# A Short Introduction to PostScript 

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## What is PostScript?

- Postscript is a language to describe graphic objects (\& text)
- It is a vector format
- Shapes, characters,.. are defined in an exact, mathematical way $\rightarrow$ objects / characters can be scaled, magnified, rotated... without loss of quality
- Other vector formats are, for instance: pdf (portable data format) and svg (scalable vector graphics)
- Postscript is a programming language
- Complex graphics can be described quickly and efficiently
- They can be parameterized and changed easily
- Postscript devices (printers) must be intelligent, because they must interpret the language
- Otherwise, the host computer must do the translation. Most often using the (free) tool 'ghostscript'


## Why Use \& Know About Postscript ?

- Simple manual generation of high quality graphics
- Graphics can be parameterized
- Automatic generation of graphics from within other programs
- Small files
- Exact dimensions
- Postscript is (still) common for LaTeX
- Sometimes, modification of available .ps or .eps files is required
- Change a font
- Modify colors or line width
- Add water mark
- Many concepts are used in other languages (pdf, swift)
- Generating Graphics can be fun!


## Examples

- Arrangement of chips in a 'reticle':

| $\begin{gathered} \text { PIXEL } \\ 4000 \times 2144 \end{gathered}$ | SPADIC1. 1 <br> $5000 \times 6000$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { PETA6N } \\ 5100 \times 6000 \end{gathered}$ | PETA6SE <br> $5100 \times 6000$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | $\begin{gathered} \text { PETA6P } \\ 5000 \times 5200 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{array}{\|\|c\|} \hline \text { PETA6P } \\ 5100 \times 5200 \end{array}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { PETA6P } \\ 5100 \times 5200 \end{gathered}$ |
|  | $\begin{gathered} \text { DCD_B } \\ 5000 \times 3280 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{array}{\|c} \text { DCD_B } \\ 5100 \times 3280 \end{array}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { DCD_H } \\ 5100 \times 3280 \end{gathered}$ |
|  | $\begin{gathered} \text { DCD_B } \\ 5000 \times 3280 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{array}{\|\|c\|c\|c\|} \text { DCD_B } \\ 5100 \times 3280 \end{array}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { DCD_H } \\ 5100 \times 3280 \end{gathered}$ |
|  | $\begin{gathered} \text { DCD_B } \\ 5000 \times 3280 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{array}{\|c} \text { DCD_B } \\ 5100 \times 3280 \end{array}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { DCD_H } \\ 5100 \times 3280 \end{gathered}$ |

Reticle size is $19500 \times 21440$

## Reticles on a wafer



- Math exercises for your kids (with random generator):



## More Examples

- Illustration of a sensor readout



## Siemensstern



## More Examples

- Any Angle. Exact:



## More Examples

- Exact Dimensions, exact clipping:



## What is the drawback?

- Postscript is used less and less (replaced by pdf)
- Importing .eps in other documents is often difficult
- It is simple in LaTeX (pdfLaTeX requires .pdf, but conversion from .eps $\rightarrow$.pdf is simple and robust)
- Conversions often lead to quality loss.
- Why not pdf?
- pdf is much more complicated!
- A 'minimal' pdf file is already lengthy
- Hard to do 'by hand' because bytes need to be counted!
- See the (short) intro to pdf later in the lecture...


## Getting Information

- Postscript Language Reference Manual ('PLRM')
- https://www.adobe.com/content/dam/acom/en/devnet/actionscri pt/articles/PLRM.pdf
- Language Tutorial and Cookbook (the ‘Blue Book’) - https://www-cdf.fnal.gov/offline/PostScript/BLUEBOOK.PDF
- Language Program Design (the ‘Green Book’):
- https://www-cdf.fnal.gov/offline/PostScript/GREENBK.PDF
- Many Web sites of good quality (see Lecture Page)


## Simple Example 1: Triangle + Circle



## Viewing Postscript Files

- On Linux machines, files can be viewed with
- gv (on the CIP Pool machines)
- evince (on the CIP Pool machines)
- ghostview, okkular, ShowView, GSView,...
- ...there is always a viewer...
- On windows
- Ghostview (must be installed, I do not know about new versions of Windows...)
- On MAC
- Using Preview (for .eps).
- ps files are converted to pdf automatically
- Always need GhostScript to interpret the language
- GhostScript is also used to convert ps/eps $\rightarrow$ pdf, png, jpg...


## Advanced Example 2: Truchet Pattern

```
%!PS-Adobe-3.0 EPSF-3.0
%%BoundingBox: 0 0 595 842
2.835 dup scale
54 translate 1 setlinecap
0 0 200 290 rectstroke
100 145 translate
/W 10 def /W2 { W 2 div } bind def
/DRAWUNIT {
    gsave translate rotate
W2 neg W2 neg W2 0 90 arc stroke
W2 W2 W2 180 270 arc stroke
    grestore
} def
-95 W 95 {
    /x exch def
    -140 W 140 {
        /y exch def
        rand 4 mod 90 mul x y DRAWUNIT
    } for
} for
showpage
```



## File Structure

- File MUST start with \% ! PS (may add PS - version number)
- If forgotten, (most) printers will output (a lot of) ASCII stuff...
- PostScript is CaseSensitive!
- Blanks and Line breaks are irrelevant
- Comments
- In-Line comments start with
\% ... commented code here
- Larger code blocks can be commented with


## false \{

... commented code here
\} if

- Files have extension .ps
- To actually print, the file must end with showpage


## eps Files

- .eps files contains some additional meta-information
- These 'encapsulated postscript files' have extension .eps
- .eps type is announced in first line by EPSF text:

```
%!PS-Adobe-3.0 EPSF-3.0
%%BoundingBox: 0 0 595 842
```

- All eps meta information is added as comment with '\% \%'
- Most important (and the only required) information: size of the viewing area = BoundingBox:
- parameters (in integer postscript units) are:

```
%%BoundingBox: x_botleft y_botleft x_topright y_topright
```

- Best always use .eps !!!


## The Stack

- PostScript uses
- a stack (Last In - First out)
- RPN (Reverse Polish Notation) = UPN (Umgekehrt Poln. Notation): Operands are put to stack first, operator is last
- Example 345 add mul $\rightarrow(4+5) \times 3$

- Operators can have 1 or more arguments


## Coordinate System, Lengths and Points

- Origin (0/0) is BOTTOM LEFT
- X is to the RIGHT
- Y is UPWARD

- 1 PostScript Unit = 1 Point = 1/72 inch = 0.353 mm
- (1 inch = 1 Zoll = 2.54 cm exactly $)$
- Convert $m m$ to point by multiplying with 72 / $25.4=2.835$.
- By defining the command (see later...)
$/ \mathrm{mm}$ \{ 2.835 mul$\}$ def you can just write
15 mm
in your code!
- Later we will use the scale command to change units...


## The Page / Sheet Size

- 'sheet' size \& orientation (in .ps) are undefined.
- They depend on the 'viewer' or printer
- (This is a drawback. This is better in .eps and .pdf!)
- The sheet size can be 'fixed' as a 'bounding box' using an eps command, see before...
-\%!PS-Adobe-3.0 EPSF-3.0
- \%\%BoundingBox: llx lly urx ury
(11x = lower left x, ... using integer postscript units)
- A4 (portrait) paper has
- width $=210 \mathrm{~mm}=595.28 \ldots$ points
- height $=297 \mathrm{~mm}=841.89 \ldots$ points
- \%\%BoundingBox: 00595842 \% A4 portrait


## Hello World

- Shapes / Outlines are defined as paths.

A path is a sequence of straight lines / bends / gaps / ...

- x y moveto moves the ,pen' to coordinate [x y]
- x y lineto draws a line from the last point to [x y]
- stroke executes the path drawing

| \%! PS |
| :---: |
| 0 0 moveto <br> 100100 lineto |
| 10080 moveto |
| 10050 lineto |
| stho |
|  |

- Remember: 100 Units $=100 \times 0.353 \mathrm{~mm}=35.3 \mathrm{~mm}$
- rmoveto and rlineto are relative to the last point
- Note: You MUST first move to 0 0!


## Drawing and Filling Paths

- A path can be started with newpath
- The command closepath connects the last active point to the starting point (see Example 1 on slide 10)
- A path can be used for further operations (e.g. clipping, ...)
- Using a path is not always necessary
- To draw a path (or sequence of moveto / lineto commands)
- stroke draws the outline
- the width of the line can be set with value setlinewidth
- the shape of the line end can be set with value setlinecap
- the shape of corners is set with value setlinejoin.
- fill fills the inner part with the presently selected color
- x y w h rectstroke is a shortcut to draw a rectangle
- Color can be set with rger setrgbcolor (r,g,b=0.0 ... 1.0) or with $\boldsymbol{g}$ setgray (for gray values)


## One More Example

```
%!PS-Adobe-3.0 EPSF-3.0
%%BoundingBox: 0 0 110 110
10 20 moveto 100 40 lineto
10060 moveto }10080\mathrm{ lineto
5 setlinewidth 1 setlinecap
stroke
newpath
    50 50 moveto 20 0 rlineto
        0 20 rlineto -20 0 rlineto
closepath
1 0 0 setrgbcolor
fill
40 50 moveto 20 90 lineto
0 setlinecap 10 setlinewidth
0 1 0 setrgbcolor
stroke
showpage
```



## Working in Linux on the CIP Pool

- Log in on one of the CIP Pools machines
- chose a shell (I use Gnome)
- To work remote, use a browser and url https://physik1.kip.uni-heidelberg.de (or physik2 or physik3)
- Create a subdirectory with mkdir DIRNAME
- Move to the subdirectory with cd DIRNAME
- Edit files for instance with gedit filename.ps \&
- View your file with evince filename.ps \&


## Exercise 1

- Draw a line from $(10,10)$ to $(40,10)$ to $(20,30)$
- Change the width of the line
- Play with shape of the line ends and the shape of the corners (use values 0... 2 and a 'thick' line).
- Can you find out the difference between cap $=0$ and 2 ?
- Draw a square of 30 units size with its lower left corner at $(50,10)$
- Use moveto and lineto
- Use also newpath and closepath
- Fill the square with green color



## Mathematics

- PostScript knows several mathematical functions.
- Remember RPN: first operand (s), then operator
$\cdot x$ y sub $\rightarrow x-y$. Also: add, mul, div, idiv, mod
$\cdot \mathbf{x}$ abs $\quad \rightarrow|x|$. Also: neg, round, floor
$\cdot \mathbf{x} \sin \quad \rightarrow \sin (x)$. Also: cos, (notan), ln, log, sqrt
$\cdot \mathbf{x} \mathbf{y}$ atan $\rightarrow \arctan (x / y)$ (in degrees)
- Angles are given (as floats) in degrees (i.e. 0...360)
- Examples:
- $(2+3) \times 4 \rightarrow 23$ add 4 mul
- $2+3 \times 4 \rightarrow 234 \mathrm{mul}$ add
- Sqrt $(3+4) \rightarrow 34$ add sqrt


## (Random Numbers)

- Random (integer) numbers can be obtained with
-rand $\quad \rightarrow$ random integer number
- A seed can be set with
- value srand
- To obtain a different seed every time you 'run' (print) the postscript file, you can use a command that returns an integer time (in ms):
- realtime $\quad \rightarrow$ integer time value on stack
- realtime srand $\rightarrow$ initialize with new value at each run


## Drawing Arcs

- Arcs (parts of circles) are defined using x y radius phistart phistop arc
- Angles are in degrees, relative to $x$-axis
- arc turns counter clock wise, arcn turns clock wise
- They can be filled or stroked.
- Example:



## Defining Constants \& Functions

- Defining a 'fix' constant:
- /name value def
- Example: /PI 3.141 def
- Defining a 'calculated' constant:
- /name commands def
- Example: /TWO_PI PI 2 mul def
- (Constants can be called more efficiently with a double slash: //PI ... def)
- Defining a function:
- /name \{ commands \} def
- Example: /ADDFIVE \{ 5 add \} def 3 ADDFIVE $\rightarrow 8$
- What happens?
- The pair (name definition) is stored in a dictionary by def


## Example

- Understand in this example how the arguments of 'lineto' are constructed!
- Note that the shift to $(20,20)$ can be done more elegantly using the translate command, see later..
%!PS-Adobe-3.0 EPSF-3.0
%!PS-Adobe-3.0 EPSF-3.0
%%BoundingBox: 0 0 70 80
%%BoundingBox: 0 0 70 80
/W 30 def
/H 40 def
newpath
2020 moveto
20 W add 20 lineto
20 W 2 div add 20 H add lineto
closepath
stroke
showpage
$\mathbf{x}$ coordinate of $\quad \mathbf{y}$ coordinate of
the top point
the top point


20

## Exercise 2

- Draw a triangle with equal sides
- Start at $(10,10)$, side length $=100$. Use a variable: /W 100 def
- You have to do so some simple math for find the height H . Do it in postscript!
- Make the lines wide (for instance 10 points)
- Add a red, filled circle in the center which just touches the lines
$(10,10)$


100


## Manipulating the Stack: pop, dup, exch

pop dup top element: dup


## exch

swap topmost elements:


## Manipulating the Stack: index, copy

n index
copy t-th element (top index $=0$ ):


## n copy

duplicate $n$ elements:


## Passing Values to Functions

- Parameters are passed on the stack
- They can be used using stack manipulation commands
- Example: Define DIST(x,y) $=\operatorname{sqrt}\left(x^{2}+y^{2}\right)$.
- Assume x,y on stack:

| /DIST |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| dup | $\% 1$ |
| mul | $\% 2$ |
| exch $\% 3$ |  |
| dup | $\% 4$ |
| mul | $\% 5$ |
| add | $\circ 6$ |
| sqrt |  |
| \} def |  |



- Usage: 3.2 1.7 DIST $\rightarrow 3.6235$
- Note: Functions can remove parameters or leave the stack intact. Stack over- / under-flows are very common mistakes!


## Defining and Assigning Local Variables

- Values on the stack can be assigned to local variables:
-/NAME exch def
- (assume $\mathbf{x}$ is on the stack, then $\mathbf{x}$ /NAME exch leads to /NAME $\mathbf{x}$, so that the def works normally)
- Example: Define $\operatorname{DIST}(x, y)=\operatorname{sqrt}\left(x^{2}+y^{2}\right)$

```
/DIST {
    /y exch def % topmost argument first!
    /x exch def % now the stack is empty!
    x x mul % on stack: x
    y y mul % on stack: x }\mp@subsup{\textrm{x}}{}{2
    add
    sqrt
} def
```

- This is much less efficient, because names must be looked up in a 'Dictionary'. (Furthermore, the variables are globa!!)


## Exercise 3a

- Define a function LINE which draws a line of length 90 in an angle phi (on stack), starting at 100/100:



## Exercise 3b

- Draw the following picture:

- First draw (a few) individual lines
- Next, define a function LINE which gets one value from the stack which indicates the start of the line on the $x$-axis.
- The drawing is then done by a sequence of LINE commands: 10 LINE 20 LINE 30 LINE...


## Loops

- There are several possibilities for repeating code
- We only treat 'for' - loops here: istart istep imax \{ ...commands... \} for
- The loop value is put on the stack in each iteration (istart, istart+istep, istart+2 istep, ..., including imax)
- Then the commands are called

They MUST consume (remove) the value from the stack

- The loop variable can be assigned with /i exch def
- Example:

```
%!PS
0.2 setlinewidth
0 1 10 {
        5 0 \text { moveto}
        O}10\mathrm{ lineto
} for
stroke
showpage
Here we use the sweep variable which is still on the stack!!!
```


## Loops: Another Example

```
%!PS
lX0 50 def 
/PHIMAX 360 NTURN mul def % maximal angle
```

```
X0 Y0 moveto
```

X0 Y0 moveto
% start in center
% start in center
O 10 PHIMAX {
O 10 PHIMAX {
/phi exch def
/phi exch def
phi PHIMAX div
phi PHIMAX div
dup mul RMAX mul
dup mul RMAX mul
dup
dup
phi cos mul X0 add
phi cos mul X0 add
exch
exch
phi sin mul YO add
phi sin mul YO add
lineto
lineto
} for
} for
stroke
stroke
showpage

```
showpage
```


## Exercise 4a

- Modify exercise 3a using a for-loop for calling LINE
- Play with the increment

- Try to implement the loop without an extra LINE routine


## Exercise 4b

- Modify exercise 3 using a for-loop for calling LINE
- Play with the increment
- Try to implement the loop without an extra LINE routine


## Conditionals

- Conditional expression are possible
-boolval \{...commands...\} if
- boolval \{...cmds (true)...\} \{...cmds (false)...\} ifelse
- Boolean values can be
- true
- false
- $x y$ eq
- x y gt
-bool1 bool2 or
-bool not
- ...

```
%!PS
/BOX { % Assume bool value on stack
        {1 0 0} {0 0 1} ifelse setrgbcolor
        0 0 10 10 rectstroke
} def
1 1 translate true BOX
12 0 translate false BOX
showpage
```

- Can be used to comment out larger parts of code



## Exercise 5

- This exercise is inspired by a problem in the 'Mathekalender' 2011 which offers a mathematics competition every year at http://www.mathekalender.de
- Draw an N -fold polygon with all inner connections...
- Use two a double loop with 2 indices for the corners
- Use a function to convert corner index to x/y (using trigonometry)



## Translating and Scaling Things

- The coordinate system can be translated, scaled and rotated at any time.
- New transformations are 'added on top'


## - x y translate

$\cdot \mathbf{x}$ y scale $\%$ negative arguments are allowed $\rightarrow$ flip

- phi rotate \% angle in degree, as always



## Applications of Coordinate Transformations

- Coordinate Transformations can simplify code a lot:

```
35 35 moveto
1 1 {
    pop
    120 rotate
    35 35 lineto
} for
stroke
```

```
35 35 moveto
1 5 {
    pop
    144 rotate
    35 35 lineto
} for
stroke
```

```
0 0 moveto
1 1 36 { pop
        50 0 lineto
        0 0 moveto
        10 rotate
} for
stroke
```



## Converting Orientation and Units

## - With

```
%!PS
2.835 dup scale % now one unit is 1 mm
5 dup translate % shift by 5/5 mm to center
0.1 setlinewidth % line width is 0.1mm
newpath
    0 moveto
    0 287 lineto
200 287 lineto
200 0 lineto
closepath
stroke
100 143.5 translate % move origin to the center
```

drawing can start in the center, in mm units.

- A frame is drawn around a A4 sheet.


## Saving the Graphic State

- Temporary scaling / translating... operations often lead to 'corrupt' coordinate systems
- The graphics state can be remembered with gsave and restored with grestore
- Example:



## Exercise 6

- Understand how the Truchet Pattern on page 9 works
- Copy the code and play around
- Change the number of tiles
- Change the size of the tiles
- Replace the rounded tile by a triangle



## Drawing Text

- Strings are delimited by (). Example: (text)
- Before drawing a font must be selected:
- /name findfont put font 'name' to stack (height is 1 unit)
(or currentfont) Some font names:
- Times-Roman
- Helvetica-Bold
- Courier
- value scalefont resize (multiply) font (leave on stack)
- setfont
- Show a string (which is on the stack): show
- start at current point
- current point moves to end of string!
- Convert a number to a string: value 10 string cvs
- Get width of a string: strval stringwidth (get $x$ and $y$ ) - Note: y is always zero and must often be poped


## Drawing Text: Example

## - Example:



## (A Detail: Font Size)

- Font height is from baseline to baseline
- Character height is $\sim 0.7 \times$ font height (depending on font)



## Exercise 7

- Draw a box from $(10,10)$ to $(50,30)$
- Print some text centered in the box
- Use stringwidth to get the $x$ - and $y$ size of the text
- Unfortunately, the y size is zero and cannot be used! Use the font height you have chosen instead.


## Advanced Topic: Clipping

- A path can be used to restrict the drawing area using the clip command
- initclip clears the clipping path
construct clipping path


## (For fun: charpath)

- The outline of characters can be converted to a path using the charpath command.
- Example using clip:

```
%!PS-Adobe-3.0 EPSF-3.0
%%BoundingBox: 0 0 90 80
0.3 setlinewidth
/Times-Roman findfont
35 scalefont setfont
    50 moveto (Some) false charpath
10 }15\mathrm{ moveto (Text) false charpath
clip
0 2 100 {
    50 0 moveto
        100 lineto
} for
stroke
showpage
```


## Advanced: Bit Maps

- The command image draws a bit map in a unit square
- To change size: scale before in $x$ - and $y$
- Parameters are:
- Number of pixels in $x$
- Number of pixels in $y$
- Bits per pixel
- A rotation matrix (not explained here..)

- A function to get the values. Simplest case is a list of values
- Similar command is colorimage
- It has some more parameters...

```
%!PS-Adobe-3.0 EPSF-3.0
%%BoundingBox: 0 0 100 100
```

We need
$4 \times 4 \times 2=32$ bit

```
10 10 translate % move image tc middle of page
80 80 scale % make image ore inch on a side
4 4 2 [4 0 0 4 0 0] {<fc1be400>} image
showpage
```


## (Example for colorimage)



## Homework

- Generate a Postscript Drawing with at least the following ingredients:
- eps file with $10 \times 10 \mathrm{~cm}^{2}$ drawing size
- Your name printed centered at the bottom
- Several graphics elements
- Several colors or gray levels
- At least one loop
(as a minimum, repeat some element multiple times)


## Inspirations



## Inspirations



## More Inspirations



## More Inspirations

- Draw Pascal's Triangle (https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pascalsches Dreieck)
- Put a marker (circle, triangle,..) at the position of on all numbers which are multiples of some modulus K
- Examples:


