

May 1, 2007

Question: I would like to use BibTex for my thesis? How do I do this with L^AT_EX? Thanks.

Hi,

Ah, yes– BibTex. A little difficult to use but still worthwhile because you can keep a library of bibliographic references and then simply create a bibliography in a document from those references using only those citations that were actually used in that document. So a little tricky, but neat. Here are the basic steps.

First: make sure your document has: 1.) the `\bibliographystyle{plain}` command after your `\begin{document}` command; 2.) that you use `\cite{apple}` and cite something that is in your bibliography file; and 3.) that you have a `\bibliography{mybib}` command which names where your bibliography file is located.

Second: your bibliography file mentioned above should be created in the same folder and should be named `filename.bib` (`mybib.bib`, for my example).

Third: PDFLaTeX your document then change the compiler (look in the top menu of your L^AT_EX front end) and Bibtex your document (compile your document with Bibtex). Then PDFLaTeX your document twice more to get all references resolved.

You will need to re-bibtex any time that you change your bibliographic references. Also remember that whenever you cite something with `\cite` like `\cite{apple}`; that needs to have a corresponding entry in your `mybib.bib` file or things just don't work out.

The real trick here is to forge on ahead if you get that first error message which is due to the fact that you don't as of yet have a `.bbl` file. After the first run through you will not get this message. Also, watch out, in your `.bib` file– BibTeX uses " double quotes a lot which is very uncommonly used in the rest of L^AT_EX.

More information on BibTeX can be found in Leslie Lamport's "LaTeX: User's Guide and Reference Manual" or an even better source is Kopka and Daly's "A Guide to L^AT_EX".

Sincerely yours,

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