

# The import package\*

Donald Arseneau (asnd@triumf.ca)

23-Mar-2009

This software is in the public domain; free of any restrictions.

Two new L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X commands, “`\import{<full_path>}{<file>}`” and “`\subimport{<path_extension>}{<file>}`” are defined to input a file from another directory, allowing that file to find its own inputs (using “`\input`”, “`\includegraphics`” etc.) in that directory.

Alias command names are “`\inputfrom`” and “`\subinputfrom`”.

Also provided are “`\includefrom`” and “`\subincludefrom`”, which are based on the “`\include`” command, rather than “`\input`”. There are also “\*” variants described below.

For example, if a remote file “`/usr5/friend/work/report.tex`” has contents:

```
My graph: \includegraphics{picture}
\input{explanation}
```

then you can safely input that file in your own document with the command “`\import{/usr5/friend/work/}{report}`”; the explanation and picture will be taken from the “`/usr5/friend/work/`” directory.

The “`\subimport`” command takes a relative path instead of a full absolute file path, and it allows imported files to import files themselves, using their own directory as the root of another “`<path_extension>`”. Do not use both “`\import`” and “`\subimport`” in the same file.

---

\*This manual corresponds to `import` v5.1, dated 23-Mar-2009.

For example, if a file is imported (using either command) from directory “abc/” and that file contains the command “\subimport{lmn/}{xyz}” then file “abc/lmn/xyz.tex” is input, and any “\input” commands in that file will read files from directory “abc/lmn/”.

Note that the sub-import path is merely appended to the current import path. Mistakes from this method must be rectified by “\import@path@fix”.

Depending on on how your  $\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$  system is configured, if a file with the same name as the import file exists in the current directory or in the  $\text{TEXINPUTS}$  path, that other file will be read in preference to one in the import directory. So here is the real behavior of the previous example: Given the sequence “\import{abc/}{one}”, “\subimport{lmn/uvw/}{two}” (in file one), “\input{three}” (in file two),  $\text{L}^{\text{A}}\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$  first looks for `three.tex` in the  $\text{TEXINPUTS}$  search path; if not found, it tries “abc/lmn/uvw/three”; if that doesn’t exist, it tries “abc/three”; if still not found, it tries the defined “\input@path”, if there is one.

To avoid searching the  $\text{TEXINPUTS}$  path when importing files, use the ‘star’ versions of the commands: “\import\*” and “\subimport\*”.

A hook “\import@path@fix” is provided to reformat the import path to fit the syntax of a particular operating system. It *could* be defined to convert unix-style path names to the local format, but all it does now is remove “[” from VMS sub-import directories.

Presently, the paths are defined “locally” so input files must have balanced grouping.