The `parskip` package[*]

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Abstract

The `parskip` package helps in implementing paragraph layouts where the paragraphs are separated by a vertical space instead of (or in addition to) indenting them.

The package can be used with any document class at any size. By default it produces the following paragraph layout: Zero `\parindent` and non-zero `\parskip`. The stretchable glue in `\parskip` helps LaTeX in finding the best place for page breaks.

1 Introduction

Many LaTeX constructs are internally built by using the paragraph mechanism even if technically there aren't text paragraphs. In most such cases the LaTeX code handles indentation and suppressed it if necessary. But unfortunately this is normally not done for `\parskip` (as that is zero in the default layouts) and thus changing it will result in vertical spaces in unexpected places.

This package attempts to fix the spacing in table of contents structures, list environments, and around display headings that would get screwed up by a positive `\parskip` value.

It is, however, is no more than quick fix; the 'proper' way to achieve effects as far-reaching as this is to create a new class.

1.1 History

This file was originally developed by Hubert Partl in 1989 (i.e., for LaTeX 2.09) to provide a somewhat crude solution to an existing problem in case no proper document class (back then called document style) support was available.

About ten years later Robin Fairbairns picked up the orphaned package and his version was then the one available for LaTeX 2_ε during the next 15[+] years.

Finally, while working on the next edition of the LaTeX Companion the current author did a reimplementation, that added support for TOC data and heading structures. Also a few additional key/value options were added to make

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[*]This is a reimplementation of a package originally written by Hubert Partl in 1989 and later maintained by Robin Fairbairns.

the package more useful. It still is and will remain an inferior choice compared to a properly designed document class. But it offers a starting point if nothing is around.

2   The user interface

The parskip package doesn't offer any document user commands and just needs loading with `\usepackage`.

2.1   Options to customize the package

All of the package options are implemented as key/value options.

skip With the package option `skip` it is possible to explicitly specify the vertical space between paragraphs. If the option is not given (or given without a value) then `.5\baselineskip` plus `2pt` of stretch is assumed.

tocskip By default the `\parskip` is zero within `\tableofcontents` and similar lists, regardless of its value elsewhere. With the option `tocskip` it can be given a different value. If used without an explicit value you get the same `\parskip` as elsewhere within these lists.

indent With the package option `indent` it is possible to explicitly set the paragraph indentation. Using this option without a value keeps the document class indentation unchanged, if it is specified with a value then that value is used. If the package is loaded without this option the indentation is set to zero.

parfill With package option `parfill`, the package also adjusts `\parfillskip` to impose a minimum space at the end of the last line of a paragraph. If specified without a value then `30pt` are assumed, if a value is given that forms the minimum.

3   Differences to the original package

If the package is used without any options or just with the option `parfill` it behaves like the earlier version, except that now the spacing around headings is also adjusted (not adding extra `\parskip`). If this is not desirable when processing an old document it can be avoided by explicitly requesting version `v1` as follows:

    \usepackage{parskip}[=v1]

Of course, the new options, etc. are then also not available.

4   Sources, bugs and issues

The official production version is available from CTAN. The latest (development) sources are maintained at GitHub at:

`https://github.com/FrankMittelbach/fmitex/tree/parskip/parskip`

In case of problems with the package you can report them at

`https://github.com/FrankMittelbach/fmitex/issues`

Please provide a minimal test example that can be run and doesn't use packages not in a standard LaTeX distribution (and as little as possible to show the issue).