

The `xspace` package*

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Abstract

`\xspace` should be used at the end of a macro designed to be used mainly in text. It adds a space unless the macro is followed by certain punctuation characters.

1 Introduction

After `\newcommand{\gb}{Great Britain\xspace}`
`\gb` is a very nice place to live.
Great Britain is a very nice place to live.
`\gb`, a small island off the coast of France.
Great Britain, a small island off the coast of France.

`\xspace` saves the user from having to type `_` or `{ }` after most occurrences of a macro name in text. However if either of these constructions follows `\xspace`, a space is not added by `\xspace`. This means that it is safe to add `\xspace` to the end of an existing macro without making too many changes in your document.

Sometimes `\xspace` may make the wrong decision, and add a space when it is not required. In these cases follow the macro with `{ }`, as this has the effect of suppressing the space.

Note that this package must be loaded *after* any language (or other) packages that make punctuation characters ‘active’.

2 The Macros

1 `\package`

`\xspace` `\xspace` just looks ahead, and then calls `\@xspace`.

2 `\DeclareRobustCommand\xspace{\futurelet\@let@token\@xspace}`

`\@xspace` If the next token is one of a specified list of characters, do nothing, otherwise add a space. If you often use a different punctuation character, add the appropriate line (do not forget the `\fi` at the end!)

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