put in a lot of text for `\address` and/or `\agent` but if you do there's probably too much—it's a rubber length...

```
66 \newlength{\titskip}
67 \setlength{\titskip}{3.75in plus 0in minus 1.5in}
```

`\addrwidth`	Size of boxes for `\agent` and `\realname`/`\address` (19 characters wide at 2")...

```
68 \newlength{\addrwidth}
69 \setlength{\addrwidth}{2.0in}
```

`\addrseplen`	Separation between Agent and author/address details, rubber to allow for possible use of `hardmarg.sty`...

```
70 \newlength{\addrseplen}
71 \setlength{\addrseplen}{2.0in plus 0in minus 0.5in}
```

`\coverpage`	Now the ability to make the the type of title page for Draft Screenplays submitted to Agents...
`\bytext` `\byskip`	In case you want to fiddle with this...

```
72 \newcommand*{\bytext}{by}
73 \newcommand*{\byskip}{\baselineskip}
```

`\coverpage` will build a title page...

```
74 \newcommand{\coverpage}{
75 \thispagestyle{empty}
76 \vspace*{\titheadskip}
77 \begin{center}{\MakeUppercase{\@title}}\\
78 \vspace{\byskip}
79 \bytext\\
80 \vspace{\byskip}
81 \@author
82 \end{center}
83 \vspace{\titskip}
```

`\agent` (if any, otherwise `\addrwidth` space) details at left margin in a `\parbox`, `\addrseplen` space then contact details for the author (`\realname`, which will default to `\author` if not defined, and `\address`) in a `\parbox`...

```
84 \parbox[t]{\addrwidth}{\@agent}\hspace{\addrseplen}
85 \parbox[t]{\addrwidth}{\@realauthor\\\@address}
```

Reset page numbers...

```
86 \newpage\setcounter{page}{1}
87 }
```

End title page—author details

`\more` `\contd`	**More and Continued.** You may want to use these macros if you feel it's necessary to follow what appears to be the "older" style where they aren't only used for pagebreaks...

```
88 \newcommand*{\more}{(MORE)}
```

89 `\newcommand*{\contd}{(CONT'D)}`

Dialogue blocks. . .

\paren `\paren{hello world}`
parenthetical within dialogue environment. . . only for *very short* text (directions) within dialogue. . .

90 `\newcommand{\paren}[1]{%`
91
92 `\parentab\parbox[t]{\parenwidth}{\raggedright(#1)\dialfix}\\`
93 `}`

dialogue env `\begin{dialogue}[directions]{character name} ... \end{dialogue}`
`\begin{dialogue}{character name} ... \end{dialogue}`
`\minipage` won't allow pagebreaks, see below for new manual pagebreak command for this environment. Do *not* have blank lines inside this environment. **Name** is outside `\minipage` to mitigate 'Overfull \hbox' warnings with long names. . .

94 `\newenvironment{dialogue}[2][]{%`
95
96 `\dialtab\dialnametab\hbox{\MakeUppercase{#2}}\\*`
97 `\dialtab\begin{minipage}[b]{\dialwidth}`
98 `\dialfix`
99 `\raggedright`
100 `\ifthenelse{\not\equal{#1}{}}`
101 `{`
102 `\paren{#1}`
103 `}{}`
104 `}{%`
105 `\end{minipage}`
106
107 `}`

\dialbreak Forcing pagebreak in dialogue,
`\dialbreak{Character}`
`\dialbreak[directions]{Character}`
(need to know character name—LaTeX 2_ε scoping rules don't seem to like global vars, somebody tell me otherwise) *Note:* only do any manual pagebreaks when you absolutely positively have killed every muthafucka in the room!. . .

108 `\newcommand{\dialbreak}[2][]{%`
109 `\nopagebreak`
110 `\dialnametab\hbox{\more}%`
111 `\end{dialogue}`
112 `\newpage`
113 `\ifthenelse{\not\equal{#1}{}}`
114 `{`
115 `\begin{dialogue}[#1]{\MakeUppercase{#2} \contd}`
116 `}{`
117 `\begin{dialogue}{\MakeUppercase{#2} \contd}`

```
118 }
119 }
```

Sluglines

Optional arg for night/day. You probably should not consider time of day optional when you're writing descriptions—unless you're in a spaceship, of course...

`\placesep`   What punctuation/spacing comes after the likes of INT and EXT...

```
120 \newcommand*{\placesep}{.~}
```

`\slug`   internal command used for building the various user commands...

```
121 \newcommand{\slug}[3][]{%
122
123 \MakeUppercase{#2\placesep#3}%
124 \ifthenelse{\not\equal{#1}{}}
125              {%
126 \slugspace\MakeUppercase{#1}\hspace{\fill}
127              }{}
128 \nopagebreak
129
130 }
```

`\intslug`   INT. SLUGLINE DESCRIPTION   DAY
`\intslug[time of day]{description text}`
`\intslug{description text}`

```
131 \newcommand*{\inttext}{INT}
132 \newcommand{\intslug}[2][]{\slug[#1]{\inttext}{#2}}
```

`\extslug`   EXT. SLUGLINE DESCRIPTION   DAY
`\extslug[time of day]{description text}`
`\extslug{description text}`

```
133 \newcommand*{\exttext}{EXT}
134 \newcommand{\extslug}[2][]{\slug[#1]{\exttext}{#2}}
```

`\sepintext`   Complementary to \placesep...

```
135 \newcommand*{\sepintext}{./}
```

`\intextslug`   Apparently people do this...
INT./EXT. SLUGLINE DESCRIPTION   DAY
`\intextslug[time of day]{description text}`
`\intextslug{description text}`

```
136 \newcommand{\intextslug}[2][]{%
137 \slug[#1]{\inttext\sepintext\exttext}{#2}}
```

`\extintslug`   and/or this...
EXT./INT. SLUGLINE DESCRIPTION   DAY

```
\extintslug[time of day]{description text}
\extintextslug{description text}
```
138 `\newcommand{\extintslug}[2][]{%`
139 `\slug[#1]{\exttext\sepintext\inttext}{#2}}`

\sccentre \scflushright Internal formatting commands for various macros…
`\sccentre{}` used in macros todo centring, you should use this if rolling your own…

140 `\newcommand*{%`
141 `\sccentre}[1]{\hspace*{\fill}{#1}\hspace{\fill}\hspace{\widthgutter}}`

`\scflushright{}` used in macros todo flushright, you should use this if rolling your own…

142 `\newcommand*{%`
143 `\scflushright}[1]{\hspace*{\fill}{#1}\hspace{\widthgutter}}`

\punctchar What you use to punctuate things like FADE TO and TITLE OVER…

144 `\newcommand*{\punctchar}{:}`

Title Over

titleover env `\begin{titleover} ... \end{titleover}`
as pseudo dialogue environment (think "Star Wars") the optional argument is for internal use *only*…

145 `\newcommand*{\titleovertext}{TITLE~OVER}`
146 `\newenvironment{titleover}[1][]{%`
147
148 `\ifthenelse{\not\equal{#1}{}}`
149 `{%`
150 `\titleovertext #1\punctchar`
151 `}{%`
152 `\titleovertext\punctchar`
153 `}%`
154 `\\*[\baselineskip]`
155 `\dialtab\begin{minipage}[b]{\dialwidth}`
156 `\raggedright`
157 `}{%`
158 `\end{minipage}`
159
160 `}`

\titbreak pagebreak for titleover environment…

161 `\newcommand{\titbreak}{%`
162 `\nopagebreak`
163 `\dialnametab\hbox{\more}%`
164 `\end{titleover}`
165 `\newpage`
166 `\begin{titleover}[\contd]%`
167 `}`

`\centretitle`   `\centretitle {short text}`

titleover for short text most often a date, centred with adjustment for gutter. . .

```
168 \newcommand{\centretitle}[1]{%
169
170 \titleovertext\punctchar\\*[\baselineskip]%
171 \sccentre{#1}
172
173 }
```

Other macros

`\fadein`   Always the *first* thing in your screenplay, for some reason. . .

```
174 \newcommand*{\fadeintext}{FADE~IN}
175 \newcommand{\fadein}{%
176
177 \fadeintext\punctchar
178
179 }
```

`\fadeout`   Always the last thing in your screenplay, for some reason, flush right with adjustment for gutter. . .

```
180 \newcommand*{\fadeouttext}{FADE~OUT}
181 \newcommand{\fadeout}{%
182
183 \scflushright{\fadeouttext\punctchar}
184
185 }
```

`\intercut`   flush right with adjustment for gutter. . .

```
186 \newcommand*{\intercuttext}{INTERCUT~WITH}
187 \newcommand{\intercut}{%
188
189 \scflushright{\intercuttext\punctchar}
190
191 }
```

`\pov \revert`   Switch point of view. . .

```
192 \newcommand*{\pov}{P.O.V.}
```

. . . switch it back. . .

```
193 \newcommand*{\revert}{REVERSE~\pov}
```

`\theend`   But this is what we've all been waiting for. . . OK, so this is actually the *last* thing in the screenplay. . .

```
194 \newcommand*{\thirty}{THE~END}
195 \newcommand{\theend}{%
196
197 \sccentre{\thirty}
198
199 }%THE END
```

Hard Margins package

Re-defines margins to exactly as stated in `scriptsample.pdf`. Try it out and see if you like it. Also shows you what todo if you want to fiddle with some of the margin settings...

Issue info as to what we do...

```
200 \ProvidesPackage{hardmarg}[2012/06/30 v1.6
201 For use with class screenplay
202 (C)2006 John Pate
203 released under the GNU General Public License]
```

Hard 1" right margin...

```
204 \setlength{\textwidth}{6.0in}
```

Flushright and centring use this, so eliminate it...

```
205 \setlength{\widthgutter}{0in}
```

Set dialogue to 3" width, right margin 2.5"...

```
206 \setlength{\dialwidth}{3.0in}
```

Set parentheticals to 1.5" width, right margin 3.3"...

```
207 \setlength{\parenwidth}{1.5in}
```

8 More about paper

Unless you're in America, getting Letter paper will be a problem. Another issue is that the recommended 20lb weight paper is equivalent to 75gsm, a non-standard weight for metric papers. (Well, strictly speaking the Americans have defined their measures using metric standards but let's not get into that.) Americans have a 24lb weight paper that's close to 80gsm. I've got samples of Letter in both 20lb and 80gsm. The same screenplay, with the same card covers (240gsm plain white card) measures 12mm vs 15mm in thickness. The 80gsm stuff is noticeably heavier and thicker (less flexible).

IMHO good quality 20lb is nicer in handling and you can very much tell the difference. Old-style typing paper was usually pretty thin for "normal" use.

Copy Shops will cut down A3 paper to 8.5" by 11" for you but whether they'll get you 75gsm weight is another matter. One told me he could "probably" get 75gsm paper if I really wanted it.

Buying Letter paper mail order in the UK is very expensive and I haven't seen American-style pound bond weights quoted—the "heavy" paper I have was sourced in the UK as XEROX PREMIER 216mm x 279mm 80gsm.

Another issue is that the paper must be three-hole punched. Specs gleaned from the Internet suggest that Letter three-hole paper is a central hole (i.e. 140mm down from the top edge) with the other two holes 108mm up, and down, from that central hole. I'm hoping to get some genuine three-hole from America to check that out, meantime I got a Copy Shop to drill a ream of paper for me (and some card for covers). I'd advise that if you can't buy punched paper, get a Copy Shop to drill it for you. It produces a vastly neater result

than using a hole punch—and a suitable hole punch for "home use" is going to be rather expensive in any case.

And then there's the paper fasteners. . .

To cut a long story short, here's what you want:

- ACCO solid brass #5 brads, 1.25" long, part number 71505;

- ACCO #2 brass washers, part number 71511.

. . . and a rubber mallet to hammer them in with. The rubber mallet is easy enough to come by but you'll have to source the paper fasteners from America (it seems to be mainly the screenwriting fraternity that call them "brads" rather than paper fasteners, BTW). The brass-plated ersatz versions available in the UK are clearly *not* up to the job by a long shot. And beware that ACCO make a version that isn't solid brass and is inferior to these all-brass ones, hence the necessity for part numbers.

The washers are for the back, where the prongs are folded over; you use *two brads*, each with a single washer, one in the top and one in the bottom hole leaving the central hole empty.

And while I'm on about paper, 120 pages is really the absolute longest you should go. A screenplay that runs between 100 and 110 pages is a better bet— and that's with plenty of whitespace in the passages of description.

9   LaTeX for the impatient

You will likely need to be familiar with the following standard LaTeX foibles and constructs.

In TeX the *space* or *blank* character has special properties:

- one blank is the same as a thousand and counts as one, except for *carriage returns* where two, or more, consecutive carriage returns signal a paragraph break. A single carriage return is treated as a blank;

- blanks at the beginning of a line are ignored;

- blanks terminating a command name are removed (except in the case of printing *command characters*, see for example \$ below);

- blanks following *full stop* (period) get extra space inserted, except where the full stop follows an uppercase character. Blanks following a *colon* get extra space inserted, as do those after an *exclamation mark*;

So to work with this you likely need to know:

- \␣ force single space (e.g. after e.g. and see \pov and \revert screenplay commands which follow convention and therefore need this to get a space after them);

- `\@` force double space after full stop following an uppercase character (place it before the offending full stop);

- `%` is the *comment character* (makes things invisible to TeX)—the comment character used immediately before a carriage return suppresses the space TeX would otherwise substitute for the carriage return;

- `\\` force a linebreak;

- `\\*` force a linebreak but don't allow a pagebreak;

- `\pagebreak` (works in description text)

- `\nopagebreak`

- `~` non-breaking space, `$\sim$` gives a $\sim$ symbol;

You *do* want TeX to munge space for you, I advise you *against* the use of the `\frenchspacing` command with `screenplay` (even if you're French).

Special characters you might want:

- `\#` to produce a # symbol;

- `\$` to produce a $ symbol;

- `\%` to produce a % symbol;

- `$\backslash$` to produce a \ symbol;

- `\ldots` ellipsis ...

A LaTeX installation comes with extensive documentation—*read it*!

Also check out the *TeX Users Group* `http://www.tug.org`.

10   Todo

If anybody else uses it maybe they'll spot stuff that's wrong but *Johnny* says, "It works for me."

The test file `test.tex` shows `screenplay` markup applied to "FOR A FEW DAYS MORE" (`http://www.oscars.org/awards/nicholl/scriptsample.pdf`) and the `test.pdf` file was generated from that.

A printout of the first page `scriptsample.pdf` and `test.pdf` show identical pitch and the inter-line spacing is pretty close. However, I chose a `\baselinestretch` value to complement the `\baselineskip` and be more typographically appropriate rather than exactly match `scriptsample.pdf` (i.e. we're emulating a typewriter).

You can tell which is which because `test.pdf` numbers the first page whilst `scriptsample.pdf` starts numbering on the second page of the screenplay.

If I get any *useful* feedback I *may* alter things accordingly. In that regard Don (the webmaster) at, `http://www.simplyscripts.com` has judged the results as, "Script is in some generally agreed upon screenplay format or close enough," which is my intention for this `class`.

If anyone comes up with additional `style` package(s) suitably applicable I'll add such to the `.dtx` bundle. Having researched the subject I believe it's inappropriate to use constructs like CUT TO:, DISSOLVE TO:, FADE TO:, etc. in a Draft Screenplay, though they might legitimately appear in a Shooting Script or something getting close to it. This `class` is aimed at Draft Screenplays, IMHO any further elaboration of capabilities should be via additional `style` packages—which I leave as an exercise for the reader.

Please ensure you have tried latest available version before reporting any bugs.

11   Disclaimer

The arcane art of writing screenplays has spawned a whole industry of books and software. `screenplay` is my modest and, more importantly, *free* contribution. It is ©2006 John Pate, released under the *GNU General Public License*. Your mileage may vary. E&OE.

The source for `screenplay` can be found on **github**,
`https://github.com/JohnPate/Screenplay`

For howto contact the author see, `http://dvc.org.uk/johnny.html`.

12 A note for our Sponsor

I don't think I'm alone when I say...

Hail Eris!
All Hail Discordia!

Change History