

Using MimeTeX to Generate Graphical Symbols in VT Scholar

MimeTeX is a utility licensed under the GPL that lets you easily embed graphical LaTeX mathematical and other symbolic expressions in your HTML pages, discussion threads, assignments, and assessment questions within VT Scholar. MimeTeX can be quite useful in explanations and questions requiring graphical symbolism. MimeTeX has been installed at VT for the convenience of those who need to include relatively short symbolic expressions within other documents quickly and is optimized for online display.


To invoke MimeTeX, use the URL <http://learn.vt.edu/tools/mimetex.cgi?> followed by the appropriate LaTeX expression. MimeTeX will parse the LaTeX and immediately generate the corresponding gif image, rather than the usual TeX dvi.

Here are several examples to try out in VT Scholar.

1. <http://learn.vt.edu/tools/mimetex.cgi?c=\sqrt{a^2+b^2}> looks like: $c = \sqrt{a^2+b^2}$
2. [http://learn.vt.edu/tools/mimetex.cgi?f\(x\)=\int_{-\infty}^x e^{-t^2}dt](http://learn.vt.edu/tools/mimetex.cgi?f(x)=\int_{-\infty}^x e^{-t^2}dt) looks like: $f(x) = \int_{-\infty}^x e^{-t^2}dt$
3. <http://learn.vt.edu/tools/mimetex.cgi?^{\frac{33}{17}}Cl^{16} \rightarrow n, n^{\frac{31}{15}}P^{16} + \frac{4}{2}He^2> looks like:
$$^{\frac{33}{17}}Cl^{16} \rightarrow n, n^{\frac{31}{15}}P^{16} + \frac{4}{2}He^2$$

Rendering Equations with MimeTeX

To render equations or other symbols like the above directly into a Discussion forum, Assignment, Tests & Quizzes question, HTML page, etc., use any Visual Text Editor box in VT Scholar:

1. In a browser, enter the URL: <http://learn.vt.edu/tools/mimetex.cgi?>
2. Append the appropriate LaTeX notation to be rendered after the ? in the URL. For example, "c=\sqrt{a^2+b^2}"
3. Copy the fully rendered URL address so it can be pasted in the next step.
4. In Scholar, place your cursor at the position in the visual text editor box where you want the mathematical notation graphic to appear, then click the **Insert Image**  icon in the toolbar.
5. Insert or paste the complete URL into the URL field. For example, "http://learn.vt.edu/tools/mimetex.cgi?c=\sqrt{a^2+b^2}"
6. Click **OK**.

The graphic will be rendered directly into the editor (as shown here using the URL in step 5 above as an example): $c = \sqrt{a^2+b^2}$

NOTE: MimeTeX Graphics in VT Scholar

At least one text character must be included in the question and multiple choice answer editor where a MimeTeX image has been

embedded, otherwise the image will 'disappear' if the question is edited. Typing a space at the beginning of the line where the image is embedded works fine to overcome this.

Alternative to MimeTeX

HTML entities for symbols are also available on the Web at <http://htmlhelp.com/reference/html40/entities/symbols.html>.

Questions?

If you have questions about using this utility in VT Scholar, please contact us via the web form at <http://4help.vt.edu/>.