

The switch Package

Version 1.0

Alceu Frigeri*

May 2025

Abstract

This package offers two commands aimed at implementing a switch/case alike command.

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Commands	1
2.1	User Document ones	1
2.1.1	Example	2
2.2	Expl3 ones	2
2.2.1	Example	2

1 Introduction

There are many ways of implementing a switch case programming structure. Notably, one can use `\str_case:nm` from `expl3`, or go over a loop using `\pdfstrcmp`, or construct an if-then-else tower, etc.

This implements a solution, somewhat based on [1], which (besides being simple) has the advantage of being constant time: once the cases are set up, suffice a single (internal) if (`\ifcsname`) to select the correct code to be executed.

Note: The implementation creates a `\csname` for each case, and it uses (at the end) the primitive `\ifcsname` to select the correct case.

Note: The coding is done using `expl3`, just for the sake of readability, in the package comments one can find an implementation using just TeX primitives.

2 Commands

Two set of commands are created, one to be used in a `expl3` code régime, and another set to be used in a user document.

2.1 User Document ones

`\newswitch` `\newswitch <switch> {{default-code}}`

It will create a new switch `<switch>`, which will expects a single argument. In case the argument doesn't corresponds to any defined case, `<default-code>` will be used. The resulting `<switch>` command is expandable, if `<default-code>` and `<case-code>` (added by `\addcase`) also are. This is just an alias for `\switch_new:Nn`

Note: `#1` can be used in `<default-code>`.

`\addcase` `\addcase <switch> {<case>} {{case-code}}`

It will add a `<case>` to a previously defined `<switch>` and associates `<case-code>` with it. `<case>` will be fully expanded at definition time. Once defined one can call `\switch {case}`, which will put said `<case-code>` in the input stream. This is just an alias for `\switch_addcase:Nnn`.

*<https://github.com/alceu-frigeri/switch>

2.1.1 Example

First we create a switch, and associate a few (or more) cases. Note the possibility of using an auxiliary (fully expandable) macro/command when defining the cases.

```
\def\CaseAstring{case-A}
\newswitch \myCase {I~ don't~ know:~ #1\par}
\addcase \myCase {\CaseAstring} {A~ was~ used\par}
\addcase \myCase {case-B} {B~ was~ used\par}
```

To use the `<switch>`, one just has to call it with `<case>` as an argument. Note the possibility of using an auxiliary macro/command (which has to be fully expandable) as a `<case>`.

<pre>\def\somemacro{case-A} \def\someothermacro{case-X} If B, then \myCase{case-B} If A, then \myCase{case-A} If X, then \myCase{case-X} if somemacro: \myCase{\somemacro} if someothermacro: \myCase{\someothermacro}</pre>	<pre>If B, then B was used If A, then A was used If X, then I don't know: case-X if somemacro: A was used if someothermacro: I don't know: case-X</pre>
--	---

2.2 Expl3 ones

`\switch_new:Nn` `\switch_new:Nn <switch> {{default-code}}`

It will create a new switch `<switch>`, which will expects a single, type n, argument. In case the argument doesn't corresponds to any defined case, `<default-code>` will be used. The resulting `<switch>` command is expandable, if `<default-code>` and `<case-code>` (added by `\switch_addcase:Nnn`) also are.

Note: #1 can be used in `<default-code>`.

`\switch_addcase:Nnn` `\switch_addcase:Nnn <switch> {{case}} {{case-code}}`

It will add a `<case>` to a previously defined `<switch>` and associates `<case-code>` with it. `<case>` will be fully expanded at definition time. Once defined one can call `\switch {case}`, which will put said `<case-code>` in the input stream.

2.2.1 Example

First we create a switch, and associate a few (or more) cases. Note the possibility of using an auxiliary (fully expandable) macro/command when defining the cases.

```
\ExplSyntaxOn
\def\CaseAstring{case-A}
\switch_new:Nn \TextCase {I~ don't~ know:~ #1\par}
\switch_addcase:Nnn \TextCase {\CaseAstring} {A~ was~ used\par}
\switch_addcase:Nnn \TextCase {case-B} {B~ was~ used\par}
\ExplSyntaxOff
```

To use the `<switch>`, one just has to call it with `<case>` as an argument. Note the possibility of using an auxiliary macro/command (which has to be fully expandable) as a `<case>`.

<pre>\def\somemacro{case-A} \def\someothermacro{case-X} If B, then \TextCase{case-B} If A, then \TextCase{case-A} If X, then \TextCase{case-X} if somemacro: \TextCase{\somemacro} if someothermacro: \TextCase{\someothermacro}</pre>	<pre>If B, then B was used If A, then A was used If X, then I don't know: case-X if somemacro: A was used if someothermacro: I don't know: case-X</pre>
--	---

References

- [1] Paul Gaborit. *Stack Exchange answer about Implementing Switch Cases*. 2012. URL: <https://tex.stackexchange.com/questions/64131/implementing-switch-cases/343306#343306> (visited on 12/10/2016).