groff

The GNU implementation of troff
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by Trent A. Fisher
and Werner Lemberg (bug-groff@gnu.org)
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Table of Contents

1 Introduction ....................................................... 1
   1.1 What Is groff? ............................................. 1
   1.2 History .................................................... 1
   1.3 groff Capabilities ........................................ 3
   1.4 Macro Packages ........................................... 4
   1.5 Preprocessors ............................................. 4
   1.6 Output Devices ........................................... 4
   1.7 Credits .................................................... 5

2 Invoking groff ................................................... 7
   2.1 Options .................................................... 7
   2.2 Environment .............................................. 12
   2.3 Macro Directories ........................................ 13
   2.4 Font Directories .......................................... 13
   2.5 Paper Size ................................................ 14
   2.6 Invocation Examples ..................................... 15
      2.6.1 grog .................................................. 15

3 Tutorial for Macro Users ................................. 17
   3.1 Basics ....................................................... 17
   3.2 Common Features ......................................... 19
      3.2.1 Paragraphs .......................................... 19
      3.2.2 Sections and Chapters .............................. 20
      3.2.3 Headers and Footers ................................ 20
      3.2.4 Page Layout ........................................ 20
      3.2.5 Displays ............................................ 20
      3.2.6 Footnotes and Annotations ......................... 20
      3.2.7 Table of Contents ................................ 21
      3.2.8 Indices .............................................. 21
      3.2.9 Paper Formats ....................................... 21
      3.2.10 Multiple Columns .................................... 21
      3.2.11 Font and Size Changes ............................. 21
      3.2.12 Predefined Strings ................................ 21
      3.2.13 Preprocessor Support ............................... 21
      3.2.14 Configuration and Customization ............... 22

4 Macro Packages ............................................... 23
   4.1 man ........................................................ 23
      4.1.1 Options ............................................ 23
      4.1.2 Usage ............................................... 24
      4.1.3 Macros to set fonts ................................. 26
## Contents

### 4.1 Miscellaneous macros
- 4.1.4 Miscellaneous macros ........................................ 27
- 4.1.5 Predefined strings ........................................... 28
- 4.1.6 Preprocessors in `man` pages ................................. 29
- 4.1.7 Optional `man` extensions .................................... 29  
  - Custom headers and footers ..................................... 29
  - Ultrix-specific `man` macros ................................... 29
  - Simple example ................................................... 31

### 4.2 mdoc
- 4.2 mdoc .......................................................... 31

### 4.3 ms
- 4.3 ms ............................................................ 31
- 4.3.1 Introduction to ms ......................................... 31
- 4.3.2 General structure of an ms document ......................... 32
  - Margin Settings ................................................. 33
  - Text Settings .................................................. 33
  - Paragraph Settings ............................................. 34
  - Footnote Settings ............................................... 35
  - Miscellaneous Number Registers ................................. 36
- 4.3.3 Document control registers .................................. 33
- 4.3.4 Cover page macros ........................................... 36
- 4.3.5 Body text .................................................... 38
  - 4.3.5.1 Paragraphs ............................................... 38
  - 4.3.5.2 Headings ................................................ 40
  - 4.3.5.3 Highlighting ............................................. 41
  - 4.3.5.4 Lists .................................................... 42
  - 4.3.5.5 Indentation values ..................................... 45
  - 4.3.5.6 Tab Stops ............................................... 45
  - 4.3.5.7 Displays and keeps ..................................... 45
  - 4.3.5.8 Tables, figures, equations, and references ............ 47
  - 4.3.5.9 An example multi-page table ............................. 48
  - 4.3.5.10 Footnotes ............................................. 48
- 4.3.6 Page layout .................................................. 49
  - 4.3.6.1 Headers and footers .................................... 49
  - 4.3.6.2 Margins ................................................ 50
  - 4.3.6.3 Multiple columns ....................................... 50
  - 4.3.6.4 Creating a table of contents ............................ 50
  - 4.3.6.5 Strings and Special Characters ........................ 52
- 4.3.7 Differences from AT&T ms .................................... 54
  - 4.3.7.1 `troff` macros not appearing in `groff` ................ 55
  - 4.3.7.2 `groff` macros not appearing in AT&T `troff` ........... 56
- 4.3.8 Naming Conventions ........................................ 56

### 4.4 me
- 4.4 me ............................................................ 57

### 4.5 mm
- 4.5 mm ............................................................ 57

### 4.6 mom
- 4.6 mom ........................................................... 57
5 gtroff Reference .................................................. 59
  5.1 Text ............................................................. 59
    5.1.1 Filling and Adjusting .................................. 59
    5.1.2 Hyphenation .............................................. 59
    5.1.3 Sentences .................................................. 59
    5.1.4 Tab Stops .................................................. 60
    5.1.5 Implicit Line Breaks ..................................... 60
    5.1.6 Input Conventions ....................................... 61
    5.1.7 Input Encodings ......................................... 61
  5.2 Measurements ................................................ 62
    5.2.1 Default Units ............................................ 63
  5.3 Expressions ................................................... 63
  5.4 Identifiers ..................................................... 65
  5.5 Embedded Commands ......................................... 67
    5.5.1 Requests .................................................. 67
      5.5.1.1 Request and Macro Arguments ..................... 68
    5.5.2 Macros .................................................... 69
    5.5.3 Escapes ................................................... 70
      5.5.3.1 Comments ............................................. 71
  5.6 Registers ...................................................... 72
    5.6.1 Setting Registers ....................................... 72
    5.6.2 Interpolating Registers ................................ 74
    5.6.3 Auto-increment ......................................... 75
    5.6.4 Assigning Formats ..................................... 76
    5.6.5 Built-in Registers ..................................... 77
  5.7 Manipulating Filling and Adjusting ............................. 79
  5.8 Manipulating Hyphenation .................................... 84
  5.9 Manipulating Spacing ........................................ 88
  5.10 Tabs and Fields ............................................... 91
    5.10.1 Leaders .................................................. 93
    5.10.2 Fields .................................................... 94
  5.11 Character Translations ....................................... 95
  5.12 Troff and Nroff Mode ......................................... 99
  5.13 Line Layout .................................................. 100
  5.14 Line Control ................................................ 103
  5.15 Page Layout .................................................. 104
  5.16 Page Control ................................................ 106
  5.17 Fonts and Symbols .......................................... 107
    5.17.1 Changing Fonts ........................................ 108
    5.17.2 Font Families ......................................... 109
    5.17.3 Font Positions ......................................... 111
    5.17.4 Using Symbols .......................................... 112
    5.17.5 Character Classes ..................................... 119
    5.17.6 Special Fonts ......................................... 120
    5.17.7 Artificial Fonts ....................................... 121
    5.17.8 Ligatures and Kerning ................................ 123
6 Preprocessors ........................................... 187
   6.1 gEqn ........................................... 187
       6.1.1 Invoking gEqn ............................. 187
   6.2 gtBl ........................................... 187
       6.2.1 Invoking gtBl ............................. 187
   6.3 gpIC ........................................... 187
       6.3.1 Invoking gpIC ............................. 187
   6.4 gGrn ........................................... 187
       6.4.1 Invoking gGrn ............................. 187
   6.5 grap ........................................... 187
   6.6 gChem .......................................... 187
       6.6.1 Invoking gChem ........................... 187
   6.7 grefer ......................................... 187
       6.7.1 Invoking grefer ........................... 187
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Installation</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Copying This Manual</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Request Index</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Escape Index</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Operator Index</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Register Index</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Macro Index</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>String Index</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Glyph Name Index</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Font File Keyword Index</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Program and File Index</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Concept Index</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Introduction

GNU troff (or groff) is a system for typesetting documents. troff is very flexible and has been used extensively for some thirty years. It is well entrenched in the UNIX community.

1.1 What Is groff?

groff belongs to an older generation of document preparation systems, which operate more like compilers than the more recent interactive WYSIWYG\(^1\) systems. groff and its contemporary counterpart, T\(\TeX\), both work using a batch paradigm: The input (or source) files are normal text files with embedded formatting commands. These files can then be processed by groff to produce a typeset document on a variety of devices.

groff should not be confused with a word processor, an integrated system of editor and text formatter. Also, many word processors follow the WYSIWYG paradigm discussed earlier.

Although WYSIWYG systems may be easier to use, they have a number of disadvantages compared to troff:

- They must be used on a graphics display to work on a document.
- Most of the WYSIWYG systems are either non-free or are not very portable.
- troff is firmly entrenched in all UNIX systems.
- It is difficult to have a wide range of capabilities within the confines of a GUI/window system.
- It is more difficult to make global changes to a document.

“GUIs normally make it simple to accomplish simple actions and impossible to accomplish complex actions.” –Doug Gwyn (22/Jun/91 in comp.unix.wizards)

1.2 History

troff can trace its origins back to a formatting program called RUNOFF, written by Jerry Saltzer, which ran on the CTSS (Compatible Time Sharing System, a project of MIT, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) in the mid-sixties.\(^2\) The name came from the use of the phrase “run off a document”, meaning to print it out. Bob Morris ported it to the 635 architecture and called the program roff (an abbreviation of runoff). It was rewritten as rf for the PDP-7 (before having UNIX), and at the same time (1969),

---

1 What You See Is What You Get
2 Jerome H. Saltzer, a grad student then, later a Professor of Electrical Engineering, now retired. Saltzer’s PhD thesis was the first application for RUNOFF and is available from the MIT Libraries.
Doug McIllroy rewrote an extended and simplified version of roff in the BCPL programming language.

In 1971, the UNIX developers wanted to get a PDP-11, and to justify the cost, proposed the development of a document formatting system for the AT&T patents division. This first formatting program was a reimplementation of McIllroy’s roff, written by J. F. Ossanna.

When they needed a more flexible language, a new version of roff called nroff ("Newer roff") was written. It had a much more complicated syntax, but provided the basis for all future versions. When they got a Graphic Systems CAT Phototypesetter, Ossanna wrote a version of nroff that would drive it. It was dubbed troff, for “typesetter roff”, although many people have speculated that it actually means “Times roff” because of the use of the Times font family in troff by default. As such, the name troff is pronounced ‘t-roff’ rather than ‘trough’.

With troff came nroff (they were actually the same program except for some ‘#ifdef’s), which was for producing output for line printers and character terminals. It understood everything troff did, and ignored the commands which were not applicable (e.g. font changes).

Since there are several things which cannot be done easily in troff, work on several preprocessors began. These programs would transform certain parts of a document into troff, which made a very natural use of pipes in UNIX.

The eqn preprocessor allowed mathematical formulæ to be specified in a much simpler and more intuitive manner. tbl is a preprocessor for formatting tables. The refer preprocessor (and the similar program, bib) processes citations in a document according to a bibliographic database.

Unfortunately, Ossanna’s troff was written in PDP-11 assembly language and produced output specifically for the CAT phototypesetter. He rewrote it in C, although it was now 7000 lines of uncommented code and still dependent on the CAT. As the CAT became less common, and was no longer supported by the manufacturer, the need to make it support other devices became a priority. However, before this could be done, Ossanna died by a severe heart attack in a hospital while recovering from a previous one.

So, Brian Kernighan took on the task of rewriting troff. The newly rewritten version produced device independent code which was very easy for postprocessors to read and translate to the appropriate printer codes. Also, this new version of troff (called ditroff for “device independent troff”) had several extensions, which included drawing functions.

Due to the additional abilities of the new version of troff, several new preprocessors appeared. The pic preprocessor provides a wide range of drawing functions. Likewise the ideal preprocessor did the same, although via a much different paradigm. The grap preprocessor took specifications for graphs, but, unlike other preprocessors, produced pic code.
James Clark began work on a GNU implementation of ditroff in early 1989. The first version, groff 0.3.1, was released June 1990. groff included:

- A replacement for ditroff with many extensions.
- The soelim, pic, tbl, and eqn preprocessors.
- Postprocessors for character devices, POSTScript, TeX DVI, and X Windows. GNU troff also eliminated the need for a separate nroff program with a postprocessor which would produce ASCII output.
- A version of the me macros and an implementation of the man macros.

Also, a front-end was included which could construct the, sometimes painfully long, pipelines required for all the post- and preprocessors.

Development of GNU troff progressed rapidly, and saw the additions of a replacement for refer, an implementation of the ms and mm macros, and a program to deduce how to format a document (grog).

It was declared a stable (i.e. non-beta) package with the release of version 1.04 around November 1991.

Beginning in 1999, groff has new maintainers (the package was an orphan for a few years). As a result, new features and programs like grn, a preprocessor for gremlin images, and an output device to produce HTML and XHTML have been added.

1.3 groff Capabilities

So what exactly is groff capable of doing? groff provides a wide range of low-level text formatting operations. Using these, it is possible to perform a wide range of formatting tasks, such as footnotes, table of contents, multiple columns, etc. Here’s a list of the most important operations supported by groff:

- text filling, adjusting, and centering
- hyphenation
- page control
- font and glyph size control
- vertical spacing (e.g. double-spacing)
- line length and indenting
- macros, strings, diversions, and traps
- number registers
- tabs, leaders, and fields
- input and output conventions and character translation
- overstrike, bracket, line drawing, and zero-width functions
- local horizontal and vertical motions and the width function
- three-part titles
• output line numbering
• conditional acceptance of input
• environment switching
• insertions from the standard input
• input/output file switching
• output and error messages

1.4 Macro Packages
Since groff provides such low-level facilities, it can be quite difficult to use by itself. However, groff provides a macro facility to specify how certain routine operations (e.g. starting paragraphs, printing headers and footers, etc.) should be done. These macros can be collected together into a macro package. There are a number of macro packages available; the most common (and the ones described in this manual) are man, mdoc, me, ms, and mm.

1.5 Preprocessors
Although groff provides most functions needed to format a document, some operations would be unwieldy (e.g. to draw pictures). Therefore, programs called preprocessors were written which understand their own language and produce the necessary groff operations. These preprocessors are able to differentiate their own input from the rest of the document via markers.

To use a preprocessor, UNIX pipes are used to feed the output from the preprocessor into groff. Any number of preprocessors may be used on a given document; in this case, the preprocessors are linked together into one pipeline. However, with groff, the user does not need to construct the pipe, but only tell groff what preprocessors to use.

groff currently has preprocessors for producing tables (tbl), typesetting equations (eqn), drawing pictures (pic and grn), processing bibliographies (refer), and drawing chemical structures (chem). An associated program which is useful when dealing with preprocessors is soelim.

A free implementation of grap, a preprocessor for drawing graphs, can be obtained as an extra package; groff can use grap also.

Unique to groff is the preconv preprocessor which enables groff to handle documents in various input encodings.

There are other preprocessors in existence, but, unfortunately, no free implementations are available. Among them is a preprocessor for drawing mathematical pictures (ideal).

1.6 Output Devices
groff actually produces device independent code which may be fed into a postprocessor to produce output for a particular device. Currently, groff
has postprocessors for PostScript devices, character terminals, X Windows (for previewing), \TeX DVI format, HP LaserJet 4 and Canon LBP printers (which use CAPSL), HTML, XHTML, and PDF.

1.7 Credits

Large portions of this manual were taken from existing documents, most notably, the manual pages for the groff package by James Clark, and Eric Allman’s papers on the me macro package.

The section on the man macro package is partly based on Susan G. Kleinmann’s groff_man manual page written for the Debian GNU/Linux system.

Larry Kollar contributed the section in the ms macro package.
Chapter 2: Invoking groff

2 Invoking groff

This section focuses on how to invoke the groff front end. This front end takes care of the details of constructing the pipeline among the preprocessors, gtroff and the postprocessor.

It has become a tradition that GNU programs get the prefix ‘g’ to distinguish it from its original counterparts provided by the host (see Section 2.2 [Environment], page 12, for more details). Thus, for example, geqn is GNU eqn. On operating systems like GNU/Linux or the Hurd, which don’t contain proprietary versions of troff, and on MS-DOS/MS-Windows, where troff and associated programs are not available at all, this prefix is omitted since GNU troff is the only used incarnation of troff. Exception: ‘groff’ is never replaced by ‘roff’.

In this document, we consequently say ‘gtroff’ when talking about the GNU troff program. All other implementations of troff are called AT&T troff which is the common origin of all troff derivates (with more or less compatible changes). Similarly, we say ‘gpic’, ‘geqn’, etc.

2.1 Options

groff normally runs the gtroff program and a postprocessor appropriate for the selected device. The default device is ‘ps’ (but it can be changed when groff is configured and built). It can optionally preprocess with any of gpic, geqn, gtbl, ggrn, grap, gchem, grefer, gsoelim, or preconv.

This section only documents options to the groff front end. Many of the arguments to groff are passed on to gtroff, therefore those are also included. Arguments to pre- or postprocessors can be found in Section 6.3.1 [Invoking gpic], page 187, Section 6.1.1 [Invoking geqn], page 187, Section 6.2.1 [Invoking gtbl], page 187, Section 6.4.1 [Invoking ggrn], page 187, Section 6.7.1 [Invoking grefer], page 187, Section 6.6.1 [Invoking gchem], page 187, Section 6.8.1 [Invoking gsoelim], page 187, Section 6.9.1 [Invoking preconv], page 188, Section 7.2.1 [Invoking grotty], page 189, Section 7.3.1 [Invoking grops], page 190, Section 7.4.1 [Invoking gropdf], page 191, Section 7.8.1 [Invoking grohtml], page 194, Section 7.5.1 [Invoking grodvi], page 192, Section 7.6.1 [Invoking grolj4], page 192, Section 7.7.1 [Invoking grolbp], page 193, and Section 7.9.1 [Invoking gxditview], page 195.

The command line format for groff is:

groff [ -abceghijklpqstvzCEGNRSUVXZ ] [ -dcs ] [ -Darg ]
[ -ffam ] [ -Fdir ] [ -Idir ] [ -Karg ]
[ -Larg ] [ -mname ] [ -Mdir ] [ -nnum ]
[ -olist ] [ -Parg ] [ -rcn ] [ -Tdef ]
[ -wname ] [ -Wname ] [ files... ]

The command line format for gtroff is as follows.
gtroff [ -abcivzCERU ] [ -dcs ] [ -ffam ] [ -Fdir ]
[ -mname ] [ -Mdirname ] [ -num ] [ -olist ]
[ -rcnum ] [ -Tname ] [ -wname ] [ -Wname ]
[ files... ]

Obviously, many of the options to groff are actually passed on to gtroff.

Options without an argument can be grouped behind a single -. A filename of - denotes the standard input. It is possible to have whitespace between an option and its parameter.

The grog command can be used to guess the correct groff command to format a file.

Here’s the description of the command-line options:

‘-a’ Generate an ASCII approximation of the typeset output. The read-only register .A is then set to 1. See Section 5.6.5 [Built-in Registers], page 77. A typical example is

groff -a -man -Tdvi troff.man | less

which shows how lines are broken for the DVI device. Note that this option is rather useless today since graphic output devices are available virtually everywhere.

‘-b’ Print a backtrace with each warning or error message. This backtrace should help track down the cause of the error. The line numbers given in the backtrace may not always be correct: gtroff can get confused by as or am requests while counting line numbers.

‘-c’ Suppress color output.

‘-C’ Enable compatibility mode. See Section 5.34 [Implementation Differences], page 184, for the list of incompatibilities between groff and AT&T troff.

‘-dcs’

‘-dname=s’ Define c or name to be a string s. c must be a one-letter name; name can be of arbitrary length. All string assignments happen before loading any macro file (including the start-up file).

‘-Darg’ Set default input encoding used by preconv to arg. Implies -k.

‘-e’ Preprocess with geqn.

‘-E’ Inhibit all error messages.

‘-ffam’ Use fam as the default font family. See Section 5.17.2 [Font Families], page 109.

‘-Fdir’ Search dir for subdirectories devname (name is the name of the device), for the DESC file, and for font files before looking in the standard directories (see Section 2.4 [Font Directories],
Chapter 2: Invoking groff

This option is passed to all pre- and postprocessors using the GROFF_FONT_PATH environment variable.

‘-g’ Preprocess with ggrn.

‘-G’ Preprocess with grap. Implies -p.

‘-h’ Print a help message.

‘-i’ Read the standard input after all the named input files have been processed.

‘-Idir’ This option may be used to specify a directory to search for files. It is passed to the following programs:

- gsoelim (see Section 6.8 [gsoelim], page 187 for more details); it also implies groff’s -s option.
- gtroff; it is used to search files named in the psbb and so requests.
- grops; it is used to search files named in the \X’ps: import and \X’ps: file escapes.

The current directory is always searched first. This option may be specified more than once; the directories are searched in the order specified. No directory search is performed for files specified using an absolute path.

‘-j’ Preprocess with gchem. Implies -p.

‘-k’ Preprocess with preconv. This is run before any other preprocessor. Please refer to preconv’s manual page for its behaviour if no -K (or -D) option is specified.

‘-Karg’ Set input encoding used by preconv to arg. Implies -k.

‘-l’ Send the output to a spooler for printing. The command used for this is specified by the print command in the device description file (see Section 8.2 [Font Files], page 210, for more info). If not present, -l is ignored.

‘-Larg’ Pass arg to the spooler. Each argument should be passed with a separate -L option. Note that groff does not prepend a ‘-’ to arg before passing it to the postprocessor. If the print keyword in the device description file is missing, -L is ignored.

‘-mname’ Read in the file name.tmac. Normally groff searches for this in its macro directories. If it isn’t found, it tries tmac.name (searching in the same directories).

‘-Mdir’ Search directory dir for macro files before the standard directories (see Section 2.3 [Macro Directories], page 13).

‘-num’ Number the first page num.


\texttt{-N} \\
Don’t allow newlines with \texttt{eqn} delimiters. This is the same as the \texttt{-N} option in \texttt{geqn}.

\texttt{-olist} \\
Output only pages in \texttt{list}, which is a comma-separated list of page ranges; ‘\texttt{n}’ means print page \texttt{n}, ‘\texttt{m-n}’ means print every page between \texttt{m} and \texttt{n}, ‘\texttt{-n}’ means print every page up to \texttt{n}, ‘\texttt{n-}’ means print every page beginning with \texttt{n}. \texttt{gtroff} exits after printing the last page in the list. All the ranges are inclusive on both ends.

Within \texttt{gtroff}, this information can be extracted with the ‘.P’ register. See Section 5.6.5 [Built-in Registers], page 77.

If your document restarts page numbering at the beginning of each chapter, then \texttt{gtroff} prints the specified page range for each chapter.

\texttt{-p} \\
Preprocess with \texttt{gpic}.

\texttt{-Parg} \\
Pass \texttt{arg} to the postprocessor. Each argument should be passed with a separate \texttt{-P} option. Note that \texttt{groff} does not prepend ‘\texttt{-}’ to \texttt{arg} before passing it to the postprocessor.

\texttt{-rcn} \\
\texttt{-rname=n} \\
Set number register \texttt{c} or \texttt{name} to the value \texttt{n}. \texttt{c} must be a one-letter name; \texttt{name} can be of arbitrary length. \texttt{n} can be any \texttt{gtroff} numeric expression. All register assignments happen before loading any macro file (including the start-up file).

\texttt{-R} \\
Preprocess with \texttt{grefer}. No mechanism is provided for passing arguments to \texttt{grefer} because most \texttt{grefer} options have equivalent commands which can be included in the file. See Section 6.7 \texttt{[grefer]}, page 187, for more details.

Note that \texttt{gtroff} also accepts a \texttt{-R} option, which is not accessible via \texttt{groff}. This option prevents the loading of the \texttt{troffrc} and \texttt{troffrc-end} files.

\texttt{-s} \\
Preprocess with \texttt{gsoelim}.

\texttt{-S} \\
Safer mode. Pass the \texttt{-S} option to \texttt{gpic} and disable the \texttt{open}, \texttt{opena}, \texttt{pso}, \texttt{sy}, and \texttt{pi} requests. For security reasons, this is enabled by default.

\texttt{-t} \\
Preprocess with \texttt{gtbl}.

\texttt{-Tdev} \\
Prepare output for device \texttt{dev}. The default device is ‘\texttt{ps}’, unless changed when \texttt{groff} was configured and built. The following are the output devices currently available:

\texttt{ps} For POSTSCRIPT printers and previewers.

\texttt{pdf} For PDF viewers or printers.
Chapter 2: Invoking groff

For TEX DVI format.

For a 75 dpi X11 previewer.

For a 75 dpi X11 previewer with a 12 pt base font in the document.

For a 100 dpi X11 previewer.

For a 100 dpi X11 previewer with a 12 pt base font in the document.

For typewriter-like devices using the (7-bit) ASCII character set.

For typewriter-like devices that support the Latin-1 (ISO 8859-1) character set.

For typewriter-like devices which use the Unicode (ISO 10646) character set with UTF-8 encoding.

For typewriter-like devices which use the EBCDIC encoding IBM cp1047.

For HP LaserJet4-compatible (or other PCL5-compatible) printers.

For Canon CAPSL printers (LBP-4 and LBP-8 series laser printers).

To produce HTML and XHTML output, respectively. Note that this driver consists of two parts, a preprocessor (pre-grohtml) and a postprocessor (post-grohtml).

The predefined gtroff string register .T contains the current output device; the read-only number register .T is set to 1 if this option is used (which is always true if groff is used to call gtroff). See Section 5.6.5 [Built-in Registers], page 77.

The postprocessor to be used for a device is specified by the postpro command in the device description file. (See Section 8.2 [Font Files], page 210, for more info.) This can be overridden with the -X option.

-U Unsafe mode. This enables the open, opena, pso, sy, and pi requests.

-wname Enable warning name. Available warnings are described in Section 5.33 [Debugging], page 179. Multiple -w options are allowed.

-Wname Inhibit warning name. Multiple -W options are allowed.
The GNU Troff Manual

The GNU Troff Manual

`-v' Make programs run by _groff_ print out their version number.

`-V' Print the pipeline on _stdout_ instead of executing it. If specified more than once, print the pipeline on _stderr_ and execute it.

`-X' Preview with _gxditview_ instead of using the usual postprocessor. This is unlikely to produce good results except with `-Tps'.

Note that this is not the same as using `-TX75` or `-TX100` to view a document with _gxditview_: The former uses the metrics of the specified device, whereas the latter uses X-specific fonts and metrics.

`-z' Suppress output from _gtroff_. Only error messages are printed.

`-Z' Do not postprocess the output of _gtroff_. Normally _groff_ automatically runs the appropriate postprocessor.

### 2.2 Environment

There are also several environment variables (of the operating system, not within _gtroff_) which can modify the behavior of _groff_.

**GROFF_BIN_PATH**

This search path, followed by _PATH_, is used for commands executed by _groff_.

**GROFF_COMMAND_PREFIX**

If this is set to _X_, then _groff_ runs _Xtroff_ instead of _gtroff_. This also applies to _tbl_, _pic_, _eqn_, _grn_, _chem_, _refer_, and _soelim_. It does not apply to _grops_, _grodvi_, _grotty_, _pre-grohtml_, _post-grohtml_, _preconv_, _grolj4_, _gropdf_, and _gxditview_.

The default command prefix is determined during the installation process. If a non-GNU troff system is found, prefix ‘g’ is used, none otherwise.

**GROFF_ENCODING**

The value of this environment value is passed to the _preconv_ preprocessor to select the encoding of input files. Setting this option implies _groff’s_ command line option `-k` (this is, _groff_ actually always calls _preconv_). If set without a value, _groff_ calls _preconv_ without arguments. An explicit `-K` command line option overrides the value of GROFF_ENCODING. See the manual page of _preconv_ for details.

**GROFF_FONT_PATH**

A colon-separated list of directories in which to search for the _devname_ directory (before the default directories are tried). See Section 2.4 [Font Directories], page 13.
Chapter 2: Invoking groff

GROFF_TMAC_PATH
A colon-separated list of directories in which to search for macro files (before the default directories are tried). See Section 2.3 [Macro Directories], page 13.

GROFF_TMPDIR
The directory in which groff creates temporary files. If this is not set and TMPDIR is set, temporary files are created in that directory. Otherwise temporary files are created in a system-dependent default directory (on Unix and GNU/Linux systems, this is usually /tmp). grops, grefer, pre-grohtml, and post-grohtml can create temporary files in this directory.

GROFF_TYPESETTER
The default output device.

Note that MS-DOS and MS-Windows ports of groff use semi-colons, rather than colons, to separate the directories in the lists described above.

2.3 Macro Directories

All macro file names must be named name\.tmac or tmac\.name to make the -mname command line option work. The mso request doesn’t have this restriction; any file name can be used, and gtroff won’t try to append or prepend the ‘tmac’ string.

Macro files are kept in the tmac directories, all of which constitute the tmac path. The elements of the search path for macro files are (in that order):
- The directories specified with gtroff’s or groff’s -M command line option.
- The directories given in the GROFF_TMAC_PATH environment variable.
- The current directory (only if in unsafe mode using the -U command line switch).
- The home directory.
- A platform-dependent directory, a site-specific (platform-independent) directory, and the main tmac directory; the default locations are
  /usr/local/lib/groff/site-tmac
  /usr/local/share/groff/site-tmac
  /usr/local/share/groff/1.22.1/tmac
assuming that the version of groff is 1.22.1, and the installation prefix was /usr/local. It is possible to fine-tune those directories during the installation process.

2.4 Font Directories

Basically, there is no restriction how font files for groff are named and how long font names are; however, to make the font family mechanism work (see
Section 5.17.2 [Font Families], page 109), fonts within a family should start with the family name, followed by the shape. For example, the Times family uses ‘T’ for the family name and ‘R’, ‘B’, ‘I’, and ‘BT’ to indicate the shapes ‘roman’, ‘bold’, ‘italic’, and ‘bold italic’, respectively. Thus the final font names are ‘TR’, ‘TB’, ‘TI’, and ‘TBI’.

All font files are kept in the font directories which constitute the font path. The file search functions always append the directory devname, where name is the name of the output device. Assuming, say, DVI output, and /foo/bar as a font directory, the font files for grodvi must be in /foo/bar/devdvi.

The elements of the search path for font files are (in that order):

- The directories specified with gtroff’s or groff’s -F command line option. All device drivers and some preprocessors also have this option.
- The directories given in the GROFF_FONT_PATH environment variable.
- A site-specific directory and the main font directory; the default locations are

  /usr/local/share/groff/site-font
  /usr/local/share/groff/1.22.1/font

assuming that the version of groff is 1.22.1, and the installation prefix was /usr/local. It is possible to fine-tune those directories during the installation process.

2.5 Paper Size

In groff, the page size for gtroff and for output devices are handled separately. See Section 5.15 [Page Layout], page 104, for vertical manipulation of the page size. See Section 5.13 [Line Layout], page 100, for horizontal changes.

A default paper size can be set in the device’s DESC file. Most output devices also have a command line option -p to override the default paper size and option -l to use landscape orientation. See Section 8.2.1 [DESC File Format], page 210, for a description of the papersize keyword which takes the same argument as -p.

A convenient shorthand to set a particular paper size for gtroff is command line option -dpaper= size. This defines string paper which is processed in file papersize.tmac (loaded in the start-up file troffrc by default). Possible values for size are the same as the predefined values for the papersize keyword (but only in lowercase) except a7-d7. An appended ‘l’ (ell) character denotes landscape orientation.

For example, use the following for PS output on A4 paper in landscape orientation:

```
groff -Tps -dpaper=a4l -P-pa4 -P-l -ms foo.ms > foo.ps
```

Note that it is up to the particular macro package to respect default page dimensions set in this way (most do).
Chapter 2: Invoking groff

2.6 Invocation Examples

This section lists several common uses of groff and the corresponding command lines.

\texttt{groff file}

This command processes file without a macro package or a preprocessor. The output device is the default, ‘ps’, and the output is sent to stdout.

\texttt{groff \(-t\) \(-\text{mandoc}\) \(-\text{Tascii}\) file \(|\) \texttt{less}}

This is basically what a call to the man program does. gtroff processes the manual page file with the mandoc macro file (which in turn either calls the man or the mdoc macro package), using the tbl preprocessor and the ASCII output device. Finally, the less pager displays the result.

\texttt{groff \(-X\) \(-\text{m me}\) file}

Preview file with gxditview, using the me macro package. Since no \(-T\) option is specified, use the default device (‘ps’). Note that you can either say ‘\(-\text{m me}\)’ or ‘\(-\text{me}\)’; the latter is an anachronism from the early days of UNIX.\(^1\)

\texttt{groff \(-\text{man}\) \(-rD1\) \(-z\) file}

Check file with the man macro package, forcing double-sided printing – don’t produce any output.

2.6.1 grog

grog reads files, guesses which of the groff preprocessors and/or macro packages are required for formatting them, and prints the groff command including those options on the standard output. It generates one or more of the options \(-e\), \(-\text{man}\), \(-\text{me}\), \(-\text{mm}\), \(-\text{mom}\), \(-\text{ms}\), \(-\text{mdoc}\), \(-\text{mdoc-old}\), \(-p\), \(-R\), \(-g\), \(-G\), \(-s\), and \(-t\).

A special file name \(-\) refers to the standard input. Specifying no files also means to read the standard input. Any specified options are included in the printed command. No space is allowed between options and their arguments. The only options recognized are \(-C\) (which is also passed on) to enable compatibility mode, and \(-v\) to print the version number and exit.

For example,

\texttt{grog \(-\text{Tdvi}\) paper.ms}

guesses the appropriate command to print paper.ms and then prints it to the command line after adding the \(-\text{Tdvi}\) option. For direct execution, enclose the call to grog in backquotes at the UNIX shell prompt:

\texttt{‘grog \(-\text{Tdvi}\) paper.ms‘ \(\rightarrow\) paper.dvi}

As seen in the example, it is still necessary to redirect the output to something meaningful (i.e. either a file or a pager program like less).

\(^1\) The same is true for the other main macro packages that come with groff: man, mdoc, ms, mm, and mandoc. This won’t work in general; for example, to load trace.tmac, either ‘\(-\text{mtrace}\)’ or ‘\(-\text{m trace}\)’ must be used.
3 Tutorial for Macro Users

Most users tend to use a macro package to format their papers. This means that the whole breadth of \texttt{groff} is not necessary for most people. This chapter covers the material needed to efficiently use a macro package.

3.1 Basics

This section covers some of the basic concepts necessary to understand how to use a macro package. References are made throughout to more detailed information, if desired.

\texttt{gtroff} reads an input file prepared by the user and outputs a formatted document suitable for publication or framing. The input consists of text, or words to be printed, and embedded commands (\textit{requests} and \textit{escapes}), which tell \texttt{gtroff} how to format the output. For more detail on this, see Section 5.5 [Embedded Commands], page 67.

The word \textit{argument} is used in this chapter to mean a word or number which appears on the same line as a request, and which modifies the meaning of that request. For example, the request

\begin{verbatim}
.sp
\end{verbatim}

spaces one line, but

\begin{verbatim}
.sp 4
\end{verbatim}

spaces four lines. The number 4 is an argument to the \texttt{sp} request which says to space four lines instead of one. Arguments are separated from the request and from each other by spaces (\textit{no tabs}). More details on this can be found in Section 5.5.1.1 [Request and Macro Arguments], page 68.

The primary function of \texttt{gtroff} is to collect words from input lines, fill output lines with those words, justify the right-hand margin by inserting extra spaces in the line, and output the result. For example, the input:

\begin{verbatim}
Now is the time
for all good men
to come to the aid
of their party.
Four score and seven
years ago, etc.
\end{verbatim}

is read, packed onto output lines, and justified to produce:

\begin{verbatim}
Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their party.
Four score and seven years ago, etc.
\end{verbatim}

Sometimes a new output line should be started even though the current line is not yet full; for example, at the end of a paragraph. To do this it is possible to cause a \texttt{break}, which starts a new output line. Some requests

\footnote{This section is derived from \textit{Writing Papers with nroff using -me} by Eric P. Allman.}
cause a break automatically, as normally do blank input lines and input lines
beginning with a space.

Not all input lines are text to be formatted. Some input lines are requests
which describe how to format the text. Requests always have a period (‘.’)
or an apostrophe (‘’’) as the first character of the input line.

The text formatter also does more complex things, such as automatically
numbering pages, skipping over page boundaries, putting footnotes in the
correct place, and so forth.

Here are a few hints for preparing text for input to \texttt{gtroff}.
• First, keep the input lines short. Short input lines are easier to edit,
  and \texttt{gtroff} packs words onto longer lines anyhow.
• In keeping with this, it is helpful to begin a new line after every comma
  or phrase, since common corrections are to add or delete sentences or
  phrases.
• End each sentence with two spaces – or better, start each sentence on
  a new line. \texttt{gtroff} recognizes characters that usually end a sentence,
  and inserts sentence space accordingly.
• Do not hyphenate words at the end of lines – \texttt{gtroff} is smart enough
to hyphenate words as needed, but is not smart enough to take hyphens
out and join a word back together. Also, words such as “mother-in-law”
should not be broken over a line, since then a space can occur where
not wanted, such as “mother- in-law”.

\texttt{gtroff} double-spaces output text automatically if you use the request
‘\texttt{.ls 2}’. Reactivate single-spaced mode by typing ‘\texttt{.ls 1}’.\footnote{If you need finer granularity of the vertical space, use the \texttt{pvs} request (see Section 5.18.1 [Changing Type Sizes], page 126).}

A number of requests allow to change the way the output looks, sometimes
called the \textit{layout} of the output page. Most of these requests adjust
the placing of whitespace (blank lines or spaces).

The \texttt{bp} request starts a new page, causing a line break.

The request ‘\texttt{.sp N}’ leaves \textit{N} lines of blank space. \textit{N} can be omitted
(meaning skip a single line) or can be of the form \textit{Ni} (for \textit{N} inches) or \textit{Nc}
(for \textit{N} centimeters). For example, the input:
\begin{verbatim}
 .sp 1.5i
 My thoughts on the subject
 .sp
\end{verbatim}
leaves one and a half inches of space, followed by the line “My thoughts on
the subject”, followed by a single blank line (more measurement units are
available, see Section 5.2 [Measurements], page 62).

Text lines can be centered by using the \texttt{ce} request. The line after \texttt{ce}
is centered (horizontally) on the page. To center more than one line, use
‘\texttt{.ce N}’ (where \textit{N} is the number of lines to center), followed by the \textit{N} lines.
To center many lines without counting them, type:
.ce 1000
lines to center
.ce 0

The `.ce 0’ request tells groff to center zero more lines, in other words, stop centering.

All of these requests cause a break; that is, they always start a new line. To start a new line without performing any other action, use `br’.

3.2 Common Features

gtroff provides very low-level operations for formatting a document. There are many common routine operations which are done in all documents. These common operations are written into macros and collected into a macro package.

All macro packages provide certain common capabilities which fall into the following categories.

3.2.1 Paragraphs

One of the most common and most used capability is starting a paragraph. There are a number of different types of paragraphs, any of which can be initiated with macros supplied by the macro package. Normally, paragraphs start with a blank line and the first line indented, like the text in this manual. There are also block style paragraphs, which omit the indentation:

Some men look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence, and deem them like the ark of the covenant, too sacred to be touched.

And there are also indented paragraphs which begin with a tag or label at the margin and the remaining text indented.

one  This is the first paragraph. Notice how the first line of the resulting paragraph lines up with the other lines in the paragraph.

longlabel
This paragraph had a long label. The first character of text on the first line does not line up with the text on second and subsequent lines, although they line up with each other.

A variation of this is a bulleted list.

.  Bulleted lists start with a bullet. It is possible to use other glyphs instead of the bullet. In nroff mode using the ASCII character set for output, a dot is used instead of a real bullet.
3.2.2 Sections and Chapters
Most macro packages supply some form of section headers. The simplest kind is simply the heading on a line by itself in bold type. Others supply automatically numbered section heading or different heading styles at different levels. Some, more sophisticated, macro packages supply macros for starting chapters and appendices.

3.2.3 Headers and Footers
Every macro package gives some way to manipulate the headers and footers (also called titles) on each page. This is text put at the top and bottom of each page, respectively, which contain data like the current page number, the current chapter title, and so on. Its appearance is not affected by the running text. Some packages allow for different ones on the even and odd pages (for material printed in a book form).

The titles are called three-part titles, that is, there is a left-justified part, a centered part, and a right-justified part. An automatically generated page number may be put in any of these fields with the ‘%’ character (see Section 5.15 [Page Layout], page 104, for more details).

3.2.4 Page Layout
Most macro packages let the user specify top and bottom margins and other details about the appearance of the printed pages.

3.2.5 Displays
Displays are sections of text to be set off from the body of the paper. Major quotes, tables, and figures are types of displays, as are all the examples used in this document.

Major quotes are quotes which are several lines long, and hence are set in from the rest of the text without quote marks around them.

A list is an indented, single-spaced, unfilled display. Lists should be used when the material to be printed should not be filled and justified like normal text, such as columns of figures or the examples used in this paper.

A keep is a display of lines which are kept on a single page if possible. An example for a keep might be a diagram. Keeps differ from lists in that lists may be broken over a page boundary whereas keeps are not.

Floating keeps move relative to the text. Hence, they are good for things which are referred to by name, such as “See figure 3”. A floating keep appears at the bottom of the current page if it fits; otherwise, it appears at the top of the next page. Meanwhile, the surrounding text ‘flows’ around the keep, thus leaving no blank areas.

3.2.6 Footnotes and Annotations
There are a number of requests to save text for later printing.
Footnotes are printed at the bottom of the current page.

Delayed text is very similar to a footnote except that it is printed when called for explicitly. This allows a list of references to appear (for example) at the end of each chapter, as is the convention in some disciplines.

Most macro packages which supply this functionality also supply a means of automatically numbering either type of annotation.

3.2.7 Table of Contents

Tables of contents are a type of delayed text having a tag (usually the page number) attached to each entry after a row of dots. The table accumulates throughout the paper until printed, usually after the paper has ended. Many macro packages provide the ability to have several tables of contents (e.g. a standard table of contents, a list of tables, etc).

3.2.8 Indices

While some macro packages use the term index, none actually provide that functionality. The facilities they call indices are actually more appropriate for tables of contents.

To produce a real index in a document, external tools like the makeindex program are necessary.

3.2.9 Paper Formats

Some macro packages provide stock formats for various kinds of documents. Many of them provide a common format for the title and opening pages of a technical paper. The mm macros in particular provide formats for letters and memoranda.

3.2.10 Multiple Columns

Some macro packages (but not man) provide the ability to have two or more columns on a page.

3.2.11 Font and Size Changes

The built-in font and size functions are not always intuitive, so all macro packages provide macros to make these operations simpler.

3.2.12 Predefined Strings

Most macro packages provide various predefined strings for a variety of uses; examples are sub- and superscripts, printable dates, quotes and various special characters.

3.2.13 Preprocessor Support

All macro packages provide support for various preprocessors and may extend their functionality.
For example, all macro packages mark tables (which are processed with `gtbl`) by placing them between `TS` and `TE` macros. The `ms` macro package has an option, `'.TS H'`, that prints a caption at the top of a new page (when the table is too long to fit on a single page).

### 3.2.14 Configuration and Customization

Some macro packages provide means of customizing many of the details of how the package behaves. This ranges from setting the default type size to changing the appearance of section headers.
4 Macro Packages

This chapter documents the main macro packages that come with groff.

Different main macro packages can’t be used at the same time; for example

    groff -m man foo.man -m ms bar.doc

doesn’t work. Note that option arguments are processed before non-option arguments; the above (failing) sample is thus reordered to

    groff -m man -m ms foo.man bar.doc

4.1 man

This is the most popular and probably the most important macro package of groff. It is easy to use, and a vast majority of manual pages are based on it.

4.1.1 Options

The command line format for using the man macros with groff is:

    groff -m man [ -rLL=length ] [ -rLT=length ] [ -rFT=dist ]
    [ -rcR=1 ] [ -rC1 ] [ -rD1 ] [-rHY=flags ]
    [ -rPnnn ] [ -rSxx ] [ -rXnnn ]
    [ -rIN=length ] [ -rSN=length ] [ files... ]

It is possible to use ‘-man’ instead of ‘-m man’.

-rcR=1  This option (the default if a TTY output device is used) creates a single, very long page instead of multiple pages. Use -rcR=0 to disable it.

-rC1    If more than one manual page is given on the command line, number the pages continuously, rather than starting each at 1.

-rD1    Double-sided printing. Footers for even and odd pages are formatted differently.

-rFT=dist  Set the position of the footer text to dist. If positive, the distance is measured relative to the top of the page, otherwise it is relative to the bottom. The default is −0.5i.

-rHY=flags    Set hyphenation flags. Possible values are 1 to hyphenate without restrictions, 2 to not hyphenate the last word on a page, 4 to not hyphenate the last two characters of a word, and 8 to not hyphenate the first two characters of a word. These values are additive; the default is 14.

-rIN=length  Set the body text indentation to length. If not specified, the indentation defaults to 7 n (7 characters) in nroff mode and 7.2 n
otherwise. For nroff, this value should always be an integer multiple of unit `n’ to get consistent indentation.

\-rLL=\textit{length}

Set line length to \textit{length}. If not specified, the line length is set to respect any value set by a prior ‘ll’ request (which \textit{must} be in effect when the ‘TH’ macro is invoked), if this differs from the built-in default for the formatter; otherwise it defaults to 78\,n in nroff mode (this is 78 characters per line) and 6.5\,i in troff mode.\footnote{Note that the use of a ‘.ll \textit{length}’ request to initialize the line length, prior to use of the ‘TH’ macro, is supported for backward compatibility with some versions of the \textit{man} program. \textit{Always} use the \texttt{-rLL=\textit{length}} option, or an equivalent ‘.nr LL \textit{length}’ request, in preference to such a ‘.ll \textit{length}’ request. In particular, note that in nroff mode, the request ‘.ll 65n’, (with any \textit{length} expression which evaluates equal to 65\,n, i.e., the formatter’s default line length in nroff mode), does \textit{not} set the line length to 65\,n (it is adjusted to the \textit{man} macro package’s default setting of 78\,n), whereas the use of the \texttt{-rLL=65n} option, or the ‘.nr LL 65n’ request \textit{does} establish a line length of 65\,n.}

\-rLT=\textit{length}

Set title length to \textit{length}. If not specified, the title length defaults to the line length.

\-rPn\texttt{nnn}

Page numbering starts with \texttt{nnn} rather than with 1.

\-rS\texttt{xx}

Use \texttt{xx} (which can be 10, 11, or 12\,pt) as the base document font size instead of the default value of 10\,pt.

\-rSN=\textit{length}

Set the indentation for sub-subheadings to \textit{length}. If not specified, the indentation defaults to 3\,n.

\-rXn\texttt{nnn}

After page \texttt{nnn}, number pages as \texttt{nnna}, \texttt{nnnb}, \texttt{nnnc}, etc. For example, the option \texttt{-rX2} produces the following page numbers: 1, 2, 2a, 2b, 2c, etc.

4.1.2 Usage

This section describes the available macros for manual pages. For further customization, put additional macros and requests into the file \texttt{man.local} which is loaded immediately after the \texttt{man} package.

\texttt{.TH title section [extra1 [extra2 [extra3]]]} \hfill [Macro]

Set the title of the man page to \textit{title} and the section to \textit{section}, which must have a value between 1 and 8. The value of \textit{section} may also have a string appended, e.g. ‘.pm’, to indicate a specific subsection of the man pages.

Both \textit{title} and \textit{section} are positioned at the left and right in the header line (with \textit{section} in parentheses immediately appended to \textit{title}. \textit{extra1} is positioned in the middle of the footer line. \textit{extra2} is positioned at the
left in the footer line (or at the left on even pages and at the right on odd pages if double-sided printing is active). extra3 is centered in the header line.

For HTML and XHTML output, headers and footers are completely suppressed.

Additionally, this macro starts a new page; the new line number is 1 again (except if the -tc1 option is given on the command line) – this feature is intended only for formatting multiple man pages; a single man page should contain exactly one TH macro at the beginning of the file.

**.SH [heading]**  
[Macro]
Set up an unnumbered section heading sticking out to the left. Prints out all the text following SH up to the end of the line (or the text in the next line if there is no argument to SH) in bold face (or the font specified by the string HF), one size larger than the base document size. Additionally, the left margin and the indentation for the following text is reset to its default value.

**.SS [heading]**  
[Macro]
Set up an unnumbered (sub)section heading. Prints out all the text following SS up to the end of the line (or the text in the next line if there is no argument to SS) in bold face (or the font specified by the string HF), at the same size as the base document size. Additionally, the left margin and the indentation for the following text is reset to its default value.

**.TP [nnn]**  
[Macro]
Set up an indented paragraph with label. The indentation is set to nnn if that argument is supplied (the default unit is ‘n’ if omitted), otherwise it is set to the previous indentation value specified with TP, IP, or HP (or to the default value if none of them have been used yet).

The first line of text following this macro is interpreted as a string to be printed flush-left, as it is appropriate for a label. It is not interpreted as part of a paragraph, so there is no attempt to fill the first line with text from the following input lines. Nevertheless, if the label is not as wide as the indentation the paragraph starts at the same line (but indented), continuing on the following lines. If the label is wider than the indentation the descriptive part of the paragraph begins on the line following the label, entirely indented. Note that neither font shape nor font size of the label is set to a default value; on the other hand, the rest of the text has default font settings.

**.LP**  
[Macro]
**.PP**  
[Macro]
**.P**  
[Macro]

These macros are mutual aliases. Any of them causes a line break at the current position, followed by a vertical space downwards by the amount specified by the PD macro. The font size and shape are reset to the
default value (10 pt roman if no \texttt{-rS} option is given on the command line). Finally, the current left margin and the indentation is restored.

\texttt{IP [designator [nnn]]} \hspace{1em} \textbf{[Macro]}

Set up an indented paragraph, using \textit{designator} as a tag to mark its beginning. The indentation is set to \textit{nnn} if that argument is supplied (default unit is \texttt{n}), otherwise it is set to the previous indentation value specified with \texttt{TP}, \texttt{IP}, or \texttt{HP} (or the default value if none of them have been used yet). Font size and face of the paragraph (but not the designator) are reset to their default values.

To start an indented paragraph with a particular indentation but without a designator, use \texttt{":"} (two double quotes) as the first argument of \texttt{IP}.

For example, to start a paragraph with bullets as the designator and 4 en indentation, write

\begin{verbatim}
.IP \(bu 4
\end{verbatim}

\texttt{HP [nnn]} \hspace{1em} \textbf{[Macro]}

Set up a paragraph with hanging left indentation. The indentation is set to \textit{nnn} if that argument is supplied (default unit is \texttt{n}); otherwise it is set to the previous indentation value specified with \texttt{TP}, \texttt{IP}, or \texttt{HP} (or to the default value if none of them have been used yet). Font size and face are reset to their default values.

\texttt{RS [nnn]} \hspace{1em} \textbf{[Macro]}

Move the left margin to the right by the value \textit{nnn} if specified (default unit is \texttt{n}); otherwise it is set to the previous indentation value specified with \texttt{TP}, \texttt{IP}, or \texttt{HP} (or to the default value if none of them have been used yet). The indentation value is then set to the default.

Calls to the \texttt{RS} macro can be nested.

\texttt{RE [nnn]} \hspace{1em} \textbf{[Macro]}

Move the left margin back to level \textit{nnn}, restoring the previous left margin. If no argument is given, it moves one level back. The first level (i.e., no call to \texttt{RS} yet) has number 1, and each call to \texttt{RS} increases the level by 1.

To summarize, the following macros cause a line break with the insertion of vertical space (which amount can be changed with the \texttt{PD} macro): \texttt{SH}, \texttt{SS}, \texttt{TP}, \texttt{LP} (\texttt{PP}, \texttt{P}), \texttt{IP}, and \texttt{HP}.

The macros \texttt{RS} and \texttt{RE} also cause a break but do not insert vertical space.

Finally, the macros \texttt{SH}, \texttt{SS}, \texttt{LP} (\texttt{PP}, \texttt{P}), and \texttt{RS} reset the indentation to its default value.

\textbf{4.1.3 Macros to set fonts}

The standard font is roman; the default text size is 10 point. If command line option \texttt{-rS=n} is given, use \textit{n} pt as the default text size.
.SM [text]  
Set the text on the same line or the text on the next line in a font that is one point size smaller than the default font.

.SB [text]  
Set the text on the same line or the text on the next line in bold face font, one point size smaller than the default font.

.BI text  
Set its arguments alternately in bold face and italic, without a space between the arguments. Thus,

.BI this "word and" that

produces “thisword andthat” with “this” and “that” in bold face, and “word and” in italics.

.IB text  
Set its arguments alternately in italic and bold face, without a space between the arguments.

.RI text  
Set its arguments alternately in roman and italic, without a space between the arguments.

.IR text  
Set its arguments alternately in italic and roman, without a space between the arguments.

.BR text  
Set its arguments alternately in bold face and roman, without a space between the arguments.

.RB text  
Set its arguments alternately in roman and bold face, without a space between the arguments.

.B [text]  
Set text in bold face. If no text is present on the line where the macro is called, then the text of the next line appears in bold face.

.I [text]  
Set text in italic. If no text is present on the line where the macro is called, then the text of the next line appears in italic.

### 4.1.4 Miscellaneous macros

The default indentation is 7.2n in troff mode and 7n in nroff mode except for grohtml which ignores indentation.
.DT

Set tabs every 0.5 inches. Since this macro is always executed during a call to the \*TH macro, it makes sense to call it only if the tab positions have been changed.

.PD [nnn]

Adjust the empty space before a new paragraph (or section). The optional argument gives the amount of space (default unit is ‘v’); without parameter, the value is reset to its default value (1 line in nroff mode, 0.4 v otherwise).

This affects the macros \*SH, \*SS, \*TP, \*LP (as well as \*PP and \*P), \*IP, and \*HP.

The following two macros are included for BSD compatibility.

.AT [system [release]]

Alter the footer for use with AT&T manpages. This command exists only for compatibility; don’t use it. The first argument system can be:

3  7th Edition (the default)
4  System III
5  System V

An optional second argument release to AT specifies the release number (such as “System V Release 3”).

.UC [version]

Alters the footer for use with BSD manpages. This command exists only for compatibility; don’t use it. The argument can be:

3  3rd Berkeley Distribution (the default)
4  4th Berkeley Distribution
5  4.2 Berkeley Distribution
6  4.3 Berkeley Distribution
7  4.4 Berkeley Distribution

4.1.5 Predefined strings

The following strings are defined:

\*[S]  [String]

Switch back to the default font size.

\*[HF]  [String]

The typeface used for headings. The default is ‘B’.

\*[R]   [String]

The ‘registered’ sign.
Chapter 4: Macro Packages

\*[Tm] The ‘trademark’ sign.
\*[lq] \*[rq] Left and right quote. This is equal to \(lq\) and \(rq\), respectively.

4.1.6 Preprocessors in man pages
If a preprocessor like \texttt{gtbl} or \texttt{geqn} is needed, it has become common usage to make the first line of the man page look like this:

'" word
Note the single space character after the double quote. \texttt{word} consists of letters for the needed preprocessors: ‘e’ for \texttt{geqn}, ‘r’ for \texttt{grefer}, ‘t’ for \texttt{gtbl}. Modern implementations of the \texttt{man} program read this first line and automatically call the right preprocessor(s).

4.1.7 Optional man extensions
Use the file \texttt{man.local} for local extensions to the \texttt{man} macros or for style changes.

Custom headers and footers
In groff versions 1.18.2 and later, you can specify custom headers and footers by redefining the following macros in \texttt{man.local}.

\*[Macro] .PT
Control the content of the headers. Normally, the header prints the command name and section number on either side, and the optional fifth argument to \texttt{TH} in the center.

\*[Macro] .BT
Control the content of the footers. Normally, the footer prints the page number and the third and fourth arguments to \texttt{TH}.
Use the \texttt{FT} number register to specify the footer position. The default is \(-0.5i\).

Ultrace-specific man macros
The \texttt{groff} source distribution includes a file named \texttt{man.ultrix}, containing macros compatible with the Ultrix variant of \texttt{man}. Copy this file into \texttt{man.local} (or use the \texttt{mso} request to load it) to enable the following macros.

\*[Macro] .CT \texttt{key}
Print ‘\texttt{<CTRL/key>}’.

\*[Macro] .CW
Print subsequent text using the constant width (Courier) typeface.
.Ds  Begin a non-filled display.

.De  End a non-filled display started with .Ds.

.EX [indent]  Begin a non-filled display using the constant width (Courier) typeface. Use the optional indent argument to indent the display.

.EE  End a non-filled display started with .EX.

.G [text]  Set text in Helvetica. If no text is present on the line where the macro is called, then the text of the next line appears in Helvetica.

.GL [text]  Set text in Helvetica Oblique. If no text is present on the line where the macro is called, then the text of the next line appears in Helvetica Oblique.

.HB [text]  Set text in Helvetica Bold. If no text is present on the line where the macro is called, then all text up to the next HB appears in Helvetica Bold.

.TB [text]  Identical to HB.

.MS title sect [punct]  Set a manpage reference in Ultrix format. The title is in Courier instead of italic. Optional punctuation follows the section number without an intervening space.

.NT [C] [title]  Begin a note. Print the optional title, or the word “Note”, centered on the page. Text following the macro makes up the body of the note, and is indented on both sides. If the first argument is C, the body of the note is printed centered (the second argument replaces the word “Note” if specified).

.NE  End a note begun with NT.

.PN path [punct]  Set the path name in constant width (Courier), followed by optional punctuation.

.Pn [punct] path [punct]  If called with two arguments, identical to PN. If called with three arguments, set the second argument in constant width (Courier), bracketed by the first and third arguments in the current font.
Switch to roman font and turn off any underlining in effect.

Print the string ‘<RETURN>’.

Start printing a change bar in the margin if the number 4 is specified. Otherwise, this macro does nothing.

End printing the change bar begun by VS.

Simple example
The following example man.local file alters the SH macro to add some extra vertical space before printing the heading. Headings are printed in Helvetica Bold.

```
.\\" Make the heading fonts Helvetica
.ds HF HB
.
.\\" Put more whitespace in front of headings.
.rn SH SH-orig
.de SH
  .if t .sp (u;\n[PD]*2)
  . SH-orig \$*
..```

4.2 mdoc
See the groff_mdoc(7) man page (type man groff_mdoc at the command line).

4.3 ms
The -ms macros are suitable for reports, letters, books, user manuals, and so forth. The package provides macros for cover pages, section headings, paragraphs, lists, footnotes, pagination, and a table of contents.

4.3.1 Introduction to ms
The original -ms macros were included with AT&T troff as well as the man macros. While the man package is intended for brief documents that can be read on-line as well as printed, the ms macros are suitable for longer documents that are meant to be printed rather than read on-line.

The ms macro package included with groff is a complete, bottom-up re-implementation. Several macros (specific to AT&T or Berkeley) are not included, while several new commands are. See Section 4.3.7 [Differences from AT&T ms], page 54, for more information.
4.3.2 General structure of an ms document

The ms macro package expects a certain amount of structure, but not as much as packages such as man or mdoc.

The simplest documents can begin with a paragraph macro (such as LP or PP), and consist of text separated by paragraph macros or even blank lines. Longer documents have a structure as follows:

Document type

If you invoke the RP (report) macro on the first line of the document, groff prints the cover page information on its own page; otherwise it prints the information on the first page with your document text immediately following. Other document formats found in AT&T troff are specific to AT&T or Berkeley, and are not supported in groff.

Format and layout

By setting number registers, you can change your document’s type (font and size), margins, spacing, headers and footers, and footnotes. See Section 4.3.3 [ms Document Control Registers], page 33, for more details.

Cover page

A cover page consists of a title, the author’s name and institution, an abstract, and the date.² See Section 4.3.4 [ms Cover Page Macros], page 36, for more details.

Body

Following the cover page is your document. You can use the ms macros to write reports, letters, books, and so forth. The package is designed for structured documents, consisting of paragraphs interspersed with headings and augmented by lists, footnotes, tables, and other common constructs. See Section 4.3.5 [ms Body Text], page 38, for more details.

Table of contents

Longer documents usually include a table of contents, which you can invoke by placing the TC macro at the end of your document. The ms macros have minimal indexing facilities, consisting of the IX macro, which prints an entry on standard error. Printing the table of contents at the end is necessary since groff is a single-pass text formatter, thus it cannot determine the page number of each section until that section has actually been set and printed. Since ms output is intended for hardcopy, you can manually relocate the pages containing the table of contents between the cover page and the body text after printing.

² Actually, only the title is required.
4.3.3 Document control registers

The following is a list of document control number registers. For the sake of consistency, set registers related to margins at the beginning of your document, or just after the RP macro. You can set other registers later in your document, but you should keep them together at the beginning to make them easy to find and edit as necessary.

**Margin Settings**

- **\[n[PO]\]**
  - Defines the page offset (i.e., the left margin). There is no explicit right margin setting; the combination of the PO and LL registers implicitly define the right margin width.
  - Effective: next page.
  - Default value: 1i.

- **\[n[LL]\]**
  - Defines the line length (i.e., the width of the body text).
  - Effective: next paragraph.
  - Default: 6i.

- **\[n[LT]\]**
  - Defines the title length (i.e., the header and footer width). This is usually the same as LL, but not necessarily.
  - Effective: next paragraph.
  - Default: 6i.

- **\[n[HM]\]**
  - Defines the header margin height at the top of the page.
  - Effective: next page.
  - Default: 1i.

- **\[n[FM]\]**
  - Defines the footer margin height at the bottom of the page.
  - Effective: next page.
  - Default: 1i.

**Text Settings**

- **\[n[PS]\]**
  - Defines the point size of the body text. If the value is larger than or equal to 1000, divide it by 1000 to get a fractional point size. For example, ‘.nr PS 10250’ sets the document’s point size to 10.25 p.
  - Effective: next paragraph.
  - Default: 10 p.
\n[VS] [Register]
Defines the space between lines (line height plus leading). If the value is larger than or equal to 1000, divide it by 1000 to get a fractional point size. Due to backwards compatibility, VS must be smaller than 40000 (this is 40.0 p).
Effective: next paragraph.
Default: 12 p.

\n[PSINCR] [Register]
Defines an increment in point size, which is applied to section headings at nesting levels below the value specified in GROWPS. The value of PSINCR should be specified in points, with the p scaling factor, and may include a fractional component; for example, ‘.nr PSINCR 1.5p’ sets a point size increment of 1.5 p.
Effective: next section heading.
Default: 1 p.

\n[GROWPS] [Register]
Defines the heading level below which the point size increment set by PSINCR becomes effective. Section headings at and above the level specified by GROWPS are printed at the point size set by PS; for each level below the value of GROWPS, the point size is increased in steps equal to the value of PSINCR. Setting GROWPS to any value less than 2 disables the incremental heading size feature.
Effective: next section heading.
Default: 0.

\n[HY] [Register]
Defines the hyphenation level. HY sets safely the value of the low-level hy register. Setting the value of HY to 0 is equivalent to using the nh request.
Effective: next paragraph.
Default: 14.

\n[FAM] [Register]
Defines the font family used to typeset the document.
Effective: next paragraph.
Default: as defined in the output device.

Paragraph Settings

\n[PI] [Register]
Defines the initial indentation of a (PP macro) paragraph.
Effective: next paragraph.
Default: 5 n.
\n[PD]
[Register]
Defines the space between paragraphs.
Effective: next paragraph.
Default: 0.3 v.

\n[QI]
[Register]
Defines the indentation on both sides of a quoted (QP macro) paragraph.
Effective: next paragraph.
Default: 5 n.

\n[PORPHANS]
[Register]
Defines the minimum number of initial lines of any paragraph which should be kept together, to avoid orphan lines at the bottom of a page. If a new paragraph is started close to the bottom of a page, and there is insufficient space to accommodate \n[PORPHANS] lines before an automatic page break, then the page break is forced, before the start of the paragraph.
Effective: next paragraph.
Default: 1.

\n[HORPHANS]
[Register]
Defines the minimum number of lines of the following paragraph which should be kept together with any section heading introduced by the NH or SH macros. If a section heading is placed close to the bottom of a page, and there is insufficient space to accommodate both the heading and at least \n[HORPHANS] lines of the following paragraph, before an automatic page break, then the page break is forced before the heading.
Effective: next paragraph.
Default: 1.

**Footnote Settings**

\n[FL]
[Register]
Defines the length of a footnote.
Effective: next footnote.

\n[FI]
[Register]
Defines the footnote indentation.
Effective: next footnote.
Default: 2 n.

\n[FF]
[Register]
The footnote format:

0  Print the footnote number as a superscript; indent the footnote (default).
1. Print the number followed by a period (like 1.) and indent the footnote.
2. Like 1, without an indentation.
3. Like 1, but print the footnote number as a hanging paragraph.

Effective: next footnote.
Default: 0.

\n[FPS]
Defines the footnote point size. If the value is larger than or equal to 1000, divide it by 1000 to get a fractional point size.
Effective: next footnote.
Default: \n[PS] − 2.

\n[FVS]
Defines the footnote vertical spacing. If the value is larger than or equal to 1000, divide it by 1000 to get a fractional point size.
Effective: next footnote.
Default: \n[FPS] + 2.

\n[FPD]
Defines the footnote paragraph spacing.
Effective: next footnote.
Default: \n[PD]/2.

Miscellaneous Number Registers

\n[MINGW]
Defines the minimum width between columns in a multi-column document.
Effective: next page.
Default: 2n.

\n[DD]
Sets the vertical spacing before and after a display, a tbl table, an eqn equation, or a pic image.
Effective: next paragraph.
Default: 0.5 v.

4.3.4 Cover page macros
Use the following macros to create a cover page for your document in the order shown.
.RP [no] [Macro]
Specifies the report format for your document. The report format creates a separate cover page. The default action (no RP macro) is to print a subset of the cover page on page 1 of your document.
If you use the word no as an optional argument, groff prints a title page but does not repeat any of the title page information (title, author, abstract, etc.) on page 1 of the document.

.P1 [Macro]
(P-one) Prints the header on page 1. The default is to suppress the header.

.DA [...] [Macro]
(optional) Prints the current date, or the arguments to the macro if any, on the title page (if specified) and in the footers. This is the default for nroff.

.ND [...] [Macro]
(optional) Prints the current date, or the arguments to the macro if any, on the title page (if specified) but not in the footers. This is the default for troff.

.TL [Macro]
Specifies the document title. groff collects text following the TL macro into the title, until reaching the author name or abstract.

.AU [Macro]
Specifies the author’s name, which appears on the line (or lines) immediately following. You can specify multiple authors as follows:

.AU
John Doe
.AI
University of West Bumblefuzz
.AU
Martha Buck
.AI
Monolithic Corporation

.AI [Macro]
Specifies the author’s institution. You can specify multiple institutions in the same way that you specify multiple authors.

.AB [no] [Macro]
Begins the abstract. The default is to print the word ABSTRACT, centered and in italics, above the text of the abstract. The word no as an optional argument suppresses this heading.
.AE

Ends the abstract.

The following is example mark-up for a title page.

```plaintext
.RP
.TL
The Inevitability of Code Bloat
in Commercial and Free Software
.AU
J. Random Luser
.AI
University of West Bumblefuzz
.AB
This report examines the long-term growth
of the code bases in two large, popular software
packages; the free Emacs and the commercial
Microsoft Word.
While differences appear in the type or order
of features added, due to the different
methodologies used, the results are the same
in the end.
.PP
The free software approach is shown to be
superior in that while free software can
become as bloated as commercial offerings,
free software tends to have fewer serious
bugs and the added features are in line with
user demand.
.AE

... the rest of the paper follows ...
```

4.3.5 Body text

This section describes macros used to mark up the body of your document. Examples include paragraphs, sections, and other groups.

4.3.5.1 Paragraphs

The following paragraph types are available.

- `.PP` [Macro]
- `.LP` [Macro]

Sets a paragraph with an initial indentation.
.QP       [Macro]
Sets a paragraph that is indented at both left and right margins. The effect is identical to the HTML <BLOCKQUOTE> element. The next paragraph or heading returns margins to normal.

.Xr       [Macro]
Sets a paragraph whose lines are indented, except for the first line. This is a Berkeley extension.

The following markup uses all four paragraph macros.

.NH 2
Cases used in the study
.OA
The following software and versions were considered for this report.
.OA
For commercial software, we chose
.OA "Microsoft Word for Windows",
starting with version 1.0 through the current version (Word 2000).
.OA
For free software, we chose
.OA "Emacs",
from its first appearance as a standalone editor through the current version (v20).
See [Bloggs 2002] for details.
.QP
Franklin's Law applied to software:
software expands to outgrow both RAM and disk space over time.
.OA
Bibliography:
.XR
Bloggs, Joseph R.,
.I "Everyone's a Critic",
A definitive work that answers all questions and criticisms about the quality and usability of free software.

The PORPHANS register (see Section 4.3.3 [ms Document Control Registers], page 33) operates in conjunction with each of these macros, to inhibit the printing of orphan lines at the bottom of any page.
4.3.5.2 Headings

Use headings to create a hierarchical structure for your document. The \texttt{ms} macros print headings in \textbf{bold}, using the same font family and point size as the body text.

The following describes the heading macros:

\texttt{.NH curr-level} \hspace{1cm} \texttt{[Macro]}
\texttt{.NH S level0 . . .} \hspace{1cm} \texttt{[Macro]}

Numbered heading. The argument is either a numeric argument to indicate the level of the heading, or the letter \texttt{S} followed by numeric arguments to set the heading level explicitly.

If you specify heading levels out of sequence, such as invoking ‘\texttt{.NH 3}’ after ‘\texttt{.NH 1}’, \texttt{groff} prints a warning on standard error.

\texttt{\%[SN]} \hspace{1cm} \texttt{[String]}
\texttt{\%[SN-DOT]} \hspace{1cm} \texttt{[String]}
\texttt{\%[SN-NO-DOT]} \hspace{1cm} \texttt{[String]}

After invocation of \texttt{NH}, the assigned section number is made available in the strings \texttt{SN-DOT} (as it appears in a printed section heading with default formatting, followed by a terminating period), and \texttt{SN-NO-DOT} (with the terminating period omitted). The string \texttt{SN} is also defined, as an alias for \texttt{SN-DOT}; if preferred, you may redefine it as an alias for \texttt{SN-NO-DOT}, by including the initialization \texttt{.als SN SN-NO-DOT}

at any time \texttt{before} you would like the change to take effect.

\texttt{\%[SN-STYLE]} \hspace{1cm} \texttt{[String]}

You may control the style used to print section numbers, within numbered section headings, by defining an appropriate alias for the string \texttt{SN-STYLE}. The default style, in which the printed section number is followed by a terminating period, is obtained by defining the alias \texttt{.als SN-STYLE SN-DOT}

If you prefer to omit the terminating period, from section numbers appearing in numbered section headings, you may define the alias \texttt{.als SN-STYLE SN-NO-DOT}

Any such change in section numbering style becomes effective from the next use of \texttt{.NH}, following redefinition of the alias for \texttt{SN-STYLE}.

\texttt{.SH [match-level]} \hspace{1cm} \texttt{[Macro]}

Unnumbered subheading.

The optional \texttt{match-level} argument is a GNU extension. It is a number indicating the level of the heading, in a manner analogous to the \texttt{curr-level} argument to \texttt{.NH}. Its purpose is to match the point size, at which the heading is printed, to the size of a numbered heading at the same level, when the \texttt{GROWPS} and \texttt{PSINCR} heading size adjustment mechanism is in effect. See Section 4.3.3 [\texttt{ms Document Control Registers}], page 33.
The HORPHANS register (see Section 4.3.3 [ms Document Control Registers], page 33) operates in conjunction with the NH and SH macros, to inhibit the printing of orphaned section headings at the bottom of any page.

4.3.5.3 Highlighting

The ms macros provide a variety of methods to highlight or emphasize text:

- **.B [txt [post [pre]]]** [Macro]
  Sets its first argument in **bold type**. If you specify a second argument, groff prints it in the previous font after the bold text, with no intervening space (this allows you to set punctuation after the highlighted text without highlighting the punctuation). Similarly, it prints the third argument (if any) in the previous font before the first argument. For example,
  
  ```
  .B foo ) (
  ```
  prints (foo).
  If you give this macro no arguments, groff prints all text following in bold until the next highlighting, paragraph, or heading macro.

- **.R [txt [post [pre]]]** [Macro]
  Sets its first argument in roman (or regular) type. It operates similarly to the B macro otherwise.

- **.I [txt [post [pre]]]** [Macro]
  Sets its first argument in *italic type*. It operates similarly to the B macro otherwise.

- **.CW [txt [post [pre]]]** [Macro]
  Sets its first argument in a **constant width face**. It operates similarly to the B macro otherwise.

- **.BI [txt [post [pre]]]** [Macro]
  Sets its first argument in bold italic type. It operates similarly to the B macro otherwise.

- **.BX [txt]** [Macro]
  Prints its argument and draws a box around it. If you want to box a string that contains spaces, use a digit-width space (\0).

- **.UL [txt [post]]** [Macro]
  Prints its first argument with an underline. If you specify a second argument, groff prints it in the previous font after the underlined text, with no intervening space.

- **.LG** [Macro]
  Prints all text following in larger type (two points larger than the current point size) until the next font size, highlighting, paragraph, or heading macro. You can specify this macro multiple times to enlarge the point size as needed.
.SM          [Macro]
  Prints all text following in smaller type (two points smaller than the
  current point size) until the next type size, highlighting, paragraph, or
  heading macro. You can specify this macro multiple times to reduce the
  point size as needed.

.NL          [Macro]
  Prints all text following in the normal point size (that is, the value of the
  PS register).

\*[{}]        [String]
\*[]          [String]
  Text enclosed with \*{ and \*} is printed as a superscript.

4.3.5.4 Lists
The IP macro handles duties for all lists.

.IP [marker [width]]          [Macro]
  The marker is usually a bullet glyph (\[bu\]) for unordered lists, a number
  (or auto-incrementing number register) for numbered lists, or a word or
  phrase for indented (glossary-style) lists.
  The width specifies the indentation for the body of each list item; its
  default unit is ‘n’. Once specified, the indentation remains the same for
  all list items in the document until specified again.
  The PORPHANS register (see Section 4.3.3 [ms Document Control Regis-
  ters], page 33) operates in conjunction with the IP macro, to inhibit the
  printing of orphaned list markers at the bottom of any page.

The following is an example of a bulleted list.

  A bulleted list:
  .IP \[bu\] 2
  lawyers
  .IP \[bu\]
  guns
  .IP \[bu\]
  money

Produces:

  A bulleted list:

  o lawyers

  o guns

  o money

The following is an example of a numbered list.
A numbered list:
1. lawyers
2. guns
3. money

Note the use of the auto-incrementing number register in this example.

The following is an example of a glossary-style list.

A glossary-style list:
- lawyers
  - Two or more attorneys.
- guns
  - Firearms, preferably large-caliber.
- money
  - Gotta pay for those lawyers and guns!

In the last example, the IP macro places the definition on the same line as the term if it has enough space; otherwise, it breaks to the next line and starts the definition below the term. This may or may not be the effect you want, especially if some of the definitions break and some do not. The following examples show two possible ways to force a break.

The first workaround uses the br request to force a break after printing the term or label.
A glossary-style list:
.IP lawyers 0.4i
Two or more attorneys.
.IP guns
.br
Firearms, preferably large-caliber.
.IP money
Gotta pay for those lawyers and guns!

The second workaround uses the \p escape to force the break. Note the space following the escape; this is important. If you omit the space, groff prints the first word on the same line as the term or label (if it fits) then breaks the line.

A glossary-style list:
.IP lawyers 0.4i
Two or more attorneys.
.IP guns
\p Firearms, preferably large-caliber.
.IP money
Gotta pay for those lawyers and guns!

To set nested lists, use the RS and RE macros. See Section 4.3.5.5 [Indentation values in ms], page 45, for more information.

For example:

.IP \[bu] 2
Lawyers:
.RS
.IP \[bu]
Dewey,
.IP \[bu]
Cheatham,
.IP \[bu]
and Howe.
.RE
.IP \[bu]
Guns

Produces:


4.3.5.5 Indentation values

In many situations, you may need to indentation a section of text while still wrapping and filling. See Section 4.3.5.4 [Lists in ms], page 42, for an example of nested lists.

```
. RS  [Macro]
. RE  [Macro]
```

These macros begin and end an indented section. The PI register controls the amount of indentation, allowing the indented text to line up under hanging and indented paragraphs.

See Section 4.3.5.7 [ms Displays and Keeps], page 45, for macros to indentation and turn off filling.

4.3.5.6 Tab Stops

Use the ta request to define tab stops as needed. See Section 5.10 [Tabs and Fields], page 91.

```
. TA  [Macro]
```

Use this macro to reset the tab stops to the default for ms (every 5n). You can redefine the TA macro to create a different set of default tab stops.

4.3.5.7 Displays and keeps

Use displays to show text-based examples or figures (such as code listings).

Displays turn off filling, so lines of code are displayed as-is without inserting br requests in between each line. Displays can be kept on a single page, or allowed to break across pages.

```
. DS L  [Macro]
. LD  [Macro]
. DE  [Macro]
```

Left-justified display. The ‘. DS L’ call generates a page break, if necessary, to keep the entire display on one page. The LD macro allows the display to break across pages. The DE macro ends the display.
.DE  
[Macro]
Indents the display as defined by the DI register. The ‘.DS I’ call generates a page break, if necessary, to keep the entire display on one page. The ID macro allows the display to break across pages. The DE macro ends the display.

.DS B  
[Macro]
.BD  
[Macro]
.DE  
[Macro]
Sets a block-centered display: the entire display is left-justified, but indented so that the longest line in the display is centered on the page. The ‘.DS B’ call generates a page break, if necessary, to keep the entire display on one page. The BD macro allows the display to break across pages. The DE macro ends the display.

.DS C  
[Macro]
.CD  
[Macro]
.DE  
[Macro]
Sets a centered display: each line in the display is centered. The ‘.DS C’ call generates a page break, if necessary, to keep the entire display on one page. The CD macro allows the display to break across pages. The DE macro ends the display.

.DS R  
[Macro]
.RD  
[Macro]
.DE  
[Macro]
Right-justifies each line in the display. The ‘.DS R’ call generates a page break, if necessary, to keep the entire display on one page. The RD macro allows the display to break across pages. The DE macro ends the display.

.Ds  
[Macro]
.De  
[Macro]
These two macros were formerly provided as aliases for DS and DE, respectively. They have been removed, and should no longer be used. The original implementations of DS and DE are retained, and should be used instead. X11 documents which actually use Ds and De always load a specific macro file from the X11 distribution (macros.t) which provides proper definitions for the two macros.

On occasion, you may want to keep other text together on a page. For example, you may want to keep two paragraphs together, or a paragraph that refers to a table (or list, or other item) immediately following. The ms macros provide the KS and KE macros for this purpose.

.KS  
[Macro]
.KE  
[Macro]
The KS macro begins a block of text to be kept on a single page, and the KE macro ends the block.
Chapter 4: Macro Packages

\[ .KF \] [Macro]
\[ .KE \] [Macro]

Specifies a floating keep; if the keep cannot fit on the current page, \texttt{groff} holds the contents of the keep and allows text following the keep (in the source file) to fill in the remainder of the current page. When the page breaks, whether by an explicit \texttt{bp} request or by reaching the end of the page, \texttt{groff} prints the floating keep at the top of the new page. This is useful for printing large graphics or tables that do not need to appear exactly where specified.

You can also use the \texttt{ne} request to force a page break if there is not enough vertical space remaining on the page.

Use the following macros to draw a box around a section of text (such as a display).

\[ .B1 \] [Macro]
\[ .B2 \] [Macro]

Marks the beginning and ending of text that is to have a box drawn around it. The \texttt{B1} macro begins the box; the \texttt{B2} macro ends it. Text in the box is automatically placed in a diversion (keep).

### 4.3.5.8 Tables, figures, equations, and references

The \texttt{ms} macros support the standard \texttt{groff} preprocessors: \texttt{tbl}, \texttt{pic}, \texttt{eqn}, and \texttt{refer}. You mark text meant for preprocessors by enclosing it in pairs of tags as follows.

\[ .TS \ [H] \] [Macro]
\[ .TE \] [Macro]

Denotes a table, to be processed by the \texttt{tbl} preprocessor. The optional argument \texttt{H} to \texttt{TS} instructs \texttt{groff} to create a running header with the information up to the \texttt{TH} macro. \texttt{groff} prints the header at the beginning of the table; if the table runs onto another page, \texttt{groff} prints the header on the next page as well.

\[ .PS \] [Macro]
\[ .PE \] [Macro]

Denotes a graphic, to be processed by the \texttt{pic} preprocessor. You can create a \texttt{pic} file by hand, using the AT&T \texttt{pic} manual available on the Web as a reference, or by using a graphics program such as \texttt{xfig}.

\[ .EQ \ [align] \] [Macro]
\[ .EN \] [Macro]

Denotes an equation, to be processed by the \texttt{eqn} preprocessor. The optional \texttt{align} argument can be \texttt{C}, \texttt{L}, or \texttt{I} to center (the default), left-justify, or indent the equation.
4.3.5.9 An example multi-page table

The following is an example of how to set up a table that may print across two or more pages.

```
.TS H
allbox expand;
cb | cb .
Text ...of heading...
-
.TH
.T&
l | l .
... the rest of the table follows...
.CW
.TE
```

4.3.5.10 Footnotes

The `ms` macro package has a flexible footnote system. You can specify either numbered footnotes or symbolic footnotes (that is, using a marker such as a dagger symbol).

\*[\*]

Specifies the location of a numbered footnote marker in the text.

.FS

.FE

Specifies the text of the footnote. The default action is to create a numbered footnote; you can create a symbolic footnote by specifying a mark glyph (such as `[dg]` for the dagger glyph) in the body text and as an argument to the `FS` macro, followed by the text of the footnote and the `FE` macro.

You can control how `groff` prints footnote numbers by changing the value of the `FF` register. See Section 4.3.3 [ms Document Control Registers], page 33.

Footnotes can be safely used within keeps and displays, but you should avoid using numbered footnotes within floating keeps. You can set a second `\*\*` marker between a `\*\*` and its corresponding `FS` entry; as long as each `FS` macro occurs after the corresponding `\*\*` and the occurrences of `FS` are in the same order as the corresponding occurrences of `\*\*`. 
4.3.6 Page layout

The default output from the \ms macros provides a minimalist page layout: it prints a single column, with the page number centered at the top of each page. It prints no footers.

You can change the layout by setting the proper number registers and strings.

4.3.6.1 Headers and footers

For documents that do not distinguish between odd and even pages, set the following strings:

\*[LH] \*[CH] \*[RH]  
Sets the left, center, and right headers.

\*[LF] \*[CF] \*[RF]  
Sets the left, center, and right footers.

For documents that need different information printed in the even and odd pages, use the following macros:

.\OH 'left\’center\’right' \[Macro\]  
.\EH 'left\’center\’right' \[Macro\]  
.\OF 'left\’center\’right' \[Macro\]  
.\EF 'left\’center\’right' \[Macro\]  
The \OH and \EH macros define headers for the odd and even pages; the \OF and \EF macros define footers for the odd and even pages. This is more flexible than defining the individual strings.

You can replace the quote ('') marks with any character not appearing in the header or footer text.

To specify custom header and footer processing, redefine the following macros:

.\PT \[Macro\] \[Macro\] \[Macro\] \[Macro\]  
The PT macro defines a custom header; the BT macro defines a custom footer. These macros must handle odd/even/first page differences if necessary.

The HD macro defines additional header processing to take place after executing the PT macro.
4.3.6.2 Margins

You control margins using a set of number registers. See Section 4.3.3 [ms Document Control Registers], page 33, for details.

4.3.6.3 Multiple columns

The ms macros can set text in as many columns as do reasonably fit on the page. The following macros are available; all of them force a page break if a multi-column mode is already set. However, if the current mode is single-column, starting a multi-column mode does not force a page break.

\[.1C\]    
Single-column mode.

\[.2C\]    
Two-column mode.

\[.MC \{width\} \{gutter\}\]    
Multi-column mode. If you specify no arguments, it is equivalent to the 2C macro. Otherwise, width is the width of each column and gutter is the space between columns. The MINGW number register controls the default gutter width.

4.3.6.4 Creating a table of contents

The facilities in the ms macro package for creating a table of contents are semi-automated at best. Assuming that you want the table of contents to consist of the document’s headings, you need to repeat those headings wrapped in XS and XE macros.

\[.XS \{page\}\]    
\[.XA \{page\}\]    
\[.XE\]    
These macros define a table of contents or an individual entry in the table of contents, depending on their use. The macros are very simple; they cannot indent a heading based on its level. The easiest way to work around this is to add tabs to the table of contents string. The following is an example:
You can manually create a table of contents by beginning with the \texttt{XS} macro for the first entry, specifying the page number for that entry as the argument to \texttt{XS}. Add subsequent entries using the \texttt{XA} macro, specifying the page number for that entry as the argument to \texttt{XA}. The following is an example:

\begin{verbatim}
.XS 1
Introduction
.XA 2
A Brief History of the Universe
.XA 729
Details of Galactic Formation
...
.XE
\end{verbatim}

\texttt{TC} \texttt{[no]} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{[Macro]}

Prints the table of contents on a new page, setting the page number to \textit{i} (Roman lowercase numeral one). You should usually place this macro at the end of the file, since \texttt{groff} is a single-pass formatter and can only print what has been collected up to the point that the \texttt{TC} macro appears. The optional argument \texttt{no} suppresses printing the title specified by the string register \texttt{TOC}.

\texttt{PX} \texttt{[no]} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{[Macro]}

Prints the table of contents on a new page, using the current page numbering sequence. Use this macro to print a manually-generated table of contents at the beginning of your document.
The optional argument no suppresses printing the title specified by the string register TOC.

The Groff and Friends HOWTO includes a sed script that automatically inserts XS andXE macro entries after each heading in a document. Altering the NH macro to automatically build the table of contents is perhaps initially more difficult, but would save a great deal of time in the long run if you use ms regularly.

4.3.6.5 Strings and Special Characters

The ms macros provide the following predefined strings. You can change the string definitions to help in creating documents in languages other than English.

\*[REFERENCES] [String]
Contains the string printed at the beginning of the references (bibliography) page. The default is ‘References’.

\*[ABSTRACT] [String]
Contains the string printed at the beginning of the abstract. The default is ‘ABSTRACT’.

\*[TOC] [String]
Contains the string printed at the beginning of the table of contents.

\*[MONTH1] [String]
\*[MONTH2] [String]
\*[MONTH3] [String]
\*[MONTH4] [String]
\*[MONTH5] [String]
\*[MONTH6] [String]
\*[MONTH7] [String]
\*[MONTH8] [String]
\*[MONTH9] [String]
\*[MONTH10] [String]
\*[MONTH11] [String]
\*[MONTH12] [String]
Prints the full name of the month in dates. The default is ‘January’, ‘February’, etc.

The following special characters are available:

\*[\-] [String]
Prints an em dash.

---

3 For an explanation what special characters are see Section 7.1 [Special Characters], page 189.
\*[Q]                  [String]
\*[U]                  [String]
Prints typographer’s quotes in troff, and plain quotes in nroff. \*[Q] is the left quote and \*[U] is the right quote.

Improved accent marks are available in the \texttt{ms} macros.

\texttt{.AM}                  [Macro]
Specify this macro at the beginning of your document to enable extended accent marks and special characters. This is a Berkeley extension.
To use the accent marks, place them \texttt{after} the character being accented.
Note that groff’s native support for accents is superior to the following definitions.

The following accent marks are available after invoking the \texttt{AM} macro:

\*[’]                   [String]
Acute accent.
\*[‘]                   [String]
Grave accent.
\*[^]                   [String]
Circumflex.
\*[,]                   [String]
Cedilla.
\*[^]                   [String]
Tilde.
\*[:]                   [String]
Umlaut.
\*[v]                   [String]
Hacek.
\*[_]                   [String]
Macron (overbar).
\*[.]                   [String]
Underdot.
\*[o]                   [String]
Ring above.

The following are standalone characters available after invoking the \texttt{AM} macro:

\*[?]                   [String]
Upside-down question mark.
4.3.7 Differences from AT&T ms

This section lists the (minor) differences between the groff -ms macros and AT&T troff -ms macros.

- The internals of groff -ms differ from the internals of AT&T troff -ms. Documents that depend upon implementation details of AT&T troff -ms may not format properly with groff -ms.
- The general error-handling policy of groff -ms is to detect and report errors, rather than silently to ignore them.
- groff -ms does not work in compatibility mode (this is, with the -C option).
- There is no special support for typewriter-like devices.
- groff -ms does not provide cut marks.
- Multiple line spacing is not supported. Use a larger vertical spacing instead.
- Some UNIX ms documentation says that the CW and GW number registers can be used to control the column width and gutter width, respectively. These number registers are not used in groff -ms.
• Macros that cause a reset (paragraphs, headings, etc.) may change the indentation. Macros that change the indentation do not increment or decrement the indentation, but rather set it absolutely. This can cause problems for documents that define additional macros of their own. The solution is to use not the `in` request but instead the `RS` and `RE` macros.

• To make `groff -ms` use the default page offset (which also specifies the left margin), the `PO` register must stay undefined until the first `-ms` macro is evaluated. This implies that `PO` should not be used early in the document, unless it is changed also: Remember that accessing an undefined register automatically defines it.

\n[GS]
This number register is set to 1 by the `groff -ms` macros, but it is not used by the AT&T `troff -ms` macros. Documents that need to determine whether they are being formatted with AT&T `troff -ms` or `groff -ms` should use this number register.

Emulations of a few ancient Bell Labs macros can be re-enabled by calling the otherwise undocumented `SC` section-header macro. Calling `SC` enables `UC` for marking up a product or application name, and the pair `P1/P2` for surrounding code example displays.

These are not enabled by default because (a) they were not documented, in the original `ms` manual, and (b) the `P1` and `UC` macros collide with different macros with the same names in the Berkeley version of `ms`.

These `groff` emulations are sufficient to give back the 1976 Kernighan & Cherry paper *Typsetting Mathematics – User’s Guide* its section headings, and restore some text that had gone missing as arguments of undefined macros. No warranty express or implied is given as to how well the typographic details these produce match the original Bell Labs macros.

### 4.3.7.1 troff macros not appearing in groff

Macros missing from `groff -ms` are cover page macros specific to Bell Labs and Berkeley. The macros known to be missing are:

- `.TM` Technical memorandum; a cover sheet style
- `.IM` Internal memorandum; a cover sheet style
- `.MR` Memo for record; a cover sheet style
- `.MF` Memo for file; a cover sheet style
- `.EG` Engineer’s notes; a cover sheet style
- `.TR` Computing Science Tech Report; a cover sheet style
- `.OK` Other keywords
- `.CS` Cover sheet information
- `.MH` A cover sheet macro
4.3.7.2 groff macros not appearing in AT&T troff

The groff -ms macros have a few minor extensions compared to the AT&T troff -ms macros.

\textbf{.AM} [Macro]
Improved accent marks. See Section 4.3.6.5 [ms Strings and Special Characters], page 52, for details.

\textbf{.DS I} [Macro]
Indented display. The default behavior of AT&T troff -ms was to indent; the groff default prints displays flush left with the body text.

\textbf{.CW} [Macro]
Print text in constant width (Courier) font.

\textbf{.IX} [Macro]
Indexing term (printed on standard error). You can write a script to capture and process an index generated in this manner.

The following additional number registers appear in \texttt{groff -ms}:

\texttt{\textbackslash n [MINGW]} [Register]
Specifies a minimum space between columns (for multi-column output); this takes the place of the GW register that was documented but apparently not implemented in AT&T troff.

Several new string registers are available as well. You can change these to handle (for example) the local language. See Section 4.3.6.5 [ms Strings and Special Characters], page 52, for details.

4.3.8 Naming Conventions

The following conventions are used for names of macros, strings and number registers. External names available to documents that use the \texttt{groff -ms} macros contain only uppercase letters and digits.

Internally the macros are divided into modules; naming conventions are as follows:

- Names used only within one module are of the form \texttt{module*name}.
- Names used outside the module in which they are defined are of the form \texttt{module@name}.
- Names associated with a particular environment are of the form \texttt{environment:name}; these are used only within the \texttt{par} module.
- \texttt{name} does not have a module prefix.
- Constructed names used to implement arrays are of the form \texttt{array!index}.

Thus the groff ms macros reserve the following names:

- Names containing the characters *, @, and :.
- Names containing only uppercase letters and digits.
4.4 me
See the meintro.me and meref.me documents in groff’s doc directory.

4.5 mm
See the groff_mm(7) man page (type man groff_mm at the command line).

4.6 mom
See the groff_mom(7) man page (type man groff_mom at the command line), which gives a short overview and a link to its extensive documentation in HTML format.
Chapter 5: gtroff Reference

This chapter covers all of the facilities of gtroff. Users of macro packages may skip it if not interested in details.

5.1 Text

gtroff input files contain text with control commands interspersed throughout. But, even without control codes, gtroff still does several things with the input text:

- filling and adjusting
- adding additional space after sentences
- hyphenating
- inserting implicit line breaks

5.1.1 Filling and Adjusting

When gtroff reads text, it collects words from the input and fits as many of them together on one output line as it can. This is known as filling.

Once gtroff has a filled line, it tries to adjust it. This means it widens the spacing between words until the text reaches the right margin (in the default adjustment mode). Extra spaces between words are preserved, but spaces at the end of lines are ignored. Spaces at the front of a line cause a break (breaks are explained in Section 5.1.5 [Implicit Line Breaks], page 60).

See Section 5.7 [Manipulating Filling and Adjusting], page 79.

5.1.2 Hyphenation

Since the odds are not great for finding a set of words, for every output line, which fit nicely on a line without inserting excessive amounts of space between words, gtroff hyphenates words so that it can justify lines without inserting too much space between words. It uses an internal hyphenation algorithm (a simplified version of the algorithm used within TeX) to indicate which words can be hyphenated and how to do so. When a word is hyphenated, the first part of the word is added to the current filled line being output (with an attached hyphen), and the other portion is added to the next line to be filled.

See Section 5.8 [Manipulating Hyphenation], page 84.

5.1.3 Sentences

Although it is often debated, some typesetting rules say there should be different amounts of space after various punctuation marks. For example, the Chicago typsetting manual says that a period at the end of a sentence should have twice as much space following it as would a comma or a period as part of an abbreviation.
gtroff does this by flagging certain characters (normally ‘!’, ‘?’, and ‘.’) as end-of-sentence characters. When gtroff encounters one of these characters at the end of a line, it appends a normal space followed by a sentence space in the formatted output. (This justifies one of the conventions mentioned in Section 5.1.6 [Input Conventions], page 61."

In addition, the following characters and symbols are treated transparently while handling end-of-sentence characters: ‘”’, ‘’’, ‘)’, ‘]’, ‘*’, \[dg], and \[rq].

See the cflags request in Section 5.17.4 [Using Symbols], page 112, for more details.

To prevent the insertion of extra space after an end-of-sentence character (at the end of a line), append \&.

5.1.4 Tab Stops

gtroff translates tabulator characters, also called tabs (normally code point ASCII 0x09 or EBCDIC 0x05), in the input into movements to the next tabulator stop. These tab stops are initially located every half inch across the page. Using this, simple tables can be made easily. However, it can often be deceptive as the appearance (and width) of the text on a terminal and the results from gtroff can vary greatly.

Also, a possible sticking point is that lines beginning with tab characters are still filled, again producing unexpected results. For example, the following input

```
1 2 3
4 5
```

produces

```
1 2 3
  4 5
```

See Section 5.10 [Tabs and Fields], page 91.

5.1.5 Implicit Line Breaks

An important concept in gtroff is the break. When a break occurs, gtroff outputs the partially filled line (unjustified), and resumes collecting and filling text on the next output line.

There are several ways to cause a break in gtroff. A blank line not only causes a break, but it also outputs a one-line vertical space (effectively a blank line). Note that this behaviour can be modified with the blank line macro request blm. See Section 5.24.4 [Blank Line Traps], page 158.

A line that begins with a space causes a break and the space is output at the beginning of the next line. Note that this space isn’t adjusted, even in fill mode; however, the behaviour can be modified with the leading spaces macro request lsm. See Section 5.24.5 [Leading Spaces Traps], page 158.

The end of file also causes a break – otherwise the last line of the document may vanish!
Certain requests also cause breaks, implicitly or explicitly. This is discussed in Section 5.7 [Manipulating Filling and Adjusting], page 79.

5.1.6 Input Conventions
Since \texttt{gtroff} does filling automatically, it is traditional in \texttt{groff} not to try and type things in as nicely formatted paragraphs. These are some conventions commonly used when typing \texttt{gtroff} text:

- Break lines after punctuation, particularly at the end of a sentence and in other logical places. Keep separate phrases on lines by themselves, as entire phrases are often added or deleted when editing.
- Try to keep lines less than 40-60 characters, to allow space for inserting more text.
- Do not try to do any formatting in a WYSIWYG manner (i.e., don’t try using spaces to get proper indentation).

5.1.7 Input Encodings
Currently, the following input encodings are available.

- \texttt{cp1047} This input encoding works only on EBCDIC platforms (and vice versa, the other input encodings don’t work with EBCDIC); the file \texttt{cp1047.tmac} is by default loaded at start-up.
- \texttt{latin-1} This is the default input encoding on non-EBCDIC platforms; the file \texttt{latin1.tmac} is loaded at start-up.
- \texttt{latin-2} To use this encoding, either say ‘\texttt{.mso latin2.tmac}’ at the very beginning of your document or use ‘\texttt{-mlatin2}’ as a command line argument for \texttt{groff}.
- \texttt{latin-5} For Turkish. Either say ‘\texttt{.mso latin9.tmac}’ at the very beginning of your document or use ‘\texttt{-mlatin9}’ as a command line argument for \texttt{groff}.
- \texttt{latin-9 (latin-0)}
  This encoding is intended (at least in Europe) to replace latin-1 encoding. The main difference to latin-1 is that latin-9 contains the Euro character. To use this encoding, either say ‘\texttt{.mso latin9.tmac}’ at the very beginning of your document or use ‘\texttt{-mlatin9}’ as a command line argument for \texttt{groff}.

Note that it can happen that some input encoding characters are not available for a particular output device. For example, saying

\texttt{groff -Tlatin1 -mlatin9 ...}

fails if you use the Euro character in the input. Usually, this limitation is present only for devices which have a limited set of output glyphs (e.g. \texttt{-Tascii} and \texttt{-Tlatin1}); for other devices it is usually sufficient to install proper fonts which contain the necessary glyphs.
Due to the importance of the Euro glyph in Europe, the groff package now comes with a POSTSCRIPT font called freeeuro.pfa which provides various glyph shapes for the Euro. In other words, latin-9 encoding is supported for the -Tps device out of the box (latin-2 isn’t).

By its very nature, -Tutf8 supports all input encodings; -Tdvi has support for both latin-2 and latin-9 if the command line -mec is used also to load the file ec.tmac (which flips to the EC fonts).

5.2 Measurements

gtroff (like many other programs) requires numeric parameters to specify various measurements. Most numeric parameters\(^1\) may have a measurement unit attached. These units are specified as a single character which immediately follows the number or expression. Each of these units are understood, by gtroff, to be a multiple of its basic unit. So, whenever a different measurement unit is specified gtroff converts this into its basic units. This basic unit, represented by a ‘u’, is a device dependent measurement which is quite small, ranging from 1/75 th to 1/72000 th of an inch. The values may be given as fractional numbers; however, fractional basic units are always rounded to integers.

Some of the measurement units are completely independent of any of the current settings (e.g. type size) of gtroff.

- **i** Inches. An antiquated measurement unit still in use in certain backwards countries with incredibly low-cost computer equipment. One inch is equal to 2.54 cm.
- **c** Centimeters. One centimeter is equal to 0.3937 in.
- **p** Points. This is a typesetter’s measurement used for measure type size. It is 72 points to an inch.
- **P** Pica. Another typesetting measurement. 6 Picas to an inch (and 12 points to a pica).
- **s**

  - **z** See Section 5.18.2 [Fractional Type Sizes], page 129, for a discussion of these units.
- **f** Fractions. Value is 65536. See Section 5.28 [Colors], page 168, for usage.

The other measurements understood by gtroff depend on settings currently in effect in gtroff. These are very useful for specifying measurements which should look proper with any size of text.

- **m** Ems. This unit is equal to the current font size in points. So called because it is approximately the width of the letter ‘m’ in the current font.

\(^1\) those that specify vertical or horizontal motion or a type size
n  Ens. In groff, this is half of an em.

v  Vertical space. This is equivalent to the current line spacing. See Section 5.18 [Sizes], page 126, for more information about this.

M  100ths of an em.

5.2.1 Default Units

Many requests take a default unit. While this can be helpful at times, it can cause strange errors in some expressions. For example, the line length request expects em units. Here are several attempts to get a line length of 3.5 inches and their results:

- \(3.5i\)  \(\Rightarrow\)  \(3.5i\)
- \(7/2\)  \(\Rightarrow\)  \(0i\)
- \(7/2i\)  \(\Rightarrow\)  \(0i\)
- \((7 / 2)u\)  \(\Rightarrow\)  \(0i\)
- \(7i/2\)  \(\Rightarrow\)  \(0.1i\)
- \(7i/2u\)  \(\Rightarrow\)  \(3.5i\)

Everything is converted to basic units first. In the above example it is assumed that 1 i equals 240 u, and 1 m equals 10 p (thus 1 m equals 33 u). The value \(7i/2\) is first handled as \(7i/2m\), then converted to \(1680u/66u\) which is 25 u, and this is approximately 0.1 i. As can be seen, a scaling indicator after a closing parenthesis is simply ignored.

Thus, the safest way to specify measurements is to always attach a scaling indicator. If you want to multiply or divide by a certain scalar value, use ‘u’ as the unit for that value.

5.3 Expressions

gtroff has most arithmetic operators common to other languages:

- Arithmetic: ‘+’ (addition), ‘-’ (subtraction), ‘/’ (division), ‘*’ (multiplication), ‘%’ (modulo).
  
gtroff only provides integer arithmetic. The internal type used for computing results is ‘int’, which is usually a 32 bit signed integer.
- Comparison: ‘<’ (less than), ‘>’ (greater than), ‘<=’ (less than or equal), ‘>=’ (greater than or equal), ‘=’ (equal), ‘==’ (the same as ‘=’).
- Logical: ‘&’ (logical and), ‘|’ (logical or).
- Unary operators: ‘-’ (negating, i.e. changing the sign), ‘+’ (just for completeness; does nothing in expressions), ‘!’ (logical not; this works only within if and while requests).\(^2\) See below for the use of unary operators in motion requests.

\(^2\) Note that, for example, ‘!(−1)’ evaluates to ‘true’ because gtroff treats both negative numbers and zero as ‘false’.
The logical not operator, as described above, works only within \texttt{if} and \texttt{while} requests. Furthermore, it may appear only at the beginning of an expression, and negates the entire expression. Attempting to insert the ‘!’ operator within the expression results in a ‘\texttt{numeric expression expected}’ warning. This maintains compatibility with old versions of \texttt{troff}.

Example:
\begin{verbatim}
\.nr X 1
\.nr Y 0
.\" This does not work as expected
..if (\n[X])&(\!\n[Y]) .nop X only

.\" Use this construct instead
..if (\n[X]=1)&(\n[Y]=0) .nop X only
\end{verbatim}

• Extrema: ‘>?’ (maximum), ‘<?’ (minimum).

Example:
\begin{verbatim}
\.nr x 5
\.nr y 3
\.nr z (\n[x] >? \n[y])
\end{verbatim}

The register \texttt{z} now contains 5.

• Scaling: \texttt{(c;e)}. Evaluate \texttt{e} using \texttt{c} as the default scaling indicator. If \texttt{c} is missing, ignore scaling indicators in the evaluation of \texttt{e}.

Parentheses may be used as in any other language. However, in \texttt{gtroff} they are necessary to ensure order of evaluation. \texttt{gtroff} has no operator precedence; expressions are evaluated left to right. This means that \texttt{gtroff} evaluates ‘3+5*4’ as if it were parenthesized like ‘(3+5)*4’, not as ‘3+(5*4)’, as might be expected.

For many requests which cause a motion on the page, the unary operators ‘+’ and ‘-’ work differently if leading an expression. They then indicate a motion relative to the current position (down or up, respectively).

Similarly, a leading ‘!’ operator indicates an absolute position. For vertical movements, it specifies the distance from the top of the page; for horizontal movements, it gives the distance from the beginning of the \texttt{input} line.

‘+’ and ‘-’ are also treated differently by the following requests and escapes: \texttt{bp}, \texttt{in}, \texttt{ll}, \texttt{lt}, \texttt{nm}, \texttt{nr}, \texttt{pl}, \texttt{pn}, \texttt{po}, \texttt{ps}, \texttt{pvs}, \texttt{rt}, \texttt{ti}, \texttt{\H}, \texttt{\R}, and \texttt{\s}. Here, leading plus and minus signs indicate increments and decrements.

See Section 5.6.1 [Setting Registers], page 72, for some examples.

\texttt{\B anything’} \hfill [Escape]

Return 1 if \texttt{anything} is a valid numeric expression; or 0 if \texttt{anything} is empty or not a valid numeric expression.
Due to the way arguments are parsed, spaces are not allowed in expressions, unless the entire expression is surrounded by parentheses.

See Section 5.5.1.1 [Request and Macro Arguments], page 68, and Section 5.20 [Conditionals and Loops], page 135.

5.4 Identifiers

Like any other language, \texttt{gtroff} has rules for properly formed identifiers. In \texttt{gtroff}, an identifier can be made up of almost any printable character, with the exception of the following characters:

- Whitespace characters (spaces, tabs, and newlines).
- Backspace (ASCII 0x08 or EBCDIC 0x16) and character code 0x01.
- The following input characters are invalid and are ignored if \texttt{groff} runs on a machine based on ASCII, causing a warning message of type ‘input’ (see Section 5.33 [Debugging], page 179, for more details): 0x00, 0x0B, 0x0D-0x1F, 0x80-0x9F.

And here are the invalid input characters if \texttt{groff} runs on an EBCDIC host: 0x00, 0x08, 0x09, 0x0B, 0x0D-0x14, 0x17-0x1F, 0x30-0x3F.

Currently, some of these reserved codepoints are used internally, thus making it non-trivial to extend \texttt{gtroff} to cover Unicode or other character sets and encodings which use characters of these ranges.

Note that invalid characters are removed before parsing; an identifier \texttt{foo}, followed by an invalid character, followed by \texttt{bar} is treated as \texttt{foobar}.

For example, any of the following is valid.

\begin{verbatim}
br
PP
(1
end-list
@
\end{verbatim}

Note that identifiers longer than two characters with a closing bracket (‘\]’ in its name can’t be accessed with escape sequences which expect an identifier as a parameter. For example, ‘\[\texttt{foo}]’ accesses the glyph ‘\texttt{foo}’, followed by ‘\]’, whereas ‘\[C\texttt{foo}]’ really asks for glyph ‘\texttt{foo}’.

To avoid problems with the \texttt{refer} preprocessor, macro names should not start with ‘[’ or ‘\]’. Due to backwards compatibility, everything after ‘.’, ‘[‘ and ‘.]’ is handled as a special argument to \texttt{refer}. For example, ‘.\texttt{[foo]}’ makes \texttt{refer} to start a reference, using ‘\texttt{foo}’ as a parameter.

\texttt{\textbackslash A ident}

[Escape]

Test whether an identifier \texttt{ident} is valid in \texttt{gtroff}. It expands to the character 1 or 0 according to whether its argument (usually delimited by quotes) is or is not acceptable as the name of a string, macro, diversion, number register, environment, or font. It returns 0 if no argument is
given. This is useful for looking up user input in some sort of associative table.

\Aend-list
⇒ 1

See Section 5.5.3 [Escapes], page 70, for details on parameter delimiting characters.

Identifiers in gtroff can be any length, but, in some contexts, gtroff needs to be told where identifiers end and text begins (and in different ways depending on their length):

- Single character.
- Two characters. Must be prefixed with ‘(’ in some situations.
- Arbitrary length (gtroff only). Must be bracketed with ‘[’ and ‘]’ in some situations. Any length identifier can be put in brackets.

Unlike many other programming languages, undefined identifiers are silently ignored or expanded to nothing. When gtroff finds an undefined identifier, it emits a warning, doing the following:

- If the identifier is a string, macro, or diversion, gtroff defines it as empty.
- If the identifier is a number register, gtroff defines it with a value of 0.

See Section 5.33.1 [Warnings], page 182, Section 5.6.2 [Interpolating Registers], page 74, and Section 5.19 [Strings], page 130.

Note that macros, strings, and diversions share the same name space.

.de xxx
   . nop foo
.. 
   .di xxx
bar
   .br
   .di
   .
   .xxx
⇒ bar

As can be seen in the previous example, gtroff reuses the identifier ‘xxx’, changing it from a macro to a diversion. No warning is emitted! The contents of the first macro definition is lost.

See Section 5.6.2 [Interpolating Registers], page 74, and Section 5.19 [Strings], page 130.
5.5 Embedded Commands

Most documents need more functionality beyond filling, adjusting and implicit line breaking. In order to gain further functionality, \texttt{gtröff} allows commands to be embedded into the text, in two ways.

The first is a \textit{request} which takes up an entire line, and does some large-scale operation (e.g. break lines, start new pages).

The other is an \textit{escape} which can be usually embedded anywhere in the text; most requests can accept it even as an argument. Escapes generally do more minor operations like sub- and superscripts, print a symbol, etc.

5.5.1 Requests

A request line begins with a control character, which is either a single quote (‘‘’, the \textit{no-break control character}) or a period (‘.’, the normal \textit{control character}). These can be changed; see Section 5.11 \texttt{[Character Translations]}, page 95, for details. After this there may be optional tabs or spaces followed by an identifier which is the name of the request. This may be followed by any number of space-separated arguments (\textit{no tabs here}).

Since a control character followed by whitespace only is ignored, it is common practice to use this feature for structuring the source code of documents or macro packages.

\begin{verbatim}
.de foo
  . tm This is foo.
.. .
.de bar
  . tm This is bar.
..
\end{verbatim}

Another possibility is to use the blank line macro request \texttt{blm} by assigning an empty macro to it.

\begin{verbatim}
.de do-nothing
.. 
.blm do-nothing " activate blank line macro

.de foo
  . tm This is foo.
..
.. 
.de bar
  . tm This is bar.
..
.blm " deactivate blank line macro
\end{verbatim}
To begin a line with a control character without it being interpreted, precede it with \&. This represents a zero width space, which means it does not affect the output.

In most cases the period is used as a control character. Several requests cause a break implicitly; using the single quote control character prevents this.

\n[.br]  
A read-only number register which is set to 1 if a macro is called with the normal control character (as defined with the \cc request), and set to 0 otherwise.

This allows to reliably modify requests.

\als bp*orig bp  
\de bp  
\tm before bp  
\ie \n[.br] bp*orig  
\el 'bp*orig  
\tm after bp

Using this register outside of a macro makes no sense (it always returns zero in such cases).

If a macro is called as a string (this is, using \*), the value of the .br register is inherited from the calling macro.

5.5.1.1 Request and Macro Arguments

Arguments to requests and macros are processed much like the shell: The line is split into arguments according to spaces.\footnote{Plan 9's \troff implementation also allows tabs for argument separation – \gtroff intentionally doesn't support this.}

An argument to a macro which is intended to contain spaces can either be enclosed in double quotes, or have the spaces escaped with backslashes. This is not true for requests.

Here are a few examples for a hypothetical macro uh:

\uh The Mouse Problem  
\uh "The Mouse Problem"  
\uh The\ Mouse\ Problem

The first line is the uh macro being called with 3 arguments, 'The', 'Mouse', and 'Problem'. The latter two have the same effect of calling the uh macro with one argument, 'The Mouse Problem'.\footnote{The last solution, i.e., using escaped spaces, is "classical" in the sense that it can be found in most \troff documents. Nevertheless, it is not optimal in all situations, since '\ ' inserts a fixed-width, non-breaking space character which can't stretch. \gtroff provides a different command \` to insert a stretchable, non-breaking space.}
A double quote which isn’t preceded by a space doesn’t start a macro argument. If not closing a string, it is printed literally.

For example,

```
.xxx a" "b c" "de"fg"
```

has the arguments ‘a’’, ‘b c’, ‘de’, and ‘fg”. Don’t rely on this obscure behaviour!

There are two possibilities to get a double quote reliably.

- Enclose the whole argument with double quotes and use two consecutive double quotes to represent a single one. This traditional solution has the disadvantage that double quotes don’t survive argument expansion again if called in compatibility mode (using the -C option of `groff`):

```
.de xx
.tm xx: ‘"$1’ ‘"$2’ ‘"$3’
.
.yy ""$1" ""$2" ""$3"
.
.de yy
.tm yy: ‘"$1’ ‘"$2’ ‘"$3’
.
.xx A "test with ""quotes"""
   ⇒ xx: ‘A’ ‘test with ""quotes""’ ‘.’
   ⇒ yy: ‘A’ ‘test with ’ ‘quotes"”'
```

If not in compatibility mode, you get the expected result

```
xx: ‘A’ ‘test with "quotes"’ ‘.’
yy: ‘A’ ‘test with "quotes"’ ‘.’
```

since `gtroff` preserves the input level.

- Use the double quote glyph \dq. This works with and without compatibility mode enabled since `gtroff` doesn’t convert \dq back to a double quote input character.

  Note that this method won’t work with UNIX troff in general since the glyph ‘dq’ isn’t defined normally.

Double quotes in the ds request are handled differently. See Section 5.19 [Strings], page 130, for more details.

### 5.5.2 Macros

`gtroff` has a macro facility for defining a series of lines which can be invoked by name. They are called in the same manner as requests – arguments also may be passed basically in the same manner.

See Section 5.21 [Writing Macros], page 140, and Section 5.5.1.1 [Request and Macro Arguments], page 68.
5.5.3 Escapes

Escapes may occur anywhere in the input to gtroff. They usually begin with a backslash and are followed by a single character which indicates the function to be performed. The escape character can be changed; see Section 5.11 [Character Translations], page 95.

Escape sequences which require an identifier as a parameter accept three possible syntax forms.

- The next single character is the identifier.
- If this single character is an opening parenthesis, take the following two characters as the identifier. Note that there is no closing parenthesis after the identifier.
- If this single character is an opening bracket, take all characters until a closing bracket as the identifier.

Examples:

\fB
\n(XX
\*[TeX]

Other escapes may require several arguments and/or some special format. In such cases the argument is traditionally enclosed in single quotes (and quotes are always used in this manual for the definitions of escape sequences). The enclosed text is then processed according to what that escape expects. Example:

\l'1.5i\(bu' 

Note that the quote character can be replaced with any other character which does not occur in the argument (even a newline or a space character) in the following escapes: \o, \b, and \X. This makes e.g.

A caf
\o
e'

in Paris
⇒ A café in Paris

possible, but it is better not to use this feature to avoid confusion.

The following escapes sequences (which are handled similarly to characters since they don’t take a parameter) are also allowed as delimiters: \%, \', \l, \r, \{, \}, \', \', \- , \_, \!, \?, \}, \%, \&, \:, \~, \0 , \a, \c, \d, \e, \E, \p, \r, \t, and \u. Again, don’t use these if possible.

No newline characters as delimiters are allowed in the following escapes: \A, \B, \Z, \C, and \w.

Finally, the escapes \D, \h, \H, \l, \L, \N, \R, \s, \S, \v, and \x can’t use the following characters as delimiters:
Chapter 5: gtroff Reference

- The digits 0-9.
- The (single-character) operators `+-*/%<>-=:()'.
- The space, tab, and newline characters.
- All escape sequences except `\', `%:', `{', `}', `\', `\e', and `\p'. To have a backslash (actually, the current escape character) appear in the output several escapes are defined: `\', `\e' or `\E'. These are very similar, and only differ with respect to being used in macros or diversions. See Section 5.11 [Character Translations], page 95, for an exact description of those escapes.

See Section 5.34 [Implementation Differences], page 184, Section 5.21.1 [Copy-in Mode], page 143, and Section 5.25 [Diversions], page 161, Section 5.4 [Identifiers], page 65, for more information.

5.5.3.1 Comments
Probably one of the most\(^5\) common forms of escapes is the comment.

\"[Escape]

Start a comment. Everything to the end of the input line is ignored.

This may sound simple, but it can be tricky to keep the comments from interfering with the appearance of the final output.

If the escape is to the right of some text or a request, that portion of the line is ignored, but the space leading up to it is noticed by gtroff. This only affects the ds and as request and its variants.

One possibly irritating idiosyncrasy is that tabs must not be used to line up comments. Tabs are not treated as whitespace between the request and macro arguments.

A comment on a line by itself is treated as a blank line, because after eliminating the comment, that is all that remains:

```
Test
\" comment
Test
```

produces

```
Test
```

To avoid this, it is common to start the line with `\" which causes the line to be treated as an undefined request and thus ignored completely.

Another commenting scheme seen sometimes is three consecutive single quotes ("') at the beginning of a line. This works, but gtroff gives a warning about an undefined macro (namely ''), which is harmless, but irritating.

\(^5\) Unfortunately, this is a lie. But hopefully future gtroff hackers will believe it :-)


\# [Escape]

To avoid all this, gtroff has a new comment mechanism using the \# escape. This escape works the same as " except that the newline is also ignored:

```
Test
\# comment
Test
```

produces

```
Test Test
```
as expected.

.ig [end] [Request]

Ignore all input until gtroff encounters the macro named .end on a line by itself (or .. if end is not specified). This is useful for commenting out large blocks of text:

```
text text text...
.ig
```

This is part of a large block
of text that has been
temporarily(?) commented out.

We can restore it simply by removing
the .ig request and the ".." at the
day of the block.

```
.. More text text text...
```

produces

```
text text text... More text text text...
```

Note that the commented-out block of text does not cause a break.
The input is read in copy-mode; auto-incremented registers are affected
(see Section 5.6.3 [Auto-increment], page 75).

5.6 Registers

Numeric variables in gtroff are called registers. There are a number of
built-in registers, supplying anything from the date to details of formatting
parameters.

See Section 5.4 [Identifiers], page 65, for details on register identifiers.

5.6.1 Setting Registers

Define or set registers using the nr request or the \R escape.

Although the following requests and escapes can be used to create registers, simply using an undefined register will cause it to be set to zero.
.nr ident value  
\R’ident value’  
Set number register \textit{ident} to \textit{value}. If \textit{ident} doesn’t exist, \texttt{gtroff} creates it.

The argument to \texttt{\R} usually has to be enclosed in quotes. See Section 5.5.3 \textit{[Escapes]}, page 70, for details on parameter delimiting characters.

The \texttt{\R} escape doesn’t produce an input token in \texttt{gtroff}; in other words, it vanishes completely after \texttt{gtroff} has processed it.

For example, the following two lines are equivalent:

\begin{verbatim}
.nr a (((17 + (3 * 4)) \% 4)
\R’a (((17 + (3 * 4)) \% 4)’
⇒ 1
\end{verbatim}

Note that the complete transparency of \texttt{\R} can cause surprising effects if you use number registers like \texttt{.k} which get evaluated at the time they are accessed.

\begin{verbatim}
.ll 1.6i
.
.aaa bbb ccc ddd eee fff ggg hhh\R’:k \n[.k]’
.tm :k == \n[.k]
⇒ :k == 126950
.
.br
.
.aaa bbb ccc ddd eee fff ggg hhh\h’0’\R’:k \n[.k]’
.tm :k == \n[.k]
⇒ :k == 15000
\end{verbatim}

If you process this with the \texttt{POSTSCRIPT} device (\texttt{-Tps}), there will be a line break eventually after \texttt{ggg} in both input lines. However, after processing the space after \texttt{ggg}, the partially collected line is not overfull yet, so \texttt{troff} continues to collect input until it sees the space (or in this case, the newline) after \texttt{hhh}. At this point, the line is longer than the line length, and the line gets broken.

In the first input line, since the \texttt{\R} escape leaves no traces, the check for the overfull line hasn’t been done yet at the point where \texttt{\R} gets handled, and you get a value for the \texttt{.k} number register which is even greater than the current line length.

In the second input line, the insertion of \texttt{\h’0’} to emit an invisible zero-width space forces \texttt{troff} to check the line length which in turn causes the start of a new output line. Now \texttt{.k} returns the expected value.

Both \texttt{nr} and \texttt{\R} have two additional special forms to increment or decrement a register.

\begin{verbatim}
.nr ident +value  
.nr ident -value
\end{verbatim}
\R’ident +value’ \[Escape\]
\R’ident -value’ \[Escape\]
Increment (decrement) register ident by value.

.nr a 1
.nr a +1
\na
⇒ 2

To assign the negated value of a register to another register, some care must be taken to get the desired result:

.nr a 7
.nr b 3
.nr a -\nb
\na
⇒ 4
.nr a (-\nb)
\na
⇒ -3

The surrounding parentheses prevent the interpretation of the minus sign as a decrementing operator. An alternative is to start the assignment with a ‘0’:

.nr a 7
.nr b -3
.nr a \nb
\na
⇒ 4
.nr a 0\nb
\na
⇒ -3

.rr ident \[Request\]
Remove number register ident. If ident doesn’t exist, the request is ignored.

.rnn ident1 ident2 \[Request\]
Rename number register ident1 to ident2. If either ident1 or ident2 doesn’t exist, the request is ignored.

.aln ident1 ident2 \[Request\]
Create an alias ident1 for a number register ident2. The new name and the old name are exactly equivalent. If ident1 is undefined, a warning of type ‘reg’ is generated, and the request is ignored. See Section 5.33 [Debugging], page 179, for information about warnings.

5.6.2 Interpolating Registers

Numeric registers can be accessed via the \n escape.
Chapter 5: gtroff Reference 75

\ni
\n(id
\n[ident]
Interpolate number register with name \textit{ident} (one-character name \textit{i}, two-character name \textit{id}). This means that the value of the register is expanded in-place while \texttt{gtroff} is parsing the input line. Nested assignments (also called indirect assignments) are possible.

\nr a 5
\nr as \na+\na
\n(\texttt{as}
\n\Rightarrow 10
\nr a1 5
\nr ab 6
\n(ds str b
\n(ds num 1
\n\n[a\n[num]]
\n\Rightarrow 5
\n[a*[str]]
\n\Rightarrow 6

5.6.3 Auto-increment

Number registers can also be auto-incremented and auto-decremented. The increment or decrement value can be specified with a third argument to the \texttt{nr} request or \texttt{\R} escape.

\nr \textit{ident} value incr
\n\texttt{[Request]}
Set number register \textit{ident} to \textit{value}; the increment for auto-incrementing is set to \textit{incr}. Note that the \texttt{\R} escape doesn’t support this notation.

To activate auto-incrementing, the escape \texttt{\n} has a special syntax form.

\n+\i
\n-\i
\n(+id
\n(-id
\n+\i (id
\n-\i (id
\n [+ident]
\n [-ident]
\n +[ident]
\n -[ident]
\n Before interpolating, increment or decrement \textit{ident} (one-character name \textit{i}, two-character name \textit{id}) by the auto-increment value as specified with the \texttt{nr} request (or the \texttt{\R} escape). If no auto-increment value has been specified, these syntax forms are identical to \texttt{\n}.

For example,
produces
   1, 2, 3, 4, 5
   -5, -10, -15, -20, -25
   -2, -4, -6, -8, -10

To change the increment value without changing the value of a register (a in
the example), the following can be used:
   .nr a \na 10

5.6.4 Assigning Formats

When a register is used, it is always textually replaced (or interpolated) with
a representation of that number. This output format can be changed to a
variety of formats (numbers, Roman numerals, etc.). This is done using the
af request.

.af ident format
   [Request]
   Change the output format of a number register. The first argument
   ident is the name of the number register to be changed, and the second
   argument format is the output format. The following output formats are
   available:

1       Decimal arabic numbers. This is the default format: 0, 1, 2,
        3, ...           
0...0   Decimal numbers with as many digits as specified. So, ‘00’
        would result in printing numbers as 01, 02, 03, ...           
               In fact, any digit instead of zero does work; gtroff only
               counts how many digits are specified. As a consequence, af’s
               default format ‘1’ could be specified as ‘0’ also (and exactly
               this is returned by the \g escape, see below).
I       Upper-case Roman numerals: 0, I, II, III, IV, ...               
i       Lower-case Roman numerals: 0, i, ii, iii, iv, ...            
A       Upper-case letters: 0, A, B, C, ..., Z, AA, AB, ...            
a       Lower-case letters: 0, a, b, c, ..., z, aa, ab, ...            

Omitting the number register format causes a warning of type ‘missing’.
See Section 5.33 [Debugging], page 179, for more details. Specifying a
nonexistent format causes an error.
The following example produces ‘10, X, j, 010’:

```
.nr a 10
.af a 1 " the default format
\na,
.af a I
\na,
.af a a
\na,
.af a 001
```

The largest number representable for the ‘i’ and ‘I’ formats is 39999 (or −39999); UNIX `troff` uses ‘z’ and ‘w’ to represent 10000 and 5000 in Roman numerals, and so does `gtroff`. Currently, the correct glyphs of Roman numeral five thousand and Roman numeral ten thousand (Unicode code points U+2182 and U+2181, respectively) are not available.

If `ident` doesn’t exist, it is created.

Changing the output format of a read-only register causes an error. It is necessary to first copy the register’s value to a writeable register, then apply the `af` request to this other register.

```
\g i [Escape] [Escape]
\g (id [Escape] [Escape]
\g [ident] [Escape]
```

Return the current format of the specified register `ident` (one-character name `i`, two-character name `id`). For example, \g a after the previous example would produce the string ‘000’. If the register hasn’t been defined yet, nothing is returned.

### 5.6.5 Built-in Registers

The following lists some built-in registers which are not described elsewhere in this manual. Any register which begins with a ‘.’ is read-only. A complete listing of all built-in registers can be found in tie E [Register Index], page 237.

```
\n [.F] This string-valued register returns the current input file name.
\n [.H] Horizontal resolution in basic units.
\n [.R] The number of number registers available. This is always 10000 in GNU `troff`; it exists for backward compatibility.
\n [.U] If `gtroff` is called with the `-U` command line option to activate unsafe mode, the number register `.U` is set to 1, and to zero otherwise. See Section 2.1 [Groff Options], page 7.
\n [.V] Vertical resolution in basic units.
```
The number of seconds after the minute, normally in the range 0 to 59, but can be up to 61 to allow for leap seconds. Initialized at start-up of gtroff.

The number of minutes after the hour, in the range 0 to 59. Initialized at start-up of gtroff.

The number of hours past midnight, in the range 0 to 23. Initialized at start-up of gtroff.

day of the week (1-7).

day of the month (1-31).
current month (1-12).
The current year minus 1900. Unfortunately, the documentation of UNIX Version 7’s troff had a year 2000 bug: It incorrectly claimed that yr contains the last two digits of the year. That claim has never been true of either AT&T troff or GNU troff. Old troff input that looks like this:

`" The following line stopped working after 1999
This document was formatted in 19\n(yr.

1 can be corrected as follows:

This document was formatted in \n[year].
or, to be portable to older troff versions, as follows:

.nr y4 1900+\n(yr
This document was formatted in \n(y4.

The current input line number. Register ‘.c’ is read-only, whereas ‘c.’ (a gtroff extension) is writable also, affecting both ‘.c’ and ‘c.’.

The current output line number after a call to the nm request to activate line numbering.

See Section 5.31 [Miscellaneous], page 175, for more information about line numbering.

The major version number. For example, if the version number is 1.03 then .x contains ‘1’.

The minor version number. For example, if the version number is 1.03 then .y contains ‘03’.

The revision number of groff.
The process ID of \texttt{gtroff}.

Always 1. Macros should use this to determine whether they are running under GNU \texttt{troff}.

If the command line option \texttt{-a} is used to produce an ASCII approximation of the output, this is set to 1, zero otherwise. See Section 2.1 [Groff Options], page 7.

This read-only register is set to the suppression nesting level (see escapes \texttt{\textbackslash 0}). See Section 5.27 [Suppressing output], page 167.

This register is set to 1 (and to 0 otherwise) if the current page is actually being printed, i.e., if the \texttt{-o} option is being used to only print selected pages. See Section 2.1 [Groff Options], page 7, for more information.

If \texttt{gtroff} is called with the \texttt{-T} command line option, the number register \texttt{.T} is set to 1, and zero otherwise. See Section 2.1 [Groff Options], page 7.

A single read-write string register which contains the current output device (for example, ‘\texttt{latin1}’ or ‘\texttt{ps}’). This is the only string register defined by \texttt{gtroff}.

## 5.7 Manipulating Filling and Adjusting

Various ways of causing breaks were given in Section 5.1.5 [Implicit Line Breaks], page 60. The \texttt{br} request likewise causes a break. Several other requests also cause breaks, but implicitly. These are \texttt{bp}, \texttt{ce}, \texttt{cf}, \texttt{fi}, \texttt{fl}, \texttt{in}, \texttt{nf}, \texttt{rj}, \texttt{sp}, \texttt{ti}, and \texttt{trf}.

\texttt{.br} \hfill [Request]

Break the current line, i.e., the input collected so far is emitted without adjustment.

If the no-break control character is used, \texttt{gtroff} suppresses the break:

\begin{verbatim}
a
'br
b
\end{verbatim}

\Rightarrow a\ b

Initially, \texttt{gtroff} fills and adjusts text to both margins. Filling can be disabled via the \texttt{nf} request and re-enabled with the \texttt{fi} request.

\texttt{.fi} \hfill [Request]

\texttt{\n[.u]} \hfill [Register]

Activate fill mode (which is the default). This request implicitly enables adjusting; it also inserts a break in the text currently being filled. The read-only number register \texttt{.u} is set to 1.
The fill mode status is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

See Section 5.14 [Line Control], page 103, for interaction with the \c escape.

.nf
[Request]
Activate no-fill mode. Input lines are output as-is, retaining line breaks and ignoring the current line length. This command implicitly disables adjusting; it also causes a break. The number register .u is set to 0.

The fill mode status is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

See Section 5.14 [Line Control], page 103, for interaction with the \c escape.

.ad [mode]
[Request]

\n[.j]
[Register]
Set adjusting mode.

Activation and deactivation of adjusting is done implicitly with calls to the fi or nf requests.

mode can have one of the following values:

1 Adjust text to the left margin. This produces what is traditionally called ragged-right text.

r Adjust text to the right margin, producing ragged-left text.

c Center filled text. This is different to the ce request which only centers text without filling.

b
n Justify to both margins. This is the default used by gtroff.

Finally, mode can be the numeric argument returned by the .j register.

Using ad without argument is the same as saying .ad \[.j]. In particular, gtroff adjusts lines in the same way it did before adjusting was deactivated (with a call to na, say). For example, this input code
As just demonstrated, the current adjustment mode is available in the read-only number register .j; it can be stored and subsequently used to set adjustment.

The adjustment mode status is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

_disable adjusting. This request won’t change the current adjustment mode: A subsequent call to ad uses the previous adjustment setting.

The adjustment mode status is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

Adjust the current line and cause a break.
In most cases this produces very ugly results since {gtroff} doesn’t have a sophisticated paragraph building algorithm (as {\TeX} have, for example); instead, {gtroff} fills and adjusts a paragraph line by line:

This is an uninteresting sentence.
This is an uninteresting sentence.
This is an uninteresting sentence.

is formatted as

This is an uninteresting sentence. This is an uninteresting sentence.
This is an uninteresting sentence.

\[ .ss \ word\_space\_size \ [sentence\_space\_size] \] [Request]
\[ \n[.ss] \] [Register]
\[ \n[.sss] \] [Register]

Change the size of a space between words. It takes its units as one twelfth of the space width parameter for the current font. Initially both the \textit{word\_space\_size} and \textit{sentence\_space\_size} are 12. In fill mode, the values specify the minimum distance.

If two arguments are given to the \textit{ss} request, the second argument sets the sentence space size. If the second argument is not given, sentence space size is set to \textit{word\_space\_size}. The sentence space size is used in two circumstances: If the end of a sentence occurs at the end of a line in fill mode, then both an inter-word space and a sentence space are added; if two spaces follow the end of a sentence in the middle of a line, then the second space is a sentence space. If a second argument is never given to the \textit{ss} request, the behaviour of UNIX {\ttroff} is the same as that exhibited by GNU {\ttroff}. In GNU {\ttroff}, as in UNIX {\ttroff}, a sentence should always be followed by either a newline or two spaces.

The read-only number registers \texttt{.ss} and \texttt{.sss} hold the values of the parameters set by the first and second arguments of the \texttt{ss} request.

The word space and sentence space values are associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

Contrary to AT&T {\ttroff}, this request is \textit{not} ignored if a TTY output device is used; the given values are then rounded down to a multiple of 12 (see Section 5.34 [Implementation Differences], page 184).

The request is ignored if there is no parameter.

Another useful application of the \texttt{ss} request is to insert discardable horizontal space, i.e., space which is discarded at a line break. For example, paragraph-style footnotes could be separated this way:

\[ .11 \ 4.5i \]
\[ 1.\ \ This \ is \ the \ first \ footnote.\c \]
\[ .ss \ 48 \]
\[ .nop \]
\[ .ss \ 12 \]
\[ 2.\ \ This \ is \ the \ second \ footnote. \]
The result:

1. This is the first footnote. 2. This is the second footnote.

Note that the \h escape produces unbreakable space.

.\ce [nnn] [Request]
\n[.\ce] [Register]
Center text. While the \ad c’ request also centers text, it fills the text as well. \ce does not fill the text it affects. This request causes a break. The number of lines still to be centered is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

The following example demonstrates the differences. Here the input:

..ll 4i
..ce 1000
This is a small text fragment which shows the differences between the \ce and the \ad c’ request.
..ce 0

..ad c
This is a small text fragment which shows the differences between the \ce and the \ad c’ request.

And here the result:

This is a small text fragment which shows the differences between the \ce and the \ad c’ request.

This is a small text fragment which shows the differences between the \ce and the \ad c’ request.

With no arguments, \ce centers the next line of text. nnn specifies the number of lines to be centered. If the argument is zero or negative, centering is disabled.

The basic length for centering text is the line length (as set with the ll request) minus the indentation (as set with the in request). Temporary indentation is ignored.

As can be seen in the previous example, it is a common idiom to turn on centering for a large number of lines, and to turn off centering after text to be centered. This is useful for any request which takes a number of lines as an argument.

The \ce read-only number register contains the number of lines remaining to be centered, as set by the \ce request.
.rj [nnn] [Register]
Justify unfilled text to the right margin. Arguments are identical to the ce request. The .rj read-only number register is the number of lines to be right-justified as set by the rj request. This request causes a break. The number of lines still to be right-justified is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

5.8 Manipulating Hyphenation

Here a description of requests which influence hyphenation.

.hy [mode] [Request]

Enable hyphenation. The request has an optional numeric argument, mode, to restrict hyphenation if necessary:

1  The default argument if mode is omitted. Hyphenate without restrictions. This is also the start-up value of gtroff.
2  Do not hyphenate the last word on a page or column.
4  Do not hyphenate the last two characters of a word.
8  Do not hyphenate the first two characters of a word.

Values in the previous table are additive. For example, the value 12 causes gtroff to neither hyphenate the last two nor the first two characters of a word.

The current hyphenation restrictions can be found in the read-only number register ‘.hy’.

The hyphenation mode is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

.nh [Request]

Disable hyphenation (i.e., set the hyphenation mode to zero). Note that the hyphenation mode of the last call to hy is not remembered.

The hyphenation mode is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

.hlm [nnn] [Request]

Set the maximum number of consecutive hyphenated lines to nnn. If this number is negative, there is no maximum. The default value is −1 if nnn is omitted. This value is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165). Only lines output from a given environment count towards the maximum associated with that environment. Hyphens resulting from \% are counted; explicit hyphens are not.
The current setting of .hlm is available in the .hlm read-only number register. Also the number of immediately preceding consecutive hyphenated lines are available in the read-only number register '.hlc'.

 hw word1 word2 ...  
 [Request]
 Define how word1, word2, etc. are to be hyphenated. The words must be given with hyphens at the hyphenation points. For example:

 .hw in-sa-lub-rious  
 Besides the space character, any character whose hyphenation code value is zero can be used to separate the arguments of hw (see the documentation for the hcode request below for more information). In addition, this request can be used more than once.

 Hyphenation exceptions specified with the hw request are associated with the current hyphenation language; it causes an error if there is no current hyphenation language.

 This request is ignored if there is no parameter.

 In old versions of troff there was a limited amount of space to store such information; fortunately, with gtroff, this is no longer a restriction.

 \%  
 \:  
 [Escape]
 [Escape]

 To tell gtroff how to hyphenate words on the fly, use the \% escape, also known as the hyphenation character. Preceding a word with this character prevents it from being hyphenated; putting it inside a word indicates to gtroff that the word may be hyphenated at that point.

 Note that this mechanism only affects that one occurrence of the word; to change the hyphenation of a word for the entire document, use the hw request.

 The \: escape inserts a zero-width break point (that is, the word breaks but without adding a hyphen).

 ... check the /var/log/\:httpd/\:access_log file ...  
 Note that \X and \Y start a word, that is, the \% escape in (say) '\X'... '\%foobar' and '\Y'... '\%foobar' no longer prevents hyphenation but inserts a hyphenation point at the beginning of 'foobar'; most likely this isn’t what you want to do.

 hc [char]  
 [Request]
 Change the hyphenation character to char. This character then works the same as the \% escape, and thus, no longer appears in the output.

 Without an argument, hc resets the hyphenation character to be \% (the default) only.

 The hyphenation character is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

 .hpf pattern_file  
 [Request]
 .hpfa pattern_file  
 [Request]
.hpfc ode  a  b  [c  d  ...]  [Request]
Read in a file of hyphenation patterns. This file is searched for in the
same way as  name.tmac (or  tma c.name) is searched for if the  -mname
option is specified.
It should have the same format as (simple)  T\TeX patterns files. More
specifically, the following scanning rules are implemented.

• A percent sign starts a comment (up to the end of the line) even if
preceded by a backslash.
• No support for ‘digraphs’ like \$.
• ^^xx (x is 0-9 or a-f) and ^^x (character code of x in the range 0-127)
are recognized; other use of ^ causes an error.
• No macro expansion.
• hpf checks for the expression \patterns{...} (possibly with white-
space before and after the braces). Everything between the braces
is taken as hyphenation patterns. Consequently, { and } are not
allowed in patterns.
• Similarly, \hyphenation{...} gives a list of hyphenation exceptions.
• \endinput is recognized also.
• For backwards compatibility, if \patterns is missing, the whole file
is treated as a list of hyphenation patterns (only recognizing the %
character as the start of a comment).

If no hpf request is specified (either in the document or in a macro pack-
age),  gtroff won’t hyphenate at all.
The hpfa request appends a file of patterns to the current list.
The hpfc ode request defines mapping values for character codes in hy-
phenation patterns. hpf or hpfa then apply the mapping (after reading
the patterns) before replacing or appending them to the current list of
patterns. Its arguments are pairs of character codes – integers from 0
to 255. The request maps character code a to code b, code c to code d,
and so on. You can use character codes which would be invalid otherwise.
By default, everything maps to itself except letters ‘A’ to ‘Z’ which map
to ‘a’ to ‘z’.
The set of hyphenation patterns is associated with the current language
set by the hla request. The hpf request is usually invoked by the troffrc
or troffrc-end file; by default, troffrc loads hyphenation patterns and
exceptions for American English (in files  hyphen.us and hyphenex.us).
A second call to hpf (for the same language) replaces the hyphenation
patterns with the new ones.
Invoking hpf causes an error if there is no current hyphenation language.

.hcode  c1 code1  [c2 code2  ...]  [Request]
Set the hyphenation code of character c1 to code1, that of c2 to code2,
etc. A hyphenation code must be a single input character (not a special
character) other than a digit or a space.
To make hyphenation work, hyphenation codes must be set up. At start-
up, groff only assigns hyphenation codes to the letters ‘a’-'z' (mapped
to themselves) and to the letters ‘A’-'Z' (mapped to ‘a’-'z’); all other hy-
phenation codes are set to zero. Normally, hyphenation patterns contain
only lowercase letters which should be applied regardless of case. In other
words, the words ‘FOO’ and ‘Foo’ should be hyphenated exactly the same
way as the word ‘foo’ is hyphenated, and this is what .hcode is good for.
Words which contain other letters won’t be hyphenated properly if the
corresponding hyphenation patterns actually do contain them. For ex-
ample, the following .hcode requests are necessary to assign hyphenation
codes to the letters ‘ÄäÖöÜüß’ (this is needed for German):

```
.hcode ä ä Ä ä
.hcode ö ö Ö ö
.hcode ü ü Ü ü
.hcode ß ß
```

Without those assignments, groff treats German words like ‘Kindergärten’
(the plural form of ‘kindergarten’) as two substrings ‘kinderg’ and ‘rten’
because the hyphenation code of the umlaut a is zero by default. There
is a German hyphenation pattern which covers ‘kinder’, so groff finds the
hyphenation ‘kin-der’. The other two hyphenation points (‘kin-der-gär-
ten’) are missed.

This request is ignored if it has no parameter.

```
审视 [length] [Request]
\n[.hym]
```

Set the (right) hyphenation margin to length. If the current adjustment
mode is not ‘b’ or ‘n’, the line is not hyphenated if it is shorter than
length. Without an argument, the hyphenation margin is reset to its
default value, which is 0. The default scaling indicator for this request is
‘m’. The hyphenation margin is associated with the current environment
(see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

A negative argument resets the hyphenation margin to zero, emitting a
warning of type ‘range’.

The current hyphenation margin is available in the .hym read-only num-
ber register.

```
审视 [hyphenation_space] [Request]
\n[.hys]
```

Set the hyphenation space to hyphenation_space. If the current adjust-
ment mode is ‘b’ or ‘n’, don’t hyphenate the line if it can be justified
by adding no more than hyphenation_space extra space to each word
space. Without argument, the hyphenation space is set to its default
value, which is 0. The default scaling indicator for this request is ‘m’. The
hyphenation space is associated with the current environment (see
Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).
A negative argument resets the hyphenation space to zero, emitting a warning of type ‘range’.

The current hyphenation space is available in the .hys read-only number register.

.shc [glyph] [Request]
Set the soft hyphen character to glyph. If the argument is omitted, the soft hyphen character is set to the default glyph \(\text{hy}\) (this is the start-up value of gtroff also). The soft hyphen character is the glyph that is inserted when a word is hyphenated at a line break. If the soft hyphen character does not exist in the font of the character immediately preceding a potential break point, then the line is not broken at that point. Neither definitions (specified with the char request) nor translations (specified with the tr request) are considered when finding the soft hyphen character.

.hla language [Request]
\[n,.hla\] [Register]
Set the current hyphenation language to the string language. Hyphenation exceptions specified with the hw request and hyphenation patterns specified with the hpf and hpfa requests are both associated with the current hyphenation language. The hla request is usually invoked by the troffrc or the troffrc-end files; troffrc sets the default language to ‘us’.

The current hyphenation language is available as a string in the read-only number register ‘.hla’.

\[.ds curr\_language \[n,.hla\] \\[*[curr\_language]\] \Rightarrow us\]

5.9 Manipulating Spacing

.sp [distance] [Request]
Space downwards distance. With no argument it advances 1 line. A negative argument causes gtroff to move up the page the specified distance. If the argument is preceded by a ‘1’ then gtroff moves that distance from the top of the page. This request causes a line break, and that adds the current line spacing to the space you have just specified. The default scaling indicator is ‘v’.

For convenience you may wish to use the following macros to set the height of the next line at a given distance from the top or the bottom of the page:

---

6 Soft hyphen character is a misnomer since it is an output glyph.
A call to `.y-from-bot-up 10c' means that the bottom of the next line will be at 10 cm from the paper edge at the bottom.

If a vertical trap is sprung during execution of sp, the amount of vertical space after the trap is discarded. For example, this

```
.de xxx
.. 
.wh 0 xxx
.
.pl 5v
foo
.sp 2
bar
.sp 50
baz
```

results in

```
foo

bar

baz
```

The amount of discarded space is available in the number register .trunc.

To protect sp against vertical traps, use the vpt request:

```
.vpt 0
.sp -3
.vpt 1
```

```
.ls [nnn]  \ [Request]
\n[.L]  \ [Register]
```

Output nnn−1 blank lines after each line of text. With no argument, gtroff uses the previous value before the last ls call.

```
.ls 2 \" This causes double-spaced output
.ls 3 \" This causes triple-spaced output
.ls \" Again double-spaced
```

The line spacing is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).
The read-only number register `.L` contains the current line spacing setting.

See Section 5.18.1 [Changing Type Sizes], page 126, for the requests `vs` and `pvs` as alternatives to `ls`.

\[x'spacing'\]
\[n[.a]\]

Sometimes, extra vertical spacing is only needed occasionally, e.g. to allow space for a tall construct (like an equation). The `\x` escape does this. The escape is given a numerical argument, usually enclosed in quotes (like `\x'3p'`); the default scaling indicator is `v`. If this number is positive extra vertical space is inserted below the current line. A negative number adds space above. If this escape is used multiple times on the same line, the maximum of the values is used.

See Section 5.5.3 [Escapes], page 70, for details on parameter delimiting characters.

The `.a` read-only number register contains the most recent (nonnegative) extra vertical line space.

Using `\x` can be necessary in combination with the `\b` escape, as the following example shows.

```
This is a test with the \[rs\]b escape.
.br
This is a test with the \[rs\]b escape.
.br
This is a test with \b'xyz'\x'1m'\x'1m'.
.br
This is a test with the \[rs\]b escape.
.br
This is a test with the \[rs\]b escape.
```

produces

```
This is a test with the \b escape.
This is a test with the \b escape.
This is a test with \b escape.
This is a test with \b escape.
```

.enable no-space mode. In this mode, spacing (either via `sp` or via blank lines) is disabled. The `bp` request to advance to the next page is also disabled, except if it is accompanied by a page number (see Section 5.16 [Page Control], page 106, for more information). This mode ends when
actual text is output or the \texttt{rs} request is encountered which ends no-space mode. The read-only number register \texttt{.ns} is set to 1 as long as no-space mode is active.

This request is useful for macros that conditionally insert vertical space before the text starts (for example, a paragraph macro could insert some space except when it is the first paragraph after a section header).

### 5.10 Tabs and Fields

A tab character (ASCII char 9, EBCDIC char 5) causes a horizontal movement to the next tab stop (much like it did on a typewriter).

\texttt{\textbackslash t} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{[Escape]}

This escape is a non-interpreted tab character. In copy mode (see Section 5.21.1 [Copy-in Mode], page 143), \texttt{\textbackslash t} is the same as a real tab character.

\texttt{.ta \{n1 n2 \ldots nn T r1 r2 \ldots rn\}} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{[Request]}

\texttt{\textbackslash n[.tabs]} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{[Register]}

Change tab stop positions. This request takes a series of tab specifiers as arguments (optionally divided into two groups with the letter ‘T’) which indicate where each tab stop is to be (overriding any previous settings). Tab stops can be specified absolutely, i.e., as the distance from the left margin. For example, the following sets 6 tab stops every one inch.

\texttt{.ta 1i 2i 3i 4i 5i 6i}

Tab stops can also be specified using a leading ‘+’ which means that the specified tab stop is set relative to the previous tab stop. For example, the following is equivalent to the previous example.

\texttt{.ta 1i +1i +1i +1i +1i +1i}

\texttt{gtroff} supports an extended syntax to specify repeat values after the ‘T’ mark (these values are always taken as relative) – this is the usual way to specify tabs set at equal intervals. The following is, yet again, the same as the previous examples. It does even more since it defines an infinite number of tab stops separated by one inch.

\texttt{.ta T 1i}

Now we are ready to interpret the full syntax given at the beginning: Set tabs at positions \texttt{n1}, \texttt{n2}, \ldots, \texttt{nn} and then set tabs at \texttt{nn+r1}, \texttt{nn+r2}, \ldots, \texttt{nn+rn} and then at \texttt{nn+rn+r1}, \texttt{nn+rn+r2}, \ldots, \texttt{nn+rn+rn}, and so on.

Example: ‘\texttt{4c +6c T 3c 5c 2c}’ is equivalent to ‘\texttt{4c 10c 13c 18c 20c 23c 28c 30c \ldots}’.

The material in each tab column (i.e., the column between two tab stops) may be justified to the right or left or centered in the column. This is specified by appending ‘R’, ‘L’, or ‘C’ to the tab specifier. The default justification is ‘L’. Example:

\texttt{.ta 1i 2iC 3iR}
Some notes:

- The default unit of the `ta` request is ‘m’.
- A tab stop is converted into a non-breakable horizontal movement which can be neither stretched nor squeezed. For example,

  ```
  .ds foo a\tb\tc
  .ta T 5i
  /*[foo]
  ```

  creates a single line which is a bit longer than 10 inches (a string is used to show exactly where the tab characters are). Now consider the following:

  ```
  .ds bar a\tb b\tc
  .ta T 5i
  /*[bar]
  ```

  `gtroff` first converts the tab stops of the line into unbreakable horizontal movements, then splits the line after the second ‘b’ (assuming a sufficiently short line length). Usually, this isn’t what the user wants.

- Superfluous tabs (i.e., tab characters which do not correspond to a tab stop) are ignored except the first one which delimits the characters belonging to the last tab stop for right-justifying or centering. Consider the following example

  ```
  .ds Z foo\tbar\tfoo
  .ds ZZ foo\tbar\tfoobar
  .ds ZZZ foo\tbar\tfoo\tbar
  .ta 2i 4iR
  /*[Z]
  .br
  /*[ZZ]
  .br
  /*[ZZZ]
  .br
  ```

  which produces the following output:

  ```
  foo bar foo
  foo bar foobar
  foo bar foobar
  ```

  The first line right-justifies the second ‘foo’ relative to the tab stop. The second line right-justifies ‘foobar’. The third line finally right-justifies only ‘foo’ because of the additional tab character which marks the end of the string belonging to the last defined tab stop.

- Tab stops are associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).
- Calling `ta` without an argument removes all tab stops.
- The start-up value of `gtroff` is ‘T 0.8i’.
Chapter 5:(gtroff Reference

The read-only number register .tabs contains a string representation of the current tab settings suitable for use as an argument to the ta request.

\*tab-string
\*[tab-string]
⇒ T120u

The troff version of the Plan 9 operating system uses register .S for the same purpose.

.tc [fill-glyph]
[Request]
 Normally gtroff fills the space to the next tab stop with whitespace. This can be changed with the tc request. With no argument gtroff reverts to using whitespace, which is the default. The value of this tab repetition character is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 Environments, page 165).

.linetabs n
[Request]

If n is missing or not zero, enable line-tabs mode, or disable it otherwise (the default). In line-tabs mode, gtroff computes tab distances relative to the (current) output line instead of the input line.

For example, the following code:

.ds x a \t c
.ds y b \t c
.ds z c
.ta 1i 3i
\*x
\*y
\*z

in normal mode, results in the output

a b c

in line-tabs mode, the same code outputs

a b c

Line-tabs mode is associated with the current environment. The read-only register .linetabs is set to 1 if in line-tabs mode, and 0 in normal mode.

5.10.1 Leaders

Sometimes it may be desirable to use the tc request to fill a particular tab stop with a given glyph (for example dots in a table of contents), but also normal tab stops on the rest of the line. For this gtroff provides an alternate tab mechanism, called leaders which does just that.

\* Tab repetition character is a misnomer since it is an output glyph.
A leader character (character code 1) behaves similarly to a tab character: it moves to the next tab stop. The only difference is that for this movement, the fill glyph defaults to a period character and not to space.

\a \text{[Escape]}
This escape is a non-interpreted leader character. In copy mode (see Section 5.21.1 [Copy-in Mode], page 143), \a is the same as a real leader character.

.lc \text{[fill-glyph]} \text{[Request]}
Declare the leader repetition character.\footnote{Leader repetition character is a misnomer since it is an output glyph.} Without an argument, leaders act the same as tabs (i.e., using whitespace for filling). \texttt{gtroff}'s startup value is a dot ('.'). The value of the leader repetition character is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

For a table of contents, to name an example, tab stops may be defined so that the section number is one tab stop, the title is the second with the remaining space being filled with a line of dots, and then the page number slightly separated from the dots.

\begin{verbatim}
 ds entry 1.1\tFoo\a\t12
 lc .
 ta 1i 5i +.25i
 /*[entry] */
\end{verbatim}

This produces

1.1 Foo.......................................... 12

5.10.2 Fields

Fields are a more general way of laying out tabular data. A field is defined as the data between a pair of delimiting characters. It contains substrings which are separated by padding characters. The width of a field is the distance on the input line from the position where the field starts to the next tab stop. A padding character inserts stretchable space similar to \TeX's \texttt{\hss} command (thus it can even be negative) to make the sum of all substring lengths plus the stretchable space equal to the field width. If more than one padding character is inserted, the available space is evenly distributed among them.

.fc \text{[delim-char [padding-char]]} \text{[Request]}
Define a delimiting and a padding character for fields. If the latter is missing, the padding character defaults to a space character. If there is no argument at all, the field mechanism is disabled (which is the default). Note that contrary to e.g. the tab repetition character, delimiting and padding characters are not associated to the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

Example:
5.11 Character Translations

The control character (‘.’) and the no-break control character (‘’’) can be changed with the \texttt{cc} and \texttt{c2} requests, respectively.

\texttt{.cc \_[c]} [Request]

Set the control character to \(c\). With no argument the default control character ‘.’ is restored. The value of the control character is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

\texttt{.c2 \_[c]} [Request]

Set the no-break control character to \(c\). With no argument the default control character ‘’’ is restored. The value of the no-break control character is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

See Section 5.5.1 [Requests], page 67.

\texttt{.eo} [Request]

Disable the escape mechanism completely. After executing this request, the backslash character ‘\’ no longer starts an escape sequence.

This request can be very helpful in writing macros since it is not necessary then to double the escape character. Here an example:

\begin{verbatim}
.\" This is a simplified version of the
.\" .BR request from the man macro package
.eo
.de BR
  . ds result \&
  . while (\n[.\$] >= 2) \{
  .   as result \fB$1\fR$2
  .   shift 2
  . }\}
  . if \n[.\$] .as result \fB$1
\*[result]
  . ft R
  ..
.ee
\end{verbatim}
.ec [c]  [Request]
Set the escape character to c. With no argument the default escape character ‘\’ is restored. It can be also used to re-enable the escape mechanism after an eo request.

Note that changing the escape character globally likely breaks macro packages since gtroff has no mechanism to ‘intern’ macros, i.e., to convert a macro definition into an internal form which is independent of its representation (\TeX\ has this mechanism). If a macro is called, it is executed literally.

.ecs
.ecr  [Request]

The ecs request saves the current escape character in an internal register. Use this request in combination with the ec request to temporarily change the escape character.

The ecr request restores the escape character saved with ecs. Without a previous call to ecs, this request sets the escape character to ‘\.”

```
\\  [Escape]
\e  [Escape]
\E  [Escape]
```

Print the current escape character (which is the backslash character ‘\’ by default).

\ is a ‘delayed’ backslash; more precisely, it is the default escape character followed by a backslash, which no longer has special meaning due to the leading escape character. It is not an escape sequence in the usual sense! In any unknown escape sequence \x the escape character is ignored and X is printed. But if X is equal to the current escape character, no warning is emitted.

As a consequence, only at top-level or in a diversion a backslash glyph is printed; in copy-in mode, it expands to a single backslash which then combines with the following character to an escape sequence.

The \E escape differs from \e by printing an escape character that is not interpreted in copy mode. Use this to define strings with escapes that work when used in copy mode (for example, as a macro argument). The following example defines strings to begin and end a superscript:

```
.ds { \v’-.3m’s’\En[.s]*60/100’
ds } \s0\v’-.3m’
```

Another example to demonstrate the differences between the various escape sequences, using a strange escape character, ‘-’.

```
.ec -
de xxx
--A’123’
.. xxx
⇒ -A’foo’
```
The result is surprising for most users, expecting ‘1’ since ‘foo’ is a valid identifier. What has happened? As mentioned above, the leading escape character makes the following character ordinary. Written with the default escape character the sequence ‘--’ becomes ‘\-’ – this is the minus sign.

If the escape character followed by itself is a valid escape sequence, only \E yields the expected result:

```
.ec -
.de xxx
-EA’123’
..
.xxx
⇒ 1
```

\ .  

Similar to \ \, the sequence \ . isn’t a real escape sequence. As before, a warning message is suppressed if the escape character is followed by a dot, and the dot itself is printed.

```
.de foo
.nop foo
.
.de bar
.nop bar
\\..
.
..
.foo
.bar
⇒ foo bar
```

The first backslash is consumed while the macro is read, and the second is swallowed while executing macro foo.

A translation is a mapping of an input character to an output glyph. The mapping occurs at output time, i.e., the input character gets assigned the metric information of the mapped output character right before input tokens are converted to nodes (see Section 5.32 [Gtroff Internals], page 177, for more on this process).

```
.tr abcd...
.trin abcd... [Request]
```

Translate character a to glyph b, character c to glyph d, etc. If there is an odd number of arguments, the last one is translated to an unstretchable space (‘\ ’).

The trin request is identical to tr, but when you unformat a diversion with asciify it ignores the translation. See Section 5.25 [Diversions], page 161, for details about the asciify request.
Some notes:

- Special characters (\(xx\), \([xxx]\), \(\C^\prime\), \(\prime\), \(-\), \(_\)), glyphs defined with the char request, and numbered glyphs (\(N^\prime\)) can be translated also.
- The \(e\) escape can be translated also.
- Characters can be mapped onto the \(\%\) and \(\~\) escapes (but \(\%\) and \(\~\) can’t be mapped onto another glyph).
- The following characters can’t be translated: space (with one exception, see below), backspace, newline, leader (and \(a\)), tab (and \(t\)).
- Translations are not considered for finding the soft hyphen character set with the shc request.
- The pair ‘c\&’ (this is an arbitrary character c followed by the zero width space character) maps this character to nothing.
  
    .tr a\&
    foo bar
    ⇒ foo br

  It is even possible to map the space character to nothing:

    .tr aa \&
    foo bar
    ⇒ foobar

  As shown in the example, the space character can’t be the first character/glyph pair as an argument of tr. Additionally, it is not possible to map the space character to any other glyph; requests like ‘.tr aa x’ undo ‘.tr aa \&’ instead.

  If justification is active, lines are justified in spite of the ‘empty’ space character (but there is no minimal distance, i.e. the space character, between words).

- After an output glyph has been constructed (this happens at the moment immediately before the glyph is appended to an output glyph list, either by direct output, in a macro, diversion, or string), it is no longer affected by tr.

- Translating character to glyphs where one of them or both are undefined is possible also; tr does not check whether the entities in its argument do exist.

See Section 5.32 [Gtroff Internals], page 177.

- troff no longer has a hard-coded dependency on Latin-1; all charXXX entities have been removed from the font description files. This has a notable consequence which shows up in warnings like can’t find character with input code XXX if the tr request isn’t handled properly.

Consider the following translation:
.tr éÉ
This maps input character é onto glyph É, which is identical to
glyph \char201. But this glyph intentionally doesn’t exist! Instead,
\[\char201\] is treated as an input character entity and is by de-
fault mapped onto \[’E\], and gtroff doesn’t handle translations of
translations.
The right way to write the above translation is
.tr é\[’E\]
In other words, the first argument of tr should be an input character
or entity, and the second one a glyph entity.

- Without an argument, the tr request is ignored.

.trnt abcd...
[Request]
trnt is the same as the tr request except that the translations do not
apply to text that is transparently throughput into a diversion with \!.
See Section 5.25 [Diversions], page 161, for more information.
For example,
.tr ab
.di x
\!.tm a
.di
.x

prints ‘b’ to the standard error stream; if trnt is used instead of tr it
prints ‘a’.

5.12 Troff and Nroff Mode
Originally, nroff and troff were two separate programs, the former for
TTY output, the latter for everything else. With GNU troff, both pro-
grams are merged into one executable, sending its output to a device driver
(grotty for TTY devices, grops for POSTSCRIPT, etc.) which interprets the
intermediate output of gtroff. For UNIX troff it makes sense to talk about
Nroff mode and Troff mode since the differences are hardcoded. For GNU
troff, this distinction is not appropriate because gtroff simply takes the
information given in the font files for a particular device without handling
requests specially if a TTY output device is used.

Usually, a macro package can be used with all output devices. Never-
thless, it is sometimes necessary to make a distinction between TTY and
non-TTY devices: gtroff provides two built-in conditions ‘n’ and ‘t’ for
the if, ie, and while requests to decide whether gtroff shall behave like
nroff or like troff.

.troff
[Request]
Make the ‘t’ built-in condition true (and the ‘n’ built-in condition false)
for if, ie, and while conditional requests. This is the default if gtroff
(not groff) is started with the -R switch to avoid loading of the start-up files troffrc and troffrc-end. Without -R, gtroff stays in troff mode if the output device is not a TTY (e.g. ‘ps’).

.nroff

Make the ‘n’ built-in condition true (and the ‘t’ built-in condition false) for if, ie, and while conditional requests. This is the default if gtroff uses a TTY output device; the code for switching to nroff mode is in the file tty.tmac which is loaded by the start-up file troffrc.

See Section 5.20 [Conditionals and Loops], page 135, for more details on built-in conditions.

5.13 Line Layout

The following drawing shows the dimensions which gtroff uses for placing a line of output onto the page. They are labeled with the request which manipulates each dimension.

```
-->| in |<--
 |<-------------------ll---------------->-|
 |----------------------------+++-------|
 | : : : | : | |
 |----------------------------+++-------|
 -->< po |<--
 |<----------paper width----------------->|
```

These dimensions are:

- **po** *Page offset* – this is the leftmost position of text on the final output, defining the left margin.
- **in** *Indentation* – this is the distance from the left margin where text is printed.
- **ll** *Line length* – this is the distance from the left margin to right margin.

A simple demonstration:

```
.l1 3i
This is text without indentation.
The line length has been set to 3\~inch.
.in +.5i
.l1 -.5i
Now the left and right margins are both increased.
.in
.l1
Calling .in and .ll without parameters restore
the previous values.
```

Result:
This is text without indentation. The line length has been set to 3 inch.
Now the left and right margins are both increased.
Calling `.in` and `.ll` without parameters restore the previous values.

```
.po [offset]   [Request]
.po +offset    [Request]
.po -offset    [Request]
\n[.o]          [Register]
```

Set horizontal page offset to `offset` (or increment or decrement the current value by `offset`). Note that this request does not cause a break, so changing the page offset in the middle of text being filled may not yield the expected result. The initial value is `1i`. For TTY output devices, it is set to `0` in the startup file `troffrc`; the default scaling indicator is ‘`m`’ (and not ‘`v`’ as incorrectly documented in the original UNIX `troff` manual).

The current page offset can be found in the read-only number register ‘`.o`’.

If `po` is called without an argument, the page offset is reset to the previous value before the last call to `po`.

```
.po 3i
\n[.o]
⇒ 720
.po -1i
\n[.o]
⇒ 480
.po
\n[.o]
⇒ 720
```

```
.in [indent]    [Request]
.in +indent     [Request]
.in -indent     [Request]
\n[.i]           [Register]
```

Set indentation to `indent` (or increment or decrement the current value by `indent`). This request causes a break. Initially, there is no indentation.

If `in` is called without an argument, the indentation is reset to the previous value before the last call to `in`. The default scaling indicator is ‘`m`’.

The indentation is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

If a negative indentation value is specified (which is not allowed), `gtroff` emits a warning of type ‘`range`’ and sets the indentation to zero.
The effect of \texttt{in} is delayed until a partially collected line (if it exists) is output. A temporary indentation value is reset to zero also.

The current indentation (as set by \texttt{in}) can be found in the read-only number register \texttt{.i}.

\texttt{.ti \hspace{1em} offset}  \texttt{[Request]}
\texttt{.ti +offset}  \texttt{[Request]}
\texttt{.ti -offset}  \texttt{[Request]}
\texttt{\n[.in]}  \texttt{[Register]}

Temporarily indent the next output line by \texttt{offset}. If an increment or decrement value is specified, adjust the temporary indentation relative to the value set by the \texttt{in} request.

This request causes a break; its value is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165). The default scaling indicator is \texttt{m}. A call of \texttt{ti} without an argument is ignored.

If the total indentation value is negative (which is not allowed), \texttt{gtroff} emits a warning of type \texttt{range} and sets the temporary indentation to zero. ‘Total indentation’ is either \texttt{offset} if specified as an absolute value, or the temporary plus normal indentation, if \texttt{offset} is given as a relative value.

The effect of \texttt{ti} is delayed until a partially collected line (if it exists) is output.

The read-only number register \texttt{.in} is the indentation that applies to the current output line.

The difference between \texttt{.i} and \texttt{.in} is that the latter takes into account whether a partially collected line still uses the old indentation value or a temporary indentation value is active.

\texttt{.ll \hspace{1em} [length]}  \texttt{[Request]}
\texttt{.ll +length}  \texttt{[Request]}
\texttt{.ll -length}  \texttt{[Request]}
\texttt{\n[.l]}  \texttt{[Register]}
\texttt{\n[.ll]}  \texttt{[Register]}

Set the line length to \texttt{length} (or increment or decrement the current value by \texttt{length}). Initially, the line length is set to 6.5i. The effect of \texttt{ll} is delayed until a partially collected line (if it exists) is output. The default scaling indicator is \texttt{m}.

If \texttt{ll} is called without an argument, the line length is reset to the previous value before the last call to \texttt{ll}. If a negative line length is specified (which is not allowed), \texttt{gtroff} emits a warning of type \texttt{range} and sets the line length to zero.

The line length is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).
The current line length (as set by \ll) can be found in the read-only number register \'.l'. The read-only number register \'.ll' is the line length that applies to the current output line.

Similar to \.i and \.in, the difference between \.l and \.ll is that the latter takes into account whether a partially collected line still uses the old line length value.

### 5.14 Line Control

It is important to understand how \gtroff handles input and output lines.

Many escapes use positioning relative to the input line. For example, this

```
This is a \h'|1.2i'\test.
```

```
This is a
\h'|1.2i'\test.
```

produces

```
This is a test.
```

```
This is a test.
```

The main usage of this feature is to define macros which act exactly at the place where called.

```
." A simple macro to underline a word
.de underline
.nop \|$1\l'|0\[ul']
```

In the above example, '\|0' specifies a negative distance from the current position (at the end of the just emitted argument \$1) back to the beginning of the input line. Thus, the '\1' escape draws a line from right to left.

\gtroff makes a difference between input and output line continuation; the latter is also called interrupting a line.

\RET [Escape]
\c [Escape]
\n[.int] [Register]

Continue a line. \RET (this is a backslash at the end of a line immediately followed by a newline) works on the input level, suppressing the effects of the following newline in the input.

```
This is a \.test
⇒ This is a .test
```

The ‘|’ operator is also affected.

\c works on the output level. Anything after this escape on the same line is ignored, except \R which works as usual. Anything before \c on the same line is appended to the current partial output line. The next non-command line after an interrupted line counts as a new input line.
The visual results depend on whether no-fill mode is active.

- If no-fill mode is active (using the \texttt{nf} request), the next input text line after \texttt{\textbackslash c} is handled as a continuation of the same input text line.

  \begin{verbatim}
  .nf
  This is a \textbackslash c
  test.
  \end{verbatim}

  ⇒ This is a test.

- If fill mode is active (using the \texttt{fi} request), a word interrupted with \texttt{\textbackslash c} is continued with the text on the next input text line, without an intervening space.

  \begin{verbatim}
  This is a te\textbackslash c
  st.
  \end{verbatim}

  ⇒ This is a test.

Note that an intervening control line which causes a break is stronger than \texttt{\textbackslash c}, flushing out the current partial line in the usual way.

The \texttt{.int} register contains a positive value if the last output line was interrupted with \texttt{\textbackslash c}; this is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

### 5.15 Page Layout

\texttt{gtroff} provides some very primitive operations for controlling page layout.

\begin{verbatim}
.pl [length] \[Request]\n.pl +length \[Request]\n.pl -length \[Request]\n\textbackslash n[.p] \[Register]\n\end{verbatim}

Set the page length to \texttt{length} (or increment or decrement the current value by \texttt{length}). This is the length of the physical output page. The default scaling indicator is ‘\texttt{v}’.

The current setting can be found in the read-only number register ‘\texttt{.p}’.

Note that this only specifies the size of the page, not the top and bottom margins. Those are not set by \texttt{gtroff} directly. See Section 5.24 [Traps], page 154, for further information on how to do this.

Negative \texttt{pl} values are possible also, but not very useful: No trap is sprung, and each line is output on a single page (thus suppressing all vertical spacing).

If no argument or an invalid argument is given, \texttt{pl} sets the page length to 11i.

\texttt{gtroff} provides several operations which help in setting up top and bottom titles (or headers and footers).

\begin{verbatim}
.tl 'left’center’right’ \[Request]\n\end{verbatim}

Print a title line. It consists of three parts: a left justified portion, a centered portion, and a right justified portion. The argument separator
‘?’ can be replaced with any character not occurring in the title line. The ‘%’ character is replaced with the current page number. This character can be changed with the pc request (see below).

Without argument, tl is ignored.

Some notes:

- The line length set by the ll request is not honoured by tl; use the lt request (described below) instead, to control line length for text set by tl.
- A title line is not restricted to the top or bottom of a page.
- tl prints the title line immediately, ignoring a partially filled line (which stays untouched).
- It is not an error to omit closing delimiters. For example, ‘.tl /foo’ is equivalent to ‘.tl /foo///’: It prints a title line with the left justified word ‘foo’; the centered and right justified parts are empty.
- tl accepts the same parameter delimiting characters as the \A escape; see Section 5.5.3 [Escapes], page 70.

\.lt [length]  [Request]
\.lt +length  [Request]
\.lt -length  [Request]
\n[.lt]  [Register]

The title line is printed using its own line length, which is specified (or incremented or decremented) with the lt request. Initially, the title line length is set to 6.5i. If a negative line length is specified (which is not allowed), gtroff emits a warning of type ‘range’ and sets the title line length to zero. The default scaling indicator is ‘m’. If lt is called without an argument, the title length is reset to the previous value before the last call to lt.

The current setting of this is available in the .lt read-only number register; it is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

\.pn page  [Request]
\.pn +page  [Request]
\.pn -page  [Request]
\n[.pn]  [Register]

Change (increase or decrease) the page number of the next page. The only argument is the page number; the request is ignored without a parameter.

The read-only number register .pn contains the number of the next page: either the value set by a pn request, or the number of the current page plus 1.

\.pc [char]  [Request]

Change the page number character (used by the tl request) to a different character. With no argument, this mechanism is disabled. Note that this doesn’t affect the number register %.
5.16 Page Control

Stop processing the current page and move to the next page. This request causes a break. It can also take an argument to set (increase, decrease) the page number of the next page (which actually becomes the current page after \texttt{bp} has finished). The difference between \texttt{bp} and \texttt{pn} is that \texttt{pn} does not cause a break or actually eject a page. See Section 5.15 [Page Layout], page 104.

\texttt{bp} has no effect if not called within the top-level diversion (see Section 5.25 [Diversions], page 161).

The read-write register \% holds the current page number.

The number register \texttt{.pe} is set to 1 while \texttt{bp} is active. See Section 5.24.1 [Page Location Traps], page 154.

\texttt{ne [space]}  
\texttt{sv [space]}  
\texttt{os}  

\texttt{ne} is similar to the \texttt{ne} request; it reserves the specified amount of vertical space. If the desired amount of space exists before the next trap (or the
bottom page boundary if no trap is set), the space is output immediately (ignoring a partially filled line which stays untouched). If there is not enough space, it is stored for later output via the \texttt{\textbf{os}} request. The default value is 1 v if no argument is given; the default scaling indicator is ‘v’.

Both \texttt{sv} and \texttt{os} ignore no-space mode. While the \texttt{sv} request allows negative values for \texttt{space}, \texttt{os} ignores them.

\[
\text{n[nl]} \quad \text{[Register]}
\]

This register contains the current vertical position. If the vertical position is zero and the top of page transition hasn’t happened yet, \texttt{nl} is set to negative value. \texttt{gtroff} itself does this at the very beginning of a document before anything has been printed, but the main usage is to plant a header trap on a page if this page has already started.

Consider the following:

\begin{verbatim}
.de xxx
.sp
.tl ''Header''
.sp
..

First page.
.bp
.wh 0 xxx
.nr nl (-1)

Second page.
\end{verbatim}

Result:

\begin{verbatim}
First page.
...

Header

Second page.
...
\end{verbatim}

Without resetting \texttt{nl} to a negative value, the just planted trap would be active beginning with the next page, not the current one.

See Section 5.25 [Diversions], page 161, for a comparison with the \texttt{.h} and \texttt{.d} registers.

5.17 Fonts and Symbols

\texttt{gtroff} can switch fonts at any point in the text.
The basic set of fonts is ‘R’, ‘I’, ‘B’, and ‘BI’. These are Times Roman, Italic, Bold, and Bold Italic. For non-TTY devices, there is also at least one symbol font which contains various special symbols (Greek, mathematics).

### 5.17.1 Changing Fonts

```troff
.ft [font]          [Request]
\f                     [Escape]
\f( fn                    [Escape]
\f[ font]                  [Escape]
\n[.sty]                  [Register]
```

The `.ft` request and the `\f` escape change the current font to `font` (one-character name `f`, two-character name `fn`).

If `font` is a style name (as set with the `.sty` request or with the `styles` command in the DESC file), use it within the current font family (as set with the `.fam` request, `\F` escape, or with the `family` command in the DESC file).

It is not possible to switch to a font with the name ‘DESC’ (whereas this name could be used as a style name; however, this is not recommended).

With no argument or using ‘P’ as an argument, `.ft` switches to the previous font. Use `\f[]` to do this with the escape. The old syntax forms `\fP` or `\f[P]` are also supported.

Fonts are generally specified as upper-case strings, which are usually 1 to 4 characters representing an abbreviation or acronym of the font name. This is no limitation, just a convention.

The example below produces two identical lines.

```
eggs, bacon,
.ft B
spam
.ft
and sausage.
```

```
eggs, bacon, \fBspam\fP and sausage.
```

Note that `\f` doesn’t produce an input token in `gtroff`. As a consequence, it can be used in requests like `.mc` (which expects a single character as an argument) to change the font on the fly:

```
.mc \f[I]x\f[]
```

The current style name is available in the read-only number register ‘.sty’ (this is a string-valued register); if the current font isn’t a style, the empty string is returned. It is associated with the current environment.

See Section 5.17.3 [Font Positions], page 111, for an alternative syntax.

```troff
.ftr f [g]          [Request]
```

Translate font `f` to font `g`. Whenever a font named `f` is referred to in a `\f` escape sequence, in the `F` and `S` conditional operators, or in the `.ft`,
ul, bd, cs, tkf, special, fspecial, fp, or sty requests, font g is used. If g is missing or equal to f the translation is undone.

Note that it is not possible to chain font translations. Example:

```
.ftr XXX TR
.ftr XXX YYY
.ft XXX
⇒ warning: can’t find font ‘XXX’
```

```
.fzoom f[zoom]                        [Request]
\n[.zoom]                                [Register]
```

Set magnification of font f to factor zoom, which must be a non-negative integer multiple of 1/1000th. This request is useful to adjust the optical size of a font in relation to the others. In the example below, font CR is magnified by 10% (the zoom factor is thus 1.1).

```
.fam P
.fzoom CR 1100
.ps 12
Palatino and \f[CR]Courier\f[]
```

A missing or zero value of zoom is the same as a value of 1000, which means no magnification. f must be a real font name, not a style.

Note that the magnification of a font is completely transparent to troff; a change of the zoom factor doesn’t cause any effect except that the dimensions of glyphs, (word) spaces, kerns, etc., of the affected font are adjusted accordingly.

The zoom factor of the current font is available in the read-only number register ‘.zoom’, in multiples of 1/1000th. It returns zero if there is no magnification.

### 5.17.2 Font Families

Due to the variety of fonts available, gtroff has added the concept of font families and font styles. The fonts are specified as the concatenation of font family and style. Specifying a font without the family part causes gtroff to use that style of the current family.

Currently, fonts for the devices \-Tps, \-Tpdf, \-Tdvi, \-Tl4, \-Tlp, and the X11 fonts are set up to this mechanism. By default, gtroff uses the Times family with the four styles ‘R’, ‘I’, ‘B’, and ‘BI’.

This way, it is possible to use the basic four fonts and to select a different font family on the command line (see Section 2.1 [Groff Options], page 7).

```
.fam [family]                          [Request]
\n[.fam]                                [Register]
\Ff                                    [Escape]
\F(fm                                    [Escape]
\F[family]                              [Escape]
```
Switch font family to *family* (one-character name *f*, two-character name *fm*). If no argument is given, switch back to the previous font family. Use \F[] to do this with the escape. Note that \FP doesn’t work; it selects font family ‘P’ instead.

The value at start-up is ‘T’. The current font family is available in the read-only number register ‘.fam’ (this is a string-valued register); it is associated with the current environment.

```plaintext
spam,
  .fam H " helvetica family
spam,
  " used font is family H + style R = HR
  .ft B " family H + style B = font HB
spam,
  .fam T " times family
spam,
  " used font is family T + style B = TB
  .ft AR " font AR (not a style)
baked beans,
  .ft R " family T + style R = font TR
and spam.
```

Note that \F doesn’t produce an input token in gtroff. As a consequence, it can be used in requests like mc (which expects a single character as an argument) to change the font family on the fly:

```plaintext
.mc \F[P]x\F[]
```

The ‘.fn’ register contains the current *real font name* of the current font. This is a string-valued register. If the current font is a style, the value of \n[.fn] is the proper concatenation of family and style name.

```
.sty n style
Associate *style* with font position *n*. A font position can be associated either with a font or with a style. The current font is the index of a font position and so is also either a font or a style. If it is a style, the font that is actually used is the font which name is the concatenation of the name of the current family and the name of the current style. For example, if the current font is 1 and font position 1 is associated with style ‘R’ and the current font family is ‘T’, then font ‘TR’ is used. If the current font is not a style, then the current family is ignored. If the requests cs, bd, tkf, uf, or fspecial are applied to a style, they are instead applied to the member of the current family corresponding to that style.

*n* must be a non-negative integer value.

The default family can be set with the `-f` option (see Section 2.1 [Groff Options], page 7). The *styles* command in the DESC file controls which font positions (if any) are initially associated with styles rather than fonts. For example, the default setting for POSTSCRIPT fonts

```
styles R I B BI
```

is equivalent to
fam and \F always check whether the current font position is valid; this can give surprising results if the current font position is associated with a style.

In the following example, we want to access the PostScript font FooBar from the font family Foo:

```groff
.sty \n[.fp] Bar
.fam Foo
⇒ warning: can’t find font ‘FooR’
```

The default font position at start-up is 1; for the PostScript device, this is associated with style ‘R’, so \gtroff\ tries to open FooR.

A solution to this problem is to use a dummy font like the following:

```groff
.fp 0 dummy TR " set up dummy font at position 0
.sty \n[.fp] Bar " register style ‘Bar’
.ft 0 " switch to font at position 0
.fam Foo " activate family ‘Foo’
.ft Bar " switch to font ‘FooBar’
```

See Section 5.17.3 [Font Positions], page 111.

### 5.17.3 Font Positions

For the sake of old phototypesetters and compatibility with old versions of \troff, \gtroff\ has the concept of font positions, on which various fonts are mounted.

```groff
.fp pos font [external-name] [Request]
\n[.f] [Register]
\n[.fp] [Register]
```

Mount font font at position pos (which must be a non-negative integer). This numeric position can then be referred to with font changing commands. When \gtroff\ starts it is using font position 1 (which must exist; position 0 is unused usually at start-up).

The current font in use, as a font position, is available in the read-only number register ‘.f’. This can be useful to remember the current font for later recall. It is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

```groff
.nr save-font \n[.f]
.ft B
... text text text ...
.ft \n[save-font]
```

The number of the next free font position is available in the read-only number register ‘.fp’. This is useful when mounting a new font, like so:
Fonts not listed in the DESC file are automatically mounted on the next available font position when they are referenced. If a font is to be mounted explicitly with the fp request on an unused font position, it should be mounted on the first unused font position, which can be found in the .fp register. Although gttroff does not enforce this strictly, it is not allowed to mount a font at a position whose number is much greater (approx. 1000 positions) than that of any currently used position.

The fp request has an optional third argument. This argument gives the external name of the font, which is used for finding the font description file. The second argument gives the internal name of the font which is used to refer to the font in gttroff after it has been mounted. If there is no third argument then the internal name is used as the external name. This feature makes it possible to use fonts with long names in compatibility mode.

Both the ft request and the \f escape have alternative syntax forms to access font positions.

\ft nnn  
\f \(nn\)  
\f [nnn]  

Change the current font position to nnn (one-digit position n, two-digit position nn), which must be a non-negative integer.

If nnn is associated with a style (as set with the sty request or with the styles command in the DESC file), use it within the current font family (as set with the fam request, the \F escape, or with the family command in the DESC file).

this is font 1
\ft 2
this is font 2
\ft 3
this is font 3
\ft " switch back to font 1

See Section 5.17.1 [Changing Fonts], page 108, for the standard syntax form.

5.17.4 Using Symbols

A glyph is a graphical representation of a character. While a character is an abstract entity containing semantic information, a glyph is something which can be actually seen on screen or paper. It is possible that a character has multiple glyph representation forms (for example, the character ‘A’ can be
either written in a roman or an italic font, yielding two different glyphs); sometimes more than one character maps to a single glyph (this is a ligature – the most common is ‘fi’).

A symbol is simply a named glyph. Within \program{gtroff}, all glyph names of a particular font are defined in its font file. If the user requests a glyph not available in this font, \program{gtroff} looks up an ordered list of special fonts. By default, the PostScript output device supports the two special fonts ‘SS’ (slanted symbols) and ‘S’ (symbols) (the former is looked up before the latter). Other output devices use different names for special fonts. Fonts mounted with the \keyword{fonts} keyword in the \program{DESC} file are globally available. To install additional special fonts locally (i.e. for a particular font), use the \command{fspecial} request.

Here the exact rules how \program{gtroff} searches a given symbol:

- If the symbol has been defined with the \command{char} request, use it. This hides a symbol with the same name in the current font.
- Check the current font.
- If the symbol has been defined with the \command{fchar} request, use it.
- Check whether the current font has a font-specific list of special fonts; test all fonts in the order of appearance in the last \command{fspecial} call if appropriate.
- If the symbol has been defined with the \command{fschar} request for the current font, use it.
- Check all fonts in the order of appearance in the last \command{special} call.
- If the symbol has been defined with the \command{schar} request, use it.
- As a last resort, consult all fonts loaded up to now for special fonts and check them, starting with the lowest font number. Note that this can sometimes lead to surprising results since the \keyword{fonts} line in the \program{DESC} file often contains empty positions which are filled later on. For example, consider the following:

\begin{verbatim}
fonts 3 0 0 FOO
\end{verbatim}

This mounts font \program{foo} at font position 3. We assume that \program{FOO} is a special font, containing glyph \program{foo}, and that no font has been loaded yet. The line

\begin{verbatim}
.fspecial BAR BAZ
\end{verbatim}

makes font \program{BAZ} special only if font \program{BAR} is active. We further assume that \program{BAZ} is really a special font, i.e., the font description file contains the \keyword{special} keyword, and that it also contains glyph \program{foo} with a special shape fitting to font \program{BAR}. After executing \command{fspecial}, font \program{BAR} is loaded at font position 1, and \program{BAZ} at position 2.

We now switch to a new font \program{XXX}, trying to access glyph \program{foo} which is assumed to be missing. There are neither font-specific special fonts for \program{XXX} nor any other fonts made special with the \keyword{special} request, so \program{gtroff} starts the search for special fonts in the list of already mounted
fonts, with increasing font positions. Consequently, it finds BAZ before FOO even for XXX which is not the intended behaviour.

See Section 8.2 [Font Files], page 210, and Section 5.17.6 [Special Fonts], page 120, for more details.

The list of available symbols is device dependent; see the groff_char(7) man page for a complete list of all glyphs. For example, say

```
man -Tdvi groff_char > groff_char.dvi
```

for a list using the default DVI fonts (not all versions of the man program support the -T option). If you want to use an additional macro package to change the used fonts, groff must be called directly:

```
groff -Tdvi -mec -man groff_char.7 > groff_char.dvi
```

Glyph names not listed in groff_char(7) are derived algorithmically, using a simplified version of the Adobe Glyph List (AGL) algorithm which is described in http://partners.adobe.com/public/developer/opentype/index_glyph.html. The (frozen) set of glyph names which can’t be derived algorithmically is called groff glyph list (GGL).

- A glyph for Unicode character U+XXXX[X[X]] which is not a composite character is named uXXXX[X[X]]. X must be an uppercase hexadecimal digit. Examples: u1234, u008E, u12DB8. The largest Unicode value is 0x10FFFF. There must be at least four X digits; if necessary, add leading zeroes (after the ‘u’). No zero padding is allowed for character codes greater than 0xFFFF. Surrogates (i.e., Unicode values greater than 0xFFFD represented with character codes from the surrogate area U+D800-U+DFFF) are not allowed too.

- A glyph representing more than a single input character is named

```
‘u’ component1 ‘_’ component2 ‘_’ component3 ...
```

Example: u0045_0302_0301.

For simplicity, all Unicode characters which are composites must be decomposed maximally (this is normalization form D in the Unicode standard); for example, u00CA_0301 is not a valid glyph name since U+00CA (LATIN CAPITAL LETTER E WITH CIRCUMFLEX) can be further decomposed into U+0045 (LATIN CAPITAL LETTER E) and U+0302 (COMBINING CIRCUMFLEX ACCENT). u0045_0302_0301 is thus the glyph name for U+1EBE, LATIN CAPITAL LETTER E WITH CIRCUMFLEX AND ACUTE.

- groff maintains a table to decompose all algorithmically derived glyph names which are composites itself. For example, u0100 (LATIN LETTER A WITH MACRON) is automatically decomposed into u0041_0304. Additionally, a glyph name of the GGL is preferred to an algorithmically derived glyph name; groff also automatically does the mapping. Example: The glyph u0045_0302 is mapped to ^E.

- glyph names of the GGL can’t be used in composite glyph names; for example, ^E_u0301 is invalid.
\{nm\} \{[name]\} \{[component1 component2 ...]\}
Insert a symbol name (two-character name nm) or a composite glyph with component glyphs component1, component2, ... There is no special syntax for one-character names – the natural form \n would collide with escapes.\footnote{Note that a one-character symbol is not the same as an input character, i.e., the character a is not the same as \{a\}. By default, groff defines only a single one-character symbol, \{-\}; it is usually accessed as \-. On the other hand, gtroff has the special feature that \{charXXX\} is the same as the input character with character code XXX. For example, \{char97\} is identical to the letter a if ASCII encoding is active.}

If name is undefined, a warning of type 'char' is generated, and the escape is ignored. See Section 5.33 [Debugging], page 179, for information about warnings.

groff resolves \{[...]\} with more than a single component as follows:

- Any component which is found in the GGL is converted to the uXXXX form.
- Any component uXXXX which is found in the list of decomposable glyphs is decomposed.
- The resulting elements are then concatenated with '_' in between, dropping the leading 'u' in all elements but the first.

No check for the existence of any component (similar to tr request) is done.

Examples:

\{A ho\} ‘A’ maps to u0041, ‘ho’ maps to u02DB, thus the final glyph name would be u0041_02DB. Note this is not the expected result: The ogonek glyph ‘ho’ is a spacing ogonek, but for a proper composite a non-spacing ogonek (U+0328) is necessary. Looking into the file composite.tmac one can find ‘.composite ho u0328’ which changes the mapping of ‘ho’ while a composite glyph name is constructed, causing the final glyph name to be u0041_0328.

\{[^E u0301]\}
\{[^E aa]\}
\{[E a^ aa]\}
\{[E ^ ']\} ‘^E’ maps to u0045_0302, thus the final glyph name is u0045_0302_0301 in all forms (assuming proper calls of the composite request).

It is not possible to define glyphs with names like ‘A ho’ within a groff font file. This is not really a limitation; instead, you have to define u0041_0328.
\C’xxx’ \[Escape\] Typeset the glyph named xxx.\(^\text{10}\) Normally it is more convenient to use \([xxx]\), but \C{} has the advantage that it is compatible with newer versions of AT&T troff and is available in compatibility mode.

.ncomposite \[Request\] Map glyph name from to glyph name to if it is used in \([\ldots]\) with more than one component. See above for examples.

This mapping is based on glyph names only; no check for the existence of either glyph is done.

A set of default mappings for many accents can be found in the file composite.tmac which is loaded at start-up.

\N’n’ \[Escape\] Typeset the glyph with code n in the current font (n is not the input character code). The number n can be any non-negative decimal integer. Most devices only have glyphs with codes between 0 and 255; the Unicode output device uses codes in the range 0–65535. If the current font does not contain a glyph with that code, special fonts are not searched. The \N{} escape sequence can be conveniently used in conjunction with the char request:

\char \[phone] \f[ZD]\N’37’

The code of each glyph is given in the fourth column in the font description file after the charset command. It is possible to include unnamed glyphs in the font description file by using a name of ‘---’; the \N{} escape sequence is the only way to use these.

No kerning is applied to glyphs accessed with \N{}.

Some escape sequences directly map onto special glyphs.

\’ \[Escape\] This is a backslash followed by the apostrophe character, ASCII character 0x27 (EBCDIC character 0x7D). The same as \[aa], the acute accent.

\’ \[Escape\] This is a backslash followed by ASCII character 0x60 (EBCDIC character 0x79 usually). The same as \[ga], the grave accent.

\- \[Escape\] This is the same as \[-], the minus sign in the current font.

\_ \[Escape\] This is the same as \[ul], the underline character.

\(^\text{10}\) \C{} is actually a misnomer since it accesses an output glyph.
Input characters and symbols have certain properties associated with it.\[11\] These properties can be modified with the \texttt{cflags} request. The first argument is the sum of the desired flags and the remaining arguments are the characters or symbols to have those properties. It is possible to omit the spaces between the characters or symbols. Instead of single characters or symbols you can also use character classes (see Section 5.17.5 [Character Classes], page 119 for more details).

1. The character ends sentences (initially characters ‘.?!’ have this property).

2. Lines can be broken before the character (initially no characters have this property). This only works if both the characters before and after have non-zero hyphenation codes (as set with the \texttt{hcode} request). Use value 64 to override this behaviour.

4. Lines can be broken after the character (initially the character ‘-’ and the symbols ‘\[hy]’ and ‘\[em]’ have this property). This only works if both the characters before and after have non-zero hyphenation codes (as set with the \texttt{hcode} request). Use value 64 to override this behaviour.

8. The character overlaps horizontally if used as a horizontal line building element. Initially the symbols ‘\[ul]’, ‘\[rn]’, ‘\[ru]’, ‘\[radicalex]’, and ‘\[sqrtex]’ have this property.

16. The character overlaps vertically if used as vertical line building element. Initially symbol ‘\[br]’ has this property.

32. An end-of-sentence character followed by any number of characters with this property is treated as the end of a sentence if followed by a newline or two spaces; in other words the character is transparent for the purposes of end-of-sentence recognition – this is the same as having a zero space factor in \TeX\ (initially characters ‘“’ and the symbols ‘\[dg]’ and ‘\[rq]’ have this property).

64. Ignore hyphenation code values of the surrounding characters. Use this in combination with values 2 and 4 (initially no characters have this property). For example, if you need an automatic break point after the hyphen in number ranges like ‘3000-5000’, insert

\texttt{.cflags 68 -}

---

\[11\] Note that the output glyphs themselves don’t have such properties. For \texttt{g2t2}, a glyph is a numbered box with a given width, depth, and height, nothing else. All manipulations with the \texttt{cflags} request work on the input level.
into your document. Note, however, that this can lead to bad layout if done without thinking; in most situations, a better solution instead of changing the cflags value is to insert `\:` right after the hyphen at the places which really need a break point.

**128** Prohibit a line break before the character, but allow a line break after the character. This works only in combination with flags 256 and 512 (see below) and has no effect otherwise.

**256** Prohibit a line break after the character, but allow a line break before the character. This works only in combination with flags 128 and 512 (see below) and has no effect otherwise.

**512** Allow line break before or after the character. This works only in combination with flags 128 and 256 and has no effect otherwise.

Contrary to flag values 2 and 4, the flags 128, 256, and 512 work pairwise. If, for example, the left character has value 512, and the right character 128, no line break gets inserted. If we use value 6 instead for the left character, a line break after the character can’t be suppressed since the right neighbour character doesn’t get examined.

```
.char g [string]     [Request]
.fchar g [string]    [Request]
.fschar f g [string] [Request]
.schar g [string]    [Request]
```

Define a new glyph `g` to be `string` (which can be empty). Every time glyph `g` needs to be printed, `string` is processed in a temporary environment and the result is wrapped up into a single object. Compatibility mode is turned off and the escape character is set to `\` while `string` is being processed. Any emboldening, constant spacing or track kerning is applied to this object rather than to individual characters in `string`.

A glyph defined by these requests can be used just like a normal glyph provided by the output device. In particular, other characters can be translated to it with the `tr` or `trin` requests; it can be made the leader character by the `lc` request; repeated patterns can be drawn with the glyph using the `\l` and `\L` escape sequences; words containing the glyph can be hyphenated correctly if the `hcode` request is used to give the glyph’s symbol a hyphenation code.

There is a special anti-recursion feature: Use of `g` within the glyph’s definition is handled like normal characters and symbols not defined with `char`.

Note that the `tr` and `trin` requests take precedence if `char` accesses the same symbol.

---

12 char is a misnomer since an output glyph is defined.
The \texttt{fchar} request defines a fallback glyph: \texttt{groff} only checks for glyphs defined with \texttt{fchar} if it cannot find the glyph in the current font. \texttt{groff} carries out this test before checking special fonts.

\texttt{fschar} defines a fallback glyph for font $f$: \texttt{groff} checks for glyphs defined with \texttt{fschar} after the list of fonts declared as font-specific special fonts with the \texttt{fspecial} request, but before the list of fonts declared as global special fonts with the \texttt{special} request.

Finally, the \texttt{schar} request defines a global fallback glyph: \texttt{groff} checks for glyphs defined with \texttt{schar} after the list of fonts declared as global special fonts with the \texttt{special} request, but before the already mounted special fonts.

See Section 5.17.4 [Using Symbols], page 112, for a detailed description of the glyph searching mechanism in \texttt{groff}.

\begin{verbatim}
\texttt{.rchar \ c1\ c2 \ldots} \hspace{1cm} \texttt{[Request]}
\texttt{.rfchar \ f\ c1\ c2 \ldots} \hspace{1cm} \texttt{[Request]}
\end{verbatim}

Remove the definitions of glyphs \texttt{c1, c2, \ldots} This undoes the effect of a \texttt{char, fchar, or schar} request.

It is possible to omit the whitespace between arguments.

The request \texttt{rfchar} removes glyph definitions defined with \texttt{fschar} for glyph $f$.

See Section 7.1 [Special Characters], page 189.

\subsection*{5.17.5 Character Classes}

Classes are particularly useful for East Asian languages such as Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, where the number of needed characters is much larger than in European languages, and where large sets of characters share the same properties.

\begin{verbatim}
\texttt{.class \ n\ c1\ c2 \ldots} \hspace{1cm} \texttt{[Request]}
\end{verbatim}

In \texttt{groff}, a \textit{character class} (or simply “class”) is a set of characters, grouped by some user aspect. The \texttt{class} request defines such classes so that other requests can refer to all characters belonging to this set with a single class name. Currently, only the \texttt{cflags} request can handle character classes.
A \texttt{class} request takes a class name followed by a list of entities. In its simplest form, the entities are characters or symbols:

\begin{verbatim}
.class [prepunct] , : ; > }
\end{verbatim}

Since class and glyph names share the same namespace, it is recommended to start and end the class name with \verb|[| and \verb|]|, respectively, to avoid collisions with normal \texttt{groff} symbols (and symbols defined by the user). In particular, the presence of \verb|]| in the symbol name intentionally prevents the usage of \verb|\[...]|, thus you must use the \verb|\C| escape to access a class with such a name.

You can also use a special character range notation, consisting of a start character or symbol, followed by ‘-’, and an end character or symbol. Internally, \texttt{g troff} converts these two symbol names to Unicode values (according to the \texttt{groff} glyph gist) which then give the start and end value of the range. If that fails, the class definition is skipped.

Finally, classes can be nested, too.

Here is a more complex example:

\begin{verbatim}
.class [prepunctx] \C'[prepunct] \[u2013]-\[u2016]
\end{verbatim}

The class ‘\texttt{prepunctx}’ now contains the contents of the class \texttt{prepunct} as defined above (the set ‘\texttt{, : ; > }’), and characters in the range between U+2013 and U+2016.

If you want to add ‘-‘ to a class, it must be the first character value in the argument list, otherwise it gets misinterpreted as a range.

Note that it is not possible to use class names within range definitions.

Typical use of the \texttt{class} request is to control line-breaking and hyphenation rules as defined by the \texttt{cflags} request. For example, to inhibit line breaks before the characters belonging to the \texttt{prepunctx} class, you can write:

\begin{verbatim}
.cflags 2 \C'[prepunctx]'
\end{verbatim}

See the \texttt{cflags} request in Section 5.17.4 [Using Symbols], page 112, for more details.

### 5.17.6 Special Fonts

Special fonts are those that \texttt{g troff} searches when it cannot find the requested glyph in the current font. The Symbol font is usually a special font.

\texttt{g troff} provides the following two requests to add more special fonts. See Section 5.17.4 [Using Symbols], page 112, for a detailed description of the glyph searching mechanism in \texttt{g troff}.

Usually, only non-TTY devices have special fonts.

\begin{verbatim}
.special [s1 s2 ...] [Request]
.fspecial f[s1 s2 ...] [Request]
\end{verbatim}

Use the \texttt{special} request to define special fonts. Initially, this list is empty.
Use the \texttt{fspecial} request to designate special fonts only when font $f$ is active. Initially, this list is empty.

Previous calls to \texttt{special} or \texttt{fspecial} are overwritten; without arguments, the particular list of special fonts is set to empty. Special fonts are searched in the order they appear as arguments.

All fonts which appear in a call to \texttt{special} or \texttt{fspecial} are loaded.

See Section 5.17.4 [Using Symbols], page 112, for the exact search order of glyphs.

### 5.17.7 Artificial Fonts

There are a number of requests and escapes for artificially creating fonts. These are largely vestiges of the days when output devices did not have a wide variety of fonts, and when \texttt{nroff} and \texttt{troff} were separate programs. Most of them are no longer necessary in GNU \texttt{troff}. Nevertheless, they are supported.

\begin{verbatim}
\H' height'
\H'+height'
\H'-height'
\n[.height]
Change (increment, decrement) the height of the current font, but not the width. If \texttt{height} is zero, restore the original height. Default scaling indicator is ‘z’.

The read-only number register \texttt{.height} contains the font height as set by \texttt{\H}. Currently, only the -Tps and -Tpdf devices support this feature.

Note that \texttt{\H} doesn’t produce an input token in \texttt{gtroff}. As a consequence, it can be used in requests like \texttt{mc} (which expects a single character as an argument) to change the font on the fly:

\texttt{.mc \H'+5z'x\H'0'}

In compatibility mode, \texttt{gtroff} behaves differently: If an increment or decrement is used, it is always taken relative to the current point size and not relative to the previously selected font height. Thus,

\texttt{.cp 1}
\texttt{\H'+5'test \H'+5'test}

prints the word ‘test’ twice with the same font height (five points larger than the current font size).

\S'slant'
\n[.slant]
Slant the current font by \texttt{slant} degrees. Positive values slant to the right. Only integer values are possible.

The read-only number register \texttt{.slant} contains the font slant as set by \texttt{\S}.\end{verbatim}
Currently, only the \-Tps and \-Tpdf devices support this feature.
Note that \S doesn’t produce an input token in gtroff. As a consequence, it can be used in requests like \mc (which expects a single character as an argument) to change the font on the fly:
\mc \S'20'x\S'0'
This request is incorrectly documented in the original UNIX troff manual; the slant is always set to an absolute value.

\ul [lines]  \[Request\]
The \ul request normally underlines subsequent lines if a TTY output device is used. Otherwise, the lines are printed in italics (only the term ‘underlined’ is used in the following). The single argument is the number of input lines to be underlined; with no argument, the next line is underlined. If \ul is zero or negative, stop the effects of \ul (if it was active). Requests and empty lines do not count for computing the number of underlined input lines, even if they produce some output like \tl. Lines inserted by macros (e.g. invoked by a trap) do count.
At the beginning of \ul, the current font is stored and the underline font is activated. Within the span of a \ul request, it is possible to change fonts, but after the last line affected by \ul the saved font is restored.
This number of lines still to be underlined is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165). The underline font can be changed with the \uf request.
The \ul request does not underline spaces.

\cu [lines]  \[Request\]
The \cu request is similar to \ul but underlines spaces as well (if a TTY output device is used).

\uf font  \[Request\]
Set the underline font (globally) used by \ul and \cu. By default, this is the font at position 2. font can be either a non-negative font position or the name of a font.

\bd font [offset]  \[Request\]
\bd font1 font2 [offset]  \[Request\]
\n[.b]  \[Register\]
Artificially create a bold font by printing each glyph twice, slightly offset. Two syntax forms are available.

• Imitate a bold font unconditionally. The first argument specifies the font to embolden, and the second is the number of basic units, minus one, by which the two glyphs are offset. If the second argument is missing, emboldening is turned off.
font can be either a non-negative font position or the name of a font.
offset is available in the \b read-only register if a special font is active; in the \bd request, its default unit is ‘u’.
Imitate a bold form conditionally. Embolden font1 by offset only if font font2 is the current font. This command can be issued repeatedly to set up different emboldening values for different current fonts. If the second argument is missing, emboldening is turned off for this particular current font.

This affects special fonts only (either set up with the special command in font files or with the fspecial request).

```
.cs font [width [em-size]]
```

Switch to and from constant glyph space mode. If activated, the width of every glyph is width/36 ems. The em size is given absolutely by em-size; if this argument is missing, the em value is taken from the current font size (as set with the ps request) when the font is effectively in use. Without second and third argument, constant glyph space mode is deactivated.

Default scaling indicator for em-size is ‘z’; width is an integer.

### 5.17.8 Ligatures and Kerning

Ligatures are groups of characters that are run together, i.e., producing a single glyph. For example, the letters ‘f’ and ‘i’ can form a ligature ‘fi’ as in the word ‘file’. This produces a cleaner look (albeit subtle) to the printed output. Usually, ligatures are not available in fonts for TTY output devices.

Most PostScript fonts support the fi and fl ligatures. The C/A/T typesetter that was the target of AT&T troff also supported ‘ff’, ‘ffi’, and ‘ffl’ ligatures. Advanced typesetters or ‘expert’ fonts may include ligatures for ‘ft’ and ‘ct’, although GNU troff does not support these (yet).

Only the current font is checked for ligatures and kerns; neither special fonts nor entities defined with the char request (and its siblings) are taken into account.

```
.lg [flag]
\n[.lg]
```

Switch the ligature mechanism on or off; if the parameter is non-zero or missing, ligatures are enabled, otherwise disabled. Default is on. The current ligature mode can be found in the read-only number register .lg (set to 1 or 2 if ligatures are enabled, 0 otherwise).

Setting the ligature mode to 2 enables the two-character ligatures (fi, fl, and ff) and disables the three-character ligatures (ffi and ffl).

Pairwise kerning is another subtle typesetting mechanism that modifies the distance between a glyph pair to improve readability. In most cases (but not always) the distance is decreased. For example, compare the combination of the letters ‘V’ and ‘A’. With kerning, ‘VA’ is printed. Without kerning it appears as ‘VA’. Typewriter-like fonts and fonts for terminals where all glyphs have the same width don’t use kerning.
Switch kerning on or off. If the parameter is non-zero or missing, enable pairwise kerning, otherwise disable it. The read-only number register .kern is set to 1 if pairwise kerning is enabled, 0 otherwise.

If the font description file contains pairwise kerning information, glyphs from that font are kerned. Kerning between two glyphs can be inhibited by placing \& between them: ‘\&A’.

See Section 8.2.2 [Font File Format], page 213.

Track kerning expands or reduces the space between glyphs. This can be handy, for example, if you need to squeeze a long word onto a single line or spread some text to fill a narrow column. It must be used with great care since it is usually considered bad typography if the reader notices the effect.

Enable track kerning for font f. If the current font is f the width of every glyph is increased by an amount between n1 and n2 (n1, n2 can be negative); if the current point size is less than or equal to s1 the width is increased by n1; if it is greater than or equal to s2 the width is increased by n2; if the point size is greater than or equal to s1 and less than or equal to s2 the increase in width is a linear function of the point size.

The default scaling indicator is ‘z’ for s1 and s2, ‘p’ for n1 and n2.

Note that the track kerning amount is added even to the rightmost glyph in a line; for large values it is thus recommended to increase the line length by the same amount to compensate it.

Sometimes, when typesetting letters of different fonts, more or less space at such boundaries are needed. There are two escapes to help with this.

Increase the width of the preceding glyph so that the spacing between that glyph and the following glyph is correct if the following glyph is a roman glyph. For example, if an italic f is immediately followed by a roman right parenthesis, then in many fonts the top right portion of the f overlaps the top left of the right parenthesis. Use this escape sequence whenever an italic glyph is immediately followed by a roman glyph without any intervening space. This small amount of space is also called italic correction.

Modify the spacing of the following glyph so that the spacing between that glyph and the preceding glyph is correct if the preceding glyph is
a roman glyph. Use this escape sequence whenever a roman glyph is immediately followed by an italic glyph without any intervening space. In analogy to above, this space could be called *left italic correction*, but this term isn’t used widely.

\[q\f[I]f\]
\[⇒ qf\]
\[q\,\f[I]f\]
\[⇒ qf\]

\[\&\] [Escape]
Insert a zero-width character, which is invisible. Its intended use is to stop interaction of a character with its surrounding.

- It prevents the insertion of extra space after an end-of-sentence character.

\[Test.\]
\[Test.\]
\[⇒ Test. Test.\]
\[Test.\&\]
\[Test.\]
\[⇒ Test. Test.\]

- It prevents interpretation of a control character at the beginning of an input line.

\[.Test\]
\[⇒ warning: ‘Test’ not defined\]
\[\&.Test\]
\[⇒ .Test\]

- It prevents kerning between two glyphs.

\[VA\]
\[⇒ VA\]
\[V\&A\]
\[⇒ VA\]

- It is needed to map an arbitrary character to nothing in the tr request (see Section 5.11 [Character Translations], page 95).

\[\)\] [Escape]
This escape is similar to \& except that it behaves like a character declared with the cflags request to be transparent for the purposes of an end-of-sentence character.

Its main usage is in macro definitions to protect against arguments starting with a control character.
5.18 Sizes

gtroff uses two dimensions with each line of text, type size and vertical spacing. The type size is approximately the height of the tallest glyph.\textsuperscript{13} Vertical spacing is the amount of space gtroff allows for a line of text; normally, this is about 20\% larger than the current type size. Ratios smaller than this can result in hard-to-read text; larger than this, it spreads the text out more vertically (useful for term papers). By default, gtroff uses 10 point type on 12 point spacing.

The difference between type size and vertical spacing is known, by type-setters, as leading (this is pronounced ‘ledding’).

5.18.1 Changing Type Sizes

\texttt{.ps [size]} \hspace{1em} [Request]
\texttt{.ps +size} \hspace{1em} [Request]
\texttt{.ps -size} \hspace{1em} [Request]
\texttt{\s[size]} \hspace{1em} [Escape]
\texttt{\n[.s]} \hspace{1em} [Register]

Use the \texttt{ps} request or the \texttt{s} escape to change (increase, decrease) the type size (in points). Specify size as either an absolute point size, or as a relative change from the current size. The size 0, or no argument, goes back to the previous size.

Default scaling indicator of \texttt{size} is ‘z’. If \texttt{size} is zero or negative, it is set to 1 u.

\textsuperscript{13} This is usually the parenthesis. Note that in most cases the real dimensions of the glyphs in a font are \textit{not} related to its type size! For example, the standard Post\$\textsc{script} font families ‘Times Roman’, ‘Helvetica’, and ‘Courier’ can’t be used together at 10 pt; to get acceptable output, the size of ‘Helvetica’ has to be reduced by one point, and the size of ‘Courier’ must be increased by one point.
The read-only number register `.s` returns the point size in points as a
decimal fraction. This is a string. To get the point size in scaled points,
use the `.ps` register instead.

`.s` is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environ-
ments], page 165).

```
  snap, snap,
  .ps +2
  grin, grin,
  .ps +2
  wink, wink, \s+2nudge, nudge,\s+8 say no more!
  .ps 10
```

The `\s` escape may be called in a variety of ways. Much like other escapes
there must be a way to determine where the argument ends and the text
begins. Any of the following forms are valid:

```
\sn Set the point size to \n points. \n must be either 0 or in the
range 4 to 39.
\s+n
\s-n Increase or decrease the point size by \n points. \n must be
exactly one digit.
\s(nn Set the point size to \nn points. \nn must be exactly two digits.
\s+(nn
\s(-nn
\s(+nn
\s(-nn Increase or decrease the point size by \nn points. \nn must be
exactly two digits.
```

Note that `\s` doesn’t produce an input token in `gtroff`. As a conse-
quence, it can be used in requests like `mc` (which expects a single character
as an argument) to change the font on the fly:

`.mc \s[20]x\s[0]`

See Section 5.18.2 [Fractional Type Sizes], page 129, for yet another syn-
tactical form of using the `\s` escape.

```
.sizes s1 s2 ... sn [0] [Request]
```

Some devices may only have certain permissible sizes, in which case `gtroff`
rounds to the nearest permissible size. The `DESC` file specifies
which sizes are permissible for the device.

Use the `sizes` request to change the permissible sizes for the current
output device. Arguments are in scaled points; the `sizescale` line in the
`DESC` file for the output device provides the scaling factor. For example,
if the scaling factor is 1000, then the value 12000 is 12 points.

Each argument can be a single point size (such as ‘12000’), or a range of
sizes (such as ‘4000–72000’). You can optionally end the list with a zero.
Change (increase, decrease) the vertical spacing by `space`. The default scaling indicator is `p`.

If `vs` is called without an argument, the vertical spacing is reset to the previous value before the last call to `vs`.

`gtroff` creates a warning of type `range` if `space` is negative; the vertical spacing is then set to smallest positive value, the vertical resolution (as given in the `.V` register).

Note that `.vs 0` isn’t saved in a diversion since it doesn’t result in a vertical motion. You explicitly have to repeat this command before inserting the diversion.

The read-only number register `.v` contains the current vertical spacing; it is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

The effective vertical line spacing consists of four components. Breaking a line causes the following actions (in the given order).

- Move the current point vertically by the extra pre-vertical line space. This is the minimum value of all `\x` escapes with a negative argument in the current output line.
- Move the current point vertically by the vertical line spacing as set with the `vs` request.
- Output the current line.
- Move the current point vertically by the extra post-vertical line space. This is the maximum value of all `\x` escapes with a positive argument in the line which has just been output.
- Move the current point vertically by the post-vertical line spacing as set with the `pvs` request.

It is usually better to use `vs` or `pvs` instead of `ls` to produce double-spaced documents: `vs` and `pvs` have a finer granularity for the inserted vertical space compared to `ls`; furthermore, certain preprocessors assume single-spacing.

See Section 5.9 [Manipulating Spacing], page 88, for more details on the `\x` escape and the `ls` request.

Change (increase, decrease) the post-vertical spacing by `space`. The default scaling indicator is `p`.

```plaintext
.vs [space]                     [Request]
.vs +space                      [Request]
.vs -space                      [Request]
\n[.v]                           [Register]
```

```plaintext
.pvs [space]                   [Request]
.pvs +space                    [Request]
.pvs -space                    [Request]
\n[.pvs]                         [Register]
```

It is usually better to use `vs` or `pvs` instead of `ls` to produce double-spaced documents: `vs` and `pvs` have a finer granularity for the inserted vertical space compared to `ls`; furthermore, certain preprocessors assume single-spacing.

See Section 5.9 [Manipulating Spacing], page 88, for more details on the `\x` escape and the `ls` request.
If \texttt{pvs} is called without an argument, the post-vertical spacing is reset to the previous value before the last call to \texttt{pvs}.

\texttt{gtroff} creates a warning of type \texttt{range} if \texttt{space} is zero or negative; the vertical spacing is then set to zero.

The read-only number register \texttt{.pvs} contains the current post-vertical spacing; it is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

### 5.18.2 Fractional Type Sizes

A \textit{scaled point} is equal to $1/sizescale$ points, where \textit{sizescale} is specified in the \texttt{DESC} file (1 by default). There is a new scale indicator \texttt{z} which has the effect of multiplying by \textit{sizescale}. Requests and escape sequences in \texttt{gtroff} interpret arguments that represent a point size as being in units of scaled points, but they evaluate each such argument using a default scale indicator of \texttt{z}. Arguments treated in this way are the argument to the \texttt{ps} request, the third argument to the \texttt{cs} request, the second and fourth arguments to the \texttt{tkf} request, the argument to the \texttt{\H} escape sequence, and those variants of \texttt{\s} escape sequence that take a numeric expression as their argument (see below).

For example, suppose \texttt{sizescale} is 1000; then a scaled point is equivalent to a millipoint: the request \texttt{.ps 10.25} is equivalent to \texttt{.ps 10.25z} and thus sets the point size to 10250 scaled points, which is equal to 10.25 points.

\texttt{gtroff} disallows the use of the \texttt{z} scale indicator in instances where it would make no sense, such as a numeric expression whose default scale indicator was neither \texttt{u} nor \texttt{z}. Similarly it would make no sense to use a scaling indicator other than \texttt{z} or \texttt{u} in a numeric expression whose default scale indicator was \texttt{z}, and so \texttt{gtroff} disallows this as well.

There is also new scale indicator \texttt{s} which multiplies by the number of units in a scaled point. So, for example, \texttt{\n[.ps]s} is equal to \texttt{1m}. Be sure not to confuse the \texttt{s} and \texttt{z} scale indicators.

\begin{verbatim}
\n[.ps]
A read-only number register returning the point size in scaled points.

.ps is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
\n[.psr]
\n[.sr]
The last-requested point size in scaled points is contained in the .psr read-only number register. The last requested point size in points as a decimal fraction can be found in .sr. This is a string-valued read-only number register.

Note that the requested point sizes are device-independent, whereas the values returned by the .ps and .s registers are not. For example, if a
point size of 11 pt is requested, and a \texttt{sizes} request (or a \texttt{sizescale} line in a \texttt{DESC} file) specifies 10.95 pt instead, this value is actually used.

Both registers are associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

The \texttt{\textbackslash s} escape has the following syntax for working with fractional type sizes:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \texttt{\textbackslash s [n]} \quad \text{Set the point size to } n \text{ scaled points; } n \text{ is a numeric expression with a default scale indicator of ‘z’}.
  \item \texttt{\textbackslash s' n'} \quad \text{Increase or decrease the point size by } n \text{ scaled points; } n \text{ is a numeric expression (which may start with a minus sign) with a default scale indicator of ‘z’}.
\end{itemize}

See Section 5.19 [Strings], page 210.

5.19 Strings

gtroff has string variables, which are entirely for user convenience (i.e. there are no built-in strings except .T, but even this is a read-write string variable).

Although the following requests can be used to create strings, simply using an undefined string will cause it to be defined as empty. See Section 5.4 [Identifiers], page 65.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \texttt{.ds name [string]} \quad \text{[Request]}
  \item \texttt{.ds1 name [string]} \quad \text{[Request]}
  \item \texttt{\textbackslash *n} \quad \text{[Escape]}
  \item \texttt{\textbackslash *(nm)} \quad \text{[Escape]}
  \item \texttt{\textbackslash *[name arg1 arg2 \ldots]} \quad \text{[Escape]}
\end{itemize}

Define and access a string variable \texttt{name} (one-character name \texttt{n}, two-character name \texttt{nm}). If \texttt{name} already exists, \texttt{ds} overwrites the previous definition. Only the syntax form using brackets can take arguments which are handled identically to macro arguments; the single exception is that a closing bracket as an argument must be enclosed in double quotes. See Section 5.5.1.1 [Request and Macro Arguments], page 68, and Section 5.21.2 [Parameters], page 143.

Example:
The \* escape interpolates (expands in-place) a previously-defined string variable. To be more precise, the stored string is pushed onto the input stack which is then parsed by \texttt{gtr}off. Similar to number registers, it is possible to nest strings, i.e., string variables can be called within string variables.

If the string named by the \* escape does not exist, it is defined as empty, and a warning of type ‘mac’ is emitted (see Section 5.33 [Debugging], page 179, for more details).

\textbf{Caution:} Unlike other requests, the second argument to the \texttt{ds} request takes up the entire line including trailing spaces. This means that comments on a line with such a request can introduce unwanted space into a string.

\begin{verbatim}
.ds UX \-1UNIX\s0\u\s-3tm\s0\d " UNIX trademark
\end{verbatim}

Instead the comment should be put on another line or have the comment escape adjacent with the end of the string.

\begin{verbatim}
.ds UX \-1UNIX\s0\u\s-3tm\s0\d" UNIX trademark
\end{verbatim}

To produce leading space the string can be started with a double quote. No trailing quote is needed; in fact, any trailing quote is included in your string.

\begin{verbatim}
.ds sign " Yours in a white wine sauce,
\end{verbatim}

Strings are not limited to a single line of text. A string can span several lines by escaping the newlines with a backslash. The resulting string is stored \textit{without} the newlines.

\begin{verbatim}
.ds foo lots and lots \
of text are on these \
ext several lines
\end{verbatim}

It is not possible to have real newlines in a string. To put a single double quote character into a string, use two consecutive double quote characters.

The \texttt{ds1} request turns off compatibility mode while interpreting a string. To be more precise, a \textit{compatibility save} input token is inserted at the beginning of the string, and a \textit{compatibility restore} input token at the end.
Strings, macros, and diversions (and boxes) share the same name space. Internally, even the same mechanism is used to store them. This has some interesting consequences. For example, it is possible to call a macro with string syntax and vice versa.

In particular, interpolating a string does not hide existing macro arguments. Thus in a macro, a more efficient way of doing

```
.xx \$@
```

is

```
\*[xx]\
```

Note that the latter calling syntax doesn’t change the value of \$0, which is then inherited from the calling macro.

Diversions and boxes can be also called with string syntax. Another consequence is that you can copy one-line diversions or boxes to a string.

```
.di xxx
a \fItest\fR
.br
di
.di
.ds yyy This is \*[xxx]\c
\*[yyy].
⇒ This is a test.
```
As the previous example shows, it is possible to store formatted output in strings. The \c escape prevents the insertion of an additional blank line in the output.

Copying diversions longer than a single output line produces unexpected results.

```
.di xxx
 a funny
.br
test
.br
.di
 .ds yyy This is \*[xxx]\c
 \*[yyy].
 ⇒ test This is a funny.
```

Usually, it is not predictable whether a diversion contains one or more output lines, so this mechanism should be avoided. With UNIX troff, this was the only solution to strip off a final newline from a diversion. Another disadvantage is that the spaces in the copied string are already formatted, making them unstretchable. This can cause ugly results.

A clean solution to this problem is available in GNU troff, using the requests \chop to remove the final newline of a diversion, and \unformat to make the horizontal spaces stretchable again.

```
.box xxx
 a funny
.br
test
.br
.box
.chop xxx
.unformat xxx
This is \*[xxx].
 ⇒ This is a funny test.
```

See Section 5.32 [Gtroff Internals], page 177, for more information.

```
.as name [string] [Request]
.as1 name [string] [Request]
The as request is similar to ds but appends string to the string stored as name instead of redefining it. If name doesn’t exist yet, it is created.

.as sign " with shallots, onions and garlic,
```

The as1 request is similar to as, but compatibility mode is switched off while the appended string is interpreted. To be more precise, a compatibility save input token is inserted at the beginning of the appended string, and a compatibility restore input token at the end.
Rudimentary string manipulation routines are given with the next two requests.

```plaintext
Request
.substring str n1 [n2]
Replace the string named str with the substring defined by the indices n1 and n2. The first character in the string has index 0. If n2 is omitted, it is taken to be equal to the string’s length. If the index value n1 or n2 is negative, it is counted from the end of the string, going backwards: The last character has index −1, the character before the last character has index −2, etc.

.ds xxx abcdefgh
.substring xxx 1 -4
\*[xxx]
⇒ bcde
```

```plaintext
Request
.length reg str
Compute the number of characters of str and return it in the number register reg. If reg doesn’t exist, it is created. str is read in copy mode.

.ds xxx abcd\h’3i’efgh
.length yyy \*[xxx]
\n[yyy]
⇒ 14
```

```plaintext
Request
.rn xx yy
Rename the request, macro, diversion, or string xx to yy.
```

```plaintext
Request
.rm xx
Remove the request, macro, diversion, or string xx. gtroff treats subsequent invocations as if the object had never been defined.
```

```plaintext
Request
.als new old
Create an alias named new for the request, string, macro, or diversion object named old. The new name and the old name are exactly equivalent (it is similar to a hard rather than a soft link). If old is undefined, gtroff generates a warning of type ‘mac’ and ignores the request.

To understand how the als request works it is probably best to think of two different pools: one pool for objects (macros, strings, etc.), and another one for names. As soon as an object is defined, gtroff adds it to the object pool, adds its name to the name pool, and creates a link between them. When als creates an alias, it adds a new name to the name pool which gets linked to the same object as the old name.

Now consider this example.
The definition of macro bar replaces the old object this name is linked to. However, the alias to foo is still active! In other words, foo is still linked to the same object as bar, and the result of calling bar is an infinite, recursive loop which finally leads to an error.

To undo an alias, simply call rm on the aliased name. The object itself is not destroyed until there are no more aliases.

```plaintext
.chop xx
```

[Request]

Remove (chop) the last character from the macro, string, or diversion named xx. This is useful for removing the newline from the end of diversions that are to be interpolated as strings. This command can be used repeatedly; see Section 5.32 [Gtroff Internals], page 177, for details on nodes inserted additionally by gtroff.

See Section 5.4 [Identifiers], page 65, and Section 5.5.3.1 [Comments], page 71.

### 5.20 Conditionals and Loops

#### 5.20.1 Operators in Conditionals

In if, ie, and while requests, in addition to ordinary Section 5.3 [Expressions], page 63, there are several more operators available:

- `e` True if the current page is even or odd numbered (respectively).
- `n` True if the document is being processed in nroff mode (i.e., the .nroff command has been issued). See Section 5.12 [Troff and Nroff Mode], page 99.
- `t` True if the document is being processed in troff mode (i.e., the .troff command has been issued). See Section 5.12 [Troff and Nroff Mode], page 99.
- `v` Always false. This condition is for compatibility with other troff versions only (identifying a -Tversatec device).
'xxx’yyy’

True if the output produced by xxx is equal to the output produced by yyy. Other characters can be used in place of the single quotes; the same set of delimiters as for the \D escape is used (see Section 5.5.3 [Escapes], page 70). gtroff formats xxx and yyy in separate environments; after the comparison the resulting data is discarded.

```
.ie "\"\fR\"\fP" \\ntrue
.el \\
false
⇒ true
```

The resulting motions, glyph sizes, and fonts have to match, and not the individual motion, size, and font requests. In the previous example, ‘\’ and ‘\fR\fP’ both result in a roman ‘\’ glyph with the same point size and at the same location on the page, so the strings are equal. If ‘.ft I’ had been added before the ‘.ie’, the result would be “false” because (the first) ‘\’ produces an italic ‘\’ rather than a roman one.

To compare strings without processing, surround the data with `\?`.  

```
.ie "\?\?\?\?\fR\fP\?\?" \\
true
.el \\
false
⇒ false
```

Since data protected with `\? is read in copy-in mode it is even possible to use incomplete input without causing an error.

```
.ds a \\
.ds b \\
.ie ’\?\?\?\?\*a\?’\?\?\?\*b\?’ \\
true
.el \\
false
⇒ true
```

r xxx  True if there is a number register named xxx.

d xxx  True if there is a string, macro, diversion, or request named xxx.

m xxx  True if there is a color named xxx.

---

14 The created output nodes must be identical. See Section 5.32 [Gtroff Internals], page 177.
Chapter 5: gtroff Reference

\texttt{\texttt{c g}} \quad \text{True if there is a glyph } g \text{ available}^{15}; \ g \text{ is either an ASCII character or a special character } (\backslash N' \ xxx', \ (\gg \text{ or } \backslash [ggg])); \ \text{the condition is also true if } g \text{ has been defined by the \texttt{char} request.}

\texttt{\texttt{F font}} \quad \text{True if a font named } font \text{ exists. } font \text{ is handled as if it was opened with the \texttt{ft} request (this is, font translation and styles are applied), without actually mounting it.}

This test doesn’t load the complete font but only its header to verify its validity.

\texttt{\texttt{S style}} \quad \text{True if style } style \text{ has been registered. Font translation is applied.}

Note that these operators can’t be combined with other operators like ‘:’ or ‘&’; only a leading ‘!’ (without whitespace between the exclamation mark and the operator) can be used to negate the result.

\begin{verbatim}
.nr xxx 1
.ie !r xxx \
true
.el 
false
⇒ false
\end{verbatim}

A whitespace after ‘!’ always evaluates to zero (this bizarre behaviour is due to compatibility with UNIX troff).

\begin{verbatim}
.nr xxx 1
.ie ! r xxx \
true
.el 
false
⇒ r xxx true
\end{verbatim}

It is possible to omit the whitespace before the argument to the ‘r’, ‘d’, and ‘c’ operators.

See Section 5.3 [Expressions], page 63.

5.20.2 if-else

gtroff has if-then-else constructs like other languages, although the formatting can be painful.

\begin{verbatim}
.if expr anything [Request]
Evaluate the expression expr, and executes anything (the remainder of the line) if expr evaluates to a value greater than zero (true). anything is interpreted as though it was on a line by itself (except that leading spaces are swallowed). See Section 5.20.1 [Operators in Conditionals], page 135, for more info.
\end{verbatim}

\footnote{The name of this conditional operator is a misnomer since it tests names of output glyphs.}
.nr xxx 1
.nr yyy 2
.if ((\n[xxx] == 1) & (\n[yyy] == 2)) true
⇒ true

.nop anything

Executes anything. This is similar to .if 1.

.ie expr anything
.el anything

Use the ie and el requests to write an if-then-else. The first request is the ‘if’ part and the latter is the ‘else’ part.

.ie n .ls 2 " double-spacing in nroff
.el .ls 1 " single-spacing in troff

\{
\}

In many cases, an if (or if-else) construct needs to execute more than one request. This can be done using the \{ and \} escapes. The following example shows the possible ways to use these escapes (note the position of the opening and closing braces).

.ie t \{
 . ds lq "
 . ds rq "
 .\}
.el \}
 .\{
 . ds lq "
 . ds rq "\}

See Section 5.3 [Expressions], page 63.

5.20.3 while

gtroff provides a looping construct using the while request, which is used much like the if (and related) requests.

.while expr anything

Evaluate the expression expr, and repeatedly execute anything (the remainder of the line) until expr evaluates to 0.

.nr a 0 1
.while (\na < 9) \{
 \n+a,
 .\}
\n+a
⇒ 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

Some remarks.
• The body of a while request is treated like the body of a de request: gtroff temporarily stores it in a macro which is deleted after the loop has been exited. It can considerably slow down a macro if the body of the while request (within the macro) is large. Each time the macro is executed, the while body is parsed and stored again as a temporary macro.

```
.de xxx
 . nr num 10
 . while (\n[num] > 0) \{
 . " many lines of code
 . nr num -1
 . \}
 .
```

The traditional and often better solution (UNIX troff doesn’t have the while request) is to use a recursive macro instead which is parsed only once during its definition.

```
.de yyy
 . if (\n[num] > 0) \{
 . " many lines of code
 . nr num -1
 . yyy
 . \}
 .
 .
.de xxx
 . nr num 10
 . yyy
 .
```

Note that the number of available recursion levels is set to 1000 (this is a compile-time constant value of gtroff).

• The closing brace of a while body must end a line.

```
.if 1 \{
 . nr a 0 1
 . while (\n[a] < 10) \{
 . nop \n+[a]
 .\}
 ⇒ unbalanced \{
```

```
.break
 Break out of a while loop. Be sure not to confuse this with the br request (causing a line break).
```

```
.continue
 Finish the current iteration of a while loop, immediately restarting the next iteration.
```
See Section 5.3 [Expressions], page 63.

5.21 Writing Macros

A macro is a collection of text and embedded commands which can be invoked multiple times. Use macros to define common operations. See Section 5.19 [Strings], page 130, for a (limited) alternative syntax to call macros.

Although the following requests can be used to create macros, simply using an undefined macro will cause it to be defined as empty. See Section 5.4 [Identifiers], page 65.

```
.de name [end]     [Request]
del name [end]     [Request]
dei name [end]     [Request]
dei1 name [end]    [Request]
```

Define a new macro named name. gtroff copies subsequent lines (starting with the next one) into an internal buffer until it encounters the line ‘..’ (two dots). If the optional second argument to de is present it is used as the macro closure request instead of ‘..’.

There can be whitespace after the first dot in the line containing the ending token (either ‘.’ or macro ‘end’). Don’t insert a tab character immediately after the ‘..’, otherwise it isn’t recognized as the end-of-macro symbol.\(^\text{16}\)

Here a small example macro called ‘P’ which causes a break and inserts some vertical space. It could be used to separate paragraphs.

```
.de P
. br
. sp .8v
..
```

The following example defines a macro within another. Remember that expansion must be protected twice; once for reading the macro and once for executing.

\(^\text{16}\) While it is possible to define and call a macro ‘.’ with

```
.de .
. tm foo
..
```

you can’t use this as the end-of-macro macro: during a macro definition, ‘..’ is never handled as a call to ‘.’, even if you say ‘.de foo .’ explicitly.
\# a dummy macro to avoid a warning
.de end
.
.de foo
. de bar end
. nop \f[B]Hallo \\\$1!\f[]
. end
.
.foo
.bar Joe
⇒ Hallo Joe!

Since \f has no expansion, it isn’t necessary to protect its backslash.
Had we defined another macro within bar which takes a parameter, eight
backslashes would be necessary before ‘$1’.

The dei request turns off compatibility mode while executing the macro.
On entry, the current compatibility mode is saved and restored at exit.

.nr xxx 12345
.
.de aa
The value of xxx is \n[xxx].
.
.dei bb
The value of xxx ix \n[xxx].
.
.cp 1
.
.aa
⇒ warning: number register ‘[’ not defined
⇒ The value of xxx is 0xxx].
.bb
⇒ The value of xxx ix 12345.

The dei request defines a macro indirectly. That is, it expands strings
whose names are name or end before performing the append.
This:

.ds xx aa
.ds yy bb
.dei xx yy

is equivalent to:

.de aa bb

The dei1 request is similar to dei but with compatibility mode switched
off during execution of the defined macro.
If compatibility mode is on, `de` (and `dei`) behave similar to `de1` (and `dei1`): A ‘compatibility save’ token is inserted at the beginning, and a ‘compatibility restore’ token at the end, with compatibility mode switched on during execution. See Section 5.32 [Gtroff Internals], page 177, for more information on switching compatibility mode on and off in a single document.

Using `trace.tmac`, you can trace calls to `de` and `de1`.

Note that macro identifiers are shared with identifiers for strings and diversions.

See [the description of the `als` request], page 134, for possible pitfalls if redefining a macro which has been aliased.

```
.am  name [end]           [Request]
am1 name [end]           [Request]
ami name [end]           [Request]
ami1 name [end]          [Request]
```

Works similarly to `de` except it appends onto the macro named `name`. So, to make the previously defined ‘P’ macro actually do indented instead of block paragraphs, add the necessary code to the existing macro like this:

```
.am P
.ti +5n
```

The `am1` request turns off compatibility mode while executing the appended macro piece. To be more precise, a compatibility save input token is inserted at the beginning of the appended code, and a compatibility restore input token at the end.

The `ami` request appends indirectly, meaning that `gtroff` expands strings whose names are `name` or `end` before performing the append.

The `ami1` request is similar to `ami` but compatibility mode is switched off during execution of the defined macro.

Using `trace.tmac`, you can trace calls to `am` and `am1`.

See Section 5.19 [Strings], page 130, for the `als` and `rn` request to create an alias and rename a macro, respectively.

The `de`, `am`, `di`, `da`, `ds`, and `as` requests (together with its variants) only create a new object if the name of the macro, diversion or string diversion is currently undefined or if it is defined to be a request; normally they modify the value of an existing object.

```
.return [anything]         [Request]
```

Exit a macro, immediately returning to the caller.

If called with an argument, exit twice, namely the current macro and the macro one level higher. This is used to define a wrapper macro for `return` in `trace.tmac`.  
5.21.1 Copy-in Mode

When \texttt{gtroff} reads in the text for a macro, string, or diversion, it copies the text (including request lines, but excluding escapes) into an internal buffer. Escapes are converted into an internal form, except for $\backslash n$, $\backslash $, $\backslash *$, $\backslash \backslash$ and $\backslash \text{RET}$ which are evaluated and inserted into the text where the escape was located. This is known as \textit{copy-in} mode or \textit{copy} mode.

What this means is that you can specify when these escapes are to be evaluated (either at copy-in time or at the time of use) by insulating the escapes with an extra backslash. Compare this to the \texttt{\def} and \texttt{\edef} commands in \TeX.

The following example prints the numbers 20 and 10:

\begin{verbatim}
.nr x 20
.de y
.nr x 10
&\nx
&\nx
.. .y
\end{verbatim}

5.21.2 Parameters

The arguments to a macro or string can be examined using a variety of escapes.

\texttt{\[Register\]} \texttt{\n[.\$]}

The number of arguments passed to a macro or string. This is a read-only number register.

Note that the \texttt{shift} request can change its value.

Any individual argument can be retrieved with one of the following escapes:

\texttt{\[Escape\]} \texttt{\$n}

\texttt{\[Escape\]} \texttt{\$(nn}

\texttt{\[Escape\]} \texttt{\$[nnn]}

Retrieve the \textit{n}th, \textit{nn}th or \textit{nnn}th argument. As usual, the first form only accepts a single number (larger than zero), the second a two-digit number (larger or equal to 10), and the third any positive integer value (larger than zero). Macros and strings can have an unlimited number of arguments. Note that due to copy-in mode, use two backslashes on these in actual use to prevent interpolation until the macro is actually invoked.

\texttt{\[Request\]} \texttt{.shift [n]}

Shift the arguments 1 position, or as many positions as specified by its argument. After executing this request, argument \textit{i} becomes argument $i - n$; arguments 1 to \textit{n} are no longer available. Shifting by negative amounts is currently undefined.
The register "." is adjusted accordingly.

\$*
\$@

In some cases it is convenient to use all of the arguments at once (for example, to pass the arguments along to another macro). The \$* escape concatenates all the arguments separated by spaces. A similar escape is \$@, which concatenates all the arguments with each surrounded by double quotes, and separated by spaces. If not in compatibility mode, the input level of double quotes is preserved (see Section 5.5.1.1 [Request and Macro Arguments], page 68).

\$^

Handle the parameters of a macro as if they were an argument to the ds or similar requests.

.de foo
 . tm $1='\$1'
 . tm $2='\$2'
 . tm $*='\$*'
 . tm $@='\$@'
 . tm $^='\$^'
 ..
 .foo " This is a "test"
 ⇒ $1=' This is a '
 ⇒ $2='test''
 ⇒ $*=' This is a test''
 ⇒ $@='" This is a " test"''
 ⇒ $^='" This is a "test"''

This escape is useful mainly for macro packages like trace.tmac which redefines some requests and macros for debugging purposes.

\$0

The name used to invoke the current macro. The als request can make a macro have more than one name.

If a macro is called as a string (within another macro), the value of \$0 isn’t changed.

.de foo
 . tm \$0
 ..
 .als foo bar
 .
5.22 Page Motions

See Section 5.9 [Manipulating Spacing], page 88, for a discussion of the main request for vertical motion, sp.

\[\text{.mk} \ [\text{reg}] \] \hspace{2cm} \text{[Request]}  \\
\[\text{.rt} \ [\text{dist}] \] \hspace{2cm} \text{[Request]}  \\

The request mk can be used to mark a location on a page, for movement to later. This request takes a register name as an argument in which to store the current page location. With no argument it stores the location in an internal register. The results of this can be used later by the rt or the sp request (or the \v escape).

The rt request returns \textit{upwards} to the location marked with the last mk request. If used with an argument, return to a position which distance from the top of the page is dist (no previous call to mk is necessary in this case). Default scaling indicator is ‘v’.

Here a primitive solution for a two-column macro.

\[\text{.nr column-length 1.5i} \]
\[\text{.nr column-gap 4m} \]
\[\text{.nr bottom-margin 1m} \]
This is a small test which shows how the `rt` request works in combination with `mk`.

Starting here, text is typeset in two columns.
Note that this implementation isn’t robust
and thus not suited for a real two-column macro.

Result:

This is a small test which shows how the `rt` request works in combination with `mk`.

The following escapes give fine control of movements about the page.
\v’\texttt{e}’  
Move vertically, usually from the current location on the page (if no absolute position operator ‘|’ is used). The argument \texttt{e} specifies the distance to move; positive is downwards and negative upwards. The default scaling indicator for this escape is ‘\v’. Beware, however, that \texttt{gtr} continues text processing at the point where the motion ends, so you should always balance motions to avoid interference with text processing.

\v doesn’t trigger a trap. This can be quite useful; for example, consider a page bottom trap macro which prints a marker in the margin to indicate continuation of a footnote or something similar.

There are some special-case escapes for vertical motion.

\texttt{r}  
Move upwards 1 \v.

\texttt{u}  
Move upwards .5 \v.

\texttt{d}  
Move down .5 \v.

\texttt{h’\texttt{e}’}  
Move horizontally, usually from the current location (if no absolute position operator ‘|’ is used). The expression \texttt{e} indicates how far to move: positive is rightwards and negative leftwards. The default scaling indicator for this escape is ‘\m’.

This horizontal space is not discarded at the end of a line. To insert discardable space of a certain length use the \texttt{ss} request.

There are a number of special-case escapes for horizontal motion.

\texttt{SP}  
An unbreakable and unpaddable (i.e. not expanded during filling) space. (Note: This is a backslash followed by a space.)

\texttt{~}  
An unbreakable space that stretches like a normal inter-word space when a line is adjusted.

\texttt{|}  
A 1/6 th em space. Ignored for TTY output devices (rounded to zero). However, if there is a glyph defined in the current font file with name \texttt{|} (note the leading backslash), the width of this glyph is used instead (even for TTYs).

\texttt{^}  
A 1/12 th em space. Ignored for TTY output devices (rounded to zero).
However, if there is a glyph defined in the current font file with name `\` (note the leading backslash), the width of this glyph is used instead (even for TTYs).

\0

A space the size of a digit.

The following string sets the TeX logo:

```
.ds TeX T\h'-.1667m'\v'.224m'E\v'-.224m'\h'-.125m'X
```

\text

\w

\n
\st
\sb
\rst
\rsb
\ct
\ssc
\skw

Return the width of the specified text in basic units. This allows horizontal movement based on the width of some arbitrary text (e.g. given as an argument to a macro).

The length of the string ‘abc’ is \textwidth.

⇒ The length of the string ‘abc’ is 72u.

Font changes may occur in text which don’t affect current settings.

After use, \w sets several registers:

st
sb

The highest and lowest point of the baseline, respectively, in text.

rst
rsb

Like the st and sb registers, but takes account of the heights and depths of glyphs. In other words, this gives the highest and lowest point of text. Values below the baseline are negative.

ct

Defines the kinds of glyphs occurring in text:

0 only short glyphs, no descenders or tall glyphs.
1 at least one descender.
2 at least one tall glyph.
3 at least one each of a descender and a tall glyph.

ssc

The amount of horizontal space (possibly negative) that should be added to the last glyph before a subscript.

skw

How far to right of the center of the last glyph in the \textwidth argument, the center of an accent from a roman font should be placed over that glyph.
Store the current horizontal position in the *input* line in number register with name *position* (one-character name *p*, two-character name *ps*). Use this, for example, to return to the beginning of a string for highlighting or other decoration.

\n[hp]  \nThe current horizontal position at the input line.

\n[.k]  \nA read-only number register containing the current horizontal output position (relative to the current indentation).

\o'abc'  \nOverstrike glyphs a, b, c, . . .; the glyphs are centered, and the resulting spacing is the largest width of the affected glyphs.

\zg  \nPrint glyph *g* with zero width, i.e., without spacing. Use this to overstrike glyphs left-aligned.

\Z'anything'  \nPrint *anything*, then restore the horizontal and vertical position. The argument may not contain tabs or leaders.

The following is an example of a strike-through macro:

```
.de ST
.nr ww \w'\$1'
.Z@\v'-.25m'\l'\n[ww]u'@\$1
...
This is
.ST "a test"
.an actual emergency!
```

5.23 Drawing Requests

gtroff provides a number of ways to draw lines and other figures on the page. Used in combination with the page motion commands (see Section 5.22 [Page Motions], page 145, for more info), a wide variety of figures can be drawn. However, for complex drawings these operations can be quite cumbersome, and it may be wise to use graphic preprocessors like gpic or ggrn. See Section 6.3 [gpic], page 187, and Section 6.4 [ggrn], page 187, for more information.

All drawing is done via escapes.
\l'\l'
\l'lg'

[Escape]

Draw a line horizontally. \( l \) is the length of the line to be drawn. If it is positive, start the line at the current location and draw to the right; its end point is the new current location. Negative values are handled differently: The line starts at the current location and draws to the left, but the current location doesn’t move.

\( l \) can also be specified absolutely (i.e. with a leading ‘|’) which draws back to the beginning of the input line. Default scaling indicator is ‘\( m \)’.

The optional second parameter \( g \) is a glyph to draw the line with. If this second argument is not specified, \texttt{gtroff} uses the underscore glyph, \texttt{\[ru\]}.

To separate the two arguments (to prevent \texttt{gtroff} from interpreting a drawing glyph as a scaling indicator if the glyph is represented by a single character) use \texttt{\&}.

Here a small useful example:

\begin{verbatim}
.de box
  \[br]\$$*\[br]\l'|0\[rn]\l'|0\[ul]\'
.. 
\end{verbatim}

Note that this works by outputting a box rule (a vertical line), then the text given as an argument and then another box rule. Finally, the line drawing escapes both draw from the current location to the beginning of the input line – this works because the line length is negative, not moving the current point.

\L'\l'
\L'lg'

[Escape]

Draw vertical lines. Its parameters are similar to the \l escape, except that the default scaling indicator is ‘\( v \)’. The movement is downwards for positive values, and upwards for negative values. The default glyph is the box rule glyph, \texttt{\[br\]}. As with the vertical motion escapes, text processing blindly continues where the line ends.

\begin{verbatim}
This is a \L‘3v’test.
\end{verbatim}

Here the result, produced with \texttt{grotty}.

\begin{verbatim}
This is a
  |
  |
  |test.
\end{verbatim}

\D’command arg . . .’

The \D escape provides a variety of drawing functions. Note that on character devices, only vertical and horizontal lines are supported within \texttt{grotty}; other devices may only support a subset of the available drawing functions.
Chapter 5: \texttt{gtroff} Reference

The default scaling indicator for all subcommands of \texttt{D} is ‘m’ for horizontal distances and ‘v’ for vertical ones. Exceptions are \texttt{D'f \ldots’} and \texttt{D't \ldots’} which use \texttt{u} as the default, and \texttt{D'Fx \ldots’} which arguments are treated similar to the \texttt{defcolor} request.

\texttt{D'1 dx dy’}

Draw a line from the current location to the relative point specified by \((dx,dy)\), where positive values mean down and right, respectively. The end point of the line is the new current location.

The following example is a macro for creating a box around a text string; for simplicity, the box margin is taken as a fixed value, 0.2 m.

\begin{verbatim}
.de BOX
 . nr @wd \w'\$1'
 \h'.2m'
 \h'-.2m'v'(.2m - \n[rsb]u)'
 \D'1 0 -\n[rsb]u - (\n[rst]u - \n[rsb]u + .4m)'
 \D'1 (\n[@wd]u + .4m) 0'
 \D'1 0 (\n[rst]u - \n[rsb]u + .4m)'
 \D'1 -(\n[@wd]u + .4m) 0'
 \h'.2m'v'-(.2m - \n[rsb]u)'
 \$1\n \h'.2m'
...
\end{verbatim}

First, the width of the string is stored in register \texttt{@wd}. Then, four lines are drawn to form a box, properly offset by the box margin. The registers \texttt{rst} and \texttt{rsb} are set by the \texttt{w} escape, containing the largest height and depth of the whole string.

\texttt{D'c d’}

Draw a circle with a diameter of \texttt{d} with the leftmost point at the current position. After drawing, the current location is positioned at the rightmost point of the circle.

\texttt{D'C d’}

Draw a solid circle with the same parameters and behaviour as an outlined circle. No outline is drawn.

\texttt{D'e x y’}

Draw an ellipse with a horizontal diameter of \texttt{x} and a vertical diameter of \texttt{y} with the leftmost point at the current position. After drawing, the current location is positioned at the rightmost point of the ellipse.

\texttt{D'E x y’}

Draw a solid ellipse with the same parameters and behaviour as an outlined ellipse. No outline is drawn.

\texttt{D'a dx1 dy1 dx2 dy2’}

Draw an arc clockwise from the current location through the two specified relative locations \((dx1,dy1)\) and \((dx2,dy2)\). The
coordinates of the first point are relative to the current position, and the coordinates of the second point are relative to the first point. After drawing, the current position is moved to the final point of the arc.

\D'~ dx1 dy1 dx2 dy2 ...'
Draw a spline from the current location to the relative point \((dx1,dy1)\) and then to \((dx2,dy2)\), and so on. The current position is moved to the terminal point of the drawn curve.

\D'f n'
Set the shade of gray to be used for filling solid objects to \(n\): \(n\) must be an integer between 0 and 1000, where 0 corresponds solid white and 1000 to solid black, and values in between correspond to intermediate shades of gray. This applies only to solid circles, solid ellipses, and solid polygons. By default, a level of 1000 is used.

Despite of being silly, the current point is moved horizontally to the right by \(n\).

Don’t use this command! It has the serious drawback that it is always rounded to the next integer multiple of the horizontal resolution (the value of the \texttt{hor} keyword in the \texttt{DESC} file). Use \texttt{\M} (see Section 5.28 [Colors], page 168) or \D’Fg ...’ instead.

\D'p dx1 dy1 dx2 dy2 ...
Draw a polygon from the current location to the relative position \((dx1,dy1)\) and then to \((dx2,dy2)\) and so on. When the specified data points are exhausted, a line is drawn back to the starting point. The current position is changed by adding the sum of all arguments with odd index to the actual horizontal position and the even ones to the vertical position.

\D’P dx1 dy1 dx2 dy2 ...
Draw a solid polygon with the same parameters and behaviour as an outlined polygon. No outline is drawn.

Here a better variant of the box macro to fill the box with some color. Note that the box must be drawn before the text since colors in \texttt{gtroff} are not transparent; the filled polygon would hide the text completely.
If you want a filled polygon which has exactly the same size as an unfilled one, you must draw both an unfilled and a filled polygon. A filled polygon is always smaller than an unfilled one because the latter uses straight lines with a given line thickness to connect the polygon's corners, while the former simply fills the area defined by the coordinates.

\h'.2m'\v'-(.2m - \n[rsb]u)'\h'.2m'\v'-.2m'\M[lightcyan]\D'P 0 -(\n[rst]u - \n[rsb]u + .4m) \(\n[@wd]u + .4m) 0 \(\n[rst]u - \n[rsb]u + .4m) 0\(-(\n[@wd]u + .4m) 0'\h'.2m'\v'-(.2m - \n[rsb]u)'\h'.2m'\v'1i'\h'.2mi'\v'1i'\n# increase line thickness\Z'D't 5p'\n# draw unfilled polygon\Z'D'p 3 3 -6 0'\n# draw filled polygon\Z'D'P 3 3 -6 0'

\D't n' Set the current line thickness to \textit{n} machine units. A value of zero selects the smallest available line thickness. A negative value makes the line thickness proportional to the current point size (this is the default behaviour of AT&T \texttt{troff}). Despite of being silly, the current point is moved horizontally to the right by \textit{n}.

\D'Fscheme color_components' Change current fill color. \texttt{scheme} is a single letter denoting the color scheme: \texttt{`r'} (rgb), \texttt{`c'} (cmy), \texttt{`k'} (cmyk), \texttt{`g'} (gray), or \texttt{`d'} (default color). The color components use exactly the same syntax as in the \texttt{defcolor} request (see Section 5.28 [Colors], page 168); the command \D'Fd' doesn't take an argument.

\textit{No} position changing!

Examples:

\D'Fg .3' " same gray as \D'f 700' \D'Fr #0000ff' " blue
See Section 8.1.2.3 [Graphics Commands], page 202.

\b\’string’

_Pile_ a sequence of glyphs vertically, and center it vertically on the current line. Use it to build large brackets and braces.

Here an example how to create a large opening brace:

\b\’\[lt\]\[bv\]\[lk\]\[bv\]\[lb\]’

The first glyph is on the top, the last glyph in _string_ is at the bottom. Note that _gtroff_ separates the glyphs vertically by 1 m, and the whole object is centered 0.5 m above the current baseline; the largest glyph width is used as the width for the whole object. This rather unflexible positioning algorithm doesn’t work with _-Tdvi_ since the bracket pieces vary in height for this device. Instead, use the _eqn_ preprocessor.

See Section 5.9 [Manipulating Spacing], page 88, how to adjust the vertical spacing with the \x escape.

### 5.24 Traps

_Traps_ are locations, which, when reached, call a specified macro. These traps can occur at a given location on the page, at a given location in the current diversion, at a blank line, after a certain number of input lines, or at the end of input.

Setting a trap is also called _planting_. It is also said that a trap is _sprung_ if the associated macro is executed.

#### 5.24.1 Page Location Traps

_Page location traps_ perform an action when _gtroff_ reaches or passes a certain vertical location on the page. Page location traps have a variety of purposes, including:

- setting headers and footers
- setting body text in multiple columns
- setting footnotes

.. _vpt: flag
\n[n\[.vpt]_ [Request]

Enable vertical position traps if _flag_ is non-zero, or disables them otherwise. Vertical position traps are traps set by the _wh_ or _dt_ requests. Traps set by the _it_ request are not vertical position traps. The parameter that controls whether vertical position traps are enabled is global. Initially vertical position traps are enabled. The current setting of this is available in the _vpt_ read-only number register.

Note that a page can’t be ejected if _vpt_ is set to zero.

.. _wh: dist [macro]_ [Request]

Set a page location trap. Non-negative values for _dist_ set the trap relative to the top of the page; negative values set the trap relative to the bottom.
of the page. Default scaling indicator is ‘v’; values of \( \text{dist} \) are always rounded to be multiples of the vertical resolution (as given in register \( .V \)).

\textit{macro} is the name of the macro to execute when the trap is sprung. If \textit{macro} is missing, remove the first trap (if any) at \( \text{dist} \).

The following is a simple example of how many macro packages set headers and footers.

```
.de hd " Page header
  ' sp .5i
  . tl 'Title''date'
  ' sp .3i
.. .
.de fo " Page footer
  ' sp 1v
  . tl ''%''
  ' bp
.. .
.wh 0   hd " trap at top of the page
.wh -1i fo " trap one inch from bottom
```

A trap at or below the bottom of the page is ignored; it can be made active by either moving it up or increasing the page length so that the trap is on the page.

Negative trap values always use the \textit{current} page length; they are not converted to an absolute vertical position:

```
.pl 5i
.wh -1i xx
.ptr
     ⇒ xx -240
.pl 100i
.ptr
     ⇒ xx -240
```

It is possible to have more than one trap at the same location; to do so, the traps must be defined at different locations, then moved together with the \texttt{ch} request; otherwise the second trap would replace the first one. Earlier defined traps hide later defined traps if moved to the same position (the many empty lines caused by the \texttt{bp} request are omitted in the following example):
A read-only number register holding the distance to the next trap.
If there are no traps between the current position and the bottom of the
page, it contains the distance to the page bottom. In a diversion, the
distance to the page bottom is infinite (the returned value is the biggest
integer which can be represented in \texttt{groff}) if there are no diversion traps.

\texttt{\textbf{.ch macro [dist]}} \hfill \textbf{[Request]}

Change the location of a trap. The first argument is the name of the
macro to be invoked at the trap, and the second argument is the new
location for the trap (note that the parameters are specified in opposite
order as in the \texttt{wh} request). This is useful for building up footnotes in a
diversion to allow more space at the bottom of the page for them.
Default scaling indicator for \texttt{dist} is ‘v’. If \texttt{dist} is missing, the trap is
removed.

\texttt{\textbf{.n[.ne]}} \hfill \textbf{[Register]}

The read-only number register \texttt{.ne} contains the amount of space that was
needed in the last \texttt{ne} request that caused a trap to be sprung. Useful in
conjunction with the \texttt{.trunc} register. See Section 5.16 [Page Control],
page 106, for more information.
Since the \texttt{.ne} register is only set by traps it doesn’t make much sense to
use it outside of trap macros.
\n[.trunc]

A read-only register containing the amount of vertical space truncated by
the most recently sprung vertical position trap, or, if the trap was sprung
by an ne request, minus the amount of vertical motion produced by the
ne request. In other words, at the point a trap is sprung, it represents
the difference of what the vertical position would have been but for the
trap, and what the vertical position actually is.

Since the .trunc register is only set by traps it doesn’t make much sense
to use it outside of trap macros.

\n[.pe]

A read-only register which is set to 1 while a page is ejected with the bp
request (or by the end of input).

Outside of traps this register is always zero. In the following example,
only the second call to x is caused by bp.

```
.de x
&.pe=\n.n[.pe]
.br
..
.wh 1v x
.wh 4v x
A line.
.br
Another line.
.br
⇒ A line.
    .pe=0
    Another line.
    .pe=1
```

An important fact to consider while designing macros is that diversions
and traps do not interact normally. For example, if a trap invokes a header
macro (while outputting a diversion) which tries to change the font on the
current page, the effect is not visible before the diversion has completely
been printed (except for input protected with \! or \?) since the data in
the diversion is already formatted. In most cases, this is not the expected
behaviour.

### 5.24.2 Diversion Traps

\n[dist macro]

Set a trap within a diversion. dist is the location of the trap (identical to
the wh request; default scaling indicator is ‘v’) and macro is the name of
the macro to be invoked. If called without arguments, the diversion trap
is removed.
Note that there exists only a single diversion trap.
The number register .t still works within diversions. See Section 5.25 [Diversions], page 161, for more information.

5.24.3 Input Line Traps

\texttt{.it }n\texttt{ macro} \quad \texttt{[Request]}
\texttt{.itc }n\texttt{ macro} \quad \texttt{[Request]}

Set an input line trap. \textit{n} is the number of lines of input which may be read before springing the trap, \textit{macro} is the macro to be invoked. Request lines are not counted as input lines.

For example, one possible use is to have a macro which prints the next \textit{n} lines in a bold font.
\begin{verbatim}
  .de B
  . it \$1 B-end
  . ft B
  ...
  .de B-end
  . ft R
  ...
\end{verbatim}

The \texttt{itc} request is identical except that an interrupted text line (ending with \texttt{\c}) is not counted as a separate line.

Both requests are associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165); switching to another environment disables the current input trap, and going back reactivates it, restoring the number of already processed lines.

5.24.4 Blank Line Traps

\texttt{.blm }macro \quad \texttt{[Request]}

Set a blank line trap. \texttt{gtroff} executes \textit{macro} when it encounters a blank line in the input file.

5.24.5 Leading Spaces Traps

\texttt{.lsm }macro \quad \texttt{\[Request]}
\texttt{\n[lsn]} \quad \texttt{\[Register\]}
\texttt{\n[lss]} \quad \texttt{\[Register\]}

Set a leading spaces trap. \texttt{gtroff} executes \textit{macro} when it encounters leading spaces in an input line; the implicit line break which normally happens in this case is suppressed. A line consisting of spaces only, however, is treated as an empty line, possibly subject to an empty line macro set with the \texttt{blm} request.

Leading spaces are removed from the input line before calling the leading spaces macro. The number of removed spaces is stored in register \texttt{lsn};
the horizontal space which would be emitted if there was no leading space macro is stored in register \(lss\). Note that \(lsn\) and \(lss\) are available even if no leading space macro has been set.

The first thing a leading space macro sees is a token. However, some escapes like \(\texttt{\\f}\) or \(\texttt{\\m}\) are handled on the fly (see Section 5.32 [Gtroff Internals], page 177, for a complete list) without creating a token at all. Consider that a line starts with two spaces followed by \(\texttt{\\fIfoo}\). While skipping the spaces \(\texttt{\\fI}\) is handled too so that groff’s current font is properly set to ‘I’, but the leading space macro only sees \(\texttt{foo}\), without the preceding \(\texttt{\\fI}\). If the macro should see the font escape you have to ‘protect’ it with something which creates a token, for example with \(\texttt{\\&\\fIfoo}\).

### 5.24.6 End-of-input Traps

\emph{em \ macro} 

[Request]

Set a trap at the end of input. \emph{macro} is executed after the last line of the input file has been processed.

For example, if the document had to have a section at the bottom of the last page for someone to approve it, the \emph{em} request could be used.

```
.de approval
\c
  . ne 3v
  . sp (\n[.t]u - 3v)
  . in +4i
  . lc _
  . br
  Approved:\t\a
  . sp
  Date:\t\t\a
  ...
  ...
.em approval
```

The \(\texttt{\c}\) in the above example needs explanation. For historical reasons (and for compatibility with AT&T \texttt{troff}), the end macro exits as soon as it causes a page break and no remaining data is in the partially collected line.

Let us assume that there is no \(\texttt{\c}\) in the above \emph{approval} macro, and that the page is full and has been ended with, say, a \texttt{br} request. The \emph{ne} request now causes the start of a new page, which in turn makes \texttt{troff} exit immediately for the reasons just described. In most situations this is not intended.

To always force processing the whole end macro independently of this behaviour it is thus advisable to insert something which starts an empty partially filled line (\(\texttt{\c}\)) whenever there is a chance that a page break can
happen. In the above example, the call of the \texttt{ne} request assures that the remaining code stays on the same page, so we have to insert \texttt{c} only once.

The next example shows how to append three lines, then starting a new page unconditionally. Since \texttt{.ne 1} doesn’t give the desired effect – there is always one line available or we are already at the beginning of the next page – we temporarily increase the page length by one line so that we can use \texttt{.ne 2}.

\begin{verbatim}
.de EM
.pl +1v
\c
.ne 2
line one
.br
\c
.ne 2
line two
.br
\c
.ne 2
line three
.br
.pl -1v
\c
'bp
..
.em EM
\end{verbatim}

Note that this specific feature affects only the first potential page break caused by the end macro; further page breaks emitted by the end macro are handled normally.

Another possible use of the \texttt{em} request is to make \texttt{gtroff} emit a single large page instead of multiple pages. For example, one may want to produce a long plain-text file for reading on-screen. The idea is to set the page length at the beginning of the document to a very large value to hold all the text, and automatically adjust it to the exact height of the document after the text has been output.
.de adjust-page-length
  . br
  . pl \n[nl]u  \" \n[nl] holds the current page length
  .
  .de single-page-mode
  . pl 99999
  . em adjust-page-length
  .
  .\" activate the above code
  .single-page-mode

Since only one end-of-input trap does exist and other macro packages may already use it, care must be taken not to break the mechanism. A simple solution would be to append the above macro to the macro package’s end-of-input macro using the .am request.

5.25 Diversions

In gtroff it is possible to divert text into a named storage area. Due to the similarity to defining macros it is sometimes said to be stored in a macro. This is used for saving text for output at a later time, which is useful for keeping blocks of text on the same page, footnotes, tables of contents, and indices.

For orthogonality it is said that gtroff is in the top-level diversion if no diversion is active (i.e., the data is diverted to the output device).

Although the following requests can be used to create diversions, simply using an undefined diversion will cause it to be defined as empty. See Section 5.4 [Identifiers], page 65.

.di macro [Request]
.da macro [Request]

Begin a diversion. Like the de request, it takes an argument of a macro name to divert subsequent text into. The da macro appends to an existing diversion.

di or da without an argument ends the diversion.
The current partially-filled line is included into the diversion. See the box request below for an example. Note that switching to another (empty) environment (with the ev request) avoids the inclusion of the current partially-filled line.

.box macro [Request]
.boxa macro [Request]

Begin (or append to) a diversion like the di and da requests. The difference is that box and boxa do not include a partially-filled line in the diversion.
Compare this:

```
Before the box.
.box xxx
In the box.
.br
.box
After the box.
.br
⇒ Before the box. After the box.
.xxx
⇒ In the box.
```

with this:

```
Before the diversion.
.di yyy
In the diversion.
.br
.di
After the diversion.
.br
⇒ After the diversion.
.yyy
⇒ Before the diversion. In the diversion.
```

box or boxa without an argument ends the diversion.

\[\text{n}[.z]\] \[\text{Register}\]
\[\text{n}[.d]\] \[\text{Register}\]

Diversions may be nested. The read-only number register .\text{z} contains the name of the current diversion (this is a string-valued register). The read-only number register .\text{d} contains the current vertical place in the diversion. If not in a diversion it is the same as register \text{nl}.

\[\text{n}[.h]\] \[\text{Register}\]

The high-water mark on the current page. It corresponds to the text baseline of the lowest line on the page. This is a read-only register.

```
.tm .h=\text{n}[.h], \text{nl}=\text{n}[\text{nl}]
⇒ .h=0, \text{nl}=-1
This is a test.
.br
.sp 2
.tm .h=\text{n}[.h], \text{nl}=\text{n}[\text{nl}]
⇒ .h=40, \text{nl}=120
```

As can be seen in the previous example, empty lines are not considered in the return value of the .\text{h} register.
After completing a diversion, the read-write number registers \texttt{dn} and \texttt{dl} contain the vertical and horizontal size of the diversion. Note that only the just processed lines are counted: For the computation of \texttt{dn} and \texttt{dl}, the requests \texttt{da} and \texttt{boxa} are handled as if \texttt{di} and \texttt{box} had been used – lines which have been already stored in a macro are not taken into account.

.. Center text both horizontally & vertically

.. Enclose macro definitions in .eo and .ec

.. to avoid the doubling of the backslash

..eo

.. macro .(c starts centering mode

.. .de (c

.. .br

.. .ev (c

.. .evc 0

.. .in 0

.. .nf

.. .di @c

.. .

.. macro .)c terminates centering mode

.. .de )c

.. .br

.. .ev

.. .di

.. .nr @s (((\n[.t]u - \n[dn]u) / 2u) - 1v)

.. .sp \n[.s]u

.. .ce 1000

.. @c

.. .ce 0

.. .sp \n[.s]u

.. .br

.. .fi

.. .rr @s

.. .rm @s

.. .rm @c

.. .

.. End of macro definitions, restore escape mechanism

.. .ec

\!\
\?anything\?\

Prevent requests, macros, and escapes from being interpreted when read into a diversion. Both escapes take the given text and \textit{transparently}
embed it into the diversion. This is useful for macros which shouldn’t be
invoked until the diverted text is actually output.

The \! escape transparently embeds text up to and including the end
of the line. The \? escape transparently embeds text until the next
occurrence of the \? escape. Example:

```
\?anything\?
```

anything may not contain newlines; use \! to embed newlines in a diver-
sion. The escape sequence \? is also recognized in copy mode and turned
into a single internal code; it is this code that terminates anything. Thus
the following example prints 4.

```
.nr x 1
.nf
.di d
\?\?\?\?\?\?\?\?\?\?\?\?\?\?\?\?\?\?\?
.di
.nr x 2
.di e
.d
.di
.nr x 3
.di f
.e
.di
.nr x 4
.f
```

Both escapes read the data in copy mode.

If \! is used in the top-level diversion, its argument is directly embedded
into the gtroff intermediate output. This can be used for example to
control a postprocessor which processes the data before it is sent to the
device driver.

The \? escape used in the top-level diversion produces no output at all;
its argument is simply ignored.

```
.output string
```

[Request]

Emit string directly to the gtroff intermediate output (subject to copy
mode interpretation); this is similar to \! used at the top level. An initial
double quote in string is stripped off to allow initial blanks.

This request can’t be used before the first page has started – if you get
an error, simply insert .br before the output request.

Without argument, output is ignored.

Use with caution! It is normally only needed for mark-up used by a
postprocessor which does something with the output before sending it to
the output device, filtering out string again.
.asciify div  [Request]
    Unformat the diversion specified by div in such a way that ASCII characters, characters translated with the trin request, space characters, and some escape sequences that were formatted and diverted are treated like ordinary input characters when the diversion is reread. It can be also used for gross hacks; for example, the following sets register n to 1.
    .tr @.
    .di x
    @nr n 1
    .br
    .di
    .tr @@
    .asciify x
    .x

Note that asciify cannot return all items in a diversion back to their source equivalent, nodes such as \N[...] will still remain as nodes, so the result cannot be guaranteed to be a pure string.
See Section 5.21.1 [Copy-in Mode], page 143.

.unformat div  [Request]
    Like asciify, unformat the specified diversion. However, unformat only unformats spaces and tabs between words. Unformatted tabs are treated as input tokens, and spaces are stretchable again.
    The vertical size of lines is not preserved; glyph information (font, font size, space width, etc.) is retained.

5.26 Environments

It happens frequently that some text should be printed in a certain format regardless of what may be in effect at the time, for example, in a trap invoked macro to print headers and footers. To solve this gtroff processes text in environments. An environment contains most of the parameters that control text processing. It is possible to switch amongst these environments; by default gtroff processes text in environment 0. The following is the information kept in an environment.

- font parameters (size, family, style, glyph height and slant, space and sentence space size)
- page parameters (line length, title length, vertical spacing, line spacing, indentation, line numbering, centering, right-justifying, underlining, hyphenation data)
- fill and adjust mode
- tab stops, tab and leader characters, escape character, no-break and hyphen indicators, margin character data
- partially collected lines
- input traps
• drawing and fill colours

These environments may be given arbitrary names (see Section 5.4 [Identifiers], page 65, for more info). Old versions of troff only had environments named ‘0’, ‘1’, and ‘2’.

\.ev [env] \n
\n[Request] \n[Register]
Switch to another environment. The argument env is the name of the environment to switch to. With no argument, gtroff switches back to the previous environment. There is no limit on the number of named environments; they are created the first time that they are referenced. The .ev read-only register contains the name or number of the current environment. This is a string-valued register.

Note that a call to ev (with argument) pushes the previously active environment onto a stack. If, say, environments ‘foo’, ‘bar’, and ‘zap’ are called (in that order), the first ev request without parameter switches back to environment ‘bar’ (which is popped off the stack), and a second call switches back to environment ‘foo’.

Here is an example:

\.ev footnote-env
\.fam N
\.ps 6
\.vs 8
\.ll -.5i
\.ev

...

\.ev footnote-env
\dg Note the large, friendly letters.
\.ev

\.evc env

[Request]
Copy the environment env into the current environment.

The following environment data is not copied:

• Partially filled lines.
• The status whether the previous line was interrupted.
• The number of lines still to center, or to right-justify, or to underline (with or without underlined spaces); they are set to zero.
• The status whether a temporary indentation is active.
• Input traps and its associated data.
• Line numbering mode is disabled; it can be reactivated with ‘.nm +0’.
• The number of consecutive hyphenated lines (set to zero).
The \n[.w] register contains the width of the last glyph added to the current environment.

The \n[.cht] register contains the height of the last glyph added to the current environment.

The \n[.cdp] register contains the depth of the last glyph added to the current environment. It is positive for glyphs extending below the baseline.

The \n[.csk] register contains the skew (how far to the right of the glyph’s center that gtroff should place an accent) of the last glyph added to the current environment.

The \n[.n] register contains the length of the previous output line in the current environment.

### 5.27 Suppressing output

\0num

Disable or enable output depending on the value of num:

- ‘\00’ Disable any glyphs from being emitted to the device driver, provided that the escape occurs at the outer level (see \0[3] and \0[4]). Motion is not suppressed so effectively \0[0] means pen up.
- ‘\01’ Enable output of glyphs, provided that the escape occurs at the outer level.

\00 and \01 also reset the four registers ‘opminx’, ‘opminy’, ‘opmaxx’, and ‘opmaxy’ to −1. See tie E [Register Index], page 237. These four registers mark the top left and bottom right hand corners of a box which encompasses all written glyphs.

For example the input text:

```
Hello \0[0]world \0[1]this is a test.
```

produces the following output:

```
Hello       this is a test.
```

- ‘\02’ Provided that the escape occurs at the outer level, enable output of glyphs and also write out to stderr the page number and four registers encompassing the glyphs previously written since the last call to \0.
‘\03’ Begin a nesting level. At start-up, g troff is at outer level. The current level is contained within the read-only register .0. See Section 5.6.5 [Built-in Registers], page 77.

‘\04’ End a nesting level. The current level is contained within the read-only register .0. See Section 5.6.5 [Built-in Registers], page 77.

‘\05Pfilename’
This escape is grohtml specific. Provided that this escape occurs at the outer nesting level write the filename to stderr. The position of the image, P, must be specified and must be one of l, r, c, or i (left, right, centered, inline). filename is associated with the production of the next inline image.

5.28 Colors

.color [n]
\n[Request]
\n[Register]

If n is missing or non-zero, activate colors (this is the default); otherwise, turn it off.

The read-only number register .color is 1 if colors are active, 0 otherwise. Internally, color sets a global flag; it does not produce a token. Similar to the cp request, you should use it at the beginning of your document to control color output.

Colors can be also turned off with the -c command line option.

.defcolor ident scheme color_components
[Request]

Define color with name ident. scheme can be one of the following values: rgb (three components), cmy (three components), cmyk (four components), and gray or grey (one component).

Color components can be given either as a hexadecimal string or as positive decimal integers in the range 0–65535. A hexadecimal string contains all color components concatenated. It must start with either # or ##; the former specifies hex values in the range 0–255 (which are internally multiplied by 257), the latter in the range 0–65535. Examples: #FFC0CB (pink), ##ffff0000ffff (magenta). The default color name value is device-specific (usually black). It is possible that the default color for \m and \M is not identical.

A new scaling indicator f has been introduced which multiplies its value by 65536; this makes it convenient to specify color components as fractions in the range 0 to 1 (1f equals 65536u). Example:

.defcolor darkgreen rgb 0.1f 0.5f 0.2f

Note that f is the default scaling indicator for the defcolor request, thus the above statement is equivalent to

.defcolor darkgreen rgb 0.1 0.5 0.2
.gcolor [color] [Request]
\mc [Escape]
\m(co) [Escape]
\m[color] [Escape]
\n[.m] [Register]
Set (glyph) drawing color. The following examples show how to turn the next four words red.

.gcolor red
   these are in red
.gcolor
   and these words are in black.
\m[red]these are in red\m[] and these words are in black.

The escape \m[] returns to the previous color, as does a call to gcolor without an argument.
The name of the current drawing color is available in the read-only, string-valued number register ‘.m’.
The drawing color is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

Note that \m doesn’t produce an input token in gtroff. As a consequence, it can be used in requests like mc (which expects a single character as an argument) to change the color on the fly:

.mc \m[red]x\m[]

.fcolor [color] [Request]
\Fc [Escape]
\M(co) [Escape]
\M[color] [Escape]
\n[.M] [Register]
Set fill (background) color for filled objects drawn with the \D’...’ commands.

A red ellipse can be created with the following code:

\M[red]\h’0.5i’\D’E 2i 1i’\M[]

The escape \M[] returns to the previous fill color, as does a call to fcolor without an argument.
The name of the current fill (background) color is available in the read-only, string-valued number register ‘.M’.
The fill color is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

Note that \M doesn’t produce an input token in gtroff.

5.29 I/O
gtroff has several requests for including files:
.so file  
[Request]  
Read in the specified file and includes it in place of the so request. This is quite useful for large documents, e.g. keeping each chapter in a separate file. See Section 6.8 [gsoelim], page 187, for more information.
Since gtroff replaces the so request with the contents of file, it makes a difference whether the data is terminated with a newline or not: Assuming that file xxx contains the word ‘foo’ without a final newline, this

This is
.so xxx
bar

yields ‘This is foobar’.
The search path for file can be controlled with the -I command line option.

.pso command  
[Request]  
Read the standard output from the specified command and includes it in place of the pso request.
This request causes an error if used in safer mode (which is the default). Use groff’s or troff’s -U option to activate unsafe mode.
The comment regarding a final newline for the so request is valid for pso also.

.mso file  
[Request]  
Identical to the so request except that gtroff searches for the specified file in the same directories as macro files for the the -m command line option. If the file name to be included has the form name.tmac and it isn’t found, mso tries to include tmac.name and vice versa. If the file does not exist, a warning of type ‘file’ is emitted. See Section 5.33 [Debugging], page 179, for information about warnings.

.trf file  
[Request]  
.cf file  
[Request]  
Transparently output the contents of file. Each line is output as if it were preceded by !; however, the lines are not subject to copy mode interpretation. If the file does not end with a newline, then a newline is added (trf only). For example, to define a macro x containing the contents of file f, use

.ev 1
.di x
.trf f
.di
.ev

The calls to ev prevent that the current partial input line becomes part of the diversion.
Both trf and cf, when used in a diversion, embeds an object in the diversion which, when reread, causes the contents of file to be transpar-
ently copied through to the output. In UNIX troff, the contents of file is immediately copied through to the output regardless of whether there is a current diversion; this behaviour is so anomalous that it must be considered a bug.

While cf copies the contents of file completely unprocessed, trf disallows characters such as NUL that are not valid gtroff input characters (see Section 5.4 [Identifiers], page 65).

For cf, within a diversion, ‘completely unprocessed’ means that each line of a file to be inserted is handled as if it were preceded by \!\!\!. Both requests cause a line break.

\nx [file] [Request]
Forced troff to continue processing of the file specified as an argument. If no argument is given, immediately jump to the end of file.

\rd [prompt [arg1 arg2 . . .]] [Request]
Read from standard input, and include what is read as though it were part of the input file. Text is read until a blank line is encountered.
If standard input is a TTY input device (keyboard), write prompt to standard error, followed by a colon (or send BEL for a beep if no argument is given).
Arguments after prompt are available for the input. For example, the line
\rd data foo bar
with the input ‘This is \$2.’ prints
This is bar.

Using the nx and rd requests, it is easy to set up form letters. The form letter template is constructed like this, putting the following lines into a file called repeat.let:

\ce
\*(td
.sp 2
.nf
.rd
.sp
.rd
.fi
Body of letter.
.bp
.nx repeat.let
When this is run, a file containing the following lines should be redirected in. Note that requests included in this file are executed as though they were part of the form letter. The last block of input is the ex request which tells groff to stop processing. If this was not there, groff would not know when to stop.
Dear Trent,

Len Adollar
4315 Sierra Vista
San Diego, CA 92103

Dear Mr. Adollar,

.pi pipe
Pipe the output of gtroff to the shell command(s) specified by pipe. This request must occur before gtroff has a chance to print anything.
pi causes an error if used in safer mode (which is the default). Use groff’s or troff’s -U option to activate unsafe mode.
Multiple calls to pi are allowed, acting as a chain. For example,

.pi foo
.pi bar
...

is the same as ‘.pi foo | bar’.
Note that the intermediate output format of gtroff is piped to the specified commands. Consequently, calling groff without the -Z option normally causes a fatal error.

.sy cmds
\n[systat]
[Register]
Execute the shell command(s) specified by cmds. The output is not saved anyplace, so it is up to the user to do so.
This request causes an error if used in safer mode (which is the default). Use groff’s or troff’s -U option to activate unsafe mode.
For example, the following code fragment introduces the current time into a document:

.sy perl -e 'printf ".nr H %d\n.nr M %d\n.nr S %d\n",
(localtime(time))[2,1,0] > /tmp/x

.sy rm /tmp/x

Note that this works by having the perl script (run by sy) print out the nr requests which set the number registers H, M, and S, and then reads those commands in with the so request.
For most practical purposes, the number registers *seconds*, *minutes*, and *hours* which are initialized at start-up of *gtroff* should be sufficient. Use the *af* request to get a formatted output:

```
.af hours 00
.af minutes 00
.af seconds 00
\n[hours]:\n[minutes]:\n[seconds]
```

The *systat* read-write number register contains the return value of the *system()* function executed by the last *sy* request.

```
.open stream file                             [Request]
.opena stream file                            [Request]
```

Open the specified *file* for writing and associates the specified *stream* with it.

The *opena* request is like *open*, but if the file exists, append to it instead of truncating it.

Both *open* and *opena* cause an error if used in safer mode (which is the default). Use *groff*’s or *troff*’s *-U* option to activate unsafe mode.

```
.write stream data                            [Request]
.writec stream data                           [Request]
```

Write to the file associated with the specified *stream*. The stream must previously have been the subject of an open request. The remainder of the line is interpreted as the *ds* request reads its second argument: A leading ‘”’ is stripped, and it is read in copy-in mode.

The *writec* request is like *write*, but only *write* appends a newline to the data.

```
.writem stream xx                             [Request]
```

Write the contents of the macro or string *xx* to the file associated with the specified *stream*.

*xx* is read in copy mode, i.e., already formatted elements are ignored. Consequently, diversions must be unformatted with the *asciify* request before calling *writem*. Usually, this means a loss of information.

```
.close stream                                 [Request]
```

Close the specified *stream*; the stream is no longer an acceptable argument to the *write* request.

Here a simple macro to write an index entry.
.open idx test.idx
.
de IX
. write idx \n[\%] \$*
..
.IX test entry
.
.close idx

\Ve
\V(ev
\V[env]

Interpolate the contents of the specified environment variable `env` (one-character name `e`, two-character name `ev`) as returned by the function `getenv`. `\V` is interpreted in copy-in mode.

5.30 Postprocessor Access
There are two escapes which give information directly to the postprocessor. This is particularly useful for embedding POSTSCRIPT into the final document.

.device xxx
\X’xxx’

Embeds its argument into the `gtroff` output preceded with ‘x X’.
The escapes `\&`, `\)`, `\%`, and `\:` are ignored within `\X`, ‘\ ’ and `\~` are converted to single space characters. All other escapes (except `\\` which produces a backslash) cause an error.
Contrary to `\X`, the `device` request simply processes its argument in copy mode (see Section 5.21.1 [Copy-in Mode], page 143).
If the ‘use_charnames_in_special’ keyword is set in the `DESC` file, special characters no longer cause an error; they are simply output verbatim. Additionally, the backslash is represented as `\`.
‘use_charnames_in_special’ is currently used by `grohtml` only.

.devicexxx
\Yn
\Y(nm
\Y[name]

This is approximately equivalent to ‘X’*[name]’ (one-character name `n`, two-character name `nm`). However, the contents of the string or macro `name` are not interpreted; also it is permitted for `name` to have been defined as a macro and thus contain newlines (it is not permitted for the argument to `\X` to contain newlines). The inclusion of newlines requires an extension to the UNIX `troff` output format, and confuses
drivers that do not know about this extension (see Section 8.1.2.4 [Device Control Commands], page 205).

See Chapter 7 [Output Devices], page 189.

5.31 Miscellaneous

This section documents parts of \texttt{gtroff} which cannot (yet) be categorized elsewhere in this manual.

\texttt{\texttt{.nm}} \texttt{[start [inc [space [indent]]]]} \hfill [Request]

Print line numbers. \texttt{start} is the line number of the next output line. \texttt{inc} indicates which line numbers are printed. For example, the value 5 means to emit only line numbers which are multiples of 5; this defaults to 1. \texttt{space} is the space to be left between the number and the text; this defaults to one digit space. The fourth argument is the indentation of the line numbers, defaulting to zero. Both \texttt{space} and \texttt{indent} are given as multiples of digit spaces; they can be negative also. Without any arguments, line numbers are turned off.

\texttt{gtroff} reserves three digit spaces for the line number (which is printed right-justified) plus the amount given by \texttt{indent}; the output lines are concatenated to the line numbers, separated by \texttt{space}, and without reducing the line length. Depending on the value of the horizontal page offset (as set with the \texttt{po} request), line numbers which are longer than the reserved space stick out to the left, or the whole line is moved to the right.

Parameters corresponding to missing arguments are not changed; any non-digit argument (to be more precise, any argument starting with a character valid as a delimiter for identifiers) is also treated as missing.

If line numbering has been disabled with a call to \texttt{nm} without an argument, it can be reactivated with \texttt{.nm +0}, using the previously active line numbering parameters.

The parameters of \texttt{nm} are associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165). The current output line number is available in the number register \texttt{ln}.

\texttt{.po}\texttt{1m}
\texttt{.ll}\texttt{2i}

This test shows how line numbering works with \texttt{groff}.

\texttt{.nm}\texttt{999}

This test shows how line numbering works with \texttt{groff}.

\texttt{.br}

\texttt{.nm}\texttt{xxx}\texttt{3}\texttt{2}
\texttt{.ll}\texttt{\textbackslash w'0'\textbackslash u}

This test shows how line numbering works with \texttt{groff}.

\texttt{.nn}\texttt{2}

This test shows how line numbering works with \texttt{groff}.

And here the result:
This test shows how line numbering works with groff. This test shows how line numbering works with groff. This test shows how line numbering works with groff. This test shows how line numbering works with groff.

\[\text{Request}\]
.nn \[\text{skip}\]
Temporarily turn off line numbering. The argument is the number of lines not to be numbered; this defaults to 1.

\[\text{Request}\]
.mc glyph \[\text{dist}\]
Print a margin character to the right of the text.\(^\text{17}\) The first argument is the glyph to be printed. The second argument is the distance away from the right margin. If missing, the previously set value is used; default is 10 pt). For text lines that are too long (that is, longer than the text length plus \textit{dist}), the margin character is directly appended to the lines. With no arguments the margin character is turned off. If this occurs before a break, no margin character is printed.

For compatibility with AT&T \texttt{troff}, a call to \texttt{mc} to set the margin character can’t be undone immediately; at least one line gets a margin character. Thus

\begin{verbatim}
 .ll 1i
 .mc \[br]
 .mc
 xxx
 .br
 xxx
produce

 | xxx
 | xxx
\end{verbatim}

For empty lines and lines produced by the \texttt{tl} request no margin character is emitted.

The margin character is associated with the current environment (see Section 5.26 [Environments], page 165).

This is quite useful for indicating text that has changed, and, in fact, there are programs available for doing this (they are called \texttt{nrchbar} and \texttt{changebar} and can be found in any \texttt{’comp.sources.unix’} archive).

\(^{17}\) \textit{Margin character} is a misnomer since it is an output glyph.
This paragraph is highlighted with a margin character.

Note that vertical space isn’t marked.

But we can fake it with ‘\&’.

Result:

This paragraph is highlighted with a margin character.

Note that vertical space isn’t marked.

But we can fake it with ‘\&’.

-psbb filename
\n[Request]
\n[Register]
\n[Register]
\n[Register]

Retrieve the bounding box of the POSTSCRIPT image found in filename. The file must conform to Adobe’s Document Structuring Conventions (DSC); the command searches for a %%BoundingBox comment and extracts the bounding box values into the number registers llx, lly, urx, and ury. If an error occurs (for example, psbb cannot find the %%BoundingBox comment), it sets the four number registers to zero.

The search path for filename can be controlled with the -I command line option.

5.32 gtroff Internals

gtroff processes input in three steps. One or more input characters are converted to an input token.\textsuperscript{18} Then, one or more input tokens are converted to an output node. Finally, output nodes are converted to the intermediate output language understood by all output devices.

Actually, before step one happens, gtroff converts certain escape sequences into reserved input characters (not accessible by the user); such reserved characters are used for other internal processing also – this is the

\textsuperscript{18} Except the escapes \f, \F, \H, \m, \M, \R, \s, and \S which are processed immediately if not in copy-in mode.
very reason why not all characters are valid input. See Section 5.4 [Identifiers], page 65, for more on this topic.

For example, the input string ‘fi[:u]’ is converted into a character token ‘f’, a character token ‘i’, and a special token ‘:u’ (representing u umlaut). Later on, the character tokens ‘f’ and ‘i’ are merged to a single output node representing the ligature glyph ‘fi’ (provided the current font has a glyph for this ligature); the same happens with ‘:u’. All output glyph nodes are ‘processed’ which means that they are invariably associated with a given font, font size, advance width, etc. During the formatting process, gtroff itself adds various nodes to control the data flow.

Macros, diversions, and strings collect elements in two chained lists: a list of input tokens which have been passed unprocessed, and a list of output nodes. Consider the following the diversion.

```
\di xxx
a
!b
c
.br
\di
```

It contains these elements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>node list</th>
<th>token list</th>
<th>element number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>line start node</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glyph node a</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>word space node</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>\n</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glyph node c</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vertical size node</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vertical size node</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>\n</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elements 1, 7, and 8 are inserted by gtroff; the latter two (which are always present) specify the vertical extent of the last line, possibly modified by \x. The br request finishes the current partial line, inserting a newline input token which is subsequently converted to a space when the diversion is reread. Note that the word space node has a fixed width which isn’t stretchable anymore. To convert horizontal space nodes back to input tokens, use the unformat request.

Macros only contain elements in the token list (and the node list is empty); diversions and strings can contain elements in both lists.

Note that the chop request simply reduces the number of elements in a macro, string, or diversion by one. Exceptions are compatibility save and compatibility ignore input tokens which are ignored. The substring request also ignores those input tokens.
Some requests like \texttt{tr} or \texttt{cflags} work on glyph identifiers only; this means that the associated glyph can be changed without destroying this association. This can be very helpful for substituting glyphs. In the following example, we assume that glyph ‘foo’ isn’t available by default, so we provide a substitution using the \texttt{fchar} request and map it to input character ‘x’.

\begin{verbatim}
.fchar \[foo\] foo
.tr x \[foo\]
\end{verbatim}

Now let us assume that we install an additional special font ‘bar’ which has glyph ‘foo’.

\begin{verbatim}
.special bar
.rchar \[foo\]
\end{verbatim}

Since glyphs defined with \texttt{fchar} are searched before glyphs in special fonts, we must call \texttt{rchar} to remove the definition of the fallback glyph. Anyway, the translation is still active; ‘x’ now maps to the real glyph ‘foo’.

Macro and request arguments preserve the compatibility mode:

\begin{verbatim}
.cp 1 \" switch to compatibility mode
de xx
\$1
..  \" switch compatibility mode off
.xx caf\['e]
 ⇒ café
\end{verbatim}

Since compatibility mode is on while \texttt{de} is called, the macro \texttt{xx} activates compatibility mode while executing. Argument \$1 can still be handled properly because it inherits the compatibility mode status which was active at the point where \texttt{xx} is called.

After expansion of the parameters, the compatibility save and restore tokens are removed.

### 5.33 Debugging

\texttt{gtroff} is not easy to debug, but there are some useful features and strategies for debugging.

\begin{verbatim}
.lf \{filename\} \texttt{[Request]}
\end{verbatim}

Change the line number and optionally the file name \texttt{gtroff} shall use for error and warning messages. \texttt{line} is the input line number of the \emph{next} line.

Without argument, the request is ignored.

This is a debugging aid for documents which are split into many files, then put together with \texttt{soelim} and other preprocessors. Usually, it isn’t invoked manually.

Note that other \texttt{troff} implementations (including the original AT&T version) handle \texttt{lf} differently. For them, \texttt{line} changes the line number of the \emph{current} line.
.tm string
   [Request]
   Send string to the standard error output; this is very useful for printing
debugging messages among other things.

string is read in copy mode.

The tm request ignores leading spaces of string; tm1 handles its argument
similar to the ds request: a leading double quote in string is stripped to
allow initial blanks.

The tmc request is similar to tm1 but does not append a newline (as is
done in tm and tm1).

.ab [string]
   [Request]
   Similar to the tm request, except that it causes gtroff to stop processing.
   With no argument it prints ‘User Abort.’ to standard error.

.ex
   [Request]
   The ex request also causes gtroff to stop processing; see also Section 5.29
[I/O], page 169.

   When doing something involved it is useful to leave the debugging state-
ments in the code and have them turned on by a command line flag.

   .if \n(DB .tm debugging output
   To activate these statements say
   groff -rDB=1 file
   If it is known in advance that there are many errors and no useful output,
gtroff can be forced to suppress formatted output with the -z flag.

.pev
   [Request]
   Print the contents of the current environment and all the currently defined
environments (both named and numbered) on stderr.

.pm
   [Request]
   Print the entire symbol table on stderr. Names of all defined macros,
strings, and diversions are print together with their size in bytes. Since
gtroff sometimes adds nodes by itself, the returned size can be larger
than expected.

   This request differs from UNIX troff: gtroff reports the sizes of diver-
sions, ignores an additional argument to print only the total of the sizes,
and the size isn’t returned in blocks of 128 characters.

.pnr
   [Request]
   Print the names and contents of all currently defined number registers on
stderr.

.ptr
   [Request]
   Print the names and positions of all traps (not including input line traps
and diversion traps) on stderr. Empty slots in the page trap list are
printed as well, because they can affect the priority of subsequently planted traps.

**.fl**  
[Request]  
Instruct `gtroff` to flush its output immediately. The intent is for interactive use, but this behaviour is currently not implemented in `gtroff`. Contrary to UNIX `troff`, TTY output is sent to a device driver also (`grotty`), making it non-trivial to communicate interactively. This request causes a line break.

**.backtrace**  
[Request]  
Print a backtrace of the input stack to the standard error stream. Consider the following in file `test`:

```
.de xxx
  .backtrace
  ..
.de yyy
  .xxx
  ..
  .yyy
```

On execution, `gtroff` prints the following:

```
test:2: backtrace: macro 'xxx'
test:5: backtrace: macro 'yyy'
test:8: backtrace: file 'test'
```

The option `-b` of `gtroff` internally calls a variant of this request on each error and warning.

**\n[slimit]**  
[Register]  
Use the `slimit` number register to set the maximum number of objects on the input stack. If `slimit` is less than or equal to 0, there is no limit set. With no limit, a buggy recursive macro can exhaust virtual memory. The default value is 1000; this is a compile-time constant.

**.warnscale `si`**  
[Request]  
Set the scaling indicator used in warnings to `si`. Valid values for `si` are `u`, `i`, `c`, `p`, and `P`. At startup, it is set to `i`.

**.spreadwarn [limit]**  
[Request]  
Make `gtroff` emit a warning if the additional space inserted for each space between words in an output line is larger or equal to `limit`. A negative value is changed to zero; no argument toggles the warning on and off without changing `limit`. The default scaling indicator is `m`. At startup, `spreadwarn` is deactivated, and `limit` is set to 3m.

For example,
.spreadwarn 0.2m
causes a warning if \texttt{gtroff} must add 0.2\,m or more for each interword space in a line.
This request is active only if text is justified to both margins (using `\texttt{.ad b}`).

\texttt{gtroff} has command line options for printing out more warnings (-w) and for printing backtraces (-b) when a warning or an error occurs. The most verbose level of warnings is -ww.

\texttt{warn \[flags\]} \[Request\]
\texttt{\\n[.warn]} \[Register\]
Control the level of warnings checked for. The flags are the sum of the numbers associated with each warning that is to be enabled; all other warnings are disabled. The number associated with each warning is listed below. For example, \texttt{warn 0} disables all warnings, and \texttt{warn 1} disables all warnings except that about missing glyphs. If no argument is given, all warnings are enabled.
The read-only number register \texttt{.warn} contains the current warning level.

5.33.1 Warnings
The warnings that can be given to \texttt{gtroff} are divided into the following categories. The name associated with each warning is used by the -w and -W options; the number is used by the \texttt{warn} request and by the \texttt{.warn} register.

- **char**
  - `'char` `'1' Non-existent glyphs.\textsuperscript{19} This is enabled by default.

- **number**
  - `'number` `'2' Invalid numeric expressions. This is enabled by default. See Section 5.3 [Expressions], page 63.

- **break**
  - `'break` `'4' In fill mode, lines which could not be broken so that their length was less than the line length. This is enabled by default.

- **delim**
  - `'delim` `'8' Missing or mismatched closing delimiters.

- **el**
  - `'el` `'16' Use of the \texttt{el} request with no matching \texttt{ie} request. See Section 5.20.2 [if-else], page 137.

- **scale**
  - `'scale` `'32' Meaningless scaling indicators.

\textsuperscript{19} \texttt{char} is a misnomer since it reports missing glyphs – there aren’t missing input characters, only invalid ones.
Chapter 5: gtroff Reference

'range'
'64'    Out of range arguments.

'syntax'
'128'   Dubious syntax in numeric expressions.

'di'
'256'   Use of di or da without an argument when there is no current diversion.

'mac'
'512'   Use of undefined strings, macros and diversions. When an undefined string, macro, or diversion is used, that string is automatically defined as empty. So, in most cases, at most one warning is given for each name.

'reg'
'1024'  Use of undefined number registers. When an undefined number register is used, that register is automatically defined to have a value of 0. So, in most cases, at most one warning is given for use of a particular name.

'tab'
'2048'  Use of a tab character where a number was expected.

'right-brace'
'4096'   Use of \} where a number was expected.

'missing'
'8192'   Requests that are missing non-optional arguments.

'input'
'16384'  Invalid input characters.

'escape'
'32768'  Unrecognized escape sequences. When an unrecognized escape sequence \X is encountered, the escape character is ignored, and X is printed.

'space'
'65536'  Missing space between a request or macro and its argument. This warning is given when an undefined name longer than two characters is encountered, and the first two characters of the name make a defined name. The request or macro is not invoked. When this warning is given, no macro is automatically defined. This is enabled by default. This warning never occurs in compatibility mode.

'font'
'131072' Non-existent fonts. This is enabled by default.
'ig'
'262144'   Invalid escapes in text ignored with the ig request. These are conditions that are errors when they do not occur in ignored text.

'color'
'524288'   Color related warnings.

'file'
'1048576'   Missing files. The mso request gives this warning when the requested macro file does not exist. This is enabled by default.

'all'
All warnings except ‘di’, ‘mac’ and ‘reg’. It is intended that this covers all warnings that are useful with traditional macro packages.

'w'
All warnings.

5.34 Implementation Differences
GNU troff has a number of features which cause incompatibilities with documents written with old versions of troff.

Long names cause some incompatibilities. UNIX troff interprets
.dsabcd
as defining a string ‘ab’ with contents ‘cd’. Normally, GNU troff interprets this as a call of a macro named dsabcd. Also UNIX troff interprets \*[ or \n[ as references to a string or number register called ‘[]’. In GNU troff, however, this is normally interpreted as the start of a long name. In compatibility mode GNU troff interprets long names in the traditional way (which means that they are not recognized as names).

.cp [n]  [Request]
.do cmd  [Request]
\n[.C]   [Register]

If n is missing or non-zero, turn on compatibility mode; otherwise, turn it off.
The read-only number register .C is 1 if compatibility mode is on, 0 otherwise.
Compatibility mode can be also turned on with the -C command line option.
The do request turns off compatibility mode while executing its arguments as a gtroff command. However, it does not turn off compatibility mode while processing the macro itself. To do that, use the del request (or manipulate the .C register manually). See Section 5.21 [Writing Macros], page 140.

.do fam T
executes the fam request when compatibility mode is enabled.
gtroff restores the previous compatibility setting before interpreting any files sourced by the cmd.

Two other features are controlled by -C. If not in compatibility mode, GNU troff preserves the input level in delimited arguments:

```
.ds xx
\w'abc\*(xxdef'
```

In compatibility mode, the string ‘72def’ is returned; without -C the resulting string is ‘168’ (assuming a TTY output device).

Finally, the escapes \f, \H, \m, \M, \R, \s, and \S are transparent for recognizing the beginning of a line only in compatibility mode (this is a rather obscure feature). For example, the code

```
.de xx
Hallo!
...
\FB.xx\FP
```

prints ‘Hallo!’ in bold face if in compatibility mode, and ‘.xx’ in bold face otherwise.

GNU troff does not allow the use of the escape sequences \|, \^, \&, \{, \}, \SP, \', \", \-, \_, \!, \%, and \c in names of strings, macros, diversions, number registers, fonts or environments; UNIX troff does. The \A escape sequence (see Section 5.4 [Identifiers], page 65) may be helpful in avoiding use of these escape sequences in names.

Fractional point sizes cause one noteworthy incompatibility. In UNIX troff the ps request ignores scale indicators and thus

```
.ps 10u
```

sets the point size to 10 points, whereas in GNU troff it sets the point size to 10 scaled points. See Section 5.18.2 [Fractional Type Sizes], page 129, for more information.

In GNU troff there is a fundamental difference between (unformatted) input characters and (formatted) output glyphs. Everything that affects how a glyph is output is stored with the glyph node; once a glyph node has been constructed it is unaffected by any subsequent requests that are executed, including bd, cs, tfk, tr, or fp requests. Normally glyphs are constructed from input characters at the moment immediately before the glyph is added to the current output line. Macros, diversions and strings are all, in fact, the same type of object; they contain lists of input characters and glyph nodes in any combination. A glyph node does not behave like an input character for the purposes of macro processing; it does not inherit any of the special properties that the input character from which it was constructed might have had. For example,
prints ‘\’ in GNU troff; each pair of input backslashes is turned into one output backslash and the resulting output backslashes are not interpreted as escape characters when they are reread. UNIX troff would interpret them as escape characters when they were reread and would end up printing one ‘\’. The correct way to obtain a printable backslash is to use the \e escape sequence: This always prints a single instance of the current escape character, regardless of whether or not it is used in a diversion; it also works in both GNU troff and UNIX troff.  To store, for some reason, an escape sequence in a diversion that is interpreted when the diversion is reread, either use the traditional \! transparent output facility, or, if this is unsuitable, the new \? escape sequence.

See Section 5.25 [Diversions], page 161, and Section 5.32 [Gtroff Internals], page 177, for more information.

\footnote{To be completely independent of the current escape character, use \(rs which represents a reverse solidus (backslash) glyph.}
6 Preprocessors

This chapter describes all preprocessors that come with groff or which are freely available.

6.1 geqn

6.1.1 Invoking geqn

6.2 gtbl

6.2.1 Invoking gtbl

6.3 gpic

6.3.1 Invoking gpic

6.4 ggrn

6.4.1 Invoking ggrn

6.5 grap

A free implementation of grap, written by Ted Faber, is available as an extra package from the following address:

http://www.lunabase.org/~faber/Vault/software/grap/

6.6 gchem

6.6.1 Invoking gchem

6.7 grefer

6.7.1 Invoking grefer

6.8 gsoelim

6.8.1 Invoking gsoelim
6.9 preconv

6.9.1 Invoking preconv
Chapter 7: Output Devices

7 Output Devices

7.1 Special Characters
See Section 8.2 [Font Files], page 210.

7.2 grotty
The postprocessor grotty translates the output from GNU troff into a form suitable for typewriter-like devices. It is fully documented on its manual page, grotty(1).

7.2.1 Invoking grotty
The postprocessor grotty accepts the following command-line options:

- **-b**  Do not overstrike bold glyphs. Ignored if -c isn’t used.
- **-B**  Do not underline bold-italic glyphs. Ignored if -c isn’t used.
- **-c**  Use overprint and disable colours for printing on legacy Teletype printers (see below).
- **-d**  Do not render lines (this is, ignore all \D escapes).
- **-f**  Use form feed control characters in the output.
- **-Fdir**  Put the directory dir/devname in front of the search path for the font and device description files, given the target device name.
- **-h**  Use horizontal tabs for sequences of 8 space characters.
- **-i**  Request italic glyphs from the terminal. Ignored if -c is active.
- **-o**  Do not overstrike.
- **-r**  Highlight italic glyphs. Ignored if -c is active.
- **-u**  Do not underline italic glyphs. Ignored if -c isn’t used.
- **-U**  Do not overstrike bold-italic glyphs. Ignored if -c isn’t used.
- **-v**  Print the version number.

The -c mode for TTY output devices means that underlining is done by emitting sequences of ‘\_’ and ‘\H’ (the backspace character) before the actual character. Literally, this is printing an underline character, then moving the caret back one character position, and printing the actual character at the same position as the underline character (similar to a typewriter). Usually, a modern terminal can’t interpret this (and the original Teletype machines for which this sequence was appropriate are no longer in use). You need a pager program like less which translates this into ISO 6429 SGR sequences to control terminals.
7.3 `grops`

The postprocessor `grops` translates the output from GNU `troff` into a form suitable for Adobe POSTSCRIPT devices. It is fully documented on its manual page, `grops(1).

7.3.1 Invoking `grops`

The postprocessor `grops` accepts the following command-line options:

- `-bflags` Use backward compatibility settings given by `flags` as documented in the `grops(1)` manual page. Overrides the command broken in the DESC file.
- `-cn` Print `n` copies of each page.
- `-F dir` Put the directory `dir/devname` in front of the search path for the font, prologue and device description files, given the target device `name`, usually `ps`.
- `-g` Tell the printer to guess the page length. Useful for printing vertically centered pages when the paper dimensions are determined at print time.
- `-I path ...` Consider the directory `path` for searching included files specified with relative paths. The current directory is searched as fallback.
- `-l` Use landscape orientation.
- `-m` Use manual feed.
- `-ppapersize` Set the page dimensions. Overrides the commands `papersize`, `paperlength`, and `paperwidth` in the DESC file. See the `groff_font(5)` manual page for details.
- `-P prologue` Use the `prologue` in the font path as the prologue instead of the default `prologue`. Overrides the environment variable `GROPS_PROLOGUE`.
- `-wn` Set the line thickness to `n/1000 em`. Overrides the default value `n = 40`.
- `-v` Print the version number.

7.3.2 Embedding POSTSCRIPT

The escape sequence

```
\X’ps: import file llx lly urx ury width [height]’
```

places a rectangle of the specified `width` containing the POSTSCRIPT drawing from file `file` bound by the box from `llx lly` to `urx ury` (in POSTSCRIPT
coordinates) at the insertion point. If \textit{height} is not specified, the embedded drawing is scaled proportionally.

See Section 5.31 [Miscellaneous], page 175, for the \texttt{psbb} request which automatically generates the bounding box.

This escape sequence is used internally by the macro \texttt{PSPIC} (see the \texttt{groff_tmac(5)} manual page).

\section*{7.4 \texttt{gropdf}}

The postprocessor \texttt{gropdf} translates the output from GNU \texttt{troff} into a form suitable for Adobe PDF devices. It is fully documented on its manual page, \texttt{gropdf(1)}.

\subsection*{7.4.1 Invoking \texttt{gropdf}}

The postprocessor \texttt{gropdf} accepts the following command-line options:

- \texttt{-d} Produce uncompressed PDFs which include debugging comments.

- \texttt{-e} This forces \texttt{gropdf} to embed all used fonts in the PDF, even if they are one of the 14 base Adobe fonts.

- \texttt{-Fdir} Put the directory \texttt{dir/devname} in front of the search path for the font, prologue and device description files, given the target device \texttt{name}, usually \texttt{pdf}.

- \texttt{-yfoundry} This forces the use of a different font foundry.

- \texttt{-l} Use landscape orientation.

- \texttt{-ppapersize} Set the page dimensions. Overrides the commands \texttt{papersize}, \texttt{paperlength}, and \texttt{paperwidth} in the DESC file. See the \texttt{groff_font(5)} manual page for details.

- \texttt{-v} Print the version number.

- \texttt{-s} Append a comment line to end of PDF showing statistics, i.e. number of pages in document. Ghostscript’s \texttt{ps2pdf(1)} complains about this line if it is included, but works anyway.

- \texttt{-uFILENAME} \texttt{gropdf} normally includes a ToUnicode CMap with any font created using \texttt{text.enc} as the encoding file, this makes it easier to search for words which contain ligatures. You can include your own CMap by specifying a \texttt{filename} or have no CMap at all by omitting the \texttt{filename}.
7.4.2 Embedding PDF

The escape sequence

\X'pdffile alignment width [height] [linelength]' 

places a rectangle of the specified width containing the PDF drawing from file file of desired width and height (if height is missing or zero then it is scaled proportionally). If alignment is -L the drawing is left aligned. If it is -C or -R a linelength greater than the width of the drawing is required as well. If width is specified as zero then the width is scaled in proportion to the height.

7.5 grodvi

The postprocessor grodvi translates the output from GNU troff into the DVI output format compatible with the TeX document preparation system. It is fully documented on its manual page, grodvi(1).

7.5.1 Invoking grodvi

The postprocessor grodvi accepts the following command-line options:

- Do not use tpic specials to implement drawing commands.
-Fdir Put the directory dir/devname in front of the search path for the font and device description files, given the target device name, usually dvi.
-l Use landscape orientation.
-ppapersize Set the page dimensions. Overrides the commands papersize, paperlength, and paperwidth in the DESC file. See groff_font(5) manual page for details.
-v Print the version number.
-wn Set the line thickness to n/1000 em. Overrides the default value n = 40.

7.6 grolj4

The postprocessor grolj4 translates the output from GNU troff into the PCL5 output format suitable for printing on a HP LaserJet 4 printer. It is fully documented on its manual page, grolj4(1).

7.6.1 Invoking grolj4

The postprocessor grolj4 accepts the following command-line options:

- Print n copies of each page.
Chapter 7: Output Devices

-Fdir Put the directory `dir/devname` in front of the search path for the font and device description files, given the target device `name`, usually `lj4`.

-1 Use landscape orientation.

-psize Set the page dimensions. Valid values for `size` are: letter, legal, executive, a4, com10, monarch, c5, b5, d1.

-v Print the version number.

-wn Set the line thickness to `n/1000 em`. Overrides the default value `n = 40`.

The special drawing command `\D'R dh dv'` draws a horizontal rectangle from the current position to the position at offset `(dh,dv)`.

7.7 grolbp

The postprocessor grolbp translates the output from GNU troff into the LBP output format suitable for printing on Canon CAPSL printers. It is fully documented on its manual page, grolbp(1).

7.7.1 Invoking grolbp

The postprocessor grolbp accepts the following command-line options:

-cn Print `n` copies of each page.

-Fdir Put the directory `dir/devname` in front of the search path for the font, prologue and device description files, given the target device `name`, usually `lbp`.

-1 Use landscape orientation.

-oorientation Use the `orientation` specified: portrait or landscape.

-ppapersize Set the page dimensions. See groff_font(5) manual page for details.

-wn Set the line thickness to `n/1000 em`. Overrides the default value `n = 40`.

-v Print the version number.

-h Print command-line help.
7.8 grohtml

The grohtml front end (which consists of a preprocessor, pre-grohtml, and a device driver, post-grohtml) translates the output of GNU troff to HTML. Users should always invoke grohtml via the groff command with a \-Thtml option. If no files are given, grohtml will read the standard input. A filename of - will also cause grohtml to read the standard input. HTML output is written to the standard output. When grohtml is run by groff, options can be passed to grohtml using groff’s -P option.

grohtml invokes groff twice. In the first pass, pictures, equations, and tables are rendered using the ps device, and in the second pass HTML output is generated by the html device.

grohtml always writes output in UTF-8 encoding and has built-in entities for all non-composite unicode characters. In spite of this, groff may issue warnings about unknown special characters if they can’t be found during the first pass. Such warnings can be safely ignored unless the special characters appear inside a table or equation, in which case glyphs for these characters must be defined for the ps device as well.

This output device is fully documented on its manual page, grohtml(1).

7.8.1 Invoking grohtml

The postprocessor grohtml accepts the following command-line options:

- **-abits** Use this number of bits (= 1, 2 or 4) for text antialiasing. Default: bits = 4.
- **-a0** Do not use text antialiasing.
- **-b** Use white background.
- **-Ddir** Store rendered images in the directory dir.
- **-Fdir** Put the directory dir/devname in front of the search path for the font, prologue and device description files, given the target device name, usually html.
- **-gbits** Use this number of bits (= 1, 2 or 4) for antialiasing of drawings. Default: bits = 4.
- **-g0** Do not use antialiasing for drawings.
- **-h** Use the B element for section headings.
- **-iresolution** Use the resolution for rendered images. Default: resolution = 100 dpi.
- **-Istem** Set the images’ stem name. Default: stem = grohtml-XXX (XXX is the process ID).
- **-jstem** Place each section in a separate file called stem-n.html (where n is a generated section number).
7.8.2 grohtml specific registers and strings

\n[ps4html]  [Register]
\*[www-image-template] [String]

The registers ps4html and www-image-template are defined by the pre-grohtml preprocessor. pre-grohtml reads in the troff input, marks up the inline equations and passes the result firstly to

```
troff -Tps -rps4html=1 -dwww-image-template=template
```
and secondly to

```
troff -Thtml
```
or

```
troff -Txhtml
```

The POSTSCRIPT device is used to create all the image files (for -Thtml; if -Txhtml is used, all equations are passed to geqn to produce MathML, and the register ps4html enables the macro sets to ignore floating keeps, footers, and headings.

The register www-image-template is set to the user specified template name or the default name.

7.9 gxditview

7.9.1 Invoking gxditview
Chapter 8: File formats

All files read and written by gtroff are text files. The following two sections describe their format.

8.1 gtroff Output

This section describes the intermediate output format of GNU troff. This output is produced by a run of gtroff before it is fed into a device postprocessor program.

As groff is a wrapper program around gtroff that automatically calls a postprocessor, this output does not show up normally. This is why it is called intermediate. groff provides the option -Z to inhibit postprocessing, such that the produced intermediate output is sent to standard output just like calling gtroff manually.

Here, the term troff output describes what is output by gtroff, while intermediate output refers to the language that is accepted by the parser that prepares this output for the postprocessors. This parser is smarter on whitespace and implements obsolete elements for compatibility, otherwise both formats are the same.¹

The main purpose of the intermediate output concept is to facilitate the development of postprocessors by providing a common programming interface for all devices. It has a language of its own that is completely different from the gtroff language. While the gtroff language is a high-level programming language for text processing, the intermediate output language is a kind of low-level assembler language by specifying all positions on the page for writing and drawing.

The intermediate output produced by gtroff is fairly readable, while output from AT&T troff is rather hard to understand because of strange habits that are still supported, but not used any longer by gtroff.

8.1.1 Language Concepts

During the run of gtroff, the input data is cracked down to the information on what has to be printed at what position on the intended device. So the language of the intermediate output format can be quite small. Its only elements are commands with and without arguments. In this section, the term command always refers to the intermediate output language, and never to the gtroff language used for document formatting. There are commands for positioning and text writing, for drawing, and for device controlling.

8.1.1.1 Separation

AT&T troff output has strange requirements on whitespace. The gtroff output parser, however, is smart about whitespace by making it maximally

¹ The parser and postprocessor for intermediate output can be found in the file groff-source-dir/src/libs/libdriver/input.cpp.
optional. The whitespace characters, i.e., the tab, space, and newline characters, always have a syntactical meaning. They are never printable because spacing within the output is always done by positioning commands.

Any sequence of space or tab characters is treated as a single syntactical space. It separates commands and arguments, but is only required when there would occur a clashing between the command code and the arguments without the space. Most often, this happens when variable-length command names, arguments, argument lists, or command clusters meet. Commands and arguments with a known, fixed length need not be separated by syntactical space.

A line break is a syntactical element, too. Every command argument can be followed by whitespace, a comment, or a newline character. Thus a syntactical line break is defined to consist of optional syntactical space that is optionally followed by a comment, and a newline character.

The normal commands, those for positioning and text, consist of a single letter taking a fixed number of arguments. For historical reasons, the parser allows to stack such commands on the same line, but fortunately, in gtroff’s intermediate output, every command with at least one argument is followed by a line break, thus providing excellent readability.

The other commands – those for drawing and device controlling – have a more complicated structure; some recognize long command names, and some take a variable number of arguments. So all ‘D’ and ‘x’ commands were designed to request a syntactical line break after their last argument. Only one command, ‘x X’, has an argument that can stretch over several lines; all other commands must have all of their arguments on the same line as the command, i.e., the arguments may not be split by a line break.

Empty lines (these are lines containing only space and/or a comment), can occur everywhere. They are just ignored.

### 8.1.1.2 Argument Units

Some commands take integer arguments that are assumed to represent values in a measurement unit, but the letter for the corresponding scale indicator is not written with the output command arguments. Most commands assume the scale indicator ‘u’, the basic unit of the device, some use ‘z’, the scaled point unit of the device, while others, such as the color commands, expect plain integers.

Note that single characters can have the eighth bit set, as can the names of fonts and special characters. The names of characters and fonts can be of arbitrary length. A character that is to be printed is always in the current font.

A string argument is always terminated by the next whitespace character (space, tab, or newline); an embedded ‘#’ character is regarded as part of the argument, not as the beginning of a comment command. An integer
8.1.1.3 Document Parts

A correct intermediate output document consists of two parts, the prologue and the body.

The task of the prologue is to set the general device parameters using three exactly specified commands. gtroff’s prologue is guaranteed to consist of the following three lines (in that order):

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{x T device} \\
\text{x res n h v} \\
\text{x init}
\end{align*} \]

with the arguments set as outlined in Section 8.1.2.4 [Device Control Commands], page 205. Note that the parser for the intermediate output format is able to swallow additional whitespace and comments as well even in the prologue.

The body is the main section for processing the document data. Syntactically, it is a sequence of any commands different from the ones used in the prologue. Processing is terminated as soon as the first ‘x stop’ command is encountered; the last line of any gtroff intermediate output always contains such a command.

Semantically, the body is page oriented. A new page is started by a ‘p’ command. Positioning, writing, and drawing commands are always done within the current page, so they cannot occur before the first ‘p’ command. Absolute positioning (by the ‘H’ and ‘V’ commands) is done relative to the current page; all other positioning is done relative to the current location within this page.

8.1.2 Command Reference

This section describes all intermediate output commands, both from AT&T troff as well as the gtroff extensions.

8.1.2.1 Comment Command

\#anything\(\text{end of line}\)

A comment. Ignore any characters from the ‘#’ character up to the next newline character.

This command is the only possibility for commenting in the intermediate output. Each comment can be preceded by arbitrary syntactical space; every command can be terminated by a comment.

8.1.2.2 Simple Commands

The commands in this subsection have a command code consisting of a single character, taking a fixed number of arguments. Most of them are com-
mands for positioning and text writing. These commands are smart about whitespace. Optionally, syntactical space can be inserted before, after, and between the command letter and its arguments. All of these commands are stackable, i.e., they can be preceded by other simple commands or followed by arbitrary other commands on the same line. A separating syntactical space is only necessary when two integer arguments would clash or if the preceding argument ends with a string argument.

C xxx⟨whitespace⟩
Print a special character named xxx. The trailing syntactical space or line break is necessary to allow glyph names of arbitrary length. The glyph is printed at the current print position; the glyph’s size is read from the font file. The print position is not changed.

c g
Print glyph g at the current print position; the glyph’s size is read from the font file. The print position is not changed.

f n
Set font to font number n (a non-negative integer).

H n
Move right to the absolute vertical position n (a non-negative integer in basic units ‘u’ relative to left edge of current page.

h n
Move n (a non-negative integer) basic units ‘u’ horizontally to the right. The original UNIX troff manual allows negative values for n also, but gtroff doesn’t use this.

m color-scheme [component ...]
Set the color for text (glyphs), line drawing, and the outline of graphic objects using different color schemes; the analogous command for the filling color of graphic objects is ‘DF’. The color components are specified as integer arguments between 0 and 65536. The number of color components and their meaning vary for the different color schemes. These commands are generated by gtroff’s escape sequence \m. No position changing. These commands are a gtroff extension.

mc cyan magenta yellow
Set color using the CMY color scheme, having the 3 color components cyan, magenta, and yellow.

md
Set color to the default color value (black in most cases). No component arguments.

mg gray
Set color to the shade of gray given by the argument, an integer between 0 (black) and 65536 (white).

mk cyan magenta yellow black
Set color using the CMYK color scheme, having the 4 color components cyan, magenta, yellow, and black.

\footnote{‘c’ is actually a misnomer since it outputs a glyph.}
mr red green blue
  Set color using the RGB color scheme, having the 3 color components red, green, and blue.

N n  Print glyph with index \( n \) (a non-negative integer) of the current font. This command is a \texttt{gtroff} extension.

n b a  Inform the device about a line break, but no positioning is done by this command. In AT&T \texttt{troff}, the integer arguments \( b \) and \( a \) informed about the space before and after the current line to make the intermediate output more human readable without performing any action. In \texttt{groff}, they are just ignored, but they must be provided for compatibility reasons.

p n  Begin a new page in the outprint. The page number is set to \( n \). This page is completely independent of pages formerly processed even if those have the same page number. The vertical position on the outprint is automatically set to 0. All positioning, writing, and drawing is always done relative to a page, so a ‘p’ command must be issued before any of these commands.

s n  Set point size to \( n \) scaled points (this is unit ‘z’). AT&T \texttt{troff} used the unit points (‘p’) instead. See Section 8.1.4 [Output Language Compatibility], page 209.

t xxx⟨whitespace⟩
t xxx dummy-arg⟨whitespace⟩
  Print a word, i.e., a sequence of characters xxx representing output glyphs which names are single characters, terminated by a space character or a line break; an optional second integer argument is ignored (this allows the formatter to generate an even number of arguments). The first glyph should be printed at the current position, the current horizontal position should then be increased by the width of the first glyph, and so on for each glyph. The widths of the glyphs are read from the font file, scaled for the current point size, and rounded to a multiple of the horizontal resolution. Special characters cannot be printed using this command (use the ‘C’ command for special characters). This command is a \texttt{gtroff} extension; it is only used for devices whose DESC file contains the \texttt{tcommand} keyword (see Section 8.2.1 [DESC File Format], page 210).

u n xxx⟨whitespace⟩
  Print word with track kerning. This is the same as the ‘t’ command except that after printing each glyph, the current horizontal position is increased by the sum of the width of that glyph and \( n \) (an integer in basic units ‘u’). This command is a \texttt{gtroff} extension; it is only used for devices whose DESC file contains the \texttt{tcommand} keyword (see Section 8.2.1 [DESC File Format], page 210).
V n  Move down to the absolute vertical position \( n \) (a non-negative integer in basic units ‘u’) relative to upper edge of current page.

v n  Move \( n \) basic units ‘u’ down (\( n \) is a non-negative integer). The original UNIX troff manual allows negative values for \( n \) also, but gtroff doesn’t use this.

w  Informs about a paddable white space to increase readability. The spacing itself must be performed explicitly by a move command.

8.1.2.3 Graphics Commands

Each graphics or drawing command in the intermediate output starts with the letter ‘D’, followed by one or two characters that specify a subcommand; this is followed by a fixed or variable number of integer arguments that are separated by a single space character. A ‘D’ command may not be followed by another command on the same line (apart from a comment), so each ‘D’ command is terminated by a syntactical line break.

gtroff output follows the classical spacing rules (no space between command and subcommand, all arguments are preceded by a single space character), but the parser allows optional space between the command letters and makes the space before the first argument optional. As usual, each space can be any sequence of tab and space characters.

Some graphics commands can take a variable number of arguments. In this case, they are integers representing a size measured in basic units ‘u’. The arguments called \( h1, h2, \ldots, hn \) stand for horizontal distances where positive means right, negative left. The arguments called \( v1, v2, \ldots, vn \) stand for vertical distances where positive means down, negative up. All these distances are offsets relative to the current location.

Each graphics command directly corresponds to a similar gtroff \D escape sequence. See Section 5.23 [Drawing Requests], page 149.

Unknown ‘D’ commands are assumed to be device-specific. Its arguments are parsed as strings; the whole information is then sent to the postprocessor.

In the following command reference, the syntax element ⟨line break⟩ means a syntactical line break as defined above.

\texttt{D\~ h1 v1 h2 v2 \ldots hn vn⟨line break⟩}

Draw \( B \)-spline from current position to offset \((h1,v1)\), then to offset \((h2,v2)\), if given, etc. up to \((hn,vn)\). This command takes a variable number of argument pairs; the current position is moved to the terminal point of the drawn curve.

\texttt{Da h1 v1 h2 v2⟨line break⟩}

Draw arc from current position to \((h1,v1)+(h2,v2)\) with center at \((h1,v1)\); then move the current position to the final point of the arc.
DC \textit{d}\{line break\}
DC \textit{d \ dummy-arg}\{line break\}
Draw a solid circle using the current fill color with diameter \textit{d} (integer in basic units ‘u’) with leftmost point at the current position; then move the current position to the rightmost point of the circle. An optional second integer argument is ignored (this allows the formatter to generate an even number of arguments). This command is a \textit{gtroff} extension.

Dc \textit{d}\{line break\}
Draw circle line with diameter \textit{d} (integer in basic units ‘u’) with leftmost point at the current position; then move the current position to the rightmost point of the circle.

DE \textit{h \ v}\{line break\}
Draw a solid ellipse in the current fill color with a horizontal diameter of \textit{h} and a vertical diameter of \textit{v} (both integers in basic units ‘u’) with the leftmost point at the current position; then move to the rightmost point of the ellipse. This command is a \textit{gtroff} extension.

De \textit{h \ v}\{line break\}
Draw an outlined ellipse with a horizontal diameter of \textit{h} and a vertical diameter of \textit{v} (both integers in basic units ‘u’) with the leftmost point at current position; then move to the rightmost point of the ellipse.

DF color-scheme [\textit{component} ...]\{line break\}
Set fill color for solid drawing objects using different color schemes; the analogous command for setting the color of text, line graphics, and the outline of graphic objects is ‘\textit{m}’. The color components are specified as integer arguments between 0 and 65536. The number of color components and their meaning vary for the different color schemes. These commands are generated by \textit{gtroff}’s escape sequences \textbackslash D\’F ...’ and \textbackslash M (with no other corresponding graphics commands). No position changing. This command is a \textit{gtroff} extension.

DFc cyan magenta yellow\{line break\}
Set fill color for solid drawing objects using the CMY color scheme, having the 3 color components cyan, magenta, and yellow.

DFd\{line break\}
Set fill color for solid drawing objects to the default fill color value (black in most cases). No component arguments.
DFg gray

Set fill color for solid drawing objects to the shade of gray given by the argument, an integer between 0 (black) and 65536 (white).

DFk cyan magenta yellow black

Set fill color for solid drawing objects using the CMYK color scheme, having the 4 color components cyan, magenta, yellow, and black.

DFr red green blue

Set fill color for solid drawing objects using the RGB color scheme, having the 3 color components red, green, and blue.

Df n

The argument n must be an integer in the range $-32767$ to $32767$.

$0 \leq n \leq 1000$

Set the color for filling solid drawing objects to a shade of gray, where 0 corresponds to solid white, 1000 (the default) to solid black, and values in between to intermediate shades of gray; this is obsoleted by command ‘DFg’.

$n < 0$ or $n > 1000$

Set the filling color to the color that is currently being used for the text and the outline, see command ‘m’. For example, the command sequence

```
mg 0 0 65536
Df -1
```

sets all colors to blue.

No position changing. This command is a gtroff extension.

Dl h v

Draw line from current position to offset $(h,v)$ (integers in basic units ‘u’); then set current position to the end of the drawn line.

Dp h1 v1 h2 v2 ... hn vn

Draw a polygon line from current position to offset $(h1,v1)$, from there to offset $(h2,v2)$, etc. up to offset $(hn,vn)$, and from there back to the starting position. For historical reasons, the position is changed by adding the sum of all arguments with odd index to the actual horizontal position and the even ones to the vertical position. Although this doesn’t make sense it is kept for compatibility. This command is a gtroff extension.
Dp h1 v1 h2 v2 ... hn vn ⟨line break⟩

Draw a solid polygon in the current fill color rather than an outlined polygon, using the same arguments and positioning as the corresponding ‘Dp’ command. This command is a \texttt{gtroff} extension.

Dt n ⟨line break⟩

Set the current line thickness to \textit{n} (an integer in basic units ‘u’) if \textit{n} > 0; if \textit{n} = 0 select the smallest available line thickness; if \textit{n} < 0 set the line thickness proportional to the point size (this is the default before the first ‘Dt’ command was specified). For historical reasons, the horizontal position is changed by adding the argument to the actual horizontal position, while the vertical position is not changed. Although this doesn’t make sense it is kept for compatibility. This command is a \texttt{gtroff} extension.

\subsection{Device Control Commands}

Each device control command starts with the letter ‘x’, followed by a space character (optional or arbitrary space or tab in \texttt{gtroff}) and a subcommand letter or word; each argument (if any) must be preceded by a syntactical space. All ‘x’ commands are terminated by a syntactical line break; no device control command can be followed by another command on the same line (except a comment).

The subcommand is basically a single letter, but to increase readability, it can be written as a word, i.e., an arbitrary sequence of characters terminated by the next tab, space, or newline character. All characters of the subcommand word but the first are simply ignored. For example, \texttt{gtroff} outputs the initialization command ‘x i’ as ‘x init’ and the resolution command ‘x r’ as ‘x res’.

In the following, the syntax element ⟨line break⟩ means a syntactical line break (see Section 8.1.1.1 [Separation], page 197).

xF name ⟨line break⟩

The ‘F’ stands for \textit{Filename}.

Use \textit{name} as the intended name for the current file in error reports. This is useful for remembering the original file name when \texttt{gtroff} uses an internal piping mechanism. The input file is not changed by this command. This command is a \texttt{gtroff} extension.

xf n s ⟨line break⟩

The ‘f’ stands for \textit{font}.

Mount font position \textit{n} (a non-negative integer) with font named \textit{s} (a text word). See Section 5.17.3 [Font Positions], page 111.

xH n ⟨line break⟩

The ‘H’ stands for \textit{Height}.
Set glyph height to \( n \) (a positive integer in scaled points ‘z’). AT&T troff uses the unit points (‘p’) instead. See Section 8.1.4 [Output Language Compatibility], page 209.

\[ \text{xi } \langle \text{line break} \rangle \]

The ‘i’ stands for init.
Initialize device. This is the third command of the prologue.

\[ \text{xp } \langle \text{line break} \rangle \]

The ‘p’ stands for pause.
Parsed but ignored. The original UNIX troff manual writes pause device, can be restarted

\[ \text{xr } n \ h \ v \langle \text{line break} \rangle \]

The ‘r’ stands for resolution.
Resolution is \( n \), while \( h \) is the minimal horizontal motion, and \( v \) the minimal vertical motion possible with this device; all arguments are positive integers in basic units ‘u’ per inch. This is the second command of the prologue.

\[ \text{xS } n \langle \text{line break} \rangle \]

The ‘S’ stands for Slant.
Set slant to \( n \) (an integer in basic units ‘u’).

\[ \text{xs } \langle \text{line break} \rangle \]

The ‘s’ stands for stop.
Terminates the processing of the current file; issued as the last command of any intermediate troff output.

\[ \text{xt } \langle \text{line break} \rangle \]

The ‘t’ stands for trailer.
Generate trailer information, if any. In gtroff, this is actually just ignored.

\[ \text{dT } xxx \langle \text{line break} \rangle \]

The ‘T’ stands for Typesetter.
Set name of device to word xxx, a sequence of characters ended by the next white space character. The possible device names coincide with those from the groff -T option. This is the first command of the prologue.

\[ \text{xu } n \langle \text{line break} \rangle \]

The ‘u’ stands for underline.
Configure underlining of spaces. If \( n \) is 1, start underlining of spaces; if \( n \) is 0, stop underlining of spaces. This is needed for the cu request in nroff mode and is ignored otherwise. This command is a gtroff extension.
**8.1.2.5 Obsolete Command**

In AT&T *troff* output, the writing of a single glyph is mostly done by a very strange command that combines a horizontal move and a single character giving the glyph name. It doesn’t have a command code, but is represented by a 3-character argument consisting of exactly 2 digits and a character.

\begin{verbatim}
 movedd g
 \end{verbatim}

In *gtroff*, arbitrary syntactical space around and within this command is allowed to be added. Only when a preceding command on the same line ends with an argument of variable length a separating space is obligatory. In AT&T *troff*, large clusters of these and other commands are used, mostly without spaces; this made such output almost unreadable.

For modern high-resolution devices, this command does not make sense because the width of the glyphs can become much larger than two decimal digits. In *gtroff*, this is only used for the devices X75, X75-12, X100, and X100-12. For other devices, the commands ‘t’ and ‘u’ provide a better functionality.

**8.1.3 Intermediate Output Examples**

This section presents the intermediate output generated from the same input for three different devices. The input is the sentence ‘\texttt{hell world}’ fed into *gtroff* on the command line.

**High-resolution device ps**

This is the standard output of *gtroff* if no -T option is given.

\begin{verbatim}
 shell> echo "hell world" | groff -Z -T ps
 x T ps
 x res 72000 1 1
 x init
 p1
 x font 5 TR
\end{verbatim}
This output can be fed into `grops` to get its representation as a PostScript file.

Low-resolution device `latin1`
This is similar to the high-resolution device except that the positioning is done at a minor scale. Some comments (lines starting with `#`) were added for clarification; they were not generated by the formatter.

```
shell> echo "hell world" | groff -Z -T latin1

# prologue
x T latin1
x res 240 24 40
x init
# begin a new page
p1
# font setup
x font 1 R
f1
s10
# initial positioning on the page
V40
H0
# write text ‘hell’
thell
# inform about space, and issue a horizontal jump
wh24
# write text ‘world’
tworld
# announce line break, but do nothing because ...
n40 0
```
This output can be fed into grotty to get a formatted text document.

**AT&T troff output**

Since a computer monitor has a very low resolution compared to modern printers the intermediate output for the X Window devices can use the jump-and-write command with its 2-digit displacements.

```
shell> echo "hello world" | groff -Z -T X100
```

```
x  T  X100
x  res 100 1 1
x  init
p1
x  font 5 TR
f5
s10
V16
H100
# write text with jump-and-write commands
ch07e07103l06w11o07r05103dh7
n16 0
x  trailer
V1100
x  stop
```

This output can be fed into xditview or gxditview for displaying in X.

Due to the obsolete jump-and-write command, the text clusters in the AT&T troff output are almost unreadable.

### 8.1.4 Output Language Compatibility

The intermediate output language of AT&T troff was first documented in the UNIX troff manual, with later additions documented in *A Typesetter-independent TROFF*, written by Brian Kernighan.

The gtroff intermediate output format is compatible with this specification except for the following features.

- The classical quasi device independence is not yet implemented.
- The old hardware was very different from what we use today. So the groff devices are also fundamentally different from the ones in AT&T troff. For example, the AT&T POSTSCRIPT device is called post and has a resolution of only 720 units per inch, suitable for printers 20
years ago, while groff’s ps device has a resolution of 72000 units per inch. Maybe, by implementing some rescaling mechanism similar to the classical quasi device independence, groff could emulate AT&T’s post device.

- The B-spline command ‘D~’ is correctly handled by the intermediate output parser, but the drawing routines aren’t implemented in some of the postprocessor programs.
- The argument of the commands ‘s’ and ‘x H’ has the implicit unit scaled point ‘z’ in gtroff, while AT&T troff has point (‘p’). This isn’t an incompatibility but a compatible extension, for both units coincide for all devices without a sizescale parameter in the DESC file, including all postprocessors from AT&T and groff’s text devices. The few groff devices with a sizescale parameter either do not exist for AT&T troff, have a different name, or seem to have a different resolution. So conflicts are very unlikely.
- The position changing after the commands ‘Dp’, ‘DP’, and ‘Dt’ is illogical, but as old versions of gtroff used this feature it is kept for compatibility reasons.

8.2 Font Files

The gtroff font format is roughly a superset of the ditroff font format (as used in later versions of AT&T troff and its descendants). Unlike the ditroff font format, there is no associated binary format; all files are text files.\footnote{Plan 9 troff has also abandoned the binary format.} The font files for device name are stored in a directory devname. There are two types of file: a device description file called DESC and for each font f a font file called f.

8.2.1 DESC File Format

The DESC file can contain the following types of line. Except for the charset keyword which must come last (if at all), the order of the lines is not important. Later entries in the file, however, override previous values.

 charset  
This line and everything following in the file are ignored. It is allowed for the sake of backwards compatibility.

 family fam  
The default font family is fam.

 fonts n F1 F2 F3 ... Fn  
Fonts F1 ... Fn are mounted in the font positions m+1, ..., m+n where m is the number of styles. This command may extend over more than one line. A font name of 0 means no font is mounted on the corresponding font position.
hor \( n \)  
The horizontal resolution is \( n \) machine units. All horizontal quantities are rounded to be multiples of this value.

image_generator \( \text{string} \)  
Needed for grohtml only. It specifies the program to generate PNG images from POSTSCRIPT input. Under GNU/Linux this is usually \texttt{gs} but under other systems (notably cygwin) it might be set to another name.

paperlength \( n \)  
The physical vertical dimension of the output medium in machine units. This isn’t used by \texttt{troff} itself but by output devices. Deprecated. Use \texttt{papersize} instead.

papersize \( \text{string} \ldots \)  
Select a paper size. Valid values for \texttt{string} are the ISO paper types \texttt{A0-A7, B0-B7, C0-C7, D0-D7, DL}, and the US paper types \texttt{letter, legal, tabloid, ledger, statement, executive, com10}, and \texttt{monarch}. Case is not significant for \texttt{string} if it holds predefined paper types. Alternatively, \texttt{string} can be a file name (e.g. /etc/papersize); if the file can be opened, \texttt{groff} reads the first line and tests for the above paper sizes. Finally, \texttt{string} can be a custom paper size in the format \texttt{length, width} (no spaces before and after the comma). Both \texttt{length} and \texttt{width} must have a unit appended; valid values are ‘i’ for inches, ‘C’ for centimeters, ‘p’ for points, and ‘P’ for picas. Example: \texttt{12c,235p}. An argument which starts with a digit is always treated as a custom paper format. \texttt{papersize} sets both the vertical and horizontal dimension of the output medium.

More than one argument can be specified; \texttt{groff} scans from left to right and uses the first valid paper specification.

paperwidth \( n \)  
The physical horizontal dimension of the output medium in machine units. This isn’t used by \texttt{troff} itself but by output devices. Deprecated. Use \texttt{papersize} instead.

pass_filenames  
Tell \texttt{gtroff} to emit the name of the source file currently being processed. This is achieved by the intermediate output command ‘F’. Currently, this is only used by the \texttt{grohtml} output device.

postpro \( \text{program} \)  
Call \texttt{program} as a postprocessor. For example, the line

\begin{verbatim}
    postpro grodvi
\end{verbatim}

in the file devdvi/DESC makes \texttt{groff} call \texttt{grodvi} if option \texttt{-Tdvi} is given (and \texttt{-Z} isn’t used).
prepro program
   Call program as a preprocessor. Currently, this keyword is used by groff with option -Thml or -Txhtml only.

print program
   Use program as a spooler program for printing. If omitted, the -l and -L options of groff are ignored.

res n
   There are n machine units per inch.

sizes s1 s2 ... sn 0
   This means that the device has fonts at s1, s2, ... sn scaled points. The list of sizes must be terminated by 0 (this is digit zero). Each si can also be a range of sizes m-n. The list can extend over more than one line.

sizescale n
   The scale factor for point sizes. By default this has a value of 1. One scaled point is equal to one point/n. The arguments to the unitwidth and sizes commands are given in scaled points. See Section 5.18.2 [Fractional Type Sizes], page 129, for more information.

styles S1 S2 ... Sm
   The first m font positions are associated with styles S1 ... Sm.

tcommand
   This means that the postprocessor can handle the ‘t’ and ‘u’ intermediate output commands.

unicode
   Indicate that the output device supports the complete Unicode repertoire. Useful only for devices which produce character entities instead of glyphs.

   If unicode is present, no charset section is required in the font description files since the Unicode handling built into groff is used. However, if there are entries in a charset section, they either override the default mappings for those particular characters or add new mappings (normally for composite characters).
   This is used for -Tutf8, -Thml, and -Txhtml.

unitwidth n
   Quantities in the font files are given in machine units for fonts whose point size is n scaled points.

unscaled_charwidths
   Make the font handling module always return unscaled character widths. Needed for the grohtml device.

use_charnames_in_special
   This command indicates that gtroff should encode special characters inside special commands. Currently, this is only used by the grohtml output device. See Section 5.30 [Postprocessor Access], page 174.
The vertical resolution is \( n \) machine units. All vertical quantities are rounded to be multiples of this value.

The \texttt{res}, \texttt{unitwidth}, \texttt{fonts}, and \texttt{sizes} lines are mandatory. Other commands are ignored by \texttt{gtroff} but may be used by postprocessors to store arbitrary information about the device in the \texttt{DESC} file.

Here a list of obsolete keywords which are recognized by \texttt{groff} but completely ignored: \texttt{spare1}, \texttt{spare2}, \texttt{biggestfont}.

### 8.2.2 Font File Format

A font file, also (and probably better) called a font description file, has two sections. The first section is a sequence of lines each containing a sequence of blank delimited words; the first word in the line is a key, and subsequent words give a value for that key.

- \texttt{name \( f \)} The name of the font is \( f \).
- \texttt{spacewidth \( n \)} The normal width of a space is \( n \).
- \texttt{slant \( n \)} The glyphs of the font have a slant of \( n \) degrees. (Positive means forward.)
- \texttt{ligatures lig1 lig2 \ldots lign [0]} Glyphs \( lig_1 \), \( lig_2 \), \ldots, \( lign \) are ligatures; possible ligatures are ‘ff’, ‘fi’, ‘fl’, ‘ffi’ and ‘ffl’. For backwards compatibility, the list of ligatures may be terminated with a 0. The list of ligatures may not extend over more than one line.
- \texttt{special} The font is \textit{special}; this means that when a glyph is requested that is not present in the current font, it is searched for in any special fonts that are mounted.

Other commands are ignored by \texttt{gtroff} but may be used by postprocessors to store arbitrary information about the font in the font file.

The first section can contain comments which start with the ‘\#' character and extend to the end of a line.

The second section contains one or two subsections. It must contain a \texttt{charset} subsection and it may also contain a \texttt{kernpairs} subsection. These subsections can appear in any order. Each subsection starts with a word on a line by itself.

The word \texttt{charset} starts the character set subsection.\footnote{This keyword is misnamed since it starts a list of ordered glyphs, not characters.} The \texttt{charset} line is followed by a sequence of lines. Each line gives information for one glyph. A line comprises a number of fields separated by blanks or tabs. The format is

\[
\text{name metrics type code [entity-name] [-- comment]}
\]
name identifies the glyph name\(^5\): If name is a single character c then it corresponds to the gtroff input character c; if it is of the form ‘\c’ where c is a single character, then it corresponds to the special character \[c\]; otherwise it corresponds to the special character ‘\[name\]’. If it is exactly two characters xx it can be entered as ‘\(xx\)’. Note that single-letter special characters can’t be accessed as ‘\c’; the only exception is ‘\-’ which is identical to \[-\].

gtroff supports 8-bit input characters; however some utilities have difficulties with eight-bit characters. For this reason, there is a convention that the entity name ‘char’ is equivalent to the single input character whose code is n. For example, ‘char163’ would be equivalent to the character with code 163 which is the pounds sterling sign in the ISO Latin-1 character set. You shouldn’t use ‘char’ entities in font description files since they are related to input, not output. Otherwise, you get hard-coded connections between input and output encoding which prevents use of different (input) character sets.

The name ‘---’ is special and indicates that the glyph is unnamed; such glyphs can only be used by means of the \N escape sequence in gtroff.

The type field gives the glyph type:

1. the glyph has a descender, for example, ‘p’;
2. the glyph has an ascender, for example, ‘b’;
3. the glyph has both an ascender and a descender, for example, ‘c’.

The code field gives the code which the postprocessor uses to print the glyph. The glyph can also be input to gtroff using this code by means of the \N escape sequence. code can be any integer. If it starts with ‘0’ it is interpreted as octal; if it starts with ‘0x’ or ‘0X’ it is interpreted as hexadecimal. Note, however, that the \N escape sequence only accepts a decimal integer.

The entity-name field gives an ASCII string identifying the glyph which the postprocessor uses to print the gtroff glyph name. This field is optional and has been introduced so that the grohtml device driver can encode its character set. For example, the glyph ‘\[Po\]’ is represented as ‘&pound;’ in HTML 4.0.

Anything on the line after the entity-name field resp. after ‘--’ is ignored.

The metrics field has the form:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{width}[, \text{height}[, \text{depth}[, \text{italic-correction}]
&[, \text{left-italic-correction}[, \text{subscript-correction}]]]]
\end{align*}
\]

There must not be any spaces between these subfields (it has been split here into two lines for better legibility only). Missing subfields are assumed to

---

\(^5\) The distinction between input, characters, and output, glyphs, is not clearly separated in the terminology of groff; for example, the char request should be called glyph since it defines an output entity.
be 0. The subfields are all decimal integers. Since there is no associated binary format, these values are not required to fit into a variable of type ‘char’ as they are in ditroff. The width subfield gives the width of the glyph. The height subfield gives the height of the glyph (upwards is positive); if a glyph does not extend above the baseline, it should be given a zero height, rather than a negative height. The depth subfield gives the depth of the glyph, that is, the distance from the baseline to the lowest point below the baseline to which the glyph extends (downwards is positive); if a glyph does not extend below the baseline, it should be given a zero depth, rather than a negative depth. The italic-correction subfield gives the amount of space that should be added after the glyph when it is immediately to be followed by a glyph from a roman font. The left-italic-correction subfield gives the amount of space that should be added before the glyph when it is immediately to be preceded by a glyph from a roman font. The subscript-correction gives the amount of space that should be added after a glyph before adding a subscript. This should be less than the italic correction.

A line in the charset section can also have the format

```plaintext
name "
```

This indicates that name is just another name for the glyph mentioned in the preceding line.

The word kernpairs starts the kernpairs section. This contains a sequence of lines of the form:

```plaintext
c1 c2 n
```

This means that when glyph c1 appears next to glyph c2 the space between them should be increased by n. Most entries in the kernpairs section have a negative value for n.
9 Installation
A Copying This Manual

Version 1.3, 3 November 2008

http://fsf.org/

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## B Request Index

Requests appear without the leading control character (normally either ‘.’ or ‘’).

### A

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<tr>
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### B

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<td>special</td>
</tr>
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</table>
spreadwarn ........................................... 181
ss ............................................... 82
sty .......................................... 110
substring .................................. 134
sv .......................................... 106
sy .......................................... 172

T
  ta ........................................... 91
  tc ......................................... 93
  ti ......................................... 102
  tkf ....................................... 124
  tl ......................................... 104
  tm ........................................ 180
  tmi ...................................... 180
  tmc ...................................... 180
  tr ......................................... 97
  trf ...................................... 170
  trin .................................... 97
  trnt .................................... 99

troff ....................................... 99

U
  uf ......................................... 122
  ul ......................................... 122
  unformat .................................. 165

V
  vpt ....................................... 154
  vs ....................................... 128

W
  warn ...................................... 182
  warnscale ................................ 181
  wh ....................................... 154
  while ..................................... 138
  write ..................................... 173
  writec .................................... 173
  writem ................................... 173
## C Escape Index

Any escape sequence \( X \) with \( X \) not in the list below emits a warning, printing glyph \( X \).

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### E Register Index

The macro package or program a specific register belongs to is appended in brackets.

A register name \texttt{x} consisting of exactly one character can be accessed as `\texttt{nx}`. A register name \texttt{xx} consisting of exactly two characters can be accessed as `\texttt{n(xx)}`. Register names \texttt{xxx} of any length can be accessed as `\texttt{n[xxx]}`.

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<td>\texttt{w}</td>
<td>167</td>
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</table>

E Register Index 237
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U</th>
<th>V</th>
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# F Macro Index

The macro package a specific macro belongs to is appended in brackets. They appear without the leading control character (normally `.`).

```plaintext
[ [ms] .......................... 48
 ]
] [ms] .......................... 48

1 1C [ms] .......................... 50

2 2C [ms] .......................... 50

A
AB [ms] .......................... 37
AE [ms] .......................... 38
AI [ms] .......................... 37
AM [ms] .......................... 53, 56
AT [man] .......................... 28
AU [ms] .......................... 37

B
B [man] .......................... 27
B [ms] .......................... 41
B1 [ms] .......................... 47
B2 [ms] .......................... 47
BD [ms] .......................... 46
B1 [man] .......................... 27
B1 [ms] .......................... 41
BR [man] .......................... 27
BT [man] .......................... 29
BT [ms] .......................... 49
BX [ms] .......................... 41

C
CD [ms] .......................... 46
CT [man] .......................... 29
CW [man] .......................... 29
CW [ms] .......................... 41, 56

d
DA [ms] .......................... 37
De [man] .......................... 30
De [ms] .......................... 46
DE [ms] .......................... 45, 46
Ds [man] .......................... 30
Ds [ms] .......................... 46
DS [ms] .......................... 45, 46, 56
DT [man] .......................... 28

E
EE [man] .......................... 30
EF [ms] .......................... 49
EH [ms] .......................... 49
EN [ms] .......................... 47
EQ [ms] .......................... 47
EX [man] .......................... 30

F
FE [ms] .......................... 48
FS [ms] .......................... 48

G
G [man] .......................... 30
GL [man] .......................... 30

H
HB [man] .......................... 30
HD [ms] .......................... 49
HP [man] .......................... 26

I
I [man] .......................... 27
I [ms] .......................... 41
IB [man] .......................... 27
ID [ms] .......................... 45
IP [man] .......................... 26
IP [ms] .......................... 42
IR [man] .......................... 27
```
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# G String Index

The macro package or program a specific string belongs to is appended in brackets.

A string name \(x\) consisting of exactly one character can be accessed as ‘\(\ast x\)’. A string name \(xx\) consisting of exactly two characters can be accessed as ‘\(\ast(xx)\)’. String names \(xxx\) of any length can be accessed as ‘\(\ast[xxx]\)’.

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<td>ABSTRACT [ms]</td>
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<td>CF [ms]</td>
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<td>d- [ms]</td>
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H Glyph Name Index

A glyph name \texttt{xx} consisting of exactly two characters can be accessed as ‘\texttt{\(xx\)}’. Glyph names \texttt{xxx} of any length can be accessed as ‘\texttt{\([xxx]\)}’.
# Font File Keyword Index

## Font File Keyword Index

### #
- # ...................................... 213

### B
- biggestfont .................. 213

### C
- charset .................. 210, 213

### F
- family ........................... 108, 112, 210
- fonts .................. 113, 120, 210

### H
- hor .................................. 211

### I
- image_generator .................. 211

### K
- kernpairs .................. 215

### L
- ligatures .................. 213

### N
- name .................. 213

### P
- paperlength .................. 211
- papersize .................. 211
- paperwidth .................. 211
- pass_filenames .................. 211
- postpro .................. 211
- prepro .................. 212
- print .................. 212

### R
- res .................. 212

### S
- sizes .................. 212
- sizescale .................. 212
- slant .................. 213
- spacewidth .................. 213
- spare1 .................. 213
- spare2 .................. 213
- special .................. 122, 213
- styles .................. 108, 110, 112, 212

### T
- tcommand .................. 212

### U
- unicode .................. 212
- unitwidth .................. 212
- unscaled_charwidths .................. 212
- use_charnames_in_special .... 174, 212

### V
- vert .................. 213
J Program and File Index

A

an.tmac............................. 23

C

changebar ......................... 176
composite.tmac ................... 116
cp1047.tmac ...................... 61

d

D

DESC ............ 108, 110, 112, 113, 116, 120
DESC file format ............... 210
DESC, and font mounting ....... 112
DESC, and use_charnames_in_special
  ......................... 174
ditroff ....................... 2

e

E

eqntmac .................................. 61
eqn .................................. 47

F

freeeuro.pfa ....................... 61

g

gchem ......................... 7
geqn ................................ 7
geqn, invocation in manual pages . 29
ggrn ................................ 7
gpic ................................ 7
grap ................................ 7
grefer ............................. 7
grefer, invocation in manual pages . 29
groff ................................ 7
grog ................................ 15
grohtml ............................. 27
gsoelim ......................... 7
gtbl ................................ 7
gtbl, invocation in manual pages . 29
gtroff ............................. 7

H

hyphen.us ............................. 86
hyphenex.us ..................... 86

L

latin1.tmac ....................... 61
latin2.tmac ....................... 61
latin9.tmac ....................... 61
less ................................ 189

M

makeindex ............................. 21
man, invocation of preprocessors .... 29
man-old.tmac ..................... 23
man-local ....................... 24, 29
man.tmac ....................... 23
man.ultrix ..................... 29

N

nrchbar ...................... 176

P

papersize.tmac ................... 14
perl ................................ 172
pic ................................ 47
post-grohtml ................... 11
pre-grohtml ................... 11
preconv ......................... 7

R

refer ............................. 47

S

soelim ..................... 179

t

tbl ................................ 47
trace.tmac ..................... 142
troffrc ...................... 10, 14, 86, 88, 99, 101
troffrc-end .................. 10, 86, 88, 99
tty.tmac ..................... 100
## K Concept Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>at end of sentence</td>
<td>60, 117</td>
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<td>in a macro argument</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>as delimiter</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
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<td>as delimiter</td>
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</tr>
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<td>as a comment</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
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<td>at end of sentence</td>
<td>60, 117</td>
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<tr>
<td>)</td>
<td>at end of sentence</td>
<td>60, 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>as delimiter</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>at end of sentence</td>
<td>60, 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>and page motion</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>as delimiter</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>and page motion</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>as delimiter</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>as delimiter</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.h</td>
<td>register, difference to <code>nl</code></td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.ps</td>
<td>register, in comparison with <code>.psr</code></td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.s</td>
<td>register, in comparison with <code>.sr</code></td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.S</td>
<td>register, Plan 9 alias for <code>.tabs</code></td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.t</td>
<td>register, and diverions</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.tabs</td>
<td>register, Plan 9 alias <code>.S</code></td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.V</td>
<td>register, and <code>.vs</code></td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>as delimiter</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>at end of sentence</td>
<td>60, 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;</td>
<td>as delimiter</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;</td>
<td>as delimiter</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>as delimiter</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>as delimiter</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[</td>
<td>macro names starting with, and refer</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[</td>
<td>starting an identifier</td>
<td>66, 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>]</td>
<td>as part of an identifier</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>]</td>
<td>at end of sentence</td>
<td>60, 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>]</td>
<td>ending an identifier</td>
<td>66, 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>]</td>
<td>macro names starting with, and refer</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\</td>
<td>copy-in mode</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\</td>
<td>output request</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The GNU Troff Manual

\!, and trnt .......................... 99
\!, in top-level diversion .......... 164
\!, incompatibilities with AT&T troff ........................................... 185, 186
\!, used as delimiter .................. 70, 71
\$, when reading text for a macro . 143
\%, and translations ................. 98
\%, following \& or \% ................. 85
\%, in \& .................................. 174
\%, incompatibilities with AT&T troff ........................................... 185
\%, used as delimiter .................. 70, 71
\&, and glyph definitions .......... 118
\&, and translations ................. 98
\&, at end of sentence ............... 60
\&, escaping control characters ... 68
\&, in \& .................................. 174
\&, incompatibilities with AT&T troff ........................................... 185
\&, used as delimiter .................. 70, 71
\', and translations ................. 98
\', incompatibilities with AT&T troff ........................................... 185
\', used as delimiter .................. 70, 71
\(, and warnings ....................... 183
\(, incompatibilities with AT&T troff ........................................... 185
\(, used as delimiter .................. 70, 71
\^, and translations ................. 98
\^, incompatibilities with AT&T troff ........................................... 185
\^, used as delimiter .................. 70, 71
\_, used as delimiter ................. 70, 71
\\, and translations ................. 98
\\, incompatibilities with AT&T troff ........................................... 185
\\, used as delimiter .................. 70, 71
\, when reading text for a macro . 143
\, incompatibilities with AT&T troff ........................................... 185
\, used as delimiter .................. 70, 71
\', and translations ................. 98
\', incompatibilities with AT&T troff ........................................... 185
\', used as delimiter .................. 70, 71
\SP, difference to \SP ................. 68
\', used as delimiter .................. 70
\0, used as delimiter .................. 70
\A, allowed delimiters ............... 70
\a, and copy-in mode ................. 94
\a, and translations ................. 98
\A, incompatibilities with AT&T troff ........................................... 185
\a, used as delimiter .................. 70
\B, allowed delimiters ............... 70
\b, limitations ......................... 154
\b, possible quote characters ........ 70
\C, allowed delimiters ............... 70
\c, and fill mode ....................... 104
\c, and no-fill mode ................... 104
\C, and translations ................. 98
\c, incompatibilities with AT&T troff ........................................... 185
\c, used as delimiter .................. 70, 71
\D, and changing fonts ............... 108
\D, and font positions ............... 112
\d, used as delimiter .................. 70
\E, and copy-in mode ................... 96
\e, and glyph definitions .......... 118
\e, and translations ................. 98
\e, incompatibilities with AT&T troff ........................................... 186
\e, used as delimiter .................. 70, 71
\E, used as delimiter .................. 70
\F, and changing fonts ............... 108
\F, and font positions ............... 112
\f, and font translations ............ 108
\f, incompatibilities with AT&T troff ........................................... 185
\h, allowed delimiters ............... 70
K: Concept Index

\H, allowed delimiters 70
\H, incompatibilities with AT&T troff 185
\H, using + and − 64
\H, with fractional type sizes 129
\L, allowed delimiters 70
\L, allowed delimiters 70
\L, and glyph definitions 118
\L, and glyph definitions 118
\M, allowed delimiters 70
\M, and translations 98
\n, and warnings 183
\n, incompatibilities with AT&T troff 184
\n, when reading text for a macro 143
\o, possible quote characters 70
\p, used as delimiter 70, 71
\R, after \c 103
\R, allowed delimiters 70
\R, and warnings 183
\R, difference to \nr 75
\r, used as delimiter 70
\R, using + and − 64
\RET, when reading text for a macro 143
\s, allowed delimiters 70
\S, allowed delimiters 70
\S, incompatibilities with AT&T troff 185
\S, incompatibilities with AT&T troff 185
\s, using + and − 64
\s, with fractional type sizes 129
\SP, difference to \ 68
\SP, incompatibilities with AT&T troff 185
\SP, used as delimiter 70
\t, and copy-in mode 91
\t, and translations 98
\t, and warnings 183
\t, used as delimiter 70
\u, used as delimiter 70
\v, allowed delimiters 70
\V, and copy-in mode 174
\V, copy-in mode 174
\v, internal representation 178
\w, allowed delimiters 70
\x, allowed delimiters 70
\X, and special characters 174
\X, followed by \n 85
\X, possible quote characters 70
\Y, followed by \v 85
\Z, allowed delimiters 70

1, and page motion 64

8

8-bit input 213

A

aborting (ab) 180
absolute position operator (1) 64
accent marks [ms] 52
access of postprocessor 174
accessing unnamed glyphs with \N 213
activating kerning (kern) 124
activating ligatures (lg) 123
activating track kerning (tkf) 124
ad request, and hyphenation margin 87
ad request, and hyphenation space 87
adjusting 59
adjusting and filling, manipulating 79
adjustment mode register (.j) 81
adobe glyph list (AGL) 114
AGL (adobe glyph list) 114
alias, diversion, creating (als) 134
alias, diversion, removing (rm) 135
alias, macro, creating (als) 134
alias, macro, removing (rm) 135
alias, number register, creating (aln) 74
alias, string, creating (als) 134
alias, string, removing (rm) 135
als request, and \$0 144
am, am1, ami requests, and warnings 183
annotations 20
appending to a diversion (da) 161
appending to a file (opena) 173
appending to a macro (am) 142
appending to a string (as) 133
arc, drawing (\D'a...') 151
argument delimiting characters 70
arguments to macros, and tabs 68
arguments to requests and macros 68
arguments, and compatibility mode 179
arguments, macro (\$) 143
arguments, of strings 130
arithmetic operators 63
artificial fonts 121
as, as1 requests, and comments 71
as, as1 requests, and warnings 183
ASCII approximation output register (.A) 8, 79
break, implicit ........................................ 60
built-in registers ................................ 77
bulleted list, example markup [ms] .......... 42

C

c unit ............................................. 62
calling convention of preprocessors ...... 29
capabilities of groff ......................... 3
c request, causing implicit linebreak .... 79
c request, difference to '.ad c' .......... 80
centered text ................................... 80
centering lines (ce) .......................... 18, 83
centimeter unit (c) ......................... 62
cf request, and copy-in mode .......... 170
cf request, causing implicit linebreak .. 79
changing font family (\fam, \F) .......... 110
changing font position (\f) ............ 112
changing font style (\sty) ............. 110
changing fonts (\tt, \f) .................. 108
changing format, and read-only registers
. ........................................ 77
changing the font height (\H) ........ 121
changing the font slant (\Sl) ........... 112
changing the page number character (\pc)
. ........................................ 105
changing trap location (\ch) .......... 156
changing type sizes (ps, \s) ........ 126
changing vertical line spacing (vs) .... 128
c char request, and soft hyphen character
. ........................................ 88
c char request, and translations ........ 98
c char request, used with \N ............. 116
character ....................................... 112
character class (\class) ............... 119
character classes ......................... 119
character properties (\flags) ........ 117
character translations ................ 95
character, backspace .................. 65
character, backspace, and translations
. ........................................ 98
character, control (.) ................. 67
character, control, changing (cc) .... 95
character, defining (\char) .......... 118
character, defining fallback (fchar,
\ms, schar) .................................. 118
character, escape, changing (ec) .... 96
character, escape, while defining glyph
. ........................................ 118
character, field delimiting (fc) ........ 94
character, field padding (fc) .......... 94
character, hyphenation (\%h) ........ 85
character, leader repetition (\c) ........... 94
character, leader, and translations ...... 98
character, leader, non-interpreted (\a) ................................................................. 94
character, named (\C) .................... 116
character, newline .......................... 71
character, newline, and translations ...... 98
character, no-break control (?) ............ 67
character, no-break control, changing (c2) ......................................................... 95
character, soft hyphen, setting (shc) ...... 88
character, space ............................ 71
character, special ........................... 98
character, tab .................................. 71
character, tab repetition (tc) .............. 93
character, tab, and translations ........... 98
character, tab, non-interpreted (\t) ....... 91
character, tabulator .......................... 60
character, transparent ..................... 60, 117
character, whitespace ........................ 65
character, zero width space (\&) ........... 68, 124, 150
characters, argument delimiting .......... 70
characters, end-of-sentence .................. 117
characters, hyphenation .................... 117
characters, input, and output glyphs, compatibility with AT&T troff .... 185
characters, invalid for trf request ......... 171
characters, invalid input ................... 65
characters, overlapping ....................... 117
characters, special .......................... 189
characters, unnamed, accessing with \N ................................................................. 213
\chem, the program .......................... 187
circle, drawing (\D'c ...') ................. 151
circle, solid, drawing (\D'C ...') ............ 151
class of characters (class) .................. 119
classes, character ............................ 119
closing file (close) .......................... 173
code, hyphenation (hcode) .................. 86
color name, background, register (.M) ....... 169
color name, drawing, register (.m) ........ 169
color name, fill, register (.M) .............. 169
color, default .................................. 168
colors ........................................... 168
colors, fill, unnamed (\D'F ...') .......... 153
command prefix ............................. 12
command-line options ........................ 8
commands, embedded ......................... 67
comments ....................................... 71
comments in font files ....................... 213

comments, lining up with tabs ............... 71
comments, with ds .......................... 131
common features ............................. 19
common name space of macros, diversions, and strings ......................... 132
comparison of strings .......................... 136
comparison operators .......................... 63
compatibility mode .......................... 183, 184
compatibility mode, and parameters ......... 179
composite glyph names ....................... 114
conditional block, begin (\l) ............... 138
conditional block, end (\r) ................. 138
conditional output for terminal (TTY) ................................................................. 135
conditional page break (\ne) ............... 106
conditionals and loops ...................... 135
consecutive hyphenated lines (hlm) ........ 84
constant glyph space mode (cs) ............ 123
contents, table of ........................... 21, 94
continuation, input line (\) .................. 103
continuation, output line (\c) ............... 103
continue request, in a while loop ........... 139
continuous underlining (cu) .................. 122
control character (.) ......................... 67
control character, changing (cc) ............ 95
control character, no-break (?) .............. 67
control character, no-break, changing (c2) ......................................................... 95
control sequences, for terminals .......... 189
control, line .................................. 103
control, page ............................... 106
conventions for input ....................... 61
copy mode .................................... 143
copy-in mode .................................. 143
copy-in mode, and \! ....................... 164
copy-in mode, and \? ....................... 136, 164
copy-in mode, and \a ....................... 94
copy-in mode, and \E ....................... 96
copy-in mode, and \t ....................... 91
copy-in mode, and \V .......................... 174
copy-in mode, and cf request ............... 170
copy-in mode, and device request .......... 174
copy-in mode, and ig request ............... 72
copy-in mode, and length request ........... 134
copy-in mode, and macro arguments .......... 143
copy-in mode, and output request .......... 164
copy-in mode, and tm request ............... 180
copy-in mode, and tmi request ............... 180
copy-in mode, and tmc request ............... 180
copy-in mode, and trf request ............... 170
copy-in mode, and write request ............. 173
copy-in mode, and writec request ............ 173
copy-in mode, and \texttt{writem} request 173

copying environment (\texttt{env}) 166
correction between italic and roman glyph (\texttt{\textbackslash V}, \texttt{\textbackslash Y}) 124
correction, italic (\texttt{\textbackslash V}) 124
correction, left italic (\texttt{\textbackslash Y}) 124
cover page macros, [ms] 36
cp request, and glyph definitions 118
cp1047, input encoding 61
cp1047, output encoding 11
creating alias, for diversion (als) 134
creating alias, for macro (als) 134
creating alias, for number register (aln) 74
creating alias, for string (als) 134
creating new characters (char) 118
credits 5
cs request, and font styles 110
cs request, and font translations 108
cs request, incompatibilities with AT&T \texttt{troff} 185
cs request, with fractional type sizes 129
current directory 13
current input file name register (.F) 77
current page number (%) 106
current time 172
current time, hours (hours) 78
current time, minutes (minutes) 78
current time, seconds (seconds) 78
current vertical position (nl) 107
d
\texttt{da} request, and \texttt{dn} (dl) 163
\texttt{da} request, and warnings 183
date, day of the month register (dy) 78
date, day of the week register (dw) 78
date, month of the year register (mo) 78
date, year register (year, yr) 78
day of the month register (dy) 78
day of the week register (dw) 78
de request, and \texttt{while} 138
de, del, dei requests, and warnings 183
debugging 179
default color 168
default indentation [man] 27
default indentation, resetting [man] 26
default units 63
defining character (\texttt{char}) 118
defining character class (class) 119
defining fallback character (\texttt{fchar}, \texttt{fschar}, \texttt{schar}) 118
defining glyph (char) 118
defining symbol (char) 118
delayed text 21
delimited arguments, incompatibilities with AT&T \texttt{troff} 185
delimiting character, for fields (fc) 94
delimiting characters for arguments 70
depth, of last glyph (\texttt{cpdp}) 167
\texttt{DESC} file, format 210
device request, and copy-in mode 174
device resolution 212
devices for output 4, 189
dg glyph, at end of sentence 60, 117
di request, and warnings 183
differences in implementation 184
digit width space (\texttt{\textbackslash 0}) 148
digits, and delimiters 71
dimensions, line 100
directories for fonts 13
directories for macros 13
directory, current 13
directory, for tmac files 13
directory, home 13
directory, platform-specific 13
directory, site-specific 13, 14
disabling \texttt{\textbackslash eo} 95
disabling hyphenation (\texttt{\textbackslash n}) 85
discardable horizontal space 82
discarded space in traps 89
displays 20
displays [ms] 45
displays, and footnotes [ms] 48
distance to next trap register (.t) 156
ditroff, the program 2
diversion name register (.z) 162
diversion trap, setting (dt) 157
diversion traps 157
disruption, appending (da) 161
disruption, beginning (di) 161
disruption, creating alias (als) 134
disruption, ending (di) 161
disruption, nested 162
disruption, removing (rm) 134
disruption, removing alias (rm) 135
disruption, renaming (rn) 134
disruption, stripping final newline 133
disruption, top-level 161
disruption, top-level, and \texttt{\textbackslash !} 164
disruption, top-level, and \texttt{\textbackslash ?} 164
disruption, top-level, and \texttt{bp} 106
disruption, unformatting (asciify) 165
diversion, vertical position in, register (.d) .......................................... 162
diversions ........................................... 161
diversions, and traps ......................... 157
diversions, shared name space with macros and strings .................................. 132
dl register, and da (boxa) ..................... 163
dn register, and da (boxa) ..................... 163
documents, multi-file .............................. 179
documents, structuring the source code .......................................................... 67
double quote, in a macro argument ...... 68
double-spacing (ls) ......................... 18, 89
double-spacing (vs, pvs) ..................... 128
drawing a circle (\D'c \ldots') ............... 151
drawing a line (\D'1 \ldots') ..................... 151
drawing a polygon (\D'P \ldots') .............. 152
drawing a solid circle (\D'C \ldots') .......... 151
drawing a solid ellipse (\D'E \ldots') .......... 151
drawing a solid polygon (\D'P \ldots') .......... 152
drawing a spline (\D'' \ldots') .................. 152
drawing an arc (\D'a \ldots') .................... 151
drawing an ellipse (\D'e \ldots') ............... 151
drawing color name register (.m) ........... 169
drawing horizontal lines (\l) ............... 150
drawing requests ............................... 149
drawing vertical lines (\L) ............... 150
ds request, and comments ..................... 131
ds request, and double quotes .............. 69
ds request, and leading spaces ............. 131
ds, ds1 requests, and comments ............ 71
ds, ds1 requests, and warnings .......... 183
dumping environments (pev) ............... 180
dumping number registers (pnr) ............ 180
dumping symbol table (pm) ................. 180
dumping traps (ptr) ......................... 180

E

EBCDIC encoding .............................. 60
EBCDIC encoding of a tab .................. 91
EBCDIC encoding of backspace .......... 65
EBCDIC, input encoding .................. 61
EBCDIC, output encoding .................. 11
el request, and warnings ............... 182
ellipse, drawing (\D'e \ldots') ............... 151
ellipse, solid, drawing (\D'E \ldots') ....... 151
eq glyph, and cflags .................... 117
em unit (m) ................................... 62
embedded commands ....................... 67
embedding PDF ............................... 192
embedding PostScript ...................... 190

embolding of special fonts ................. 122
empty line ..................................... 60
empty line (sp) .............................. 18
empty space before a paragraph [man] .. 28
en unit (n) ................................... 63
enabling vertical position traps (vpt) ......................................................... 154
encoding, EBCDIC ......................... 60
encoding, input, cp1047 .................. 61
encoding, input, EBCDIC .................. 61
encoding, input, latin-1 (ISO 8859-1) .. 61
encoding, input, latin-2 (ISO 8859-2) .. 61
encoding, input, latin-5 (ISO 8859-9) .. 61
encoding, input, latin-9 (latin-0, ISO 8859-15) ............................................ 61
encoding, output, ASCII .................. 11
encoding, output, cp1047 ............... 11
encoding, output, EBCDIC ............... 11
encoding, output, latin-1 (ISO 8859-1) ......................................................... 11
end of conditional block (\}) .............. 138
end-of-input macro (em) .................. 159
end-of-input trap, setting (em) ........ 159
end-of-input traps ........................... 159
end-of-sentence characters ............... 117
ending diversion (di) ...................... 161
environment number/name register (.ev) ......................................................... 166
environment variables ........................ 12
environment, copying (evc) ............. 166
environment, dimensions of last glyph (w, .cht, .cdp, .csk) .................. 167
environment, previous line length (.n) ......................................................... 167
environment, switching (ev) ............. 166
environments .................................. 165
environments, dumping (pev) ............ 180
eqn, the program ............................ 187
equations [ms] ................................. 47
escape character, changing (ec) ........ 96
e scape character, while defining glyph ......................................................... 118
escapes ........................................ 70
escaping newline characters, in strings ......................................................... 131
ex request, use in debugging ........... 180
ex request, used with nx and rd ........ 171
example markup, bulleted list [ms] ........ 42
example markup, glossary-style list [ms] ......................................................... 43
example markup, multi-page table [ms] .................................. 48
example markup, numbered list [ms] .................................. 42
example markup, title page ........................................... 38
examples of invocation ................................................. 15
exiting (ex) .................................................................. 180
expansion of strings (\*) ................................................. 130
explicit hyphen (\%) ......................................................... 84
expression, limitation of logical not in .......................... 63
expression, order of evaluation ..................................... 64
expressions ................................................................... 63
expressions, and space characters ................................. 65
extra post-vertical line space (\x) ......................... 128
extra post-vertical line space register (.a) ................. 90
extra pre-vertical line space (\x) ............................... 128
extra spaces ............................................................... 59
extremum operators (>?, <?) ........................................ 64

\textbf{F}

\textit{f} unit ................................................................. 62
\textit{f} unit, and colors .............................................. 168
factor, zoom, of a font (fzoom) ................................. 109
fallback character, defining (fchar, fschar, schar) ....... 118
fallback glyph, removing definition (rchar, rfschar) ....... 119
\textit{fam} request, and changing fonts ......................... 108
\textit{fam} request, and font positions ......................... 112
families, font ........................................................... 109
features, common ...................................................... 19
\textit{fi} request, causing implicit linebreak ................. 79
field delimiting character (fc) .................................... 94
field padding character (fc) ........................................ 94
fields ........................................................................ 94
fields, and tabs .......................................................... 91
figures [ms] ............................................................... 47
file formats ............................................................... 197
file, appending to (opena) .......................................... 173
file, closing (close) ................................................... 173
file, inclusion (so) .................................................... 170
file, opening (open) .................................................. 173
file, processing next (nx) .......................................... 171
file, writing to (write, writec) .................................. 173
files, font ................................................................. 210
files, macro, searching ............................................. 13
fill color name register (.M) ........................................ 169
fill colors, unnamed (\d'\F'...) .................................. 153
fill mode ................................................................. 60, 82, 182
fill mode (fi) .............................................................. 79
fill mode, and \c ......................................................... 104
filling ........................................................................ 59
filling and adjusting, manipulating ......................... 79
final newline, stripping in diversions ....................... 133
\textit{fl} request, causing implicit linebreak ................. 79
floating keep ............................................................. 20
flush output (fl) ......................................................... 181
font description file, format ................................. 210, 213
font directories ......................................................... 13
font families ............................................................ 109
font family, changing (fam, \F) ............................... 110
font file, format ......................................................... 213
font files ................................................................. 210
font files, comments ............................................. 213
font for underlining (uf) .......................................... 122
font height, changing (\H) ....................................... 121
font path ................................................................. 14
font position register (.f) ........................................ 111
font position, changing (\f) .................................... 112
font positions ......................................................... 111
font selection [man] ................................................. 26
font slant, changing (\S) .......................................... 121
font style, changing (sty) ........................................ 110
font styles .............................................................. 109
font translation (ftr) ................................................ 108
font, magnification (fzoom) .................................... 109
font, mounting (fp) .................................................. 111
font, optical size ..................................................... 109
font, previous (ft, \f[, \F) ........................................ 108
font, zoom factor (fzoom) .................................... 109
fonts ................................................................. 107, 108
fonts, artificial ......................................................... 121
fonts, changing (ft, \f) ........................................... 108
fonts, PostScript ..................................................... 109
fonts, searching ....................................................... 13
fonts, special ......................................................... 120
footers ................................................................. 104, 155
footers [ms] ............................................................. 49
footnotes ............................................................... 20
footnotes [ms] .......................................................... 48
footnotes, and displays [ms] ................................. 48
footnotes, and keeps [ms] ........................................ 48
form letters ........................................................... 171
format of font description file ............................. 210
format of font description files ............................ 213
format of font files ................................................. 213
format of register (\g) ............................................. 77
formats, assigning (af) ............................................ 76
formats, file .......................................................... 197
\textit{fp} request, and font translations ................... 108
\textit{fp} request, incompatibilities with AT&T troff .......... 185
fractional point sizes ............................................ 129, 185
 fractional type sizes .................. 129, 185
 french-spacing, ................................ 59
 fspecial request, and font styles ... 110
 fspecial request, and font translations ..................................... 108
 fspecial request, and glyph search order .................................. 113
 fspecial request, and imitating bold .................................. 122
 ft request, and font translations ........ 108

G

gchem, invoking .......................... 187
gchem, the program ................ 187
gleqn, invoking .......................... 187
gleqn, the program ................ 187
GGL (groff glyph list) ............. 114, 120
ggrn, invoking .................. 187
ggrn, the program ................ 187
glossary-style list, example markup [ms] ....................................... 43
glyph .................................. 112
glyph for line drawing .......... 150
glyph names, composite ........ 114
glyph pile (\b) ................. 154
glyph properties (cflags) ........ 117
glyph, box rule (\br) .......... 150
glyph, constant space .......... 123
glyph, defining (char) .......... 118
glyph, for line drawing .......... 150
glyph, for margins (mc) ........ 176
glyph, italic correction (/\) .... 124
glyph, last, dimensions (.w, .cht, .cdp, .csk) ............................ 167
glyph, leader repetition (1c) .... 94
glyph, left italic correction (\,) .. 124
glyph, numbered (\N) ............. 98, 116
glyph, removing definition (rchar, rfschar) ................................ 119
glyph, soft hyphen (hy) ............. 88
glyph, tab repetition (tc) .......... 93
glyph, underscore (\ru) .......... 150
glyphs, available list (groff_char(7) man page) .................. 114

K: Concept Index 259
glyphs, output, and input characters, compatibility with AT&T troff 185
glyphs, overstriking (\o) ............. 149

glyphs, unnamed .................. 116

glyphs, unnamed, accessing with \N .... 213

GNU-specific register (.g) .............. 79
gpic, invoking .......................... 187
gpic, the program .................. 187
grap, the program .............. 187
gray shading (\Df ...) .............. 152
grefer, invoking .................. 187
grefer, the program .................. 187
grn, the program .................. 187
grodi, invoking .................. 192
grodi, the program .................. 192
groff - what is it? .............. 1
groff capabilities .................. 3
groff glyph list (GGL) .......... 114, 120

groff invocation .................. 7
groff, and pi request .................. 172
GROFF_BIN_PATH, environment variable .................. 12
GROFF_COMMAND_PREFIX, environment variable .................. 12
GROFF_ENCODING, environment variable .................. 12
GROFF_FONT_PATH, environment variable .................. 12, 14
GROFF_TMPC_DIR, environment variable .................. 13
GROFF_TMPDIR, environment variable .................. 13
GROFF_TYPESETTER, environment variable .................. 13
grohtml, invoking .................. 194
grohtml, registers and strings .......... 195
grohtml, the program ............ 11, 194
grolbp, invoking .................. 193
grolbp, the program .................. 193
grolj4, invoking .................. 192
grolj4, the program .................. 192
gropdf, invoking .................. 191
gropdf, the program .................. 191
grops, invoking .................. 190
grops, the program .................. 190
groty, invoking .................. 189
groty, the program .................. 189
gseoim, invoking .................. 187
gseoim, the program .................. 187
gtbl, invoking .................. 187
gtbl, the program .................. 187
gtroff, identification register (.g) .... 79
gtroff, interactive use .................. 181
gtroff, output .................. 197
gtroff, process ID register ($$) .... 79
gtroff, reference .................. 59
gxditview, invoking .................. 195
gxditview, the program .................. 195
IBM cp1047 output encoding

identifiers, undefined

ie request, and font translations

ie request, and warnings

ie request, operators to use with

if request, and font translations

if request, and the ’!’ operator

if request, operators to use with

if-else

ig request, and auto-increment

ig request, and copy-in mode

imitating bold face (bd)

implementation differences

implicit breaks of lines

implicit line breaks

in request, causing implicit linebreak

in request, using + and _

inch unit (i)

including a file (so)

incompatibilities with AT&T troff

increment value without changing the register

increment, automatic

indentation, resetting to default [man]

indentation (in)

index, in macro package

indirect assignments

input and output requests

input characters and output glyphs,

compatibility with AT&T troff

input characters, invalid

input conventions

input encoding, cp1047

input encoding, EBCDIC

input encoding, latin-1 (ISO 8859-1)

input encoding, latin-2 (ISO 8859-2)

input encoding, latin-2 (ISO 8859-9)

input encoding, latin-9 (latin-9, ISO 8859-15)

input file name, current, register (.F)

input level in delimited arguments

input line continuation (\)

input line number register (.c, c.)

input line number, setting (1f)

input line position, horizontal, saving (\k)

input line trap, setting (it)

input line traps

input line traps and interrupted lines
level of warnings (warn)  .......... 182
ligature .......................... 112
ligatures and kerning .......... 123
ligatures enabled register (.lg) 123
ligatures, activating (lg) .... 123
limitations of \b escape ........ 154
line break ...................... 17, 60, 79
line break (br) ................. 19
line breaks, with vertical space [man] .. 26
line breaks, without vertical space [man] .... 26
line control .......................... 103
line dimensions ................. 100
line drawing glyph .............. 150
line indentation (in) .......... 100
line layout ..................... 100
line length (1l) ............... 100
line length register (.l) ...... 102
line length, previous (.n) .... 167
line number, input, register (.c, c.) ... 78
line number, output, register (ln) ... 78
line numbers, printing (nm) .... 175
line space, extra post-vertical \(\times\) .... 128
line space, extra pre-vertical \(\times\) ...... 128
line spacing register (.L) ....... 89
line spacing, post-vertical (pvs) ..... 128
line thickness (\D't \ldots') .......... 153
line, blank .......................... 60
line, drawing (\D'l \ldots') .......... 151
line, empty (sp) .................. 18
line, horizontal, drawing (\l) .... 150
line, implicit breaks ........... 60
line, input, continuation (\c) .... 103
line, input, horizontal position, register (hp) .......... 149
line, input, horizontal position, saving (\k) ............. 149
line, interrupted ................ 103
line, output, continuation (\c) .... 103
line, output, horizontal position, register (.k) .......... 149
line, vertical, drawing (\L) .... 150
line-tabs mode ................... 93
lines, blank, disabling ......... 90
lines, centering (ce) ............ 83
lines, consecutive hyphenated (hlm) .. 84
lines, interrupted, and input line traps (itc) ............ 158
list .................................. 20
list of available glyphs (groff_char(7) man page) .......... 114
11 request, using + and - .......... 64
location, vertical, page, marking (mk) .................. 145
location, vertical, page, returning to marked (rt) .......... 145
logical not, limitation in expression .... 63
logical operators .................. 63
long names ...................... 184
loops and conditionals .......... 135
1q glyph, and 1q string [man] .... 29
1s request, alternative to (pvs) .... 128
it request, using + and - .......... 64

M
m unit .............................. 62
M unit ............................. 63
machine unit (u) ................ 62
macro arguments ................ 68
macro arguments, and compatibility mode .......... 179
macro arguments, and tabs ........ 68
macro basics ........................ 17
macro directories ................ 13
macro files, searching ............ 13
macro name register (\$0) ........ 144
macro names, starting with [ or ], and refer .......... 65
macro packages ................... 4, 23
macro packages, structuring the source code .............. 67
macro, appending (am) ........... 142
macro, arguments (\$) ............ 143
macro, creating alias (als) ........ 134
macro, end-of-input (em) ........ 159
macro, removing (rm) ............ 134
macro, removing alias (rm) ....... 135
macro, renaming (rn) ............. 134
macros .............................. 69
macros for manual pages [man] .......... 24
macros, recursive ................ 139
macros, searching ................ 13
macros, shared name space with strings and diversions ........ 132
macros, tutorial for users ........ 17
macros, writing ................... 140
magnification of a font (fzoom) .......... 109
major quotes ..................... 20
major version number register (.x) ... 78
man macros ....................... 24
man macros, bold face ............. 27
man macros, custom headers and footers ............ 29
man macros, default indentation ...... 27
man macros, empty space before a paragraph ..................... 28
man macros, hanging indentation ...... 26
man macros, how to set fonts .......... 26
man macros, italic fonts .................... 27
man macros, line breaks with vertical space .......................... 26
man macros, line breaks without vertical space .......................... 26
man macros, moving left margin ......... 26
man macros, resetting default indentation .................................. 26
man macros, tab stops ...................... 28
man macros, Ultrix-specific ............... 29
man pages ................................ 23
manipulating filling and adjusting .......... 79
manipulating hyphenation .................. 84
manipulating spacing ....................... 88
man macros, BSD compatibility ........... 28
manual pages ................................ 23
margin for hyphenation (hym) .............. 87
margin glyph (mc) ............................ 176
margin, bottom ............................... 104
margin, left (po) .............................. 100
margin, top .................................. 104
mark, high-water, register (.h) ............ 162
marking vertical page location (mk) ........ 145
MathML ........................................ 195
maximum values of Roman numerals 77
mdoc macros ................................... 31
ms macro package ............................. 57
measurement unit ............................. 62
measurements .................................. 62
measurements, specifying safely ........... 63
minimum values of Roman numerals 77
minor version number register (.y) ........ 78
minutes, current time (minutes) .......... 78
mm macro package ............................. 57
mode for constant glyph space (cs) ....... 123
mode, compatibility .......................... 184
mode, compatibility, and parameters ........... 179
mode, copy .................................... 143
mode, copy-in .................................. 143
mode, copy-in, and \! .......................... 164
mode, copy-in, and \? ....................... 136, 164
mode, copy-in, and \a ........................ 94
mode, copy-in, and \E ........................ 96
mode, copy-in, and \t ........................ 91
mode, copy-in, and \W ......................... 174
mode, copy-in, and cf request .............. 170
mode, copy-in, and device request ....... 174
mode, copy-in, and ig request .............. 72
mode, copy-in, and length request ....... 134
mode, copy-in, and macro arguments .......... 143
mode, copy-in, and output request ...... 164
mode, copy-in, and tm request ............. 180
mode, copy-in, and tml request .......... 180
mode, copy-in, and tmc request .......... 180
mode, copy-in, and trf request .......... 170
mode, copy-in, and write request ........ 173
mode, copy-in, and writem request ......... 173
mode, fill ................................. 60, 82, 182
mode, fill (fi) ............................... 79
mode, fill, and \c ............................ 104
mode, line-tabs ............................... 93
mode, no-fill (nf) ......................... 80
mode, no-fill, and \c ........................ 104
mode, no-space (ns) ....................... 90
mode, nroff ................................. 99
mode, safer ................................. 10, 13, 77, 170, 172, 173
mode, troff ................................. 99
mode, unsafe ............................... 11, 13, 77, 170, 172, 173
modifying requests ......................... 68
mom macro package ........................... 57
month of the year register (mo) .......... 78
motion operators ............................. 64
motion, horizontal (\h) ..................... 147
motion, vertical (\v) ....................... 147
motions, page ................................ 145
mounting font (fp) ............................ 111
ms macros ..................................... 31
ms macros, accent marks .................... 52
ms macros, body text ......................... 38
ms macros, cover page ....................... 36
ms macros, creating table of contents .... 50
ms macros, differences from AT&T ....... 54
ms macros, displays ......................... 45
ms macros, document control registers .. 33
ms macros, equations ....................... 47
ms macros, figures ........................... 47
ms macros, footers ........................... 49
ms macros, footnotes ......................... 48
ms macros, general structure ............... 32
ms macros, headers ......................... 49
ms macros, headings ......................... 40
ms macros, highlighting ..................... 41
ms macros, keeps ............................. 45
ms macros, lists ............................. 42
ms macros, margins ........................... 50
ms macros, multiple columns .................. 50
ms macros, naming conventions ............... 56
ms macros, nested lists ....................... 44
ms macros, page layout ....................... 49
ms macros, paragraph handling ............... 38
ms macros, references ........................ 47
ms macros, special characters ............... 52
ms macros, strings .......................... 52
ms macros, tables ........................... 47
multi-file documents ........................ 179
multi-line strings .......................... 131
multi-page table, example markup [ms] ..... 48
multiple columns [ms] ....................... 50

N
n unit ........................................... 63
name space, common, of macros,
  diversions, and strings .................. 132
name, background color, register (.M) ........ 169
name, drawing color, register (.m) .......... 169
name, fill color, register (.M) ............. 169
named character (\C) ......................... 116
names, long .................................. 184
naming conventions, ms macros .............. 56
ne request, and the .trunc register ........ 157
ne request, comparison with sv ............. 106
negating register values ..................... 74
nested assignments .......................... 75
nested diversions ........................... 162
nested lists [ms] ............................ 44
new page (bp) ................................ 18, 106
newline character ............................ 65, 71
newline character, and translations ........ 98
newline character, in strings, escaping .... 131
newline, final, stripping in diversions .... 133
next file, processing (nx) ................... 171
next free font position register (.fp) .... 111
nf request, causing implicit linebreak .... 79
nl register, and .d ......................... 162
nl register, difference to .h ................. 162
nm request, using + and - ................. 64
no-break control character (‘) ............. 67
no-break control character, changing (c2) .. 95
no-fill mode (nf) ........................... 80
no-fill mode, and \c ......................... 104
no-space mode (ns) ........................ 90
node, output ................................ 177
nr request, and warnings ................... 183
nr request, using + and - ................. 64
nroff mode .................................. 99
nroff, the program ..........................  2
number of arguments register (.\$) ........ 143
number of registers register (.R) ..........  77
number register, creating alias (aln) .....  74
number register, removing (rr) ............  74
number register, renaming (rnn) ...........  74
number registers, dumping (par) .......... 180
number, input line, setting (1f) .......... 179
number, page (pn) ........................... 105
numbered glyph (\N) ......................... 98, 116
numbered list, example markup [ms] .......  42
numbers, and delimiters ....................  71
numbers, line, printing (nm) ............... 175
numerals, Roman ............................  76
numeric expression, valid ...................  64

O
offset, page (po) ............................. 100
open request, and safer mode ...............  10
opena request, and safer mode ..............  10
opening file (open) .......................... 173
operator, scaling ............................  64
operators, arithmetic ........................  63
operators, as delimiters ....................  71
operators, comparison .......................  63
operators, extremum (>?, <?) ...............  64
operators, logical ...........................  63
operators, motion ...........................  64
operators, unary ............................  63
optical size of a font ....................... 109
options .......................................  7
order of evaluation in expressions ........  64
orientation, landscape .......................  14
orphan lines, preventing with ne .......... 106
os request, and no-space mode .............. 107
output and input requests .................. 169
output device name string register (.T) .... 11, 79
output device usage number register (.T) ... 11
output devices ..............................  4, 189
output encoding, ASCII .....................  11
output encoding, cp1047 ......................  11
output encoding, EBCDIC ....................  11
output encoding, latin-1 (ISO 8859-1) ... 11
output encoding, utf-8 ......................  11
K: Concept Index 265

output glyphs, and input
  characters, compatibility with AT&T troff .......................... 185
output line number register (ln) ........................................ 78
output line, continuation (\c) ........................................... 103
output line, horizontal position, register (.
.k) ................................................................. 149
output node .............................................................. 177
output request, and \! ....................................................... 164
output request, and copy-in mode ...................................... 164
output, flush (f1) ......................................................... 181
output, gtroff ............................................................. 197
output, intermediate ...................................................... 197
output, suppressing (\0) .................................................. 167
output, transparent (\!, \?) ................................................. 163
output, transparent (cf, trf) .............................................. 170
output, transparent, incompatibilities with AT&T troff .......... 186
output, troff ............................................................... 197
overlapping characters .................................................. 117
overstriking glyphs (\o) .................................................. 149

P

p unit ................................................................. 62
P unit ................................................................. 62
packages, macros ....................................................... 23
padding character, for fields (fc) .................................. 94
page break, conditional (ne) ......................................... 106
page control .......................................................... 106
page ejecting register (pe) ......................................... 157
page footers .......................................................... 155
page headers .......................................................... 155
page layout .......................................................... 104
page layout [ms] .......................................................... 49
page length (pl) .......................................................... 104
page length register (.p) ............................................. 104
page location traps ................................................... 154
page location, vertical, marking (mk) ................................... 145
page location, vertical, returning to marked (rt) ................. 145
page motions .......................................................... 145
page number (pn) .......................................................... 105
page number character (\%) ........................................... 104
page number character, changing (pc) ........................................ 105
page number register (\%) ............................................. 106
page offset (po) .......................................................... 100
page orientation, landscape ........................................ 14
page, new (bp) .......................................................... 106
paper formats ........................................................ 21
paper size ........................................................... 14
paragraphs ............................................................. 19
parameters ............................................................ 143
parameters, and compatibility mode ............................... 179
parentheses ........................................................... 64
path, for font files ...................................................... 14
path, for tmac files .................................................... 13
patterns for hyphenation (hpf) ...................................... 86
PDF, embedding ......................................................... 192
pi request, and groff .................................................. 172
pi request, and safer mode ........................................... 10
pic, the program ....................................................... 187
pica unit (P) ............................................................ 62
pile, glyph (\b) ........................................................... 154
pl request, using + and - ............................................. 64
planting a trap .......................................................... 154
platform-specific directory ........................................... 13
pn request, using + and - ............................................. 64
PNG image generation from PostScript ........................... 211
po request, using + and - ............................................. 64
point size registers (.s, ps) ......................................... 126
point size registers, last-requested (.psr, .sr) .................... 129
point sizes, changing (ps, \s) ....................................... 126
point sizes, fractional ............................................... 129, 185
point unit (p) ........................................................... 62
polygon, drawing (\D'p ...') ....................................... 152
drawing (\D'p ...') .................................................. 152
position of lowest text line (..h) .................................... 162
position, absolute, operator (1) .................................... 64
position, horizontal input line, saving (\k) ....................... 149
position, horizontal, in input line, register (hp) ............... 149
position, horizontal, in output line,
  register (.k) .......................................................... 149
position, vertical, current (nl) .................................... 107
position, vertical, in diversion, register (..d) ................... 162
positions, font ........................................................ 111
post-vertical line spacing ........................................... 128
post-vertical line spacing register (.pvs) ......................... 128
post-vertical line spacing, changing (pvs) ....................... 128
postprocessor access .................................................. 174
postprocessors ......................................................... 4
PostScript fonts ......................................................... 109
PostScript, bounding box .......................................... 177
PostScript, embedding ............................................... 190
PostScript, PNG image generation .................................. 211
preconv, invoking ....................................................... 188
preconv, the program .......................... 188
prefix, for commands .......................... 12
preprocessor, calling convention .......... 29
preprocessors ................................. 4, 187
previous font (ft, \f[]), \fP ............... 108
previous line length (.n) .................... 167
print current page register (.P) ........... 10
printing backlash (\, \e, \E, \rs) ............ 71, 186
printing line numbers (nm) ................. 175
printing to stderr (tm, tml, tmc) .......... 180
printing, zero-width (\z, \Z) ................ 149
process ID of gtroff register ($$) ....... 79
processing next file (nx) ................... 171
properties of characters (cflags) .......... 117
properties of glyphs (cflgs) ............... 117
ps request, and constant glyph space mode .................................. 123
ps request, incompatibilities with AT&T

troff ...................................... 185
ps request, using + and - ................. 64
ps request, with fractional type sizes . 129
ps0 request, and safer mode ............... 10
pvs request, using + and - ............... 64
Q
quotes, major .................................. 20
quotes, trailing ................................ 131
R
radicalex glyph, and cflags ............... 117
ragged-left .................................. 80
ragged-right .................................. 80
rc request, and glyph definitions .......... 118
read-only register, changing format ...... 77
reading from standard input (rd) .......... 171
recursive macros ............................ 139
refer, and macro names starting with [ or ] .................................. 65
refer, the program ........................... 187
reference, gtroff ............................. 59
references [ms] ............................... 47
register, creating alias (aln) ............. 74
register, format (\g) ....................... 77
register, removing (rr) ..................... 74
register, renaming (rm) ..................... 74
registers ..................................... 72
registers specific to grohtml ............. 195
registers, built-in ........................... 77
registers, interpolating (\n) ............... 74
registers, number of, register (.R) ....... 77
registers, setting (nr, \R) .................. 72
removing alias, for diversion (rmn) ...... 135
removing alias, for macro (rm) ............ 135
removing alias, for string (rm) .......... 135
removing diversion (rm) .................... 134
removing glyph definition (rchar,
rfschar) ..................................... 119
removing macro (rm) ......................... 134
removing number register (rr) ............. 74
removing request (rm) ...................... 134
removing string (rm) ....................... 134
renaming diversion (rn) .................... 134
renaming macro (rn) ........................ 134
renaming number register (rnn) .......... 74
renaming request (rn) ...................... 134
renaming string (rn) ....................... 134
renaming request, using arguments .......... 68
renaming request, and compatibility mode .................................. 179
requests, modifying ......................... 68
requests for drawing ......................... 149
requests for input and output ............. 169
resolution, device ........................... 212
resolution, horizontal ....................... 211
resolution, horizontal, register (.H) ... 77
resolution, vertical ......................... 213
resolution, vertical, register (.V) ....... 77
returning to marked vertical page location

(rt) ...................................... 145
revision number register (.Y) ............. 78
rf, the program .............................. 1
right-justifying (rj) ....................... 84
rj request, causing implicit linebreak .. 79
rn glyph, and cflgs .......................... 117
roff, the program ........................... 2
roman glyph, correction after italic

glyph ....................................... 124
roman glyph, correction before italic
glyph ....................................... 124
Roman numerals ............................. 76
Roman numerals, maximum and minimum

............................................. 77
rq glyph, and rq string [man] ............. 29
rq glyph, at end of sentence ............. 60, 117
rt request, using + and - ................. 64
ru glyph, and cflgs .......................... 117
RUNOFF, the program ........................ 1
S

s unit .................................. 62, 129
safer mode ...... 10, 13, 77, 170, 172, 173
saving horizontal input line position (\k) ........................................ 149
scaling indicator ..................................... 62
scaling operator ..................................... 64
searching fonts ..................................... 13
searching macro files ..................................... 13
searching macros ..................................... 13
seconds, current time (seconds) ........ 78
sentence space ..................................... 59
sentence space size register (.sss) ........ 82
sentences .................................. 59
setting diversion trap (dt) .................. 157
setting end-of-input trap (em) .............. 159
setting input line number (lf) ............... 179
setting input line trap (it) ................... 158
setting registers (nr, \R) ...................... 72
shading filled objects (\D'f ...') ............. 152
shc request, and translations ................. 98
site-specific directory ................................ 13, 14
size of sentence space register (.sss) ....... 82
size of type ..................................... 126
size of word space register (.ss) .......... 82
size, optical, of a font ................................ 109
size, paper ..................................... 14
sizes ..................................... 126
sizes, fractional .................................. 129, 185
skew, of last glyph (.csk) ...................... 167
slant, font, changing (\\$) ....................... 121
soelim, the program .......................... 187
soft hyphen character, setting (shc) ........ 88
soft hyphen glyph (hy) ......................... 88
solid circle, drawing (\D'C ...') ............... 151
solid ellipse, drawing (\D'\E ...') ............... 151
solid polygon, drawing (\D'P ...') ............... 152
sp request, and no-space mode ............... 90
sp request, and traps ......................... 89
sp request, causing implicit linebreak ...... 79
space between sentences ....................... 59
space between sentences register (.sss) ....... 82
space between words register (.ss) .......... 82
space character ..................................... 71
space character, zero width (\&) ........ 68, 124, 150
space characters, in expressions ........ 65
space, discardable, horizontal ............... 82
space, discarded, in traps ..................... 89
space, horizontal (\h) ......................... 147
space, horizontal, unformatting ............. 133
space, unbreakable .................... 147
space, vertical, unit (v) ..................... 63
space, width of a digit (\0) ................. 148
spaces with ds .................................. 131
spaces, in a macro argument ............... 68
spaces, leading and trailing ............... 59
spacing ..................................... 18
spacing, manipulating ....................... 88
spacing, vertical ......................... 126
special characters .............................. 98, 189
special characters [ms] ..................... 52
special fonts ............................. 113, 120, 213
special fonts, emboldening .................. 122
special request, and font translations .......... 108

special request, and glyph search order .......... 113
spline, drawing (\D' ...') ..................... 152
springing a trap ............................. 154
sqrtex glyph, and cflags .................. 117
stacking glyphs (\b) ....................... 154
standard input, reading from (rd) ........... 171
stderr, printing to (tm, tml, tmc) ............ 180
stops, tabulator ............................... 60
string arguments ............................ 130
string comparison ............................ 136
string expansion (\*) ....................... 130
string interpolation (\*) ..................... 130
string, appending (as) ....................... 133
string, creating alias (als) .................. 134
string, length of (length) .................... 134
string, removing (rm) ....................... 134
string, removing alias (rm) .................. 135
string, renaming (rn) ....................... 134
strings .................................. 130
strings [ms] .................................. 52
strings specific to grohtml .................. 195
strings, multi-line ......................... 131
strings, shared name space with macros and diversions .................. 132
stripping final newline in diversions ...... 133
structuring source code of documents or macro packages .................. 67
sty request, and changing fonts ............. 108
sty request, and font positions ............. 112
sty request, and font translations ............. 108
styles, font .................................. 109
substring (substring) ..................... 134
suppressing output (\0) ..................... 167
sv request, and no-space mode ............. 107
switching environments (ev) ................. 166
sy request, and safer mode .................. 10
symbol ........................................... 113
symbol table, dumping (.pm) .......... 180
symbol, defining (char) .............. 118
symbols, using .............................. 112
system() return value register (systat)
............................................. 173

T

tab character ................................. 60, 71
tab character, and translations ...... 98
tab character, non-interpreted (\t) ... 91
tab repetition character (tc) ........ 93
tab settings register (.tabs) ......... 93
tab stops ..................................... 60
tab stops [man] ............................. 28
tab stops, for TTY output devices ... 92
tab, line-tabs mode ....................... 93
table of contents .......................... 21, 94
table of contents, creating [ms] ... 50
tables [ms] .................................. 47
tabs, and fields ......................... 91
tabs, and macro arguments .......... 68
tabs, before comments ................. 71
tbl, the program ......................... 187
Teletype .................................. 189
terminal control sequences .......... 189
terminal, conditional output for .... 135
text line, position of lowest (.h) ... 162
text, gtroff processing ................. 59
text, justifying (j) ...................... 79
text, justifying (rj) .................... 84
thickness of lines (D ’t ...) .......... 153
three-part title (tl) ..................... 104
ti request, causing implicit linebreak.. 79
ti request, using + and – .............. 64
time, current ............................. 172
time, current, hours (hours) .......... 78
time, current, minutes (minutes) ... 78
time, current, seconds (seconds) ... 78
title line (tl) ............................. 104
title line length register (.lt) ...... 105
title line, length (lt) .................. 105	title page, example markup .......... 38	titles ......................................... 104
tkf request, and font styles .......... 110
tkf request, and font translations ... 108
tkf request, with fractional type sizes ............................................. 129
tl request, and mc ......................... 176
tm request, and copy-in mode ...... 180
tml request, and copy-in mode ...... 180
tmak, directory ............................ 13
tmak, path .................................. 13
tmc request, and copy-in mode ...... 180
TMPDIR, environment variable .... 13
token, input .............................. 177
top margin .................................. 104
top-level diversion ...................... 161
top-level diversion, and \! .......... 164
top-level diversion, and \? ......... 164
top-level diversion, and bp .......... 106
t request, and glyph definitions ... 118
t request, and soft hyphen character .. 88
t request, incompatibilities with AT&T troff ................................. 185
track kerning ............................. 124
track kerning, activating (tkf) .... 124
trailing quotes ............................ 131
trailing spaces ........................... 59
translations of characters .......... 95
transparent characters .......... 60, 117
transparent output (\!, \?) .......... 163
transparent output (cf, trf) ......... 170
transparent output, incompatibilities with AT&T troff ......................... 186
trap, changing location (ch) ....... 156
trap, distance, register (.t) ......... 156
trap, diversion, setting (dt) ......... 157
trap, end-of-input, setting (em) ..... 159
trap, input line, setting (it) ...... 158
trap, planting ............................ 154
trap, springing ........................... 154
traps ....................................... 154
traps, and discarded space .......... 89
traps, and diversions ................. 157
traps, blank line ......................... 158
traps, diversion .......................... 157
traps, dumping (ptr) ................. 180
traps, end-of-input ...................... 159
traps, input line ......................... 158
traps, input line, and interrupted lines (itc) .................................. 158
traps, leading spaces ................... 158
traps, page location ..................... 154
traps, sprung by bp request (.pe) ... 157
trf request, and copy-in mode ...... 170
trf request, and invalid characters ... 171
trf request, causing implicit linebreak ............................................. 79
trin request, and asciiify .......... 165
troff mode .................................. 99
troff output .............................. 197
### truncated vertical space register (.trunc)
- [157]

### TTY, conditional output for
- [135]

### tutorial for macro users
- [17]

### type size registers (.s, .ps)
- [126]

### type sizes, changing (ps, \s)
- [126]

### type sizes, fractional
- [129, 185]

### U

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>u unit</th>
<th>[62]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>uf request, and font styles</td>
<td>[110]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ul glyph, and cflags</td>
<td>[117]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ul request, and font translations</td>
<td>[108]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ultrix-specific man macros</td>
<td>[29]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unary operators</td>
<td>[63]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unbreakable space</td>
<td>[147]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undefined identifiers</td>
<td>[66]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undefined request</td>
<td>[71]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>underline font (uf)</td>
<td>[122]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>underlining (ul)</td>
<td>[122]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>underlining, continuous (cu)</td>
<td>[122]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>underscore glyph (\ru)</td>
<td>[150]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unformatting diversions (asciify)</td>
<td>[165]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unformatting horizontal space</td>
<td>[133]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unicode</td>
<td>[65, 116]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit, c</td>
<td>[62]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit, f</td>
<td>[62]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit, f, and colors</td>
<td>[168]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit, i</td>
<td>[62]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit, m</td>
<td>[62]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit, M</td>
<td>[63]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit, n</td>
<td>[63]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit, p</td>
<td>[62]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit, P</td>
<td>[62]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit, s</td>
<td>[62, 129]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit, u</td>
<td>[62]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit, v</td>
<td>[63]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit, z</td>
<td>[62, 129]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### V

| v unit                              | [63]          |
| valid numeric expression            | [64]          |
| value, incrementing without changing the register | [76] |
| variables in environment            | [12]          |
| version number, major, register (.x) | [78]          |
| version number, minor, register (.y) | [78]          |
| vertical line drawing (\L)          | [150]         |
| vertical line spacing register (.v) | [128]         |
| vertical line spacing, changing (vs) | [128]         |
| vertical line spacing, effective value | [128]        |
| vertical motion (\v)                | [147]         |
| vertical page location, marking (mk) | [145]         |
| vertical page location, returning to marked (rt) | [145]        |
| vertical position in diversion register (.d) | [162]        |
| vertical position trap enable register (.vpt) | [154]        |
| vertical position traps, enabling (vpt) | [154]        |
| vertical position, current (nl)     | [107]         |
| vertical resolution                 | [213]         |
| vertical resolution register (.v)   | [77]          |
| vertical space unit (v)             | [63]          |
| vertical spacing                    | [126]         |

### W

| warnings                            | [182]         |
| warnings, level (warn)              | [182]         |
| what is groff?                      | [1]           |
| while                                | [138]         |
| while request, and font translations | [108]         |
| while request, and the ‘I’ operator | [63]          |
| while request, confusing with br    | [139]         |
| while request, operators to use with | [135]         |
| whitespace characters               | [65]          |
| width escape (\w)                   | [148]         |
| width, of last glyph (.w)           | [167]         |
| word space size register (.ss)      | [82]          |
| write request, and copy-in mode     | [173]         |
| writec request, and copy-in mode    | [173]         |
| writem request, and copy-in mode    | [173]         |
| writing macros                      | [140]         |
| writing to file (write, writec)     | [173]         |

### Y

| year, current, register (year, yr) | [78]          |
Z

zero width space character (\&) . 68, 124, 150

zero-width printing (\z, \Z) ........... 149

z unit ......................... 62, 129

zoom factor of a font (fzoom)......... 109