

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
M A T H E M A T I C S D E P A R T M E N T
1326 Stevenson Center, Nashville, TN 37240, U.S.A.
Phone (615) 322-6672 • Fax (615) 343-0215
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Eric Schechter • eric.schechter@vanderbilt.edu
(615) 322-6651 • www.math.vanderbilt.edu/~schecktex/



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Mathematics Personnel
(faculty, staff, graduate students, visitors)

Dear everyone,

This page demonstrates a new letterhead system that I have created. Here are the ingredients:

1. The “**myletter.tex**” file. You can copy mine, rename it, and edit it to suit your own needs. This includes the letterhead design — the part that mentions Vanderbilt, mathematics, Eric Schechter, etc. It is written in ordinary Latex, so **YOU CAN CHANGE IT EASILY**, using commands which you are (presumably) already familiar with. This file also contains the body of the letter; it can contain math. It doesn’t need to be named “myletter.”
2. The file “**letterhd.cls**,” which I have created, is called by *myletter.tex*. You may not need to edit it at all (though perhaps someone can suggest an improvement or two). It *does not mention* Vanderbilt or mathematics or Eric Schechter or the graphic image; those are mentioned in the tex file (see next item). It is a slightly modified version of the file “letter.cls,” which is a standard part of Latex. Consequently, most of the commands associated with “letter.cls” (described in any Latex manual) will also work with “letterhd.cls.” One exception is the “\address” entry, which has been removed.
3. A letterhead looks best if it includes one **graphic image**. I’ve used Vanderbilt’s new logo, but you may use Ed Saff’s dotball, or a photo of yourself, or any other image that you supply. (Or you can omit the graphics altogether if you wish; that might be easiest for beginners.) You can even use color, though black-and-white is cheaper when you’re printing many copies. I use the MikTeX/dvipdfm method for inserting graphics — it is described in the “pictures in Tex files” section of

<http://www.math.vanderbilt.edu/~schecktex/wincd/>

— but probably letterhd.cls will work with most graphics insertion methods, so try whatever method you are familiar with.

4. A letterhead looks best if the text is horizontally adjacent to the graphic image. That doesn't seem to be a capability of ordinary Latex, but it can be achieved using Joachim Blesser's **picins** package, which can be downloaded from tex repositories such as CTAN or DANTE. (If you're using Miktex, download using the Package Manager.) — I had trouble with the spacing when I tried putting the image on the left, so I had to put the image on the right.

The files letterhd.cls and myletter.tex and the graphics files can be downloaded from

<http://www.math.vanderbilt.edu/~schectex/wincd/letterhd/>

By the way, if there is sufficient interest and if I can find a convenient time, I may offer a seminar about Latex this fall. I could give beginner-level lectures to the graduate students to get them started on Latex; later I could also give some lectures on some of the intermediate-level techniques that I've learned over the years (graphics, color, hyperlinks, PDF files, etc.). I'm sure that some other people in the department know some things about Latex that I don't know; perhaps some of them could also give a few lectures.

Yours truly,

Eric Schechter,
Webmaster and Associate Professor
Vanderbilt Mathematics