

Preface

The necessity for writing this book was felt long back, during my Ph.D. work, when I saw students and researchers struggling with L^AT_EX for preparing their articles and theses. A very limited number of books on L^AT_EX are available in markets. Of course, a lot of resources on this subject can be obtained freely from the internet. However, most of the books emphasize on detailed documentation of L^AT_EX, while the internet-based resources are topic-specific. But people are either unable or not interested to spare time, during their busy schedules of research works, to understand and learn the detailed genotype of L^AT_EX covered in books, or to collect materials from different websites. Instead, they prefer to get direct and concise applications of various L^AT_EX syntax in a single window, which they can modify easily, so as to get their works done in the least time and with the least effort. This is the motivation for writing the book. The book has been prepared by following a huge number of existing books and internet-based resources, as well as my personal experience with L^AT_EX (but the Bibliographic list has been shortened referring only to some famous resources). An attempt is made here to present materials in such a way that, at least, a similar book can be produced using only this book. *Using only the raw version of this book, many of my students have already learned L^AT_EX successfully up to the level of preparing articles and dissertations.* Hence, I am confident that the book would be able to cater to the needs of other students and professionals also, who want to learn and use L^AT_EX in a short time. Suggestions for any correction, modification, addition, or deletion will be highly appreciated (the same may be mailed to ddatta@tezu.ernet.in, datta_dilip@rediffmail.com or ddatta@iitkalumni.org).

The book, **L^AT_EX in 24 Hours: A Practical Guide for Scientific Writing**, explains the basic L^AT_EX2_ε required for writing scientific documents. Applications of most of the discussed L^AT_EX syntax are presented in such a way that a reader would be able to use them directly without any confusion, however maybe with some minor modifications as per requirement. In many cases, multiple procedures are presented for producing a single item. The main part of the book is stretched over 276 pages dividing into 24 chapters, named as Hours. Hour 1 introduces L^AT_EX, including how a L^AT_EX document is prepared and compiled. Various L^AT_EX

syntax required for fonts selection, texts and page formatting, items listing, table preparation, figure insertion and drawing, equation writing, user-defined macros, bibliography preparation, list of contents and index generation, and some other miscellaneous issues are discussed in Hours 2–18. Hours 19 and 20 explain the preparation of complete documents, such as letter, article, book, and report. Since a work often needs to be presented to an audience, slide preparation is also explained in Hours 21 and 22. Being an unavoidable fact, error and warning messages generated in different cases are discussed in Hour 23. Finally, some exercises are included for learners in Hour 24. Further, L^AT_EX commands for producing different symbols are presented in Appendix A.

I am thankful to my Ph.D. supervisor, Prof. Kalyanmoy Deb, Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur, India (presently in Michigan State University, USA), from whom I could learn many things about L^AT_EX. In fact, I was inspired to work with L^AT_EX from him only. I am also thankful to my friend, Dr. Shamik Choudhury (working in GE Capital, Bengaluru, India), who helped me in preparing and compiling my very first L^AT_EX document. My special thanks are due to my better half, Madhumita, and beloved daughters, Devoshree and Tanushree, from whom I got continuous inspiration and support for writing the book. Finally, I am indebted to my parents, late Paresh Chandra Datta and late Saraju Datta, whose blessings have brought me to this height to be able to write a book.

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