

# The `ifthen` package\*

David Carlisle

2024/03/16

This file is maintained by the L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X Project team.  
Bug reports can be opened (category `latex`) at  
<https://latex-project.org/bugs.html>.

## Abstract

This file implements an `\ifthenelse` command for L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X 2<sub>ε</sub>. The algorithm used is compatible with that used in the L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X 2.09 `ifthen` style option. It has been recoded, making the resulting definitions somewhat more compact and efficient.

## 1 Introduction

`\ifthenelse` `\ifthenelse{<test>}{<then clause>}{<else clause>}`

Evaluates `<test>` as a boolean function, and then executes either `<then clause>` or `<else clause>`.

`<test>` is a boolean expression using the infix connectives, `\and`, `\or`, the unary `\not` and parentheses `\( \)`.

As an alternative notation `\AND`, `\OR` and `\NOT` can be used. This is safer since it can't be misinterpreted when appearing inside a T<sub>E</sub>X-conditional in which `\or` has a different meaning.

The atomic propositions are:

`<number> < <number>`  
`<number> = <number>`  
`<number> > <number>`  
`\isodd{ <number> }`  
`\isundefined{ <command name> }`  
`\equal{<string>}{<string>}`  
`\lengthtest{<dimen>< <dimen>}`  
`\lengthtest{<dimen>= <dimen>}`  
`\lengthtest{<dimen>> <dimen>}`  
`\boolean{<name>}`

The `<string>`s tested by `\equal` may be any sequence of commands that expand to a list of tokens. If these expansions are equal, then the proposition is true.

`\isodd` is true if the `<number>` is odd, and false otherwise (even if the argument is not a number).

---

\*This file has version number v1.1e, last revised 2024/03/16.

`\isundefined{<cmd>}` is true if `<cmd>` is not defined.

`\boolean{xyz}` returns the truth value contained in the primitive TeX `\if`, `\ifxyz`. This is usually used with boolean flags created with `\newboolean` and `\provideboolean` described below. It can also be used with the names of `\newif` created tokens, and primitive TeX `\if` constructs, for example `\boolean{true}` (`\iftrue`), `\boolean{mmode}` (`\ifmmode`) etc.

The commands:

`\newboolean` `\newboolean{<name>}` and `\provideboolean{<name>}` are provided so the user  
`\provideboolean` can easily create new boolean flags. As for `\newcommand`, `\newboolean` generates an error if the command name is not new. `\provideboolean` silently does nothing in that case.

The boolean flags may be set with:

`\setboolean` `\setboolean{<name>}{<value>}`  
`<value>` may be either `true` or `false` (any CaSe).

Note that there is no precedence between `\and` and `\or`. The proposition is evaluated in a left right manner. `\not` only applies to the immediately following proposition. (This is consistent with Lamport's `ifthen.sty`.) In this style, though the test is 'lazily' evaluated, so for instance if the first proposition in an `\or` is true, the second one is skipped. (On the second pass—the first pass in an `\edef` expands clauses in all propositions.)

Apart from the addition of the extra atomic propositions `\isodd`, `\boolean`, `\lengthtest` and `\isundefined`, the only known incompatibility is that in this package the expression `\not\not<P>` is equivalent to `<P>`. However in the original style it was equivalent to `\not<P>`. This is intentional (bug fix:-).

`\whiledo` The command `\whiledo` is also defined (copied directly from the L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X 2.09 definition).

`\whiledo{<test>}{<while clause>}`

With `<test>` as above, repeatedly executes `<while clause>` while the test remains true.

## 2 The Implementation

```
1 (*package)
```

`\TE@throw` In order to support the syntax of `ifthen.sty`, which allows access to the primitive TeX syntax for a numeric test, rather than a `{}` delimited argument form, it is most convenient to work 'within' an `\ifnum`. `\ift@throw` 'throws' you out of the current `\ifnum` so that you can (eg) start an `\ifdim` for the length tests.

```
2 \def\TE@throw{\@ne=\@ne\noexpand\fi}
```

`\boolean` A non-standard extension to `ifthen`, supporting boolean was previously available, this is a simpler implementation.

```
3 \def\boolean#1#2{%
4   \TE@throw\expandafter\noexpand\csname if#1\endcsname#2}
```

`\TE@length` Testing lengths. `#1` is the test. The extra argument gobbles spaces.

```
5 \def\TE@length#1#2{\TE@throw\noexpand\ifdim#1#2}
```

`\TE@odd` Testing odd/even. This is true if `#1` is an odd number, and false otherwise (even `\TE@@odd` if `#1` is not a number at all).

It is hard to make this completely reliable. Here I have erred on the side of safety. This should not generate a T<sub>E</sub>X error if given any robust commands as its argument. However it returns true on any argument that *starts* with an odd number 11xx which is bad, and it can not deal with T<sub>E</sub>X's count registers, although L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X counters work (via \value).

```

6 \def\TE@odd#1#2{%
7   \TE@throw\noexpand\TE@@odd#1\noexpand\@nil\noexpand\ifodd\count@#2}
   \TE@@odd is not expanded on the first pass.
8 \def\TE@@odd#1#2\@nil{%
9   \@defaultunits
10  \count@\if-#1-0\else0\expandafter#1\fi#2\relax\@nnil}

```

`\TE@repl` `\TE@repl` replaces the single token #1 by #2. (Not within {} groups.) It is used to replace \or by \TE@or without the need to redefine \or. Earlier versions just \let\or\TE@or but this has a bad effect on the expansion of commands which use the primitive \or internally, eg \alph, and so caused surprising results if these commands were used inside \equal.

```

11 \def\TE@repl#1#2{%
12   \long\def\@tempc##1#1##2{%
13     \def\@tempa{##2}\def\@tempb{\@tempc}%
14     \ifx\@tempa\@tempb
15       \toks@\expandafter{\the\toks@##1}%
16       \expandafter\@gobble
17     \else
18       \toks@\expandafter{\the\toks@##1#2}%
19       \expandafter\@tempc
20     \fi
21     ##2}%
22   \expandafter\toks@\expandafter{\expandafter}%
23   \expandafter\@tempc\the\toks@#1\@tempc}

```

`\ifthenelse` The remaining macros in this file are derived from the ones in `ifthen.sty` but recoded and simplified. The main simplification is that the original style (and the \boolean extensions) expressed logical values always in terms of \ifnum. As \fi is ‘untyped’ this is not necessary, so for example the length tests can return values via \ifdim, the trailing \fi will not complain, even though it was ‘expecting’ an \ifnum. Also the system of passing information via macros expanding to T or F has been completely replaced by a simpler system using \iftrue, which furthermore allows lazy evaluation on the second pass. With a LaTeX 2022/06/01 we have to ensure that \pageref is expandable.

```

24 \@ifl@t@r\fmtversion{2022/06/01}
25   {\def\TE@ref@exp{\let\pageref\@kernel@pageref@exp
26     \let\ref\@kernel@ref@exp}}
27   {\def\TE@ref@exp{\def\@setref##1##2##3{%
28     \ifx##1\relax\z@\else\expandafter##2##1\fi}}}
29 \begingroup
30 \lccode'\~'\> %
31 \catcode'\+\active
32 \lccode'\+'\< %
33 \catcode'\!\active
34 \lccode'\!'\= %
35 \lowercase{\endgroup}

```

```

36 \def\TE@repl@active{%
37 \TE@repl~>%
38 \TE@repl+<%
39 \TE@repl!=%
40 }

41 \long\def\ifthenelse#1{%
42 \toks@{#1}%
43 \TE@repl\or\TE@or
44 \TE@repl\and\TE@and
45 \TE@repl\not\TE@neg
46 \TE@repl@active

```

Support alternate names for the boolean operators (strictly speaking only `\OR` would be necessary).

```

47 \TE@repl\OR\TE@or
48 \TE@repl\AND\TE@and
49 \TE@repl\NOT\TE@neg

```

The original `ifthen.sty` processed everything inside a box assignment, to catch any extra spaces before they appeared in the output. Instead I have added extra arguments to the commands so they each remove any following space.

Set up the user level names `\not` etc.

```

50 \begingroup
51 \let\protect\@unexpandable@protect
52 \TE@ref@exp
53 \def\value##1{\the\csname c@##1\endcsname}%
54 \let\equal\TE@equal \let\(\TE@lparen \let\)\TE@rparen
55 \let\isodd\TE@odd \let\lengthtest\TE@length
56 \let\isundefined\TE@undef

```

For the first pass, in a group, make various tokens non-expandable.

It is unfortunate that in order to remain compatible with `ifthen` syntax, it is necessary to have a two pass system. The first pass inside an `\edef` ‘exposes’ the `\if... \fi` tokens, so the correct clauses may be skipped on the second pass. This means that the whole `ifthenelse` command does not work by expansion, and so possibly has only limited usefulness for macro code writers. The main problem with the `ifthen:` syntax is that (unique for  $\LaTeX$ ) it does not use a brace delimited argument form, and exposes the primitive  $\TeX$  syntax for  $\langle number \rangle$ . Pretty much the only way of parsing  $1 > 2 \text{ \or } 2 < 1$  is to actually evaluate the primitive `\ifnums`. A syntax such as:

```
\or{\numtest{1<2}}{\lengthtest{1pt<1in}}
```

could easily be evaluated in a one pass way, operating directly via expansion, and leaving no extra tokens in the token stream.

Still, on with the code... make `\@tempa` and `\@tempb` tokens non-expandable on the first pass.

```

57 \begingroup
58 \let\@tempa\relax\let\@tempb\relax
59 \xdef\@gtempa{\expandafter\TE@eval\the\toks@\TE@endeval}%
60 \endgroup

```

Now outside the group, execute `\@gtempa` which causes all the `\ifs` etc., to be evaluated, the final truth value is contained in the `\newif` token `\ifTE@val`. Fi-

nally this is tested and either the first or second following argument is chosen accordingly.

```

61     \@gtempa
62     \expandafter\endgroup\ifTE@val
63     \expandafter\@firstoftwo
64     \else
65     \expandafter\@secondoftwo
66     \fi}%
67 }

```

`\TE@eval` Initialise a term. (Expanded on the first pass).

```
68 \def\TE@eval{\noexpand\TE@negatefalse\noexpand\iftrue\noexpand\ifnum}
```

`\ifTE@val` Two `\newifs` the first holds the current truth value of the expression. The second `\ifTE@negate` is a temporary flag which is true if we need to negate the current proposition.

```
69 \newif\ifTE@val
70 \newif\ifTE@negate

```

`\TE@endeval` Finalize a term. (Expanded on the first pass).

```

71 \def\TE@endeval{\relax
72     \noexpand\TE@setvaltrue\noexpand
73     \else
74     \noexpand\TE@setvalfalse\noexpand
75     \fi
76     \noexpand\TE@negatefalse\noexpand
77     \fi}

```

`\TE@setvaltrue` Set the `\ifTE@val` to true or false depending on the value of the current proposition, and the negate flag. (Not expanded on the first pass.)

```

78 \def\TE@setvaltrue{%
79     \ifTE@negate\TE@valfalse\else\TE@valtrue\fi}
80 \def\TE@setvalfalse{\let\ifTE@val\ifTE@negate}

```

`\TE@or` The internal version of `\or`. Ends the current term. If true skip the remaining terms.

```
81 \def\TE@or{\TE@endeval\noexpand\ifTE@val\noexpand\else\noexpand\ifnum}
```

`\TE@and` The internal version of `\and`. If false skip the remaining terms.

```
82 \def\TE@and{\TE@endeval\noexpand\ifTE@val\noexpand\ifnum}
```

`\TE@neg` `\not`. Throw the current context, set a negate flag, then restart the `\ifnum`.

`\TE@negswitch` `\TE@negswitch` is not expanded on the first pass.

```

83 \def\TE@neg{\TE@throw\noexpand\TE@negswitch\noexpand\ifnum}
84 \def\TE@negswitch{\ifTE@negate\TE@negatefalse\else\TE@negatetrue\fi}

```

`\TE@lparen` `\(`. Throw the current context, then restart a term inside a group.

```
85 \def\TE@lparen#1{\TE@throw\beginngroup\TE@eval#1}
```

`\TE@rparen` `\)` end the current term, and the local group started by `\(`, but pass on the boolean value in `\if\@val` T. The `\noexpand` stops the `\expandafter` from expanding on the first pass.

```

86 \def\TE@rparen#1{%
87     \TE@endeval
88     \noexpand\expandafter\endgroup\noexpand\ifTE@val#1}

```

`\TE@equal` `\equal` greatly simplified from the original. `\def` may be used rather than `\edef` as the whole thing is expanded anyway in the first pass. The boolean can be directly encoded with the `\ifx`, there is no need to start an equivalent `\ifnum`.

```
89 \long\def\TE@equal#1#2#3{\TE@throw
90   \def\@tempa{#1}\def\@tempb{#2}%
91   \noexpand\ifx\@tempa\@tempb#3}
```

`\setboolean` `\setboolean` takes true or false, as #2, and sets #1 accordingly.

```
92 \def\setboolean#1#2{%
93   \lowercase{\def\@tempa{#2}}%
94   \@ifundefined{@tempa\@tempa}%
95   {\PackageError{ifthen}%
96    {You can only set a boolean to ‘true’ or ‘false’}\@ehc}%
97   {\@ifundefined{#1\@tempa}%
98    {\PackageError{ifthen}{Boolean #1 undefined}\@ehc}%
99   {\csname#1\@tempa\endcsname}}
```

`\newboolean` Define a new ‘boolean’.

```
100 \def\newboolean#1{%
101   \expandafter\@ifdefinable\csname if#1\endcsname{%
102     \expandafter\newif\csname if#1\endcsname}}
```

`\provideboolean` Define a new ‘boolean’ if it is not already defined.

```
103 \def\provideboolean#1{%
104   \@ifundefined{if#1}{%
105     \expandafter\newif\csname if#1\endcsname}\relax}
```

`\whiledo` `\whiledo` copied directly from the original.  
`\whiledo{<test>}{<body>}`  
repeatedly evaluates `<body>` until `<test>` is true.

```
106 \long\def\whiledo#1#2{%
107   \ifthenelse{#1}%
108   {\@whiledotrue
109    \@whiles\if@whiledo\fi
110    {#2%
111     \ifthenelse{#1}\@whiledotrue\@whiledofalse}}%
112   {}%
113   }
```

`\TE@undef` test if csname is defined. `\ifx` test.

```
114 \def\TE@undef#1#2{%
115   \TE@throw\noexpand\ifx\noexpand\@undefined\noexpand#1#2}
```

`\if@whiledo` Internal switch for `\whiledo`.

```
116 \newif\if@whiledo
117 </package>
```