

Template for Specs

1 Goals of this template

The goal of this template is to present a straightforward template for writing easy-to-read in-house technical documents, such as specs, engineering research papers, theory-of-operation documents, and the like. The sections are numbered to give the reader an easier idea of structure and organization. Some special formats—such as table format for pull-down menus—streamline writing about software.

There are two variables predefined:

- ⇒ The CodeName variable can be used for the code-name of a product.
- ⇒ The FeatureName variable can be used for a specific feature of a product.

1-1 The headings

A heading1 has a line under it, which nicely separates the main sections. The Heading2's are smaller are numbered based on its Heading1. The Heading3's are indented. The HeadingRunIn is not numbered and so need not be used hierarchically.

NOTE In addition to the various headings, you can also use the Note format to draw attention to a paragraph. The word “Note” is automatically entered for you.

1-2 Lists

There are two levels of bullets (in this template, they're spruced up with arrows from the Symbol font). As follows:

- ⇒ First level of bullet looks like this.
- ⇒ And like this.
 - Second level of bullet is called Bulleted-2nd
 - It looks like this.

The numbered list uses the Numbered format. Its numbering is reset by using Body (use Indent to place a body-like paragraph in a list *without* resetting the numbering. Like so:

1. This is the first step.
2. This is the second.

This paragraph is in the Indent format. (If this paragraph were Body, the next line would be numbered “1” instead of “3.”)

3. Now we're back to Numbered.

2 Charts and Tables

The basic table, Format A, looks like this:

Table 1: A look at a Format A table

Heading	Heading
body	body
body	body

This is a utilitarian table format. Note the following features of this table:

Alignment The table is centered so that it looks correct regardless of the left indent at the moment.

Ruling The table is fully ruled so that nothing is ambiguous.

Numbering The table is numbered for unambiguous reference.

2-1 Specialized tables

There are two specialized table formats, the RevisionTable and the Menu table.

2-1.1 The RevisionTable

Use the RevisionTable to track the revision history of your document. The look is a bit different from Format A, and it has no numbered table title. For example:

Date	Person	Change
6 Jan 96	larry	First draft written
30 Oct 97	curly	Tweaks resulting from review by team
28 Oct 98	moe	2nd review

2-1.2 The Menu table

See Section 3-2.1 on page 5 for information on this table format.

3 Graphics

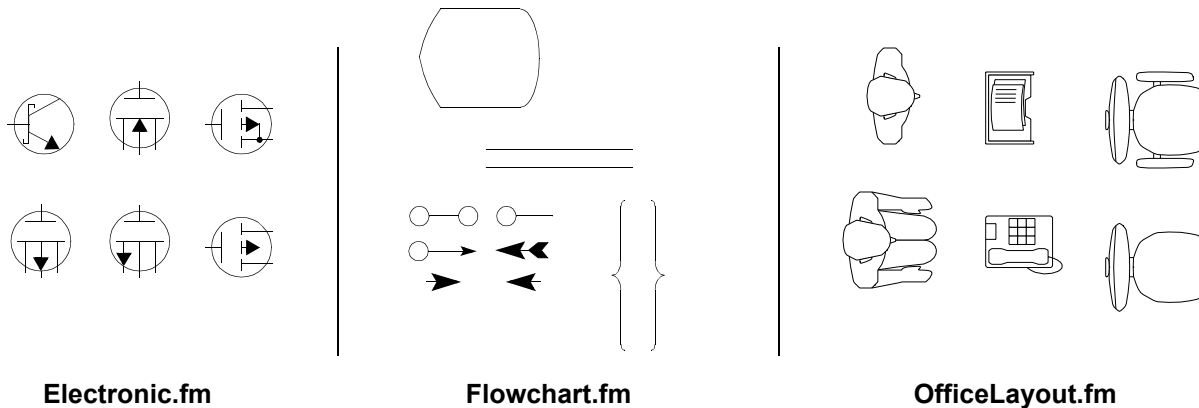
Technical drawings, schematics, screenshots of a computer screen, and so on often accompany specs and other in-house technical documents.

the FrameMaker clipart collection contains several specialized sets of drawings that may be useful to you:

- ⇒ A set of electronic symbols, useful for schematics.
- ⇒ A set of overhead drawings of office furniture and building parts.
- ⇒ A set of flowchart shapes.



Figure 1: A sampler of FrameMaker clipart for technical drawings



3-1 Dialog boxes

You can easily use FrameMaker's built-in drawing tools to mock-up a simple dialog box. This is handy when you're writing about something that does not yet exist even in prototype. The following example shows you how easy it is. Use the Figure format to enter the caption and then anchor the frame to that paragraph, like so:

Figure 2: A sample dialog box

Choose an option:

Label: ▼

Radio Button 1

Radio Button 2

Radio Button 3

A checkbox

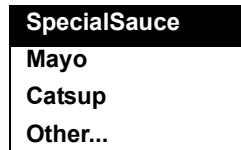
3-2 Menu Commands

Documents that talk about software or many types of home electronics inevitably talk about menu commands. You may want to define a variable for a menu command name that appears often or whose name may change several times as the project progresses.

To illustrate a menu, you can use the Menu table format, which simulates the look of a pull-down menu. It uses two special paragraph formats, MenuHeading and MenuItem. For example...

3-2.1 The SpecialSauce command

The menu looks like this (use the Menu table format to get this effect):



Purpose and use The SpecialSauce command will add a certain *je ne se quoi* to the *gestalt* out-of-box experience.

Required selection states for invocation The user will have to be fully awake for this command to have any impact.



Error checking If the user attempts to invoke the SpecialSauce command without first invoking Sauce Mode, the following self-explanatory message appears:

You fool! You have unsuccessfully tried to redefine a parameter that lacks a missing delimiter from the incomplete set. Reset the system or try again?
[OK] [Cancel]

Interpretation and processing If the command is invoked with a selection selected, the pointer points elsewhere (see "Dialog boxes" on page 4).

4 Code



Programming code uses the Code formats (both the paragraph and character formats), as the following example shows.

4-1 Sample code

Sample `code` can be inserted with the Code formats (both paragraph and character formats):

```
<Document  
  ...  
  <DspaceNarrow>  
  ...  
> # end of Document  
  <TextEnd>  
<End>
```