`currvita.sty`

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Abstract

`currvita.sty` is a package for typesetting a curriculum vitae.
See the files `README` and `COPYING` for additional information.

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1 Introduction

Quite regularly in the LaTeX newsgroups someone is asking for a package or document class to typeset a curriculum vitae. Normally, the following answers are given:

- A curriculum vitae is highly individual and so you should not rely on solutions provided by others but rather think about it on your own and create it in *your* style following *your* taste.

- Use `vita.cls`.

- Use `resume.sty`.

- Use `tabularx.sty`.

In my opinion all answers are unsatisfactory. To create an "individual style" with LaTeX is not at all easy, especially if you consider the bunch of questions in the LaTeX newsgroups about list and tabular environments, which seem to be the obvious choice for the use within a curriculum vitae.

The layout produced by `vita.cls` is a little bit crowded, the customization has to be done by class option files (definitely not something for a beginner) and the documentation is sparse.

`resume.sty` is a totally out-dated (December 1989) LaTeX 2.09 style file, in my opinion it gives a crowded layout as well, the documentation can be found in the style file. Those days did not have the neat system of `ins`/`dtx` files.

`tabularx.sty` is quite good, but to typeset a curriculum vitae spanning more than one page[1], interspersed with section-like headings and various `\multicolumn` commands is surely not an easy task.

So I finally decided to write this package, replacing the macros that I used earlier for my applications[2]. In fact, there was not much to replace, because that time I made heavy use of `\textbf`, `\large`, `\\` and other LaTeXnically incorrect commands. (-;

I made it a package because a curriculum vitae can make sense not only on its own, but also within a Ph. D. thesis or a letter. This package (hopefully) has few requirements, (hopefully) produces a clearly arranged layout (also known as puristic or plain and even explained in

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[1] DAVID, I know that there is `ltxtable.sty`. Surely this great package was once a hack of 5 minutes on a rainy Sunday like all your other packages. (-;

[2] Typeset with `longtable.sty` written (again) by DAVID CARLISLE.

its own section later), is (hopefully) well documented by this (hopefully) nice `dvi` file, (hopefully) easy to use and can (hopefully) easily be customized. There is even a (hopefully) interesting example file, my curriculum vitae, so you can see what sick brains program (and even document) such packages. If you can understand German. `(-;`

2   What You Need

1. LaTeX 2_ε (at least the 1996/12/01 release)

2. The `ifthen` package, part of the standard LaTeX tools

3. The `babel` package, nowadays a "required" part of LaTeX, if you want to typeset the example file.

3   Loading

Load the package with:

    `\usepackage{currvita}`

LabelsAligned   There are two package options that can be used to change the
TextAligned   vertical spacing of the curriculum vitae:[3]

    `\usepackage[LabelsAligned]{currvita}`

will give you a more compact spacing, whereas

    `\usepackage[TextAligned]{currvita}`

will give you the default, more generous spacing. See the explanation of the `cvlist` environment and section 5 on page 5 ("Customization") for details.

openbib   If you like the look of the "open" format for bibliographies, you can use this layout also for a list of publications within your curriculum vitae. Normally, this option will be passed automatically by the document class to all packages, so there is no need to specify it explicitely. However, if you are typesetting your Ph. D. thesis with a "normal" bibliography and you want to include your curriculum vitae with an "open" publication list, you can pass this option directly to the package:

    `\usepackage[openbib]{currvita}`

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[3]Credits go to Timm Wetzel for inspiring me to implement this. He will notice later that I did not follow his suggestion, though. `(-;`

ManyBibs If you want to subdivide your publication list (journal articles, book chapters, ...) but do not want to do without BibTeX and enter every \bibitem manually, you can use this option:

```
\usepackage[ManyBibs]{currvita}
```

This option suppresses the normal heading and also the item labels. This makes sense only in combination with bibunits.sty, multibib.sty or other packages supporting multiple bibliographies. See section 8 on page 8 ("Bibliographies").

NoDate If you have reason to suppress the date normally printed at the bottom of the curriculum vita,[4] use the following option:

```
\usepackage[NoDate]{currvita}
```

4   Usage

cv A curriculum vitae is written inside a cv environment, which takes one mandatory argument, the heading:

```
\begin{cv}{<heading of the curriculum vitae>}
  <text of the curriculum vitae>
\end{cv}
```

If you do not want a heading (perhaps because you think the addressee might have read "Curriculum Vitae" too often), you can specify an empty argument by leaving the braces empty.

cvlist The text of the curriculum vitae is normally divided into several sections, which are typeset as lists, taking the list heading as a mandatory argument:

```
\begin{cvlist}{<heading of the list>}
  <list items>
\end{cvlist}
```

As usual, the list items can take a label as an optional argument:

```
\item <item text>
\item[<label>] <item text>
```

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[4]Credits go to MATT SWIFT, who obviously *has* reason and thus suggested this feature. (-;

The typesetting of the list depends on the length of the heading and the use of an optional argument in the first item: If the heading is less wide than the width reserved for the label and no optional argument was used, the item is typeset in the same line as the heading. In all other cases the text of the item itself starts a new line.

\cvplace   Normally, a curriculum vitae ends with the date when and the place where you wrote it. You can specify the location as follows:

```
\cvplace{<location>}
```

If you do not use this command, the printing of a location will be omitted.

\date   To specify the date, just use the command provided by the standard LaTeX document classes `article.cls`, `report.cls` and `book.cls`. I took special care that it works also if you are using an other class. If you do not call this macro at all, \today will be used by default, unless you have specified the NoDate option.

```
\date{<date>}
```

5 Customization

\cvheadingfont   Normally, the heading of the curriculum vitae is typeset in bold face and \Large size (see [4] for details). You can change this e. g. with:

```
\renewcommand*{\cvheadingfont}{\large\bfseries}
```

\cvlistheadingfont   Corresponding to the font of the heading, the heading of the `cvlist` environments is typeset in bold face and \large size. This can be changed e. g. with the following code:

```
\renewcommand*{\cvlistheadingfont}{\scshape}
```

\cvlabelfont   The labels of the `cvlist` environments are typeset in the normal size of the current font. You can change this e. g. with:

```
\renewcommand*{\cvlabelfont}{\itshape}
```

\cvlabelwidth   The default width of the labels of the `cvlist` environments is equal to the width of "88/8888–88/8888", because normally in the left hand column dates are typeset (and, at least in Germany, should be formatted in this way).

If you are using the optional argument of the `\item` command for further sectioning (as I did for my curriculum vitae in the example file), you perhaps need to adjust this length by means of

```
\setlength{\cvlabelwidth}{50mm}
```

or

```
\AtBeginDocument{%
  \settowidth{\cvlabelwidth}{%
    \cvlabelfont This is my longest label%
  }%
}
```

or like this, if you want the items to be typeset in-line with the labels wherever possible:

```
\AtBeginDocument{%
  \settowidth{\cvlabelwidth}{%
    \cvlistheadingfont This is my longest list heading%
  }%
}
```

The first example works correctly only *after* `\begin{document}`, whereas the other two show how to adjust the label width within the preamble. Make sure that you include the appropriate font if you want to measure the width.[5] And do not try to get things done in the preamble without `\AtBeginDocument`, because the font setup will probably not be correct, especially if you use non-standard fonts.

`\cvlabelskip` This vertical space is inserted if you have a `cvlist` environment with a short heading and the first item of this list has no label, so that the text of the item starts in the same line as the heading. The spacing is controlled by the options `TextAligned` and `LabelsAligned`, see section 3 on page 3 ("Loading").

By default (`TextAligned`), the spacing between the item text belonging to different lists is independent of the length of the list heading and also independent of the use of an optional argument of the `\item` command. The gaps between the item *text* blocks are equal. See, for example, the lists "Fremdsprachen" or "Interessen" of the example file.

The option `LabelsAligned` suppresses the additional space necessary to achieve this consistent layout and thus gives a more compact look with evenly distributed gaps between the headings and the *labels*.

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[5]Credits go to MATT SWIFT for reporting the need for a better documentation.

If you are not satisfied with either of these options, feel free to set hands to it yourself, for example:

```
\setlength{\cvlabelskip}{%
  0.5\baselineskip plus 1pt minus 1pt%
}%
```

\cvlabelsep   The default width of the distance between the labels and the items itself is equal to `1em`. You can customize it e. g. with

```
\setlength{\cvlabelsep}{1mm}
```

or

```
\settowidth{\cvlabelsep}{~}
```

I strongly recommend to use relative measures like `1em` (i. e. dependent on the font size), if you need to customize these lengths at all.

\cvbibname   The default heading for bibliographies inside of `cv` environments is "Publications". You could change this for example with:

```
\renewcommand*{\cvbibname}{List of Papers}
```

Please keep in mind: All the customizations mentioned above are *optional* and in my opinion not necessary (not even the change of `\cvlabelwidth`, better use more suggestive label texts). See section 9 on page 11 ("Typography") for some remarks.

6   Example

Run the example file `cvtest.tex` through LATEX. You will get my curriculum vitae. Sorry, it is written in German. Sorry, it is not an original version used for an application (though the data is correct, but I omitted the marks[6]), because for this I need some fonts and packages not available to every user and I wanted to use as much standard LATEX as possible.

7   Bugs

Some people[7] with an older version of the `babel` package (v3.6h) have reported problems due to the use of the `babel` shortcuts for accented letters within the `\cvplace` command. If you encounter this, too, try a more recent version (v3.6x definitely works) of the `babel` package[8]

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[6]It would have been too embarrassing for me. (-;

[7]Credits go to MARTIN SANDER and SEBASTIAN BÖCKER.

[8]Perhaps included in a new LATEX release? (-;

```
\documentclass{letter}
\usepackage{currvita}
\begin{document}
\begin{cv}{Resume}
  \begin{cvlist}{Gnats and Gnus}
  \item[Bar] Bar
  \item[Foo] Foo
  \end{cvlist}
  \begin{thebibliography}{1}
  \bibitem{Bar} Bar.
  \bibitem{Foo} Foo.
  \end{thebibliography}
\end{cv}
\end{document}
```

Figure 1: Curriculum vitae with bibliography, manually done

(or `german.sty`).

8 Bibliographies

This package offers several possibilities for bibliographies or publication lists.[9] You can use BibTeX or enter each \bibitem manually. You can have multiple bibliographies within one `cvlist` environment (with the aid of other packages like `bibunits` or `multibib`), or only one somewhere in the `cv` environment. Of course the main bibliographies of your document remain untouched. You can even use a publication list in document classes without native support for bibliographies, like `letter.cls`.

Enough advertising, here we go with some examples. Figure 1 shows the source of a letter with a manually done bibliography and a normal `cvlist` enviroment in comparison. The resulting publication list (not shown here) does not fit well into the layout of the `cvlist` environment, so probably you want to integrate your publication list into a `cvlist` environment and to supply distinctive labels?

Figure 2 shows an example with multiple bibliographies automatically generated by BibTeX and in combination with `bibunits.sty`. This code will result in a LaTeX error ("Something's wrong–perhaps a

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[9]Credits go to IAN BRUCE for suggesting this feature and providing the first lines of code that did start the thing.

```
\documentclass{article}
\usepackage{bibunits}
\usepackage[ManyBibs]{currvita}
\begin{document}
\begin{cv}{Resume}
  \begin{cvlist}{Gnats and Gnus}
  \item[Bar] Bar
  \item[Foo] Foo
  \end{cvlist}
  \begin{cvlist}{Publications}
    \begin{bibunit}[alpha]
      \nocite{booklet-full,manual-full,techreport-full}
    \item[Books etc.] \putbib[xampl]
    \end{bibunit}
    \begin{bibunit}[plain]
      \nocite{article-full,inproceedings-full}
    \item[Papers] \putbib[xampl]
    \end{bibunit}
  \end{cvlist}
\end{cv}
\end{document}
```

Figure 2: Bibliographies inside a `cvlist`, done with `bibunits.sty`

```
\documentclass{report}
\usepackage{multibib}
\usepackage[openbib,ManyBibs]{currvita}
\newcites{books}{bar}
\newcites{papers}{foo}
\begin{document}
\bibliographystyle{alpha}
\bibliographystylebooks{unsrt}
\bibliographystylepapers{plain}
\begin{cv}{Resume}
  \begin{cvlist}{Gnats and Gnus}
  \item[Bar] Bar
  \item[Foo] Foo
  \end{cvlist}
  \begin{cvlist}{Publications}
  \nocitebooks{booklet-full,manual-full,techreport-full}
  \item[Books etc.] \bibliographybooks{xampl}
  \nocitepapers{article-full,inproceedings-full}
  \item[Papers] \bibliographypapers{xampl}
  \end{cvlist}
\end{cv}
\nocite{mastersthesis-full,misc-full,unpublished-full}
\bibliography{xampl}
\end{document}
```

Figure 3: "Open" publication lists inside a `cvlist`, additional "normal" bibliography outside, done with `multibib.sty`

missing `\item`.") on the first run, but if you scroll through the errors and run LaTeX again, you will get a nice output once you have run BibTeX according to the `bibunits` manual. Note that the choice of the bibliography style does not influence the labels because they are suppressed anyway by use of the `ManyBibs` option.

However, they work as normal outside the `cv` environment, see Figure 3, which shows in addition to the usage of the `multibib` package for "open" publication lists a "normal" bibliography in yet another bibliography style. Note also that the second argument of the `\newcites` command does not matter because the heading of the partial bibliographies is suppressed, again by use of the `ManyBibs` option.

9 Typography

A curriculum vitae is an exam. The addressee gets a proof of your skills concerning collecting, discarding, ordering and presenting information. He also gets an impression of some of your qualities that are not even mentioned in the text: Accuracy (consistency and correctness of the micro-typographic things), stinginess (extremely narrow margins) and your taste in questions of aesthetics (font overload as against clear and evident font usage). Even more things are revealed by subtle hints given by the typography of the curriculum vitae and they can be noticed by all professional readers of applications,[10] not only by typographers.

Therefore you definitely should do your best not only when thinking about the content but also when thinking about the form of the curriculum vitae. This package tries to help you in this task.

The overall appearance of a curriculum vitae is determined mainly by three factors:

Layout Organization and arrangement of the information e. g. into lists or tabulars, usage of headings, size of the typearea, width of columns, horizontal and vertical spacing

Font Family, sizes, usage of fonts for emphasized in-line text or text serving as an eye-catcher, creation of an atmosphere appropriate to the candidate and the job in question

Micro-typography Formatting of various numbers, avoidance of bad linebreaks, distinction between small and normal spaces, typesetting of company names, usage of quotation marks

9.1 Layout

You generally should organize the necessary information (and *only* the necessary information) as clearly as possible, because the addressee is annoyed anyway by the pile of applications that he has to wade, and you definitely should not annoy him any further by not structuring your curriculum vitae.

Use generous margins, a not too small font and moderate vertical spacing. I recommend something around `DIV12` for users of `typearea.sty` (part of KOMA-Script), an 11 point font for A4 paper (highly dependent on the font family) and a left hand column as

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[10]Very often subconsciously.

narrow as possible (it will make the linebreaking in the right hand column easier). For the distance between the columns `1em` creates a sufficient separation. A normal word space would not be enough, whereas something around `1cm` would weaken the coherence of the layout, especially if you have some shorter labels.

If you ever heard a curriculum vitae should not be longer than one page, forget it, unless you are required (by whom, if I may ask?) to stay below this limit. I made some tries with increased typearea and reduced the font size and the vertical spacing. I finally managed to arrange my test file on one page by usage of a very narrow newspaper font, but it looked horrible. The normal version, though about half a page longer, was much easier (and quicker!) to read.

9.2 Font

The most difficult thing is to choose a good font. For "normal" jobs like engineering, economics or similar, the font should look friendly and professional, just like you on the photo. Of course a typographical layman does not identify the font, but he too feels the atmosphere created by it.

I made some tries with about 50 fonts, with serifs or without, old-style, transitional and modern fonts and got surprisingly good agreement among the test persons[11]. Moreover, my analysis and theirs yielded the same result: Computer Modern, Charter, Utopia and Melior really do a good job. Except Melior, these fonts are freely available. Computer Modern looks elegant, dry, precise and reserved, Charter friendly, open, solid and likable and Utopia clear and technical. The last two are nowadays part of good LaTeX distributions, so you are not sticked to Computer Modern, just try them out:

```
\usepackage{charter}
```

or

```
\usepackage{utopia}
```

Generally, you should use bold face for the headings, to make them clearly distinct from the main text, italics are not enough. An important aspect of the font choice is the contrast between the normal and the bold face. It should be high enough, so that the headings can be

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[11]Credits go to MELANIE FRISCH, RÜDIGER HAARDT, STEFFEN MEISSNER, JOACHIM GNAUK and RAINER MESSERSCHMIDT for doing this tedious work.

identified at a glance, but neither the regular font nor the bold variant should look too "loud". This is a problem e. g. with New Century Schoolbook, apart from that as good as Computer Modern.

Many fonts typically used in novels have too low a contrast, e. g. Berling, Galliard, Palatino and Stempel Garamond. Although the contrast is good in Bembo, it looks too "nice", too familiar from books to create the correct atmosphere for a curriculum vitae, which normally is attached to a stupid letter. Plantin and Trump Medieval and perhaps New Baskerville may be acceptable in some cases, but I think there are better choices. Not everybody's taste because a little unusual, but in my opinion quite good is Oranda, rather bold and small, but friendly and soft. Oh, I almost forgot: The obligatory Times is a good choice, too. Though it is completely over-used and overrated (I am not at all a fan of Times), its domain is the typesetting of (more or less) narrow columns and it does a good job looking both familiar and neutral.

My trials with sans-serif fonts were not very successful. Computer Modern Sans Serif, Franklin Gothic or Univers may be acceptable, Helvetica looks too boring (are *you* boring?), Frutiger has too low a contrast, Optima is "too nice", Gill Sans and Futura look too bold (and the latter perhaps too cold and technical, but that may be suitable for some jobs). Generally the problem is to achieve consistency with the accompanying letter, which normally is written with a serif font (and should be, because it is a longer text with less structure, the main text only divided into paragraphs. In these cases, so-called "linear reading", a serif font is considered more legible by many typographers).

9.3   Micro-typography

Sometimes the pile of applications is pre-sorted by a secretary. You should ensure that the micro-typography (also known as "pedantic stuff") is correct, because secretaries learn these things during their education. German users of this package definitely should consult the relevant part of the Duden [1] or have a look into [5] or the example file. Errors in the formatting of dates, spacing or grouping of telephone numbers, usage of quotation marks or ampersands and so on are too common. Trained secretaries will notice these mistakes and, if they already did not like your photo, will put your application onto stack W (wastebasket). (-;

Think about it, micro-typography is easy, and if you get used to

it, you will typeset things correctly "by default" and your documents will require less proof-reading. It is awful if the reader stumbles (and falls) over a bad linebreak. Use ties (~) or other things influencing hyphenation from `babel.sty` or `german.sty` like `\,`, `"~` or `""` not after you have discovered such a mistake, but during entering the text.

O.K., and now I will turn preaching mode off and programming mode on. (-;

10   Implementation

References

[1] DUDENREDAKTION (ed.): *Duden, Rechtschreibung der deutschen Sprache*, vol. 1 of *Der Duden in 12 Bänden; das Standardwerk zur deutschen Sprache*, chap. Richtlinien für den Schriftsatz, pp. 65–73. Dudenverlag, Mannheim, 21st edn., 1996.

[2] GOOSSENS, M.; MITTELBACH, F.; SAMARIN, A.: *Der LATEX-Begleiter*. Addison-Wesley, Bonn, 1st edn., 1994.

[3] KOPKA, H.: *Erweiterungen*, vol. 3 of *LATEX*. Addison-Wesley-Longman, Bonn, 1997.

[4] LATEX3 Project Team. *LATEX 2ε font selection*, Jan. 1999.

[5] WILLBERG, H. P.; FORSSMAN, F.: *Lesetypographie*. Schmidt, Mainz, 1997.