The sepfootnotes package,[*]
or a footnote to Plato

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Abstract

This package supports footnotes and endnotes from separate files. This is achieved with commands \sepfootnotecontent and \sepfootnote; the former defines the content of a note, while the latter typesets that note.

Introduction

Standard \footnote and \endnote both take a note as a mandatory argument. Because notes have to be embedded in the paragraph to which they refer, sentences are often split up into two[1] or more parts. Consequently, footnotes and endnotes may disrupt the flow of reading and editing LaTeX prose.[2] This can be an issue for those who make extensive use of notes, such as philosophers and people from the humanities in general.

The sepfootnotes package gets around this inconvenience by separating note input from usage. That is, it provides a command to define what a particular note says, and another command to insert that note in the document.

Note definitions may be grouped together—in no particular order—in the preamble, at the beginning of chapters or sections, in a separate file, or even right after a paragraph. In that way, the main body is less cluttered.

You may use sepfootnotes and standard \footnote simultaneously; the same goes for \footcite from biblatex.

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[*]This document corresponds to sepfootnotes 0.3d, dated July 5, 2024. I am grateful to Michael Sellhoff, Sam Foster, Mats, David Carlisle, and schtandard for their valuable feedback on sepfootnotes and to Dan Luecking for the basic idea implemented in this package.

[1]This is precisely what this footnote does to the first paragraph of this document. There are more than thirty words between 'two' and 'or more' in the code of an otherwise short paragraph.

[2]In a posting to texhax.tug.org in April 2010, someone complained that using footnotes "tends to disrupt the flow of the document on the screen and makes editing the text itself harder", and asked about the possibility of "putting all of the footnotes in a separate file" [1]. Another user, back in 2004, remarked that the "only thing I missed about word processors was the ability to keep footnote text at the bottom of the page, or in a separate window. I often have extensive footnotes, and don't want them cluttering up my main body text when I'm composing" [2].

1 Synopsis

Default footnote apparatus

> \sepfootnotecontent {⟨*key*⟩} {⟨*content*⟩}
> \sepfootnote {⟨*key*⟩}

User-defined footnote or endnote apparatus

> \newfootnotes {⟨*prefix*⟩}
> \newfootnotes* {⟨*prefix*⟩}
>
> \newsymbolfootnotes [⟨*master counter*⟩] {⟨*prefix*⟩}
>
> \newendnotes {⟨*prefix*⟩}
>
> \⟨*prefix*⟩notecontent {⟨*key*⟩} {⟨*content*⟩}
> \⟨*prefix*⟩note {⟨*key*⟩}
> \⟨*prefix*⟩notemark {⟨*key*⟩}
> \⟨*prefix*⟩notetext {⟨*key*⟩}
> \print⟨*prefix*⟩note {⟨*key*⟩}
>
> \⟨*prefix*⟩quicknote {⟨*content*⟩}

Endnote-specific

> \the⟨*prefix*⟩notes
> \addto⟨*prefix*⟩notes {⟨*text*⟩}

Formatting

> \renewcommand\the⟨*prefix*⟩note
> \renewcommand\the⟨*prefix*⟩mark
> \renewcommand\make⟨*prefix*⟩mark
> \renewcommand\⟨*prefix*⟩notesize
> \renewcommand\⟨*prefix*⟩noteformat
>
> \renewenvironment {⟨*prefix*⟩notes}

2 Basic usage

\sepfootnotecontent First define the ⟨*content*⟩ of a footnote by assigning it a ⟨*key*⟩ that uniquely identifies it:

> \sepfootnotecontent {⟨*key*⟩} {⟨*content*⟩}

\sepfootnote Then insert that footnote anywhere in the main body by means of the same ⟨*key*⟩ as used before:

> \sepfootnote {⟨*key*⟩}

3 Advanced usage

\newfootnotes
\newfootnotes*
\newsymbolfootnotes
\newendnotes

The `sepfootnotes` apparatus described above is available by default. But you may create as many distinct and independent footnote or endnote apparatus as needed:

\newfootnotes {⟨*prefix*⟩}
Create an apparatus of footnote commands named after ⟨*prefix*⟩ using the standard `footnote` counter.

\newfootnotes* {⟨*prefix*⟩}
Create an apparatus of footnote commands named after ⟨*prefix*⟩ using its own counter.

\newsymbolfootnotes [⟨*master counter*⟩] {⟨*prefix*⟩}
Create an apparatus of symbol-footnote commands named after ⟨*prefix*⟩ using its own counter. The optional argument ⟨*master counter*⟩ can be anything like `page`, `section`, `chapter`, etc. The default master counter is `page`. The series of symbols is reset each new page, so that * marks the first symbol-footnote on any page, whereas † marks the second, ‡ the third, and so on.

\newendnotes {⟨*prefix*⟩}
Create an apparatus of endnote commands named after ⟨*prefix*⟩ using its own counter.

\<prefix>notecontent

This is how to typeset notes: once a note apparatus of any kind is created, you need to assign a ⟨*key*⟩ to a ⟨*content*⟩:

\⟨*prefix*⟩notecontent {⟨*key*⟩} {⟨*content*⟩}

\<prefix>note
\<prefix>notemark
\<prefix>notetext
\print<prefix>content

And then use the ⟨*key*⟩ to typeset that content using any of the following:

\⟨*prefix*⟩note {⟨*key*⟩}
Typeset a note identified by ⟨*key*⟩.

\⟨*prefix*⟩notemark {⟨*key*⟩}
Typeset just the mark identified by ⟨*key*⟩ without the corresponding note.

\⟨*prefix*⟩notetext {⟨*key*⟩}
Typeset just the note identified by ⟨*key*⟩ without the corresponding mark.

\print⟨*prefix*⟩note {⟨*key*⟩}
Just print the ⟨*content*⟩ identified by ⟨*key*⟩.

\⟨*prefix*⟩quicknote {⟨*content*⟩}
Typeset a note with ⟨*content*⟩ without a key. This is similar to standard \footnote {⟨*content*⟩}, and may be useful for short notes, such as "Idem."

These are endnote-specific:

> \the⟨*prefix*⟩notes
> Typeset the actual endnotes at the end of a chapter or section.

> \addto⟨*prefix*⟩notes {⟨*text*⟩}
> Add ⟨*text*⟩ to endnotes.
> Suggestion: \subsection*

> \renewcommand\⟨*prefix*⟩notesize
> Define the fontsize in which to typeset endnotes.
> Default: \footnotesize

> \renewenvironment {⟨*prefix*⟩notes}
> Define the environment in which endnotes are typeset.
> Default: \⟨*prefix*⟩notesize\setlength\parskip\footnotesep

> \renewcommand\the⟨*prefix*⟩note
> Define how endnote numbers are typeset.
> Default: \arabic {⟨*prefix*⟩note}

> \renewcommand\the⟨*prefix*⟩mark
> Define how endnote marks are typeset.
> Default: \the⟨*prefix*⟩note

> \renewcommand\make⟨*prefix*⟩mark
> Define how a particular endnote mark is typeset.
> Default:[3] \hbox {\normalfont\the⟨*prefix*⟩mark.\ }

> \renewcommand\⟨*prefix*⟩noteformat
> Define how a particular endnote is typeset.
> Default:[4]
> \noindent\rightskip\z@ \leftskip\z@
> \leavevmode\llap{\make⟨*prefix*⟩mark}

The left-margin labels:
\the<prefix>notes
\addto<prefix>notes
\<prefix>notesize
<prefix>notes
\the<prefix>note
\the<prefix>mark
\make<prefix>mark
\<prefix>noteformat

4 Package options

after (experimental) Allow \sepfootnotecontent after \sepfootnote. Must compile twice. Implies global. See below.

global Notes defined within environments and groups take global scope and become available throughout, as if they were defined in the preamble.

error Print warning messages, halt, and wait for user input.

quiet Suppress warning and error messages.

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[3] Adapted from the LaTeX2e sources.
[4] Adapted from the endnotes package.

5　Examples

Example 1

How to typeset 'Socrates's pupil' as a footnote to Plato using the default `sepfootnotes` apparatus:

```
\documentclass{article}
\usepackage{sepfootnotes}
\sepfootnotecontent{Plato}{Socrates's pupil.}
\begin{document}
This was first brought up by the great Plato.\sepfootnote{Plato}
\end{document}
```

Example 2

How to typeset 'Socrates's pupil' as a footnote to Plato using a *user-defined* footnote apparatus with prefix `a-`

```
\documentclass{article}
\usepackage{sepfootnotes}
\newfootnotes{a}
\anotecontent{Plato}{Socrates's pupil.}
\begin{document}
This was first brought up by the great Plato.\anote{Plato}
\end{document}
```

Example 3

How to typeset a footnote *from a separate file* using a user-defined apparatus with prefix `b-`

- mynotes.tex:

  ```
  \bnotecontent{Plato}{Socrates's pupil.}
  ```

- document.tex:

  ```
  \documentclass{article}
  \usepackage{sepfootnotes}
  \newfootnotes{b}
  \input{mynotes}
  \begin{document}
  This was first brought up by the great Plato.\bnote{Plato}
  \end{document}
  ```

Example 4

How to typeset 'Socrates's pupil' as a *symbol-footnote* to Plato using a user-defined footnote apparatus with prefix `symbol-`

```
\documentclass{article}
\usepackage{sepfootnotes}
\newsymbolfootnotes{symbol}
\symbolnotecontent{Plato}{Socrates's pupil.}
\begin{document}
This was first brought up by the great Plato.\symbolnote{Plato}
\end{document}
```

Example 5

How to typeset 'Socrates's pupil' as an *endnote* to Plato using a user-defined endnote apparatus with prefix `x-`

```
\documentclass{article}
\usepackage{sepfootnotes}
\newendnotes{x}
\xnotecontent{Plato}{Socrates's pupil.}
\begin{document}
This was first brought up by the great Plato.\xnote{Plato}
\section*{Notes}
\thexnotes
\end{document}
```

Example 6

How to typeset a footnote to Plato *and* an endnote to Homer from a separate file *in no particular order*:

- mynotes.tex:

  ```
  \xnotecontent{Homer}{The greatest of ancient poets.}
  \anotecontent{Plato}{Socrates's pupil.}
  ```

- document.tex:

  ```
  \documentclass{article}
  \usepackage{sepfootnotes}
  \newfootnotes{a}
  \newendnotes{x}
  \input{mynotes}
  \begin{document}
   This was first brought up by the great Plato.\anote{Plato}
   But an antecedent is to be found in Homer.\xnote{Homer}
  \section*{Notes}
  \thexnotes
  \end{document}
  ```

References

[1] http://tug.org/mailman/htdig/texhax/2010-April/014558.html

[2] http://www.44342.com/tex-f809-t9440-p1.htm.