

April 30, 2007

**Question:** Is there a way to change the line spacing in my latex document? More specifically, how do I make this change for a tabbing environment? Thanks.

Hi,

The tabbing environment uses the interline spacing from the actual document itself. The command to change this is the `\linespread{Factor}` where Factor is the amount of spacing that you want (defaults to 1). So 1.3 is one-and-a-half spacing and 1.6 is double-spacing. The trick to this command is that if it is not used in the preamble then it does not execute until a font change is made. So if you want it to occur right away, then you need to change the font and then quickly change it back. For example, in your case if you want to squeeze down the space in your tabbing environment, you would enter:

```
\linespread{.75}
\small \normalsize
\begin{tabbing}
\quad \= {\sf Named Input} \quad \= Description \\
\>{\tt data} \> SAS name for the dataset, \\
\>{\tt raw} \> {\sf variable} containing data, \\
\>{\tt converge}\>  $\lambda^{-1}$  (default  $10^{-6}$ ), \\
\>{\tt maxiter} \> maximum iterations (default $200$), \\
\>{\tt d} \> the truncation point.
\end{tabbing}

\linespread{1}
\small \normalsize
```

So I changed the linespread to .75 and then entered `\small \normalsize` to do a font switch which kicked in the new linespacing. After the tabbing environment, I switched back to a 1 spacing factor and did the same trick again to make the spacing change take place.

This trick will work for normal textual spacing as well throughout your L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X document. However, the `\linespread` command normally is used in

the preamble to set the spacing for the whole document:

```
\documentclass{report}
\linespread{1.3}
\begin{document}
Something somewhat unique to the tabbing environment is that you can also
add or subtract vertical space at the end of any line by putting in a
length in brackets. Here is an example of that:
\begin{tabbing}
\quad \= {\sf Named Input} \quad \= Description \\
\>{\tt data} \> SAS name for the dataset, \>[-.05 in]
\>{\tt raw} \> {\sf variable} containing data, \>[.05 in]
\>{\tt converge}\>  $\lambda^{-1}$  (default  $10^{-6}$ ), \>[.1 in]
\>{\tt maxiter} \> maximum iterations (default $200$), \>[-.05 in]
\>{\tt d} \> the truncation point.
\end{tabbing}
```

This is probably more of a pain than what it's worth but it is useful for a quick, short change.

Sincerely yours,

Joe Struss  
Creative Services, ITS, Iowa State