

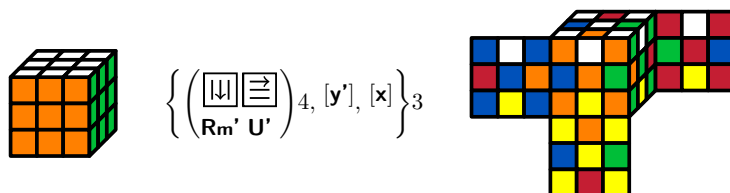
# The RUBIKROTATION package

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This file describes version 4.0 (2017/03/03)  
[www.ctan.org/pkg/rubik](http://www.ctan.org/pkg/rubik)

## Abstract

The RUBIKROTATION package is a dynamic extension for the RUBIKCUBE package (both are part of the Rubik ‘bundle’). This package provides the `\RubikRotation` command which processes a sequence of Rubik rotation moves on-the-fly (using the Perl script `rubikrotation.pl`), and returns the new Rubik cube state (configuration). The RUBIKROTATION package also provides commands for saving the cube state to a file (`\SaveRubikState`), and for displaying any errors (`\ShowRubikErrors`).



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# 1 Introduction

The RUBIKROTATION package is a dynamic extension to the RUBIKCUBE package. It consists of a style option (`rubikrotation.sty`), a Perl script (`rubikrotation.pl`).

The primary role of the RUBIKROTATION package is to implement a sequence of Rubik rotation moves on-the-fly using the `\RubikRotation` command. Consequently the RUBIKROTATION package requires access to the  $\TeX$  `write18` facility, which is enabled by using the `--shell-escape` command-line switch. This allows command-line control of the Perl script, which is really the ‘engine’ of this package.

The RUBIKROTATION package has been road-tested on a Microsoft platform (MiKTeX and Strawberry Perl<sup>1</sup>), on a Linux platform (Debian v8.2.0,  $\TeX$ Live 2016, and Perl v5.20.2), and on a Solaris platform (OpenIndiana).

The following commands are made available by `rubikrotation.sty`:

```
\RubikRotation[]{}  
\SaveRubikState  
\CheckRubikState  
\ShowRubikErrors  
\SequenceName  
\SequenceInfo  
\SequenceShort  
\SequenceLong
```

## 2 Requirements

The RUBIKROTATION package requires the TikZ and the RUBIKCUBE packages.

## 3 Installation

### 3.1 Generating the files

Place the file `rubikrotation.zip` into a temporary directory, and unzip it. This will generate the following files:

```
rubikrotation.ins  
rubikrotation.dtx  
rubikrotation.pdf      --this document  
rubikrotation.pl       --Perl script  
rubikrotationPL.pdf    --documentation of rubikrotation.pl  
rubikrotation.1        --manual file for rubikrotation.pl ('man' file)  
rubikrot-doc-figA.pdf  
rubikrot-doc-figB.pdf  
rubikrot-doc-figC.pdf  
rubikrot-doc-figD.pdf
```

---

<sup>1</sup>‘Strawberry Perl’ (<http://strawberryperl.com>) is a free Perl environment for MS Windows, designed to be as close as possible to the Perl environment of Unix/Linux systems.

The main package documentation is the file `rubikrotation.pdf`. The documentation of the Perl program `rubikrotation.pl` is the file `rubikrotationPL.pdf`

The style option `rubikrotation.sty` is generated by running (pdf)L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X on the file `rubikrotation.ins` as follows:

```
pdflatex rubikrotation.ins
```

The documentation file (`rubikrotation.pdf`) is then generated using the following sequence of steps<sup>2</sup>:

```
pdflatex rubikrotation.dtx
pdflatex rubikrotation.dtx
makeindex -s gind.ist rubikrotation
makeindex -s gglo.ist -o rubikrotation.gls rubikrotation.gls
pdflatex rubikrotation.dtx
pdflatex rubikrotation.dtx
```

### 3.2 Placing the files

Place the files either in a working directory, or where your system will find them, e.g., in your `/texmf-local/` directory tree. For example, on a Linux platform with a standard T<sub>E</sub>X Directory Structure (TDS), then:

```
*.sty → /usr/local/texlive/texmf-local/tex/latex/rubik/
*.cfg → /usr/local/texlive/texmf-local/tex/latex/rubik/
*.pdf → /usr/local/texlive/texmf-local/doc/rubik/
*.pl → /usr/local/texlive/texmf-local/scripts/rubik/
```

PERL SCRIPT: Make the perl script executable (`chmod +x rubikrotation.pl`), and then rename the file as ‘`rubikrotation`’ (i.e., with no file extension), and then place the executable script into your current TeXLive binary directory, e.g., `/usr/local/texlive/YYYY/bin/i386-linux`.

Sometimes the setting up of a simple one or two-line plain-text configuration-file may be useful or even necessary, depending on your system (see Section 4.2 below). Such a file (if one exists) will automatically be read by `rubikrotation.sty` providing the file is named `rubikrotation.cfg`.

THE ‘MAN’ FILE: On a Linux platform this manual file (`rubikrotation.1`) would be typically located in the directory `/usr/share/man/man1`.

FILE DATABASE: Finally, (depending on your system) update the T<sub>E</sub>X file database. For example, on a Linux platform this is achieved using the `texhash` command.

QUICK TEST: To test that your system can now run the perl script, just type at the command-line

```
rubikrotation -h
```

---

<sup>2</sup>Since the documentation includes a complicated indexing system as well as an index and hyperef links (the package `hypdoc` is used), then a lot of `pdflatex` runs are required. Prior to the first run it is a good idea to delete any relevant `.toc`, `.aux`, `.out` files.

which should generate something like the following:

```
This is rubikrotation version 4.0
Usage: rubikrotation [-h] -i <input file> [-o <out file>]
where,
[-h]    gives this help listing
[-i]    creates specified input file
[-o]    creates specified output file
For documentation see: rubikrotation.pdf,
rubikrotationPL.pdf and rubikcube.pdf
```

## 4 Usage

Load the packages `rubikcube.sty`, `rubikrotation.sty` and `rubikpatterns.sty` in the  $\TeX$  file preamble *after* loading the TikZ package (all the Rubik packages require the TikZ package); for example, as follows:

```
\usepackage{tikz}
\usepackage{rubikcube,rubikrotation,rubikpatterns}
```

and run (pdf) $\LaTeX$  using the `--shell-escape` command-line option (see the following section).

### 4.1 Enabling the $\TeX$ ‘shell’ facility

In order to access the  $\TeX$  `\write18` syntax (so we can access system commands, and hence run the Perl script), it is necessary to invoke the  $\LaTeX$  engine (e.g., (pdf) $\LaTeX$  or Lua $\LaTeX$ ) using the `--shell-escape` command-line option; for example:

```
pdflatex --shell-escape filename.tex
```

In practice, it is probably most convenient to run this command via a bash/batch file. For example, on a Linux platform the following bash file will run the file, show any errors, and open the PDF using AcrobatReader.

```
pdflatex --shell-escape filename.tex
echo "...checking error file"
grep ERROR ./rubikstateERRORS.dat
acroread filename.pdf &
```

If the  $\LaTeX$  engine is Lua $\LaTeX$ , e.g.,

```
lualatex --shell-escape filename.tex
```

then `rubikrotation.sty` will automatically load the recently developed `shellesc` package in order to facilitate system access to Perl (see Section 10.1). See  *$\LaTeX$  News*, issue 24, Feb 2016 for further details of the `shellesc` package. Consequently, if you intend to use Lua $\LaTeX$  then you will need to ensure your system has access to the `shellesc` package (it can always be downloaded from CTAN directly).

## 4.2 Configuration-file

A plain-text configuration-file with the name `rubikrotation.cfg` (if one exists) will automatically be read by `rubikrotation.sty`. The RUBIKROTATION package's facility to use a configuration-file allows the user to change not only (a) the filename of the Perl script (`rubikrotation.pl`), but also (b) the command-line code used by `rubikrotation.sty` for calling the Perl script. This sort of fine-tuning can be very useful, and sometimes may even be necessary (depending on your system) for running the Perl script.

For example, on some systems it maybe preferable to use a different PATH, file-name and/or a different command-line code to call the script. Such a configuration-file can also facilitate testing a new Perl script having a different name and location.

`\rubikperlname`      The configuration-file is essentially a convenient software vehicle for feeding  
`\rubikperlcmd`    additional L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X code to the style option `rubikrotation.sty`, and hence allows the contents of some commands to be easily adjusted and/or fine-tuned. For the RUBIKROTATION package there are two particular macros we may wish to adjust. The first is that holding the filename of the Perl script, namely `\rubikperlname`. The second is that holding the command-line call, namely `\rubikperlcmd`. The default definitions in `rubikrotation.sty` (which assume the Perl script is executable), are as follows: (they are detailed in Section 10.2)

```
\newcommand{\rubikperlname}{rubikrotation}  
\newcommand{\rubikperlcmd}{\rubikperlname\space%  
-i rubikstate.dat -o rubikstateNEW.dat}
```

Note the need here (in the second macro) to use `\space` on the end of (`\rubikperlname`) in order to force a following space—i.e., before the first command-line argument. The following examples illustrate how the configuration-file may be used.

EXAMPLE 1: Suppose we wish to test out a slightly modified Perl script with the working (executable) name `rubikrotationR77`. In this case we simply create, in the local working directory, a plain-text configuration-file (it *must* be named exactly `rubikrotation.cfg`) and contains just the following line:

```
\renewcommand{\rubikperlname}{rubikrotationR77}
```

EXAMPLE 2: Alternatively, suppose we wish to test out a new Perl script with the (non-executable) name `rubikrotationR55.pl`. Now, in this particular case we will need to run the script using a slightly different command, namely, `perl rubikrotationR55.pl ...`, and consequently we need to implement *both* these changes (of name and command) in the configuration-file, as follows:

```
\renewcommand{\rubikperlname}{rubikrotationR55.pl}  
\renewcommand{\rubikperlcmd}{perl \rubikperlname\space%  
-i rubikstate.dat -o rubikstateNEW.dat}
```

Remember to make sure the PATH associated with the command is also correct.

PLACING THE CONFIGURATION-FILE: The simplest arrangement is just to include the `.cfg` file in the working directory. Alternatively, the `.cfg` file could be placed in the `/texmf-local/` directory tree (say, in `/usr/local/texlive/texmf-local/tex/latex/rubik/`), but in this case one would then have to be careful to specify the correct PATH for everything in order to enable your system to find all the various components etc.

Note that you can, of course, have several `.cfg` files, since the system will read only one such file (the first one it finds starting with the current working directory). Consequently, it may be useful to have one `.cfg` file in your `/texmf-local/` dir (for running the standard Rubik package), and another (different) `.cfg` file in your ‘test’ directory.

## 5 Commands

The *only* ‘Rubik bundle’ commands which *must* be used inside a TikZ picture environment are the `\Draw...` commands (these are all provided by the RUBIKCUBE package), although most commands can be placed inside a TikZ environment if you wish.

However, using commands which influence the Rubik colour state (e.g., the `\RubikRotation` command) outside the `tikzpicture`, `minipage` or `figure` environments generally offers maximum flexibility, since the effects of such commands when used inside these environments remain ‘local’ to the environment, and are not therefore accessible outside that *particular* environment (see also Section 4.1 in the RUBIKCUBE documentation).

Conversely, the only RUBIKROTATION command which should *not* be used inside a TikZ environment is the `\ShowRubikErrors` command (see the notes on this command below).

### 5.1 `\RubikRotation` command

`\RubikRotation` The `\RubikRotation` [*integer*] {*comma-separated sequence*} command processes a sequence of rotation codes, and returns the final state. The inverse sequence can also be implemented (see **Inverse** below).

The first (optional) argument [*integer*] of the `\RubikRotation` command is the number of times the whole command itself should be repeated; for example as follows: `\RubikRotation[2]{...}`.

The second (mandatory) argument consists of a comma-separated sequence of rotation codes, e.g., `U, D2`, which may be encoded as a macro. In addition, there may be additional comma-separated macros and optional [*name*], ‘repeat blocks’ and ‘info blocks’ (see below). The general structure of the second argument is as follows: `\RubikRotation{[name], ..., \macro, ..., (repeat)n, ..., <info>}`. These elements are now described in detail.

**Square brackets:** This is an optional ‘sequence name’ facility. The contents of square brackets are not processed as rotations, and can therefore be used as a ‘name’ of the sequence, e.g., `[CrossSeq]`, or as a tag, to be visible in the log file.

The contents must *not* include commas, but can have other separators, e.g., spaces, semicolons etc. Importantly, the contents of the first square bracket will be designated the sequence name and will be held as the macro `\SequenceName`. Square brackets can also be used in repeat blocks (see below). Square brackets must be separated by a comma from adjacent codes.

**Repeat block:** This is an optional comma-separated sequence of rotation codes which is to be repeated a specified number of times. It must be delimited by balanced curved brackets, and an optional terminal integer  $n$  (repeat number) can be used. For example, `(F,B3)2`, where the ‘2’ indicates that the rotation sequence `F,B3` is to be processed twice. If the repeat number is omitted then  $n = 1$  is assumed. Repeat blocks must be separated by a comma from adjacent codes, and can include balanced square brackets (see below).

**Info block:** This is an optional block of meta information, and must be delimited by balanced angle-brackets `<.>`. An info-block typically carries information regarding the sequence itself; typically, something like `<(20f*) //C2(a)>`. If an infoblock includes the keyword ‘inverse’ then the program will implement the inverse sequence of rotations (see below). An info-block must be separated by a comma from the adjacent codes. The contents of all info blocks will be held collectively as the macro `\SequenceInfo`.

**Inverse sequence:** The (mathematically) inverse sequence of the given sequence can be implemented by including the keyword ‘inverse’ (or `INVERSE`) in an infoblock, as follows `\RubikRotation{<inverse>, ... }`. The keyword can be either in its own separate infoblock, or inside a larger infoblock. The program simply checks for the string ‘inverse’, which can be either lower-case or upper-case. The implemented sequence can be checked by looking at (or printing) the contents of the macro `\SequenceLong` (see section on *Sequence strings* below). Note that the macro `\SequenceLong` is also shown (expanded) in the log file.

### 5.1.1 Examples

Some examples of the use of the `\RubikRotation` command are as follows; the commas are important and brackets must be balanced and not nested:

```
\RubikRotation[2]{x,R2,U}
\rubikrotation{\sixspot}
\rubikrotation{<inverse>, [myseqB], U,D,L,R2, (M,U)3,D2}
\rubikrotation{ [K32466], U,F,U2,F,L2,B,U2,F,Lp,Rp,F2,D,R2,U2,L2,B,Fp,
L,F2,D,<(20f*) //Oh{I}>}
```

#### Inverse sequence

Inverting a sequence involves (a) reversing the order, and (b) inverting each element. Thus, the inverse of the sequence `(Up,D,L2,Rp)` is `(R,Lp,Lp,Dp,U)`. But `(Lp,Lp) ≡ L2`, and so the inverse of `(Up,D,L2,Rp)` would generally be expressed as `(R,L2,Dp,U)`. However, since the macro `\SequenceLong` records the individual elements as they are processed, when a sequence is inverted notational compressions such as `Lp,Lp → L2` are not made. For example, processing the command `\RubikRotation{<inverse>,Up,D,L2,Rp}` results in the macro `\SequenceLong` being displayed in the subsequent `rubikstateNEW.dat` file as



```
\renewcommand\SequenceLong{R,Lp,Lp,Dp,U}%
```

A more extensive example is given at the end of Section 5.1.2.

### Repetitions

Repetitions can be achieved in various ways. First, all the rotations in the second argument can be repeated multiple times, say  $n$  times, by using the optional `[n]` argument of the `\RubikRotation[]{}{}` command; i.e., the whole of the mandatory argument of the `\RubikRotation` command is then executed  $n$  times.

Second, a sub-sequence of rotations can be repeated within the main argument multiple times, by delimiting such groups with curved brackets and a trailing integer (i.e., in a repeat-block), as described above. If no integer is given, then  $n = 1$  is assumed, and hence curved brackets can also be used simply to highlight particular sequences. For example, the following five commands are equivalent:

```
\RubikRotation[3]{x,R2,U}
\RubikRotation{(x,R2,U)3}
\RubikRotation{(x,R2,U)2,x,R2,U}
\RubikRotation{x,R2,U,x,R2,U,x,R2,U}
\RubikRotation{(x,R2,U),(x,R2,U),(x,R2,U)}
```

### Macros

Note also that macros representing a rotation sequence can also appear as part of the main argument. So, extending the previous example, if we were to define `\newcommand{\ShortSeq}{x,R2,U}`, then the following three commands would also be equivalent to the five previous ones:

```
\RubikRotation[3]{\ShortSeq}
\RubikRotation{(\ShortSeq)3}
\RubikRotation{(x,R2,U),\ShortSeq,\ShortSeq}
```

### Process overview

The `\RubikRotation` command results in  $\text{\LaTeX}$  first writing the current Rubik state to a text file (`rubikstate.dat`), and then calling the Perl script `rubikrotation.pl`. The Perl script then reads the current Rubik state from the (`rubikstate.dat`) file, performs all the rotations, and then writes the new Rubik state, and the four `\Sequence...` macros (see below), and any error messages, all to the file `rubikstateNEW.dat`, which is then input on-the-fly by the `.tex` file. This new Rubik state can then be used either as the input for another `\RubikRotation` command, or used to generate a graphic image of the cube. The `\Sequence...` macros can then be used for typesetting the sequence of rotations in various formats.

#### 5.1.2 Sequence strings

<code>\SequenceName</code>	The sequence of rotation codes used as the main argument for the <code>\RubikRotation</code>
<code>\SequenceInfo</code>	command is also returned in the form of four macros, namely <code>\SequenceName</code>
<code>\SequenceShort</code>	(contains the ‘name’ of the sequence if a <code>[name]</code> exists), <code>\SequenceInfo</code> (contains
<code>\SequenceLong</code>	

any sequence meta data in ‘info-blocks’), `\SequenceShort` (contains the original sequence of rotation codes), and `\SequenceLong` (contains the expanded or ‘Long’ form of the original sequence—i.e., in which any ‘short’ rotation codes (e.g., `R2`, `L3`) in the original sequence have been expanded into their separate codes—e.g., `R`, `R`, `L`, `L`, `L` etc.).

For example, if we wanted to see the effect of the sequence associated with the ‘SixTs’ cube configuration `[SixTs],F2,R2,U2,Fp,B,D2,L2,F,B,<(14q*,14f*)>` on a solved Rubik cube (where ‘SixTs’ is the ‘name’ of the sequence), we could use the following commands:

```
\RubikCubeSolved % sets up the colours for a solved cube state
\rubikRotation{[SixTs],F2,R2,U2,Fp,B,D2,L2,F,B,<(14q*,14f*)>}
\ShowCube{2.8cm}{0.7}{\DrawRubikCubeRU}
```

Note (a) contents of a square bracket `[.]` are not processed as rotations, (b) the contents of the first square bracket in a sequence is taken to be the ‘name’ of the sequence (see Section 5.1.4 for more details). In this example the four `\Sequence..` macros described above would now hold the following strings:

```
\SequenceName = SixTs
\SequenceInfo = (14q*,14f*)
\SequenceShort = [SixTs],F2,R2,U2,Fp,B,D2,L2,F,B
\SequenceLong = F,F,R,R,U,U,Fp,B,D,D,L,L,F,B
```

As another example, we now show how to implement the inverse of the above `SixTs` sequence, by including the key word ‘inverse’ in an infoblock, and, more conveniently, using the macro `\sixts` from the `RUBIKPATTERNS` package, as follows:

```
\rubikRotation{<inverse>,\sixts}
```

In this case, the log file would then show the associated `\Sequence..` macros as follows:

```
...SequenceName = SixTs
...SequenceInfo = inverse; (14q*; 9f*)
...SequenceShort = [SixTs],F2,R2,U2,Fp,B,D2,L2,F,B
...SequenceLong = Bp,Fp,Lp,Lp,Dp,Dp,Bp,F,Up,Up,Rp,Rp,Fp,Fp
```

showing that the macro `\SequenceShort` holds the `\sixts` sequence, while the macro `\SequenceLong` holds the inverse sequence which was actually implemented.

For further details regarding the use of these `\Sequence..` macros for typesetting the various components of a sequence, and why the `\SequenceLong` command is particularly useful, see Section 10 in the `RUBIKCUBE` documentation (the `\ShowSequence` command).

### 5.1.3 Sequences as macros

Macros which are arguments of the `TEX` `\write` command are expanded on writing (Eijkhout 1992, § 30.2.3, p. 238)[see refs Section 8]. Consequently we are able to

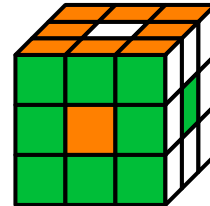
use a sequence-defining macro as an argument for the `\RubikRotation` command. In fact this is very convenient, since it allows one to store lots of different rotation sequences by name alone. Note that `rubikpatterns.sty` (part of the Rubik bundle) is a collection/database of many such well-known named sequences.

For example, by installing the RUBIKPATTERNS package we are able to use the name ‘sixspot’ for a macro denoting the rotation sequence which generates the well known ‘sixspot’ configuration (see the ‘patterns’ page on the Reid website)[see refs Section 8]. The ‘sixspot’ sequence is defined as follows:

```
\newcommand{\sixspot}{U,Dp,R,Lp,F,Bp,U,Dp,<(8q*, 8f*)>}
```

Armed with the `\sixspot` macro we are now able to generate the graphic (sixspot cube) very easily using the following code—this time we demonstrate the use of the more convenient `\ShowCube` command (which includes the `tikzpicture` environment):

```
\usepackage{rubikcube,rubikrotation}
\usepackage{rubikpatterns}
...
\RubikCubeSolved
\RubikRotation{\sixspot}
\ShowCube{3cm}{0.7}{\DrawRubikCubeRU}
```



Providing such macros (when used as arguments) are comma separated (as the rotation codes must be), then the `\RubikRotation` command can accommodate both rotation codes and macros; for example, `\RubikRotation{x,y,\sixspot,x}`.

#### 5.1.4 Arguments in square brackets

The contents of a square bracket are not processed as rotations, but are simply interpreted as an inactive ‘string’. This feature therefore allows the contents to be used as a label, which can be very useful. Note the contents of square brackets must not include commas, but spaces and semicolons are allowed.

For example, we can use this facility to ‘name’ the ‘SixSpot’ configuration mentioned above, as follows:

```
\RubikRotation{[SixSpot],U,Dp,R,Lp,F,Bp,U,Dp}
```

In practice, it is quite useful to go one step further and include the `[]` label-name feature in the `\sixspot` command, as follows,

```
\newcommand{\sixspot}{[SixSpot],U,Dp,R,Lp,F,Bp,U,Dp}
```

Note that using the `[name]` facility has the great advantage of making the label-name visible in the log-file. For example, the following command, which uses the rotations `x2`, and `y` to rotate the Rubik cube after applying the ‘sixspot’ sequence of rotations:

```
\RubikRotation{\sixspot,x2,y}
```

will then be represented in the log file as

```

...dataline = rotation, [SixSpot], U, Dp, R, Lp, F, Bp, U, Dp, <(8q*; 8f*)>, x2, y
...[SixSpot] is a label OK
...rotation U, OK
...rotation Dp, OK
...rotation R, OK
...rotation Lp, OK
...rotation F, OK
...rotation Bp, OK
...rotation U, OK
...rotation Dp, OK
...Expanding x2 ...
...rotation x, OK (= x = R + Sr + Lp)
...rotation x, OK (= x = R + Sr + Lp)
...rotation y, OK (= y = U + Su + Dp)
...writing new Rubik state to file rubikstateNEW.dat
...SequenceName = SixSpot
...SequenceInfo = (8q*; 8f*)
...SequenceShort = [SixSpot], U, Dp, R, Lp, F, Bp, U, Dp, x2, y
...SequenceLong = U, Dp, R, Lp, F, Bp, U, Dp, x, x, y

```

Note that the `\sixspot` macro, as held in the RUBIKPATTERNS package, includes a terminal infoblock holding the ‘SequenceInfo’ as indicated in the above example.

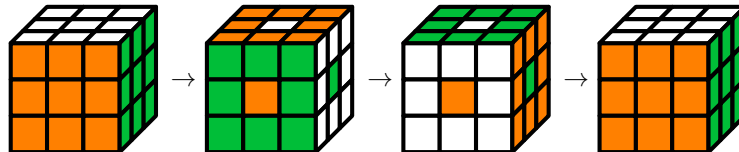
Also, note that the square bracket feature allows for several named rotation sequences to be easily distinguished in the log file from adjacent rotation sequences. This feature is also useful when typesetting a sequence of rotation codes, since the first element will then appear in the form `[name]`, obviating the need to typeset the name of the sequence separately.

See also the `\ShowSequence` command (in the RUBIKCUBE package) for a convenient way of displaying a sequence of rotations in various formats.

### 5.1.5 Groups

The `\RubikRotation` command is a convenient tool for illustrating how Rubik rotations and sequences of rotations are elements of groups and subgroups. For example, using the RUBIKROTATION package it is easy to show that three cycles of the ‘sixspot’ sequence return the Rubik cube to its original state. More formally this is equivalent to  $(\text{\sixspot})^3 \equiv e^3$ , and can be nicely illustrated by implementing the following pseudocode:

```
\RubikCubeSolved . \RubikRotation[3]{\sixspot} = \RubikCubeSolved
```




---

<sup>3</sup> $e$  is the ‘identity’ element

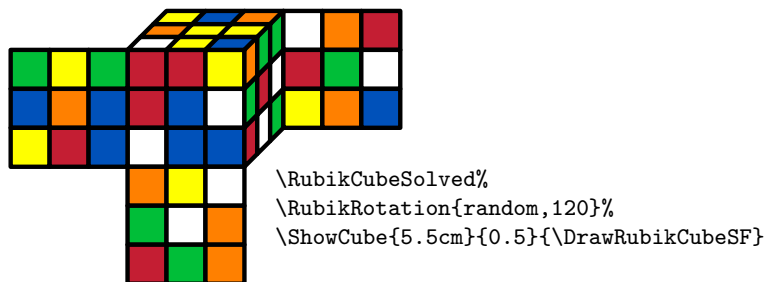
### 5.1.6 Random rotations

The `\RubikRotation` command can also be used to scramble the cube using a random sequence of rotations. If the first argument is the lower-case word ‘random’ AND the second argument is an integer  $n$ , ( $1 \leq n \leq 200$ ), then a random sequence of  $n$  rotations will be performed; otherwise a default value of 50 is used (for example, if the second argument is not an integer). If  $n > 200$  then the currently set maximum value  $n = 200$  will be used.

As a safety feature the maximum  $n$  can be changed only by editing the set value of the Perl variable `$maxn` in the Perl script `rubikrotation.pl`, where we currently have (see the ‘random’ subroutine in the document `rubikrotationPL.pdf`)

```
my $maxn=200;
```

For example, the following commands scramble a solved cube using a sequence of 120 random rotations, and display the state in the form of a semi-flat (SF) cube.



Note that in this particular example (above), only the `\Draw..` command is inside the TikZ picture environment (i.e., inside the `\ShowCube` command). Note also that when Rubik commands are outside a TikZ picture environment, they should have a trailing `%` to stop additional white space being included.

The randomisation procedure is as follows: all the possible rotations are first allocated a different cardinal number (positive integer) and collected into an array. Then a sequence of  $n$  randomised numbers is generated and mapped to the array to generate the associated sequence of random rotations. The sequence used is detailed in the `.log` file.

### 5.2 \SaveRubikState command

`\SaveRubikState` The command `\SaveRubikState{<filename>}` saves the state (configuration) of the Rubik cube to the file `{<filename>}` in the standard `\RubikFace...` format so that it can be read by `LATEX`. Consequently such a file can then be input so it can be drawn or processed in the usual way. The output file is ‘closed’ immediately following the ‘write’ in order to allow it to be available for input later by the same file if required.

For example, the following commands would save the so-called ‘sixspot’ configuration (generated by the rotations **U**, **Dp**, **R**, **Lp**, **F**, **Bp**, **U**, **Dp**) to the file `sixspot.tex`.

```

\RubikCubeSolved%
\RubikRotation{U,Dp,R,Lp,F,Bp,U,Dp}%
\SaveRubikState{sixspot.tex}%

```

The form of the file `sixspot.tex` will then be as follows—the filename (commented out) is automatically written to the top of the file for convenience.

```

% filename: sixspot.tex
\RubikFaceUp{0}{0}{0}{W}{0}{0}{0}{0}%
\RubikFaceDown{R}{R}{R}{Y}{R}{R}{R}{R}%
\RubikFaceLeft{Y}{Y}{Y}{Y}{B}{Y}{Y}{Y}%
\RubikFaceRight{W}{W}{W}{W}{G}{W}{W}{W}%
\RubikFaceFront{G}{G}{G}{G}{0}{G}{G}{G}%
\RubikFaceBack{B}{B}{B}{B}{R}{B}{B}{B}%

```

We can therefore access and draw this configuration in a Semi-Flat format later, when required, simply by inputting the file as follows:

```

\input{sixspot.tex}
\ShowCube{7cm}{0.7}{\DrawRubikCubeSF}

```

### 5.3 `\CheckRubikState` command

`\CheckRubikState` Since it is easy to inadvertently define an invalid Rubik cube (e.g., enter an invalid number of, say, yellow facelets), this command simply checks the current colour state of all the cubies of a 3x3x3 Rubik cube, and shows the number of facelets of each colour. An `ERROR: code` is issued if the number of facelets having a given colour exceeds 6. The results are written to the `.log` file, and displayed under the graphic if the `\ShowRubikErrors` command is used.

One can check the current Rubik state (for errors) by issuing the command

```

\CheckRubikState%

```

Note (1) that such a check is implemented automatically with each `\RubikRotation` command, and (2) this is actually only a very superficial check—simply counting the number of cubies of each colour.

### 5.4 `\ShowRubikErrors` command

`\ShowRubikErrors` Any errors which arise can be made visible using the command `\ShowRubikErrors`. This command places a copy of the ‘error’ file (`rubikstateERRORS.dat`) underneath the graphic image so you can see any errors if there are any—all this detail can also be found in the `.log` file.

Consequently, this command must be placed *after* a TikZ picture environment—it cannot be used inside a TikZ environment. In fact this command is probably best placed at the end of the document (if there are several such environments), where it will reveal all rotation errors generated while processing the whole document. Once the document is free of errors this command can be removed or just commented out. Run the test file `example-rot.tex` to see an example of the use of this command.

## 6 Files generated

Whenever the `\RubikRotation` or `\CheckRubikState` commands are used, three small temporary plain-text files for holding data are generated as follows (they are refreshed with each `LATEX` run, and are not actively deleted).

- `LATEX` writes Rubik state data to the file `rubikstate.dat`.
- The Perl script `rubikrotation.pl` reads the file `rubikstate.dat` and then writes the new rubik state to the file `rubikstateNEW.dat`.
- The Perl script `rubikrotation.pl` also writes error data to the file `rubikstateERRORS.dat`. A copy of this file is displayed under the graphic image when the command `\ShowRubikErrors` is used after the `TikZ` picture environment.

## 7 General overview

When `LATEX` processes `rubikrotation.sty` the following steps are implemented.

1. A check is made to see if `fancyvrb.sty` is loaded: if not then this package is loaded (this package supplies the command `\VerbatimInput` which is required for inputting the file `rubikstateERRORS.dat` in verbatim form).
2. A check is made to see if a configuration-file (`rubikrotation.cfg`) exists: if so then this file is input.
3. The text file `rubikstateNEW.dat` is overwritten (if it exists), otherwise the file is created (this prevents an ‘old’ version of the file being used by `LATEX`).
4. The plain-text file `rubikstateERRORS.dat` is created. This file collects error messages generated by the Perl script.

When a `\RubikRotation` command is processed it first writes the current colour configuration of each face (the ‘rubik state’) to the temporary file `rubikstate.dat` (this will be read by the Perl script `rubikrotation.pl`). The `\RubikRotation` command also appends the keyword ‘`checkrubik`’ as well as a copy of the string of Rubik rotations. It then calls the Perl script `rubikrotation.pl`.

For example, if we use the command `\RubikCubeSolved` followed by the command `\RubikRotation[2]{U,D,L,R}`, then the associated `rubikstate.dat` file will be written as follows:

```
% filename: rubikstate.dat
up,W,W,W,W,W,W,W,W,W
down,Y,Y,Y,Y,Y,Y,Y,Y,Y
left,B,B,B,B,B,B,B,B,B
right,G,G,G,G,G,G,G,G,G
front,O,O,O,O,O,O,O,O,O
```

```

back,R,R,R,R,R,R,R,R,R
checkstate
rotation,U,D,L,R
rotation,U,D,L,R

```

Note that the `\RubikRotation` option [2] results in the string “rotation,U,D,L,R” being written twice to the `rubikstate.dat` file, as shown above.

Alternatively, if we used the command `\RubikRotation{random, 45}` then the last line written to the file would be the string “rotation,random,45”, as follows:

```

% filename: rubikstate.dat
up,W,W,W,W,W,W,W,W,W
down,Y,Y,Y,Y,Y,Y,Y,Y
left,B,B,B,B,B,B,B,B
right,G,G,G,G,G,G,G,G
front,O,O,O,O,O,O,O,O
back,R,R,R,R,R,R,R,R,R
checkstate
rotation,random,45

```

A `\CheckRubikState` command triggers the same sequence of events except that no “rotation,...” line is written.

The action of the Perl script `rubikrotation.pl` is controlled by the keywords (first argument of each line) associated with each line of the file `rubikstate.dat`. When control passes to Perl, the script `rubikrotation.pl` starts by loading the current `rubikstate` (prompted by the keywords ‘up’, ‘down’, ‘left’, ‘right’, ‘front’, ‘back’), and performing a syntax check—significant syntax errors at this stage will cause the program to issue appropriate error messages and then terminate cleanly. Next, the Perl script performs some basic cube checks (prompted by the key word ‘checkstate’), and then the program processes the sequence of Rubik rotations (prompted by the keyword ‘rotation’). If, instead, the second argument of the ‘rotation,...’ string is the keyword ‘random’, and provided this is followed by a valid integer, say  $n$ , then the Perl script performs a sequence of  $n$  random rotations. Finally, the Perl script writes the final `rubikstate` to the text file `rubikstateNEW.dat`. All error messages are written to the text file `rubikstateERRORS.dat` and also to the  $\LaTeX$  log-file.

Control then reverts to  $\LaTeX$  which then inputs the file `rubikstateNEW.dat`. If there are more `\RubikRotation` commands (in the `.tex` file) then this cycle repeats accordingly. Eventually a `\Draw...` command is reached (in the `.tex` file) and the final `rubikstate` is drawn in a TikZ picture environment.

If the TikZ picture environment is followed by a `\ShowRubikErrors` command, then a ‘verbatim’ copy of the `rubikstateERRORS.dat` file is displayed immediately under the graphic. Once the graphic is error-free, then the `\ShowRubikErrors` command can be removed or commented out.

Note that if a BASH file is used to coordinate the process then it is often convenient to use the linux `grep` utility to alert the user to any run-time errors, by using `grep` to scan the `rubikstateERRORS.dat` file at the end of the run; for example, as follows:



```
pdflatex --shell-escape myfile.tex
echo "...checking error file"
grep ERROR ./rubikstateERRORS.dat
```

## 8 References

- Abrahams PW, Berry K and Hargreaves KA (1990). *TEX for the impatient* (Addison-Wesley Publishing Company), page 292.  
Available from: <http://www.ctan.org/pkg/impatient>  
[re: `\rubikpercentchar` and `\@comment` in Section 10.2]
- Eijkhout V (1992). *TEX by topic: a TEXnician's reference*. (Addison-Wesley Publishing Company), pages 232 & 238.  
Available from: <https://bitbucket.org/VictorEijkhout/tex-by-topic/>  
[re: `\string` in Section 10.8] [re: `\write` in Section 5.1.3]
- Feuersänger C (2015). Notes on programming in TeX.  
(revision: 1.12.1-32-gc90572c; 2015/07/29)  
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- Kociemba website (Kociemba H). <http://www.kociemba.org/cube.htm>
- Nickalls RWD and Syropoulos A (2015). The RUBIKCUBE package, v3.0.  
<http://www.ctan.org/pkg/rubik>,
- Randelshofer website (Randelshofer W). <http://www.randelshofer.ch/rubik/> [re: sequences and supersetENG notation]
- Reid website (Reid M). Patterns. <http://www.cflmath.com/Rubik/patterns.html> [re: sequences as macros; in Section 5.1.3]
- Tellechea C and Segletes SB (2016). The listofitems package, v1.2  
<http://www.ctan.org/pkg/listofitems>

## 9 Change history

- Version 4.0 (March 2017)
  - The `\RubikRotation` command has been enhanced to allow its argument to include so-called repeat-blocks (rotation-sequences which can be repeated multiple times), and info-blocks for holding sequence metadata (see Section 5.1). Syntax checking of the `\RubikRotation` argument is much improved (see `rubikrotationPL.pdf` for details of the Perl script).
  - Four new macros which hold derived data (see Section 5.1).

`\SequenceName`  
`\SequenceInfo`  
`\SequenceShort`  
`\SequenceLong`

— Better syntax checking of the `\RubikRotation` argument by the Perl program `rubikrotation.pl`.

- Version 3.0 (25 September 2015)

— The `\RubikRotation` command now actions multiple instances of its argument as determined by an optional ‘repeat’ [*integer*]. For example the command `\RubikRotation[3]{R,x}` is equivalent to the command `\RubikRotation{R,x,R,x,R,x}` (see Sections 5.1 and 10.9).

— If a comma separated element used as an argument for the `\RubikRotation` command is prefixed with either a `*` or `[ or ]` character then it is not actioned as a rotation (see Section 5.1.4).

— The Perl script `rubikrotation.pl` now has command-line switches, including `-h` to show some ‘help’ and ‘usage’ information (see Section 3.2).

— A ‘man’ file (manual file) for the Perl script `rubikrotation.pl` is now included in the package.

— The Perl script `rubikrotation.pl` now uses as input and output file-names those specified in the command-line of the CALLing program. This now allows the script `rubikrotation.pl` to be used as a stand-alone tool (see the `rubikrotation` ‘man’ file for details).

— The documentation for the Perl script `rubikrotation.pl` is in the accompanying file `rubikrotationPL.pdf`.

— Fixed typos, index and minor errors in the documentation.

- Version 2.0 (5 February, 2014)

— First release.

## 10 The code (`rubikrotation.sty`)

In the following, the term ‘Perl script’ denotes the script `rubikrotation.pl`. Useful information regarding the  $\TeX$  `\write` command is given in Eijkhout (1992), § 30.2.3 (page 238). For the means of including a ‘%’ character in the token list of `\write` see Abrahams *et. al* (1990).

### 10.1 Package heading

```

1 (*rubikrotation)
2 \def\RRfileversion{4.0}%
3 \def\RRfiledate{2017/03/03}%
4 \NeedsTeXFormat{LaTeX2e}

```

```
5 \ProvidesPackage{rubikrotation}[\RRfiledate\space (v\RRfileversion)]
```

The package requires `rubikcube.sty`. However `rubikcube.sty` is not automatically loaded (for the moment at least) since this makes it difficult to errorcheck new versions.

```
6 \@ifpackageloaded{rubikcube}{}{%
7   \typeout{---rubikrotation requires the rubikcube package.}%
8   }%
```

The RUBIKROTATION package requires access to the `fancyvrb` package for the `\VerbatimInput{}` command which we use for inputting and displaying the error file (see Section 10.10).

```
9 \@ifpackageloaded{fancyvrb}{}{%
10  \typeout{---rubikrotation requires the fancyvrb package%
11    for VerbatimInput{ } command.}%
12  \RequirePackage{fancyvrb}}
```

For the `\write18` syntax to work with Lua $\TeX$  (so we can access system commands) we require the recent `shellesc` package, which we load using the `ifluatex` conditional (see Section 4.1).

```
13 \@ifpackageloaded{ifluatex}{}{%
14  \typeout{---rubikrotation requires the ifluatex package.}%
15  \RequirePackage{ifluatex}}
16 \ifluatex%
17  \@ifpackageloaded{shellesc}{}{%
18  \typeout{---rubikrotation requires the shellesc package
19    to run using Lua\LaTeX.}%
20  \RequirePackage{shellesc}}
21 \fi%
```

## 10.2 Some useful commands

`\rubikrotation` First we create a suitable logo

```
22 \newcommand{\rubikrotation}{\textsc{rubikrotation}}
23 \newcommand{\Rubikrotation}{\textsc{Rubikrotation}}
```

`\@print` We need a simple print command to facilitate writing output to a file.

```
24 \newcommand{\@print}[1]{\immediate\write\outfile{#1}}
```

`\@comment` We also require access to the ‘%’ character so we can (a) write comments to files, including the log file, and (b) place a trailing ‘%’ in a line of code written to a file.

`\@commentone`

To achieve this we define the ‘%’ character as `\rubikpercentchar` (modified from: Abrahams PW, Berry K and Hargreaves KA (1990), p 292) [see refs Section 8], and also two ‘comment’ commands which implement it. This ‘workaround’ is necessary because  $\TeX$  does not allow the use of the `\%` command for placing a ‘%’ character in the token list of `\write`. See Abrahams *et. al* (1990) for details.

```
25 {\catcode'\%=12 \global\def\rubikpercentchar{}}%
26 \newcommand{\@comment}{\rubikpercentchar\rubikpercentchar\space}%
27 \newcommand{\@commentone}{\rubikpercentchar}%
```

`\rubikperlname` This holds the name of the Perl script. A configuration-file (`rubikrotation.cfg`) can be used to change the default name of the Perl script using a `renewcommand` (see Section 4.2).

```
28 \newcommand{\rubikperlname}{rubikrotation}
```

Note that here we are assuming that the script is an executable file.

`\rubikperlcmd` This holds the command-line code for calling the Perl script. Note that the command-line requires a mandatory input filename preceded by the `-i` switch. An optional output filename (preceded by the `-o` switch) may be used, otherwise the default output filename of `rubik-OUT.dat` will be used.

Note that it is very important that we do actually specify an output filename (for receiving data from the Perl script). This is because (a) The Perl script `rubikrotation.pl` is currently configured to read its output filename as an argument from the command-line (so it can be flexibly used as a stand-alone script for processing a given Rubik state through a sequence of rotations), and (b) `rubikrotation.sty` is currently configured to read its input (i.e., data generated by the Perl script) from the file `rubikstateNEW.dat`.

```
29 \newcommand{\rubikperlcmd}{\rubikperlname\space%
30 -i rubikstate.dat -o rubikstateNEW.dat}
```

Remember to use the `\space` macro following the `\rubikperlname` macro in order to generate the mandatory space before the first command-line argument.

A plain-text configuration-file `rubikrotation.cfg` can be used to change the default command-line code using a `renewcommand` (see Section 4.2).

### 10.3 Configuration file

If a configuration file exists (`rubikrotation.cfg`) then input it here, i.e., *after* defining the `\rubikperlname` and `\rubikperlcmd` macros and *before* creating the `rubikstateERRORS.dat` file.

```
31 \typeout{---checking for config file (rubikrotation.cfg)...}
32 \IfFileExists{rubikrotation.cfg}{%
33 \input{rubikrotation.cfg}%
34 }{\typeout{---no config file available}%
35 }
```

### 10.4 Clean file `rubikstateNEW.dat`

We need to clean out any existing (old) `rubikstateNEW.dat` file, since if the TeX shell command-line switch is accidentally not used then the Perl script `rubikrotation.pl` will not be CALLED, and hence this file will not be renewed (i.e., an ‘old’ image may be used).

```
36 \typeout{---cleaning file rubikstateNEW.dat}%
37 \newwrite\outfile%
38 \immediate\openout\outfile=rubikstateNEW.dat%
39 \@print{\@comment rubikstateNEW.dat}%
40 \immediate\closeout\outfile%
```

## 10.5 rubikstateERRORS.dat

We first open the file `rubikstateERRORS.dat` which is used by the Perl script `rubikrotation.pl` for writing its error-messages to. This file is displayed by the command `\ShowRubikErrors`.

IMPORTANT NOTE: this file is created fresh each time LaTeX is run, and hence the Perl script only appends data to it during the L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X run, so this file just grows until either it is destroyed or recreated—this is a useful feature since the file accumulates all error messages as the `.tex` file is processed. We can't make the Perl script create the file since the Perl script is only CALLED if we use a `\RubikRotation` or `\CheckRubikState` command (which we may not!)—so it has to be created here.

```
41 \typeout{---creating file rubikstateERRORS.dat}%
42 \newwrite\outfile%
43 \immediate\openout\outfile=rubikstateERRORS.dat%
44 \@print{\@comment rubikstateERRORS.dat}%
45 \@print{\@comment -----}%
46 \immediate\closeout\outfile%
```

## 10.6 Setting up file-access for new files

Having set up all the primary files, we now need to set up a newwrite for all subsequent file openings (e.g., for `rubikstate.dat` and saving to arbitrary filenames by the `\SaveRubikState` command). Otherwise, we can easily exceed the LaTeX limit of 15. From here-on T<sub>E</sub>X will use `openout7` when opening and writing to files. We will implement new openings using the command `\@openstatefile` (see below).

```
47 \typeout{---setting up newwrite for rubikrotation.sty to use...}%
48 \newwrite\outfile%
```

`\@openstatefile` We also need commands for easy file opening and closing for new instances of the  
`\@closestatefile` file `rubikstate.dat` etc. Note that for this we are therefore using the same outfile number as set up by the `\newwrite...` above.

```
49 \newcommand{\@openstatefile}{\immediate\openout\outfile=rubikstate.dat}
50 \newcommand{\@closestatefile}{\immediate\closeout\outfile}
```

## 10.7 Saving the Rubik state

`\@printrubikstate` This internal command writes the Rubik configuration to the file `rubikstate.dat`, and is used by the `\RubikRotation` command (see Sections 5.2 and 7). The file `rubikstate.dat` is read by the Perl script, and represents the state on which the new `\RubikRotation` command acts. Note that we append the key-word `checkstate` to the end of the file in order to trigger the Perl script to implement its `checkstate` subroutine.

The actual state is simply an ordered sequence of the faces and the colours associated with each facelet of a face. The colour associated with a particular facelet is held by the variable for that facelet. For example, the top-left facelet

associated with the FRONT face is held in the variable `\Flt` (see Section 5.2). Further relevant documentation is in the RUBIKCUBE package.

```

51 \newcommand{\@printrubikstate}{%
52   \@print{up, \Ult, \Umt, \Urt, \Ulm, \Umm, \Urm, \Ulb, \Umb, \Urb}%
53   \@print{down, \Dlt, \Dmt, \Drt, \Dlm, \Dmm, \Drm, \Dlb, \Dmb, \Drb}%
54   \@print{left, \Llt, \Lmt, \Lrt, \Llm, \Lmm, \Lrm, \Llb, \Lmb, \Lrb}%
55   \@print{right, \Rlt, \Rmt, \Rrt, \Rlm, \Rmm, \Rrm, \Rlb, \Rmb, \Rrb}%
56   \@print{front, \Flt, \Fmt, \Frt, \Flm, \Fmm, \Frm, \Flb, \Fmb, \Frb}%
57   \@print{back, \Blt, \Bmt, \Brt, \Blm, \Bmm, \Brm, \Blb, \Bmb, \Brb}%
58   \@print{checkstate}%
59 }

```

## 10.8 SaveRubikState command

`\SaveRubikState` The command `\SaveRubikState{filename}` saves the Rubik state to a named file in the format of a Rubik command (so it can then be processed by L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X). Note that in order to actually write a LaTeX command to a file without a trailing space one must prefix the command with the `\string` command (see Eijkhout (1992), p 238) [see refs Section 8].

Note that this macro uses the internal commands `\@comment` (`'%'`), `\@commentone` (`'%'`) and `\@print`. `#1` is the output filename. We use several `\typeout` commands to write to the log file. An example of the line of code we are trying to output to the `rubikstateNEW.dat` file is as follows:

```

\RubikFaceUp{W}{W}{G}{W}{W}{G}{B}{B}{Y}%
60 \newcommand{\SaveRubikState}[1]{%
61 \typeout{---NEW save command-----}%
62 \typeout{---command = SaveRubikState{#1}}%
63 \typeout{---saving Rubik state data to file #1}%
64 \immediate\openout\outfile=#1%
65 \@print{\@comment filename: #1\@commentone}%
66 \@print{\string\RubikFaceUp%
67   {\Ult}{\Umt}{\Urt}{\Ulm}{\Umm}{\Urm}{\Ulb}{\Umb}{\Urb}\@commentone}%
68 \@print{\string\RubikFaceDown%
69   {\Dlt}{\Dmt}{\Drt}{\Dlm}{\Dmm}{\Drm}{\Dlb}{\Dmb}{\Drb}\@commentone}%
70 \@print{\string\RubikFaceLeft%
71   {\Llt}{\Lmt}{\Lrt}{\Llm}{\Lmm}{\Lrm}{\Llb}{\Lmb}{\Lrb}\@commentone}%
72 \@print{\string\RubikFaceRight%
73   {\Rlt}{\Rmt}{\Rrt}{\Rlm}{\Rmm}{\Rrm}{\Rlb}{\Rmb}{\Rrb}\@commentone}%
74 \@print{\string\RubikFaceFront%
75   {\Flt}{\Fmt}{\Frt}{\Flm}{\Fmm}{\Frm}{\Flb}{\Fmb}{\Frb}\@commentone}%
76 \@print{\string\RubikFaceBack%
77   {\Blt}{\Bmt}{\Brt}{\Blm}{\Bmm}{\Brm}{\Blb}{\Bmb}{\Brb}\@commentone}%
78 \immediate\closeout\outfile%
79 \typeout{-----}%
80 }%

```

## 10.9 RubikRotation command

`\RubikRotation` The `\RubikRotation` [*integer*] {*comma separated sequence*} command (a) writes the current Rubik state to the file `rubikstate.dat`, (b) writes the rotation sequence (either once or multiple times depending on the value of the optional integer argument), and then (c) CALLs the Perl script `rubikrotation.pl`. It also writes comments to the data file and also to the log file.

The way we allow the user to (optionally) process the main argument multiple times is simply by writing the associated output command multiple times to the output data-file. Consequently, we require the `\RubikRotation` command to allow a square-bracket optional argument (a non-negative integer) to specify the number of such repeats. In order to implement this optional argument facility we use two macros (`countingloop` and `loopcounter`) detailed by Feuersänger (2015) [see refs Section 8], as follows:

```

81 %% Two macros detailed by Feuersaenger (2015)
82 \long\def\@countingloop#1 in #2:#3#4{%
83   #1=#2 %
84   \@loopcounter{#1}{#3}{#4}%
85 }
86 %%-----
87 \long\def\@loopcounter#1#2#3{%
88   #3%
89   \ifnum#1=#2 %
90     \let\next=\relax%
91   \else
92     \advance#1 by1 %
93     \def\next{\@loopcounter{#1}{#2}{#3}}%
94   \fi
95   \next
96 }

```

Having defined the above two macros we can now implement an optional argument (a repeat number) indicating the number of times we want the command to write the main argument to the output data file.

```

97 \newcommand{\RubikRotation}[2][1]{%
98   \typeout{---TeX process (rubikrotation.sty)-----}%
99   \typeout{---NEW rotation command-----}%
100  \typeout{---command = RubikRotation[#1]{#2}}%
101  \typeout{---writing current Rubik state to file rubikstate.dat}%
102  \@openstatefile% open data file
103  \@print{\@comment filename: rubikstate.dat}%
104  \@print{\@comment written by rubikrotation.sty%
105           =v\RRfileversion\space (\RRfiledate)}%
106  \@printrubikstate%
107 %% countingloop code from Feuersaenger (2015)
108  \newcount\ourRRcounter%
109  \@countingloop{\ourRRcounter} in 1:{#1}{%
110    \immediate\write\outfile{rotation,#2}}%
111  \@closestatefile% close data file

```

```

112 \typeout{---CALLing Perl script (rubikrotation.pl)}%
113 \immediate\write18{\rubikperlcmd}%
114 \typeout{---inputting NEW datafile (data written by Perl script)}%
115 \input{rubikstateNEW.dat}%
116 \typeout{-----}%
117 }

```

Note that the new `\ShellEscape` command implemented by the recent `shellesc` package is equivalent to `\immediate\write18` (see above), and so we probably ought to use `\ShellEscape` instead in future (and hence load `shellesc` automatically). At present, however, we leave the user to make sure that the `shellesc` package is actually available on their system.

## 10.10 ShowRubikErrors command

`\ShowRubikErrors` This command inputs the file `rubikstateERRORS.dat`. Also made a more convenient synonym = `\ShowErrors`.

```

118 \newcommand{\ShowRubikErrors}{%
119 \typeout{---ShowRubikErrors: inputting file rubikstateERRORS.dat}%
120 \VerbatimInput{rubikstateERRORS.dat}%
121 }
122 \newcommand{\ShowErrors}{\ShowRubikErrors}

```

## 10.11 CheckRubikState command

`\CheckRubikState` This command triggers the Perl script to implement some simple error checking of the Rubik configuration (state). This command (a) writes the current Rubik state to the file `rubikstate.dat`, and then (b) CALLs the Perl script. It also writes comments to the data file and also to the log file..

```

123 \newcommand{\CheckRubikState}{%
124 \typeout{---NEW check command-----}%
125 \typeout{---command = CheckRubikState}%
126 \typeout{---writing current Rubik state to file rubikstate.dat}%
127 \@openstatefile% opens data file
128 \@print{\@comment filename: rubikstate.dat}%
129 \@printrubikstate%
130 \@closestatefile% close data file
131 \typeout{---running Perl script (rubikrotation.pl)}%
132 \immediate\write18{\rubikperlcmd}%
133 \typeout{---inputting NEW datafile (data written by Perl script)}%
134 \input{rubikstateNEW.dat}%
135 \typeout{-----}%
136 }

```

————— End of this package —————

```

137 </rubikrotation>

```



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