

Syntax Coloring in T_EXShop

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1 Introduction

T_EXShop provides Syntax Coloring for L^AT_EX documents as an aid to pick out text versus markup in source documents. To activate the Syntax Coloring make sure that Syntax Coloring is checked in TeXShop → Preferences → Source → Editor. The default color scheme is a bright red for comments, a dark blue for commands and a dark green for “marker” characters (`{`, `}` and `$`). Assuming you haven’t already changed the defaults you can see how that looks; open the enclosed TestSyntaxColors.tex file in T_EXShop.

In addition, T_EXShop offers a special Syntax Coloring for `\index{text}` commands so that they “recede” into the background and you can more easily read the surrounding text. To turn the `\index{text}` coloring on you need to place a Colorindex checkbox onto the Source Window toolbar and make it active by checking the box. To place that box on the toolbar first open a .tex Source File, Right Click (or Ctl-Click) in an empty area of the toolbar and select Customize Toolbar... or click on Window → Customize Toolbar... with the Source Window active. Then just Drag and Drop the Color Index item to the toolbar and press Done. Finally Check that box to get the `\index{text}` commands colored in a bright yellow.

2 Changing the Colors

You may not like the default Syntax Coloring scheme. Searching for ‘syntax coloring’ (without the quotes) in TeXShop’s Help Panel gives the following:

When syntax coloring is turned on in the source window, comments will be colored red, commands will be colored blue, and the symbols `$`, `{`, and `}` will be colored dark green. A few users may wish to change these colors. Each color is determined by setting its red, green, and blue components; these components are real numbers between 0.0 and 1.0. Suppose we wish to change the color of `$`, `{`, and `}` to bright green, a color with components $(r, g, b) = (0.0, 1.0, 0.0)$. To do so, open the Terminal window and type the following commands

```
defaults write TeXShop markerred 0.0
defaults write TeXShop markergreen 1.0
defaults write TeXShop markerblue 0.0
```

The corresponding preference items for comments are `commentred`, `commentgreen`, `commentblue`; the items for commands are `commandred`, `commandgreen`, `commandblue`.

so you can customize the colors for syntax colors. It turns out you can do a similar thing with the color of the `\index{text}` command when the Colorindex checkbox is installed on the Source toolbar and checked. The variables are `indexred`, `indexgreen` and `indexblue`.

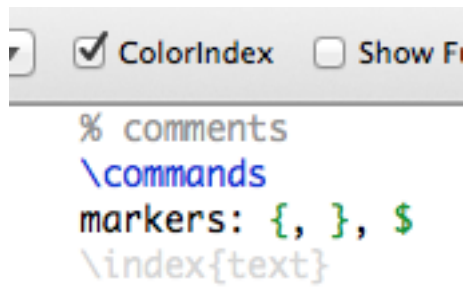


Figure 1: My choices for Syntax Coloring.

3 An Alternate Syntax Coloring Choice

I find the default color choices a bit jarring and prefer a different set of colors. In particular I prefer a color for comments that forces them somewhat into the background (I choose a medium gray); getting my eyes to look at the content is the purpose of all this. My eyes find the colors of the command and markers a bit too dark and hard to differentiate from the source content so I choose a bit lighter blue and green. Finally, while the bright yellow for the `\index{text}` coloring lets the eye skip over those commands I find it a bit distracting and almost impossible to read those commands when I wish to (I choose a light gray). See Figure (1) for an example.

Enclosed is a short script, `HSTeXShopSyntaxColors.sh`, that will run the necessary commands to change to the scheme shown in Figure (1). To run the script, open the Terminal application, drag and drop the `HSTeXShopSyntaxColors.sh` script onto the Terminal window (the path to that script will appear in the window) and press Return.

Also supplied is the script `DefaultTeXShopSyntaxColors.sh` which will reset the scheme to TeXShop's default colors.

A copy of either of those scripts can be edited in any Text Editor with personalized value.