expkv

an expandable ⟨key⟩=⟨value⟩ implementation

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Abstract

expkv provides a small interface for ⟨key⟩=⟨value⟩ parsing. The parsing macro is *fully expandable*, the ⟨code⟩ of your keys might be not. expkv is *swift*, close to the fastest ⟨key⟩=⟨value⟩ implementation. However it is the fastest which copes with active commas and equal signs and doesn't strip braces accidentally.

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1 Documentation

expkv provides an expandable ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ parser. The ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ pairs should be given as a comma separated list and the separator between a ⟨*key*⟩ and the associated ⟨*value*⟩ should be an equal sign. Both, the commas and the equal signs, might be of category 12 (other) or 13 (active). To support this is necessary as for example babel turns characters active for some languages, for instance the equal sign is turned active for Turkish.

expkv is usable as generic code or as a LaTeX package. To use it, just use one of:

```
\usepackage{expkv} % LaTeX
\input expkv       % plainTeX
```

The LaTeX package doesn't do more than `expkv.tex`, except calling `\ProvidesPackage` and setting things up such that `expkv.tex` will use `\ProvidesFile`.

In the **expkv** family are other packages contained which provide additional functionality. Those packages currently are:

expkv|def a key-defining frontend for **expkv** using a ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ syntax

expkv|cs define expandable ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ macros using **expkv**

expkv|opt parse package and class options with **expkv**

Note that while the package names are stylised with a vertical rule, their names are all lower case with a hyphen (*e.g.*, `expkv-def`).

1.1 Setting up Keys

expkv provides a rather simple approach to setting up keys, similar to keyval. However there is an auxiliary package named **expkv|def** which provides a more sophisticated interface, similar to well established packages like pgfkeys or l3keys.

Keys in **expkv** (as in almost all other ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ implementations) belong to a *set* such that different sets can contain keys of the same name. Unlike many other implementations **expkv** doesn't provide means to set a default value, instead we have keys that take values and keys that don't (the latter are called `NoVal` keys by **expkv**), but both can have the same name (on the user level).

The following macros are available to define new keys. Those macros containing "`def`" in their name can be prefixed by anything allowed to prefix `\def` (but *don't* use `\outer`, keys defined with it won't ever be usable), prefixes allowed for `\let` can prefix those with "`let`" in their name, accordingly. Neither ⟨*set*⟩ nor ⟨*key*⟩ are allowed to be empty for new keys. ⟨*set*⟩ will be used as is inside of `\csname ...\endcsname` and ⟨*key*⟩ will get `\detokenized`.

`\ekvdef` `\ekvdef{`⟨*set*⟩`}{`⟨*key*⟩`}{`⟨*code*⟩`}`

Defines a ⟨*key*⟩ taking a value in a ⟨*set*⟩ to expand to ⟨*code*⟩. In ⟨*code*⟩ you can use `#1` to refer to the given value.

`\ekvdefNoVal` `\ekvdefNoVal{`⟨*set*⟩`}{`⟨*key*⟩`}{`⟨*code*⟩`}`

Defines a no value taking ⟨*key*⟩ in a ⟨*set*⟩ to expand to ⟨*code*⟩.

\ekvlet `\ekvlet{⟨set⟩}{⟨key⟩}⟨cs⟩`

Let the value taking ⟨key⟩ in ⟨set⟩ to ⟨cs⟩, there are no checks on ⟨cs⟩ enforced.

\ekvletNoVal `\ekvletNoVal{⟨set⟩}{⟨key⟩}⟨cs⟩`

Let the no value taking ⟨key⟩ in ⟨set⟩ to ⟨cs⟩, it is not checked whether ⟨cs⟩ exists or that it takes no parameter.

\ekvletkv `\ekvletkv{⟨set⟩}{⟨key⟩}{⟨set2⟩}{⟨key2⟩}`

Let the ⟨key⟩ in ⟨set⟩ to ⟨key2⟩ in ⟨set2⟩, it is not checked whether that second key exists (but take a look at \ekvifdefined).

\ekvletkvNoVal `\ekvletkvNoVal{⟨set⟩}{⟨key⟩}{⟨set2⟩}{⟨key2⟩}`

Let the ⟨key⟩ in ⟨set⟩ to ⟨key2⟩ in ⟨set2⟩, it is not checked whether that second key exists (but take a look at \ekvifdefinedNoVal).

\ekvdefunknown `\ekvdefunknown{⟨set⟩}{⟨code⟩}`

By default an error will be thrown if an unknown ⟨key⟩ is encountered. With this macro you can define ⟨code⟩ that will be executed for a given ⟨set⟩ when an unknown ⟨key⟩ with a ⟨value⟩ was encountered instead of throwing an error. You can refer to the given ⟨value⟩ with #1 and to the unknown ⟨key⟩'s name with #2 in ⟨code⟩.[1]

\ekvdefunknownNoVal `\ekvdefunknownNoVal{⟨set⟩}{⟨code⟩}`

As already explained for \ekvdefunknown, expkv would throw an error when encountering an unknown ⟨key⟩. With this you can instead let it execute ⟨code⟩ if an unknown NoVal ⟨key⟩ was encountered. You can refer to the given ⟨key⟩ with #1 in ⟨code⟩.

1.2 Parsing Keys

\ekvset `\ekvset{⟨set⟩}{⟨key⟩=⟨value⟩,...}`

Splits ⟨key⟩=⟨value⟩ pairs on commas. From both ⟨key⟩ and ⟨value⟩ up to one space is stripped from both ends, if then only a braced group remains the braces are stripped as well. So \ekvset{foo}{bar=baz} and \ekvset{foo}{ {bar}= {baz} } will both do \⟨foobarcode⟩{baz}, so you can hide commas, equal signs and spaces at the ends of either ⟨key⟩ or ⟨value⟩ by putting braces around them. If you omit the equal sign the code of the key created with the NoVal variants described in subsection 1.1 will be executed. If ⟨key⟩=⟨value⟩ contains more than a single unhidden equal sign, it will be split at the first one and the others are considered part of the value. \ekvset should be nestable.

\ekvsetSneaked `\ekvsetSneaked{⟨set⟩}{⟨sneak⟩}{⟨key⟩=⟨value⟩,...}`

Just like \ekvset, this macro parses the ⟨key⟩=⟨value⟩ pairs within the given ⟨set⟩. But \ekvsetSneaked will behave as if \ekvsneak has been called with ⟨sneak⟩ as its argument as the first action.

[1] That order is correct, this way the code is faster.

\ekvsetdef `\ekvsetdef⟨cs⟩{⟨set⟩}`

With this function you can define a shorthand macro ⟨*cs*⟩ to parse keys of a specified ⟨*set*⟩. It is always defined `\long`, but if you need to you can also prefix it with `\global`. The resulting macro is faster than but else equivalent to the idiomatic definition:

```
\long\def⟨cs⟩#1{\ekvset{⟨set⟩}{#1}}
```

\ekvsetSneakeddef `\ekvsetSneakeddef⟨cs⟩{⟨set⟩}`

Just like `\ekvsetdef` this defines a shorthand macro ⟨*cs*⟩, but this macro will make it a shorthand for `\ekvsetSneaked`, meaning that ⟨*cs*⟩ will take two arguments, the first being stuff that should be given to `\ekvsneak` and the second the ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ list. The resulting macro is faster than but else equivalent to the idiomatic definition:

```
\long\def⟨cs⟩#1#2{\ekvsetSneaked{⟨set⟩}{#1}{#2}}
```

\ekvsetdefSneaked `\ekvsetSneakeddef⟨cs⟩{⟨set⟩}{⟨sneaked⟩}`

And this one behaves like `\ekvsetSneakeddef` but with a fixed ⟨*sneaked*⟩ argument. So the resulting macro is faster than but else equivalent to the idiomatic definition:

```
\long\def⟨cs⟩#1{\ekvsetSneaked{⟨set⟩}{⟨sneaked⟩}{#1}}
```

\ekvparse `\ekvparse⟨cs1⟩⟨cs2⟩{⟨key⟩=⟨value⟩,...}`

This macro parses the ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ pairs and provides those list elements which are only keys as the argument to ⟨*cs1*⟩, and those which are a ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ pair to ⟨*cs2*⟩ as two arguments. It is fully expandable as well and returns the parsed list in `\unexpanded`, which has no effect outside of an `\expanded` or `\edef` context[2]. If you need control over the necessary steps of expansion you can use `\expanded` around it.

`\ekvbreak`, `\ekvsneak`, and `\ekvchangeset` and their relatives don't work in `\ekvparse`. It is analogue to expl3's `\keyval_parse:NNn`, but not with the same parsing rules – `\keyval_parse:NNn` throws an error on multiple equal signs per ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ pair and on empty ⟨*key*⟩ names in a ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ pair, both of which `\ekvparse` doesn't deal with.

As a small example:

```
\ekvparse\handlekey\handlekeyval{foo = bar, key, baz={zzz}}
```

would expand to

```
\handlekeyval{foo}{bar}\handlekey{key}\handlekeyval{baz}{zzz}
```

and afterwards `\handlekey` and `\handlekeyval` would have to further handle the ⟨*key*⟩. There are no macros like these two contained in expkv, you have to set them up yourself if you want to use `\ekvparse` (of course the names might differ). If you need the results of `\ekvparse` as the argument for another macro, you should use `\expanded` as only then the input stream will contain the output above:

```
\expandafter\handle\expanded{\ekvparse\k\kv{foo = bar, key, baz={zzz}}}
```

would expand to

```
\handle\kv{foo}{bar}\k{key}\kv{baz}{zzz}
```

[2] This is a change in behaviour, previously (v0.3 and before) `\ekvparse` would expand in exactly two steps. This isn't always necessary, but makes the parsing considerably slower. If this is necessary for your application you can put an `\expanded` around it and will still be faster since you need only a single `\expandafter` this way.

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1.3 Miscellaneous

1.3.1 Other Macros

expkv provides some other macros which might be of interest.

`\ekvVersion` `\ekvDate`

These two macros store the version and date of the package.

`\ekvifdefined` `\ekvifdefinedNoVal`

```
\ekvifdefined{⟨set⟩}{⟨key⟩}{⟨true⟩}{⟨false⟩}
\ekvifdefinedNoVal{⟨set⟩}{⟨key⟩}{⟨true⟩}{⟨false⟩}
```

These two macros test whether there is a ⟨*key*⟩ in ⟨*set*⟩. It is false if either a hash table entry doesn't exist for that key or its meaning is `\relax`.

`\ekvifdefinedset`

```
\ekvifdefinedset{⟨set⟩}{⟨true⟩}{⟨false⟩}
```

This macro tests whether ⟨*set*⟩ is defined (which it is if at least one key was defined for it). If it is ⟨*true*⟩ will be run, else ⟨*false*⟩.

`\ekvbreak` `\ekvbreakPreSneak` `\ekvbreakPostSneak`

```
\ekvbreak{⟨after⟩}
```

Gobbles the remainder of the current `\ekvset` macro and its argument list and reinserts ⟨*after*⟩. So this can be used to break out of `\ekvset`. The first variant will also gobble anything that has been sneaked out using `\ekvsneak` or `\ekvsneakPre`, while `\ekvbreakPreSneak` will put ⟨*after*⟩ before anything that has been smuggled and `\ekvbreakPostSneak` will put ⟨*after*⟩ after the stuff that has been sneaked out.

`\ekvsneak` `\ekvsneakPre`

```
\ekvsneak{⟨after⟩}
```

Puts ⟨*after*⟩ after the effects of `\ekvset`. The first variant will put ⟨*after*⟩ after any other tokens which might have been sneaked before, while `\ekvsneakPre` will put ⟨*after*⟩ before other smuggled stuff. This reads and reinserts the remainder of the current `\ekvset` macro and its argument list to do its job. After `\ekvset` has parsed the entire ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ list everything that has been `\ekvsneaked` will be left in the input stream. A small usage example is shown in subsubsection 1.4.2.

`\ekvchangeset`

```
\ekvchangeset{⟨new-set⟩}
```

Replaces the current set with ⟨*new-set*⟩, so for the rest of the current `\ekvset` call, that call behaves as if it was called with `\ekvset{`⟨*new-set*⟩`}`. Just like `\ekvsneak` this reads and reinserts the remainder of the current `\ekvset` macro to do its job. It is comparable to using ⟨*key*⟩`/.cd` in pgfkeys.

\ekv@name	\ekv@name{⟨*set*⟩}{⟨*key*⟩}
\ekv@name@set	\ekv@name@set{⟨*set*⟩}
\ekv@name@key	\ekv@name@key{⟨*key*⟩}

The names of the macros that correspond to a key in a set are build with these macros. The name is built from two blocks, one that is formatting the ⟨*set*⟩ name (\ekv@name@set) and one for formatting the ⟨*key*⟩ name (\ekv@name@key). To get the actual name the argument to \ekv@name@key must be \detokenized. Both blocks are put together (with the necessary \detokenize) by \ekv@name. For NoVal keys an additional N gets appended irrespective of these macros' definition, so their name is \ekv@name{⟨*set*⟩}{⟨*key*⟩}N.

You can use these macros to implement additional functionality or access key macros outside of **expkv**, but *don't* change them! **expkv** relies on their exact definitions internally.

1.3.2 Bugs

Just like keyval, **expkv** is bug free. But if you find ~~bugs~~hidden features[3] you can tell me about them either via mail (see the first page) or directly on GitHub if you have an account there: https://github.com/Skillmon/tex_expkv

1.3.3 Comparisons

Comparisons of speed are done with a very simple test key and the help of the l3benchmark package. The key and its usage should be equivalent to

```
\protected\ekvdef{test}{height}{\def\myheight{#1}}
\ekvsetdef\expkvtest{test}
\expkvtest{ height = 6 }
```

and only the usage of the key, not its definition, is benchmarked. For the impatient, the essence of these comparisons regarding speed and buggy behaviour is contained in Table 1.

As far as I know **expkv** is the only fully expandable ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ parser. I tried to compare **expkv** to every ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ package listed on CTAN, however, one might notice that some of those are missing from this list. That's because I didn't get the others to work due to bugs, or because they just provide wrappers around other packages in this list.

In this subsubsection is no benchmark of \ekvparse and \keyval_parse:NNn contained, as most other packages don't provide equivalent features to my knowledge. \ekvparse is slightly faster than \ekvset, but keep in mind that it does less. The same is true for \keyval_parse:NNn compared to \keys_set:nn of expl3 (where the difference is much bigger). Comparing just the two, \ekvparse is a tad faster than \keyval_parse:NNn because of the two tests (for empty key names and only a single equal sign) which are omitted.

keyval is about 30 % to 40 % faster and has a comparable feature set just a slightly different way how it handles keys without values. That might be considered a drawback, as it limits the versatility, but also as an advantage, as it might reduce doubled code. Keep in mind that as soon as someone loads xkeyval the performance of keyval gets replaced by xkeyval's.

[3] Thanks, David!

Also keyval has a bug, which unfortunately can't really be resolved without breaking backwards compatibility for *many* documents, namely it strips braces from the argument before stripping spaces if the argument isn't surrounded by spaces, also it might strip more than one set of braces. Hence all of the following are equivalent in their outcome, though the last two lines should result in something different than the first two:

```
\setkeys{foo}{bar=baz}
\setkeys{foo}{bar= {baz}}
\setkeys{foo}{bar={ baz}}  % should be ' baz'
\setkeys{foo}{bar={{baz}}} % should be '{baz}'
```

xkeyval is roughly twenty times slower, but it provides more functionality, e.g., it has choice keys, boolean keys, and so on. It contains the same bug as keyval as it has to be compatible with it by design (it replaces keyval's frontend), but also adds even more cases in which braces are stripped that shouldn't be stripped, worsening the situation.

ltxkeys is no longer compatible with the LaTeX kernel starting with the release 2020-10-01. It is over 380 times slower – which is funny, because it aims to be "[...] faster [...] than these earlier packages [referring to keyval and xkeyval]." It needs more time to parse zero keys than five of the packages in this comparison need to parse 100 keys. Since it aims to have a bigger feature set than xkeyval, it most definitely also has a bigger feature set than **expkv**. Also, it can't parse `\long` input, so as soon as your values contain a `\par`, it'll throw errors. Furthermore, ltxkeys doesn't strip outer braces at all by design, which, imho, is a weird design choice. In addition ltxkeys loads catoptions which is known to introduce bugs (e.g., see https://tex.stackexchange.com/questions/461783). Because it is no longer compatible with the kernel, I stop benchmarking it (so the numbers listed here and in Table 1 regarding ltxkeys were last updated on 2020-10-05).

l3keys is around four and a half times slower, but has an, imho, great interface to define keys. It strips *all* outer spaces, even if somehow multiple spaces ended up on either end. It offers more features, but is pretty much bound to expl3 code. Whether that's a drawback is up to you.

pgfkeys is around 2.7 times slower for one key if one uses the `/⟨path⟩/.cd` syntax and almost 20 % slower if one uses `\pgfqkeys`, but has an *enormous* feature set. To get the best performance `\pgfqkeys` was used in the benchmark. This reduces the overhead for setting the base directory of the benchmark keys by about 43 ops (so both p_0 and T_0 would be about 43 ops bigger if `\pgfkeys{⟨path⟩/.cd,⟨keys⟩}` was used instead). It has the same or a very similar bug keyval has. The brace bug (and also the category fragility) can be fixed by pgfkeyx, but this package was last updated in 2012 and it slows down `\pgfkeys` by factor 8. Also pgfkeyx is no longer compatible with versions of pgfkeys newer than 2020-05-25.

kvsetkeys with kvdefinekeys is about 4.4 times slower, but it works even if commas and equals have category codes different from 12 (just as some other packages in this list). Else the features of the keys are equal to those of keyval, the parser has more features, though.

options is 1.7 times slower for only a single value. It has a much bigger feature set. Unfortunately it also suffers from the premature unbracing bug keyval has.

simplekv is hard to compare because I don't speak French (so I don't understand the documentation). There was an update released on 2020-04-27 which greatly improved the package's performance and adds functionality so that it can be used more like most of the other ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ packages. It has problems with stripping braces and spaces in a hard to predict manner just like keyval. Also, while it tries to be robust against category code changes of commas and equal signs, the used mechanism fails if the ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ list already got tokenised. Regarding unknown keys it got a very interesting behaviour. It doesn't throw an error, but stores the ⟨*value*⟩ in a new entry accessible with `\useKV`. Also if you omit ⟨*value*⟩ it stores `true` for that ⟨*key*⟩. For up to three keys, **expkv** is a bit faster, for more keys simplekv takes the lead.

yax is over twenty times slower. It has a pretty strange syntax, imho, and again a direct equivalent is hard to define. It has the premature unbracing bug, too. Also somehow loading yax broke options for me. The tested definition was:

```
\usepackage{yax}
\defactiveparameter yax {\storevalue\myheight yax:height } % key setup
\setparameterlist{yax}{ height = 6 }                       % benchmarked
```

1.4 Examples

1.4.1 Standard Use-Case

Say we have a macro for which we want to create a ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ interface. The macro has a parameter, which is stored in the dimension `\ourdim` having a default value from its initialisation. Now we want to be able to change that dimension with the `width` key to some specified value. For that we'd do

```
\newdimen\ourdim
\ourdim=150pt
\protected\ekvdef{our}{width}{\ourdim=#1\relax}
```

as you can see, we use the set `our` here. We want the key to behave different if no value is specified. In that case the key should not use its initial value, but be smart and determine the available space from `\hsize`, so we also define

```
\protected\ekvdefNoVal{our}{width}{\ourdim=.9\hsize}
```

Now we set up our macro to use this ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ interface

```
\protected\def\ourmacro#1{\begingroup\ekvset{our}{#1}\the\ourdim\endgroup}
```

Finally we can use our macro like in the following

```
\ourmacro{}\par                 150.0pt
\ourmacro{width}\par            192.85382pt
\ourmacro{width=5pt}\par        5.0pt
```

Table 1: Comparison of ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ packages. The packages are ordered from fastest to slowest for one ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ pair. Benchmarking was done using l3benchmark and the scripts in the `Benchmarks` folder of the git repository. The columns p_i are the polynomial coefficients of a linear fit to the run-time, p_0 can be interpreted as the overhead for initialisation and p_1 the cost per key. The T_0 column is the actual mean ops needed for an empty list argument, as the linear fit doesn't match that point well in general. The column "BB" lists whether the parsing is affected by some sort of brace bug, "CF" stands for category code fragile and lists whether the parsing breaks with active commas or equal signs.

Package	p_1	p_0	T_0	BB	CF	Date
keyval	13.7	1.5	7.3	yes	yes	2014-10-28
expkv	19.7	2.2	6.6	no	no	2020-10-10
simplekv	18.3	7.0	17.7	yes	yes	2020-04-27
pgfkeys	24.3	1.7	10.7	yes	yes	2020-09-05
options	23.6	15.6	20.8	yes	yes	2015-03-01
kvsetkeys	*	*	40.3	no	no	2019-12-15
l3keys	71.3	33.1	31.6	no	no	2020-09-24
xkeyval	253.6	202.2	168.3	yes	yes	2014-12-03
yax	421.9	157.0	114.7	yes	yes	2010-01-22
ltxkeys	3400.1	4738.0	5368.0	no	no	2012-11-17

*For kvsetkeys the linear model used for the other packages is a poor fit, kvsetkeys seems to have approximately quadratic run-time, the coefficients of the second degree polynomial fit are $p_2 = 8.2$, $p_1 = 44.9$, and $p_0 = 60.8$. Of course the other packages might not really have linear run-time, but at least from 1 to 20 keys the fits don't seem too bad. If one extrapolates the fits for 100 ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ pairs one finds that most of them match pretty well, the exception being ltxkeys, which behaves quadratic as well with $p_2 = 23.5$, $p_1 = 2906.6$, and $p_0 = 6547.5$.

The same key using expkv|def Using expkv|def we can set up the equivalent key using a ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ interface, after the following we could use `\ourmacro` in the same way as above. expkv|def will allocate and initialise `\ourdim` and define the `width` key `\protected` for us, so the result will be exactly the same – with the exception that the default will use `\ourdim=.9\hsize\relax` instead.

```
\input expkv-def                    % or \usepackage{expkv-def}
\ekvdefinekeys{our}
  {
    dimen     width = \ourdim,
    qdefault  width = .9\hsize,
    initial   width = 150pt
  }
```

1.4.2 An Expandable ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ Macro Using `\ekvsneak`

Let's set up an expandable macro, that uses a ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ interface. The problems we'll face for this are:

1. ignoring duplicate keys
2. default values for keys which weren't used
3. providing the values as the correct argument to a macro (ordered)

First we need to decide which ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ parsing macro we want to do this with, `\ekvset` or `\ekvparse`. For this example we also want to show the usage of `\ekvsneak`, hence we'll choose `\ekvset`. And we'll have to use `\ekvset` such that it builds a parsable list for our macro internals. To gain back control after `\ekvset` is done we have to put an internal of our macro at the start of that list, so we use an internal key that uses `\ekvsneakPre` after any user input.

To ignore duplicates will be easy if the value of the key used last will be put first in the list, so the following will use `\ekvsneakPre` for the user-level keys. If we wanted some key for which the first usage should be the binding one we would use `\ekvsneak` instead for that key.

Providing default values can be done in different ways, we'll use a simple approach in which we'll just put the outcome of our keys if they were used with default values before the parsing list terminator.

Ordering the keys can be done simply by searching for a specific token for each argument which acts like a flag, so our sneaked out values will include specific tokens acting as markers.

Now that we have answers for our technical problems, we have to decide what our example macro should do. How about we define a macro that calculates the sine of a number and rounds that to a specified precision? As a small extra this macro should understand input in radian and degree and the used trigonometric function should be selectable as well. For the hard part of this task (expandably evaluating trigonometric functions) we'll use the xfp package.

First we set up our keys according to our earlier considerations and set up the user facing macro `\sine`. The end marker of the parsing list will be a `\sine@stop` token, which we don't need to define and we put our defaults right before it.

```
\RequirePackage{xfp}
\makeatletter
\ekvdef{expex}{f}{\ekvsneakPre{\f{#1}}}
\ekvdef{expex}{round}{\ekvsneakPre{\rnd{#1}}}
\ekvdefNoVal{expex}{degree}{\ekvsneakPre{\deg{d}}}
\ekvdefNoVal{expex}{radian}{\ekvsneakPre{\deg{}}}
\ekvdefNoVal{expex}{internal}{\ekvsneakPre{\sine@rnd}}
\newcommand*\sine[2]
  {\ekvset{expex}{#1,internal}\rnd{3}\deg{d}\f{sin}\sine@stop{#2}}
```

For the sake of simplicity we defined the macro `\sine` with two mandatory arguments, the first being the ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ list, the second the argument to the trigonometric function. We could've used xparse's facilities here to define an expandable macro which takes an optional argument instead.

Now we need to define some internal macros to extract the value of each key's last usage (remember that this will be the group after the first special flag-token). For that we use one delimited macro per key.

```
\def\sine@rnd#1\rnd#2#3\sine@stop{\sine@deg#1#3\sine@stop{#2}}
\def\sine@deg#1\deg#2#3\sine@stop{\sine@f#1#3\sine@stop{#2}}
\def\sine@f#1\f#2#3\sine@stop{\sine@final{#2}}
```

After the macros `\sine@rnd`, `\sine@deg`, and `\sine@f` the macro `\sine@final` will see `\sine@final{`⟨*f*⟩`}{`⟨*degree/radian*⟩`}{`⟨*round*⟩`}{`⟨*num*⟩`}`. Now `\sine@final` has to expandably deal with those arguments such that the `\fpeval` macro of xfp gets the correct input. Luckily this is pretty straight forward in this example. In `\fpeval` the trigonometric functions have names such as `sin` or `cos` and the degree taking variants `sind` or `cosd`. And since the `degree` key puts a `d` in `#2` and the `radian` key leaves `#2` empty all we have to do to get the correct function name is stick the two together.

```
\newcommand*\sine@final[4]{\fpeval{round(#1#2(#4),#3)}}
\makeatother
```

Let's test our macro:

```
\sine{}{60}\par                                          0.866
\sine{round=10}{60}\par                                  0.8660254038
\sine{f=cos,radian}{pi}\par                              -1
\edef\myval{\sine{f=tan}{1}}\texttt{\meaning\myval}      macro:->0.017
```

The same macro using expkvics Using expkvics we can set up something equivalent with a bit less code. The implementation chosen in expkvics is more efficient than the example above and way easier to code for the user.

```
\makeatletter
\ekvcSplitAndForward\sine\sine@
  {
    f=sin,
    unit=d,
    round=3,
  }
\ekvcSecondaryKeys\sine
  {
```

```
    nmeta degree={unit=d},
    nmeta radian={unit={}},
  }
\newcommand*\sine@[4]{\fpeval{round(#1#2(#4),#3)}}
\makeatother
```

The resulting macro will behave just like the one previously defined, but will have an additional `unit` key, since in expkv-cs every argument must have a value taking key which defines it.

1.5 Error Messages

expkv should only send messages in case of errors, there are no warnings and no info messages. In this subsection those errors are listed.

1.5.1 Load Time

`expkv.tex` checks whether ε-TeX is available. If it isn't, an error will be thrown using `\errmessage`:

```
! expkv Error: e–TeX required.
```

1.5.2 Defining Keys

If you get any error from expkv while you're trying to define a key, the definition will be aborted and gobbled.

If you try to define a key with an empty set name you'll get:

```
! expkv Error: empty set name not allowed.
```

Similarly, if you try to define a key with an empty key name:

```
! expkv Error: empty key name not allowed.
```

Both of these messages are done in a way that doesn't throw additional errors due to `\global`, `\long`, etc., not being used correctly if you prefixed one of the defining macros.

1.5.3 Using Keys

This subsubsection contains the errors thrown during `\ekvset`. The errors are thrown in an expandable manner by providing an undefined macro. In the following messages <*key*> gets replaced with the problematic key's name, and <*set*> with the corresponding set. If any errors during ⟨`key`⟩=⟨`value`⟩ handling are encountered, the entry in the comma separated list will be omitted after the error is thrown and the next ⟨`key`⟩=⟨`value`⟩ pair will be parsed.

If you're using an undefined key you'll get:

```
! Undefined control sequence.
<argument> \! expkv Error:
                              unknown key ('<key>', set '<set>').
```

If you're using a key for which only a normal version and no `NoVal` version is defined, but don't provide a value, you'll get:

```
! Undefined control sequence.
<argument> \! expkv Error:
                              value required ('<key>', set '<set>').
```

If you're using a key for which only a `NoVal` version and no normal version is defined, but provide a value, you'll get:

```
! Undefined control sequence.
<argument> \! expkv Error:
                              value forbidden ('<key>', set '<set>').
```

If you're using a set for which you never executed one of the defining macros from subsection 1.1 you'll get a low level TEX error, as that isn't actively tested by the parser (and hence will lead to undefined behaviour and not be gracefully ignored). The error will look like

```
! Missing \endcsname inserted.
<to be read again>
                    \! expkv Error: Set '<set>' undefined.
```

1.6 License

2 Implementation

2.1 The LaTeX Package

First we set up the LaTeX package. That one doesn't really do much except \inputting the generic code and identifying itself as a package.

```
\def\ekv@tmp
  {%
    \ProvidesFile{expkv.tex}%
      [\ekvDate\space v\ekvVersion\space an expandable key=val implementation]%
  }
\input{expkv.tex}
\ProvidesPackage{expkv}%
  [\ekvDate\space v\ekvVersion\space an expandable key=val implementation]
```

2.2 The Generic Code

The rest of this implementation will be the generic code.

We make sure that it's only input once:

```
\expandafter\ifx\csname ekvVersion\endcsname\relax
\else
  \expandafter\endinput
\fi
```

Check whether ε-TeX is available – expkv requires ε-TeX.

```
\begingroup\expandafter\expandafter\expandafter\endgroup
\expandafter\ifx\csname numexpr\endcsname\relax
  \errmessage{expkv requires e-TeX}
  \expandafter\endinput
\fi
```

\ekvVersion
\ekvDate

We're on our first input, so lets store the version and date in a macro.

```
\def\ekvVersion{1.5}
\def\ekvDate{2020-10-10}
```

(*End definition for* \ekvVersion *and* \ekvDate*. These functions are documented on page* 5.)

If the LaTeX format is loaded we want to be a good file and report back who we are, for this the package will have defined \ekv@tmp to use \ProvidesFile, else this will expand to a \relax and do no harm.

```
\csname ekv@tmp\endcsname
```

Store the category code of @ to later be able to reset it and change it to 11 for now.

```
\expandafter\chardef\csname ekv@tmp\endcsname=\catcode`\@
\catcode`\@=11
```

\ekv@tmp might later be reused to gobble any prefixes which might be provided to \ekvdef and similar in case the names are invalid, we just temporarily use it here as means to store the current category code of @ to restore it at the end of the file, we never care for the actual definition of it.

\ekv@if@lastnamedcs

If the primitive \lastnamedcs is available, we can be a bit faster than without it. So we test for this and save the test's result in this macro.

```
\begingroup
  \edef\ekv@tmpa{\string \lastnamedcs}
  \edef\ekv@tmpb{\meaning\lastnamedcs}
  \ifx\ekv@tmpa\ekv@tmpb
    \def\ekv@if@lastnamedcs{\long\def\ekv@if@lastnamedcs##1##2{##1}}
  \else
    \def\ekv@if@lastnamedcs{\long\def\ekv@if@lastnamedcs##1##2{##2}}
  \fi
  \expandafter
\endgroup
\ekv@if@lastnamedcs
```

(*End definition for* \ekv@if@lastnamedcs.)

\ekv@empty

Sometimes we have to introduce a token to prevent accidental brace stripping. This token would then need to be removed by \@gobble or similar. Instead we can use \ekv@empty which will just expand to nothing, that is faster than gobbling an argument.

```
\def\ekv@empty{}
```

(*End definition for* \ekv@empty.)

\@gobble
\@firstofone
\@firstoftwo
\@secondoftwo
\ekv@gobbleto@stop
\ekv@fi@gobble
\ekv@fi@firstoftwo
\ekv@fi@secondoftwo
\ekv@gobble@mark
\ekv@gobble@from@mark@to@stop

Since branching tests are often more versatile than \if...\else...\fi constructs, we define helpers that are branching pretty fast. Also here are some other utility functions that just grab some tokens. The ones that are also contained in LaTeX don't use the ekv prefix. Not all of the ones defined here are really needed by **expkv** but are provided because packages like **expkv|def** or **expkv|opt** need them (and I don't want to define them in each package which might need them).

```
\long\def\@gobble#1{}
\long\def\@firstofone#1{#1}
\long\def\@firstoftwo#1#2{#1}
\long\def\@secondoftwo#1#2{#2}
\long\def\ekv@fi@gobble\fi\@firstofone#1{\fi}
\long\def\ekv@fi@firstoftwo\fi\@secondoftwo#1#2{\fi#1}
\long\def\ekv@fi@secondoftwo\fi\@firstoftwo#1#2{\fi#2}
\long\def\ekv@gobbleto@stop#1\ekv@stop{}
\def\ekv@gobble@mark\ekv@mark{}
\long\def\ekv@gobble@from@mark@to@stop\ekv@mark#1\ekv@stop{}
```

(*End definition for* \@gobble *and others.*)

As you can see \ekv@gobbleto@stop uses a special marker \ekv@stop. The package will use three such markers, the one you've seen already, \ekv@mark and \ekv@nil. Contrarily to how for instance expl3 does things, we don't define them, as we don't need them to have an actual meaning. This has the advantage that if they somehow get expanded – which should never happen if things work out – they'll throw an error directly.

\ekv@ifempty
\ekv@ifempty@
\ekv@ifempty@true
\ekv@ifempty@false
\ekv@ifempty@true@F
\ekv@ifempty@true@F@gobble
\ekv@ifempty@true@F@gobbletwo

We can test for a lot of things building on an if-empty test, so lets define a really fast one. Since some tests might have reversed logic (true if something is not empty) we also set up macros for the reversed branches.

```
\long\def\ekv@ifempty#1%
  {%
```

```
    \ekv@ifempty@\ekv@ifempty@A#1\ekv@ifempty@B\ekv@ifempty@true
      \ekv@ifempty@A\ekv@ifempty@B\@secondoftwo
  }
\long\def\ekv@ifempty@#1\ekv@ifempty@A\ekv@ifempty@B{}
\long\def\ekv@ifempty@true\ekv@ifempty@A\ekv@ifempty@B\@secondoftwo#1#2{#1}
\long\def\ekv@ifempty@false\ekv@ifempty@A\ekv@ifempty@B\@firstoftwo#1#2{#2}
\long\def\ekv@ifempty@true@F\ekv@ifempty@A\ekv@ifempty@B\@firstofone#1{}
\long\def\ekv@ifempty@true@F@gobble\ekv@ifempty@A\ekv@ifempty@B\@firstofone#1#2%
  {}
\long\def\ekv@ifempty@true@F@gobbletwo
    \ekv@ifempty@A\ekv@ifempty@B\@firstofone#1#2#3%
  {}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@ifempty` *and others.*)

`\ekv@ifblank` `\ekv@ifblank@`

The obvious test that can be based on an if-empty is if-blank, meaning a test checking whether the argument is empty or consists only of spaces. Our version here will be tweaked a bit, as we want to check this, but with one leading `\ekv@mark` token that is to be ignored. The wrapper `\ekv@ifblank` will not be used by **expkv** for speed reasons but **expkv|opt** uses it.

```
\long\def\ekv@ifblank#1%
  {%
    \ekv@ifblank@#1\ekv@nil\ekv@ifempty@B\ekv@ifempty@true
      \ekv@ifempty@A\ekv@ifempty@B\@secondoftwo
  }
\long\def\ekv@ifblank@\ekv@mark#1{\ekv@ifempty@\ekv@ifempty@A}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@ifblank` *and* `\ekv@ifblank@`.)

`\ekv@ifdefined`

We'll need to check whether something is defined quite frequently, so why not define a macro that does this. The following test is expandable and pretty fast. The version with `\lastnamedcs` is the fastest version to test for an undefined macro I know of (that considers both undefined macros and those with the meaning `\relax`).

```
\ekv@if@lastnamedcs
  {%
    \def\ekv@ifdefined#1{\ifcsname#1\endcsname\ekv@ifdef@\fi\@secondoftwo}
    \def\ekv@ifdef@\fi\@secondoftwo
      {%
        \fi
        \expandafter\ifx\lastnamedcs\relax
          \ekv@fi@secondoftwo
        \fi
        \@firstoftwo
      }
  }
  {%
    \def\ekv@ifdefined#1%
      {%
        \ifcsname#1\endcsname\ekv@ifdef@\fi\ekv@ifdef@false#1\endcsname\relax
          \ekv@fi@secondoftwo
        \fi
        \@firstoftwo
      }
    \def\ekv@ifdef@\fi\ekv@ifdef@false{\fi\expandafter\ifx\csname}
```

```
    \long\def\ekv@ifdef@false
        #1\endcsname\relax\ekv@fi@secondoftwo\fi\@firstoftwo#2#3%
      {#3}
  }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@ifdefined`.)

`\ekv@strip` `\ekv@strip@a` `\ekv@strip@b` `\ekv@strip@c`

We borrow some ideas of expl3's l3tl to strip spaces from keys and values. This `\ekv@strip` also strips one level of outer braces *after* stripping spaces, so an input of `{abc}` becomes `abc` after stripping. It should be used with `#1` prefixed by `\ekv@mark`. Also this implementation at most strips *one* space from both sides (which should be fine most of the time, since TEX reads consecutive spaces as a single one during tokenisation).

```
\def\ekv@strip#1%
  {%
    \long\def\ekv@strip##1%
      {%
        \ekv@strip@a
          ##1\ekv@nil
          \ekv@mark#1%
          #1\ekv@nil
        \ekv@stop
      }%
    \long\def\ekv@strip@a##1\ekv@mark#1{\ekv@strip@b##1\ekv@mark}%
    \long\def\ekv@strip@b##1#1\ekv@nil {\ekv@strip@c##1\ekv@nil}%
  }
\ekv@strip{ }
\long\def\ekv@strip@c\ekv@mark#1\ekv@nil\ekv@mark#2\ekv@nil\ekv@stop#3{#3{#1}}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@strip` *and others.*)

`\ekv@expB@unbraceA` `\ekv@expB@unbraceA@`

To reduce some code doublets while gaining some speed, it is often useful to expand the first token in a definition once. Let's define a wrapper for this.

```
\long\def\ekv@expB@unbraceA#1#2%
  {%
    \expandafter\ekv@expB@unbraceA@\expandafter{#2}{#1}%
  }
\long\def\ekv@expB@unbraceA@#1#2{#2{#1}}%
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@expB@unbraceA` *and* `\ekv@expB@unbraceA@`.)

`\ekv@name` `\ekv@name@set` `\ekv@name@key`

The keys will all follow the same naming scheme, so we define it here.

```
\def\ekv@name@set#1{ekv#1(}
\def\ekv@name@key#1{#1)}
\edef\ekv@name
  {%
    \unexpanded\expandafter{\ekv@name@set{#1}}%
    \unexpanded\expandafter{\ekv@name@key{\detokenize{#2}}}%
  }
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\def\ekv@name#1#2}{\ekv@name}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@name`, `\ekv@name@set`, *and* `\ekv@name@key`. *These functions are documented on page* 6.)

\ekv@undefined@set

We can misuse the macro name we use to expandably store the set-name in a single token – since this increases performance drastically, especially for long set-names – to throw a more meaningful error message in case a set isn't defined. The name of `\ekv@undefined@set` is a little bit misleading, as it is called in either case inside of `\csname`, but the result will be a control sequence with meaning `\relax` if the set is undefined, hence will break the `\csname` building the key-macro which will throw the error message.

```
\def\ekv@undefined@set#1{! expkv Error: Set `#1' undefined.}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@undefined@set`.)

\ekv@checkvalid

We place some restrictions on the allowed names, though, namely sets and keys are not allowed to be empty – blanks are fine (meaning set- or key-names consisting of spaces). The `\def\ekv@tmp` gobbles any TEX prefixes which would otherwise throw errors. This will, however, break the package if an `\outer` has been gobbled this way. I consider that good, because keys shouldn't be defined `\outer` anyways.

```
\edef\ekv@checkvalid
  {%
    \unexpanded\expandafter{\ekv@ifempty{#1}}%
    \unexpanded
      {{%
        \def\ekv@tmp{}%
        \errmessage{expkv Error: empty set name not allowed}%
      }}%
      {%
        \unexpanded\expandafter{\ekv@ifempty{#2}}%
        \unexpanded
          {%
            {%
              \def\ekv@tmp{}%
              \errmessage{expkv Error: empty key name not allowed}%
            }%
            \@secondoftwo
          }%
      }%
    \unexpanded{\@gobble}%
  }
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\protected\def\ekv@checkvalid#1#2}{\ekv@checkvalid}%
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@checkvalid`.)

\ekvifdefined
\ekvifdefinedNoVal

And provide user-level macros to test whether a key is defined.

```
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\def\ekvifdefined#1#2}}%
  {\expandafter\ekv@ifdefined\expandafter{\ekv@name{#1}{#2}}}
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\def\ekvifdefinedNoVal#1#2}}%
  {\expandafter\ekv@ifdefined\expandafter{\ekv@name{#1}{#2}N}}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekvifdefined` *and* `\ekvifdefinedNoVal`. *These functions are documented on page* 5.)

\ekvdef
\ekvdefNoVal
\ekvlet
\ekvletNoVal
\ekvletkv
\ekvletkvNoVal
\ekvdefunknown
\ekvdefunknownNoVal

Set up the key defining macros `\ekvdef` etc. We use temporary macros to set these up with a few expansions already done.

```
\def\ekvdef#1#2#3#4%
  {%
```

```
    \protected\long\def\ekvdef##1##2##3%
      {#1{\expandafter\def\csname#2\endcsname####1{##3}#3}}%
    \protected\long\def\ekvdefNoVal##1##2##3%
      {#1{\expandafter\def\csname#2N\endcsname{##3}#3}}%
    \protected\def\ekvlet##1##2##3%
      {#1{\expandafter\let\csname#2\endcsname##3#3}}%
    \protected\def\ekvletNoVal##1##2##3%
      {#1{\expandafter\let\csname#2N\endcsname##3#3}}%
    \ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{%
        \protected\long\def\ekvdefunknown##1##2}}}%
      {%
        \expandafter\ekv@expB@unbraceA@\expandafter
          {%
            \expandafter\expandafter\expandafter
            \def\expandafter\csname\ekv@name{##1}{}u\endcsname####1####2{##2}%
            #3%
          }%
          {\ekv@checkvalid{##1}.}%
      }%
    \ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{%
        \protected\long\def\ekvdefunknownNoVal##1##2}}}%
      {%
        \expandafter\ekv@expB@unbraceA@\expandafter
          {%
            \expandafter\expandafter\expandafter
            \def\expandafter\csname\ekv@name{##1}{}uN\endcsname####1{##2}%
            #3%
          }%
          {\ekv@checkvalid{##1}.}%
      }%
    \protected\def\ekvletkv##1##2##3##4%
      {%
        #1%
          {%
            \expandafter\let\csname#2\expandafter\endcsname
            \csname#4\endcsname
            #3%
          }%
      }%
    \protected\def\ekvletkvNoVal##1##2##3##4%
      {%
        #1%
          {%
            \expandafter\let\csname#2N\expandafter\endcsname
            \csname#4N\endcsname
            #3%
          }%
      }%
  }
\edef\ekvdefNoVal
  {%
    {\unexpanded\expandafter{\ekv@checkvalid{#1}{#2}}}%
    {\unexpanded\expandafter{\ekv@name{#1}{#2}}}%
    {%
```

```
      \unexpanded{\expandafter\ekv@defsetmacro\csname}%
      \unexpanded\expandafter{\ekv@undefined@set{#1}\endcsname{#1}}%
    }%
    {\unexpanded\expandafter{\ekv@name{#3}{#4}}}%
  }%
\expandafter\ekvdef\ekvdefNoVal
```

(*End definition for* `\ekvdef` *and others. These functions are documented on page 2.*)

`\ekv@defsetmacro` In order to enhance the speed the set name given to `\ekvset` will be turned into a control sequence pretty early, so we have to define that control sequence.

```
\edef\ekv@defsetmacro
  {%
    \unexpanded{\ifx#1\relax\edef#1##1}%
      {%
        \unexpanded\expandafter{\ekv@name@set{#2}}%
        \unexpanded\expandafter{\ekv@name@key{##1}}%
      }%
    \unexpanded{\fi}%
  }
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\protected\def\ekv@defsetmacro#1#2}{\ekv@defsetmacro}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@defsetmacro`.)

`\ekvifdefinedset`

```
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\def\ekvifdefinedset#1}}%
  {%
    \expandafter\ekv@ifdefined\expandafter{\ekv@undefined@set{#1}}%
  }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekvifdefinedset`. *This function is documented on page 5.*)

`\ekvset` Set up `\ekvset`, which should not be affected by active commas and equal signs. The equal signs are a bit harder to cope with and we'll do that later, but the active commas can be handled by just doing two comma-splitting loops one at actives one at others. That's why we define `\ekvset` here with a temporary meaning just to set up the things with two different category codes. `#1` will be a `,`$_{13}$ and `#2` will be a `=`$_{13}$.

```
\begingroup
\def\ekvset#1#2{%
\endgroup
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\long\def\ekvset##1##2}%
  {%
    \expandafter\expandafter\expandafter
    \ekv@set\expandafter\csname\ekv@undefined@set{##1}\endcsname
      \ekv@mark##2#1\ekv@stop#1{}%
  }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekvset`. *This function is documented on page 3.*)

`\ekv@set` `\ekv@set` will split the ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ list at active commas. Then it has to check whether there were unprotected other commas and resplit there.

```
\long\def\ekv@set##1##2#1%
  {%
```

Test whether we're at the end, if so invoke \ekv@endset,

```
    \ekv@gobble@from@mark@to@stop##2\ekv@endset\ekv@stop
```

else go on with other commas.

```
    \ekv@set@other##1##2,\ekv@stop,%
  }
```

(*End definition for* \ekv@set.)

\ekv@endset \ekv@endset is a hungry little macro. It will eat everything that remains of \ekv@set and unbrace the sneaked stuff.

```
\long\def\ekv@endset
    \ekv@stop\ekv@set@other##1\ekv@mark\ekv@stop,\ekv@stop,##2%
  {##2}
```

(*End definition for* \ekv@endset.)

\ekv@eq@other \ekv@eq@active Splitting at equal signs will be done in a way that checks whether there is an equal sign and splits at the same time. This gets quite messy and the code might look complicated, but this is pretty fast (faster than first checking for an equal sign and splitting if one is found). The splitting code will be adapted for \ekvset and \ekvparse to get the most speed, but some of these macros don't require such adaptions. \ekv@eq@other and \ekv@eq@active will split the argument at the first equal sign and insert the macro which comes after the first following \ekv@mark. This allows for fast branching based on TEX's argument grabbing rules and we don't have to split after the branching if the equal sign was there.

```
\long\def\ekv@eq@other##1=##2\ekv@mark##3%
  {%
    ##3##1\ekv@stop\ekv@mark##2%
  }
\long\def\ekv@eq@active##1#2##2\ekv@mark##3%
  {%
    ##3##1\ekv@stop\ekv@mark##2%
  }
```

(*End definition for* \ekv@eq@other *and* \ekv@eq@active.)

\ekv@set@other The macro \ekv@set@other is guaranteed to get only single ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ pairs.

```
\long\def\ekv@set@other##1##2,%
  {%
```

First we test whether we're done.

```
    \ekv@gobble@from@mark@to@stop##2\ekv@endset@other\ekv@stop
```

If not we split at the equal sign of category other.

```
    \ekv@eq@other##2\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@set@eq@other@a
      =\ekv@mark\ekv@set@eq@active
```

And insert the set name for the next recursion step of \ekv@set@other.

```
    ##1%
    \ekv@mark
  }
```

(*End definition for* \ekv@set@other.)

\ekv@set@eq@other@a
\ekv@set@eq@other@b

The first of these two macros runs the split-test for equal signs of category active. It will only be inserted if the ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ pair contained at least one equal sign of category other and ##1 will contain everything up to that equal sign.

```
\long\def\ekv@set@eq@other@a##1\ekv@stop
  {%
    \ekv@eq@active##1\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@set@eq@other@active
      #2\ekv@mark\ekv@set@eq@other@b
  }
```

The second macro will have been called by \ekv@eq@active if no active equal sign was found. All it does is remove the excess tokens of that test and forward the ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ pair to \ekv@set@pair. Normally we would have to also gobble an additional \ekv@mark after \ekv@stop, but this mark is needed to delimit \ekv@set@pair's argument anyway, so we just leave it there.

```
\ekv@expB@unbraceA
  {%
    \long\def\ekv@set@eq@other@b
        ##1\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@set@eq@other@active\ekv@stop\ekv@mark
        ##2\ekv@nil=\ekv@mark\ekv@set@eq@active
  }%
  {\ekv@strip{##1}{\expandafter\ekv@set@pair\detokenize}\ekv@mark##2\ekv@nil}
```

(*End definition for* \ekv@set@eq@other@a *and* \ekv@set@eq@other@b.)

\ekv@set@eq@other@active

\ekv@set@eq@other@active will be called if the ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ pair was wrongly split on an equal sign of category other but has an earlier equal sign of category active. ##1 will be the contents up to the active equal sign and ##2 everything that remains until the first found other equal sign. It has to reinsert the equal sign and forward things to \ekv@set@pair.

```
\ekv@expB@unbraceA
  {%
    \long\def\ekv@set@eq@other@active
        ##1\ekv@stop##2\ekv@nil#2\ekv@mark
        \ekv@set@eq@other@b\ekv@mark##3=\ekv@mark\ekv@set@eq@active
  }%
  {\ekv@strip{##1}{\expandafter\ekv@set@pair\detokenize}\ekv@mark##2=##3}
```

(*End definition for* \ekv@set@eq@other@active.)

\ekv@set@eq@active
\ekv@set@eq@active@

\ekv@set@eq@active will be called when there was no equal sign of category other in the ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ pair. It removes the excess tokens of the prior test and split-checks for an active equal sign.

```
\long\def\ekv@set@eq@active
   ##1\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@set@eq@other@a\ekv@stop\ekv@mark
  {%
    \ekv@eq@active##1\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@set@eq@active@
      #2\ekv@mark\ekv@set@noeq
  }
```

If an active equal sign was found in \ekv@set@eq@active we'll have to pass the now split ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ pair on to \ekv@set@pair.

```
\ekv@expB@unbraceA
  {\long\def\ekv@set@eq@active@##1\ekv@stop##2\ekv@nil#2\ekv@mark\ekv@set@noeq}%
  {%
```

```
      \ekv@strip{##1}{\expandafter\ekv@set@pair\detokenize}\ekv@mark##2\ekv@nil
    }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@set@eq@active` *and* `\ekv@set@eq@active@`.)

`\ekv@set@noeq` If no active equal sign was found by `\ekv@set@eq@active` there is no equal sign contained in the parsed list entry. In that case we have to check whether the entry is blank in order to ignore it (in which case we'll have to gobble the set-name which was put after these tests by `\ekv@set@other`). Else this is a `NoVal` key and the entry is passed on to `\ekv@set@key`.

```
\edef\ekv@set@noeq
  {%
    \unexpanded
      {%
        \ekv@ifblank@##1\ekv@nil\ekv@ifempty@B\ekv@set@was@blank
          \ekv@ifempty@A\ekv@ifempty@B
      }%
    \unexpanded\expandafter
      {\ekv@strip{##1}{\expandafter\ekv@set@key\detokenize}\ekv@mark}%
  }
\ekv@expB@unbraceA
  {%
    \long\def\ekv@set@noeq
        ##1\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@set@eq@active@\ekv@stop\ekv@mark
  }%
  {\ekv@set@noeq}
\def\ekv@set@was@blank##1%
  {%
    \def\ekv@set@was@blank
        \ekv@ifempty@A\ekv@ifempty@B
        \ekv@strip@a\ekv@mark####1\ekv@nil\ekv@mark##1##1\ekv@nil\ekv@stop
        ####2\ekv@mark
      {\ekv@set@other}%
  }
\ekv@set@was@blank{ }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@set@noeq`.)

`\ekv@endset@other` All that's left for `\ekv@set@other` is the macro which breaks the recursion loop at the end. This is done by gobbling all the remaining tokens.

```
\long\def\ekv@endset@other
    \ekv@stop
    \ekv@eq@other\ekv@mark\ekv@stop\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@set@eq@other@a
    =\ekv@mark\ekv@set@eq@active
  {\ekv@set}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@endset@other`.)

`\ekvbreak` `\ekvbreakPreSneak` `\ekvbreakPostSneak` Provide macros that can completely stop the parsing of `\ekvset`, who knows what it'll be useful for.

```
\long\def\ekvbreak##1##2\ekv@stop#1##3{##1}
\long\def\ekvbreakPreSneak ##1##2\ekv@stop#1##3{##1##3}
\long\def\ekvbreakPostSneak##1##2\ekv@stop#1##3{##3##1}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekvbreak`, `\ekvbreakPreSneak`, *and* `\ekvbreakPostSneak`. *These functions are documented on page 5.*)

`\ekvsneak` `\ekvsneakPre` One last thing we want to do for `\ekvset` is to provide macros that just smuggle stuff after `\ekvset`'s effects.

```
\long\def\ekvsneak##1##2\ekv@stop#1##3%
  {%
    ##2\ekv@stop#1{##3##1}%
  }
\long\def\ekvsneakPre##1##2\ekv@stop#1##3%
  {%
    ##2\ekv@stop#1{##1##3}%
  }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekvsneak` *and* `\ekvsneakPre`. *These functions are documented on page 5.*)

`\ekvparse` Additionally to the `\ekvset` macro we also want to provide an `\ekvparse` macro, that has the same scope as `\keyval_parse:NNn` from expl3. This is pretty analogue to the `\ekvset` implementation, we just put an `\unexpanded` here and there instead of other macros to stop the `\expanded` on our output.

```
\long\def\ekvparse##1##2##3%
  {%
    \ekv@parse##1##2\ekv@mark##3#1\ekv@stop#1%
  }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekvparse`. *This function is documented on page 4.*)

`\ekv@parse`

```
\long\def\ekv@parse##1##2##3#1%
  {%
    \ekv@gobble@from@mark@to@stop##3\ekv@endparse\ekv@stop
    \ekv@parse@other##1##2##3,\ekv@stop,%
  }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@parse`.)

`\ekv@endparse`

```
\long\def\ekv@endparse
    \ekv@stop\ekv@parse@other##1\ekv@mark\ekv@stop,\ekv@stop,%
  {}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@endparse`.)

`\ekv@parse@other`

```
\long\def\ekv@parse@other##1##2##3,%
  {%
    \ekv@gobble@from@mark@to@stop##3\ekv@endparse@other\ekv@stop
    \ekv@eq@other##3\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@eq@other@a
      =\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@eq@active
    ##1##2%
    \ekv@mark
  }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@parse@other`.)

\ekv@parse@eq@other@a
\ekv@parse@eq@other@b
```
\long\def\ekv@parse@eq@other@a##1\ekv@stop
  {%
    \ekv@eq@active##1\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@eq@other@active
      #2\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@eq@other@b
  }
\ekv@expB@unbraceA
  {%
    \long\def\ekv@parse@eq@other@b
        ##1\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@eq@other@active\ekv@stop\ekv@mark
        ##2\ekv@nil=\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@eq@active
  }%
  {\ekv@strip{##1}\ekv@parse@pair##2\ekv@nil}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@parse@eq@other@a` *and* `\ekv@parse@eq@other@b`.)

\ekv@parse@eq@other@active
```
\ekv@expB@unbraceA
  {%
    \long\def\ekv@parse@eq@other@active
        ##1\ekv@stop##2\ekv@nil#2\ekv@mark
        \ekv@parse@eq@other@b\ekv@mark##3=\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@eq@active
  }%
  {\ekv@strip{##1}\ekv@parse@pair##2=##3}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@parse@eq@other@active`.)

\ekv@parse@eq@active
\ekv@parse@eq@active@
```
\long\def\ekv@parse@eq@active
    ##1\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@eq@other@a\ekv@stop\ekv@mark
  {%
    \ekv@eq@active##1\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@eq@active@
      #2\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@noeq
  }
\ekv@expB@unbraceA
  {\long\def\ekv@parse@eq@active@##1\ekv@stop##2#2\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@noeq}%
  {%
    \ekv@strip{##1}\ekv@parse@pair##2%
  }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@parse@eq@active` *and* `\ekv@parse@eq@active@`.)

\ekv@parse@noeq
```
\edef\ekv@parse@noeq
  {%
    \unexpanded
      {%
        \ekv@ifblank@##1\ekv@nil\ekv@ifempty@B\ekv@parse@was@blank
          \ekv@ifempty@A\ekv@ifempty@B
      }%
      \unexpanded\expandafter{\ekv@strip{##1}\ekv@parse@key}%
  }
\ekv@expB@unbraceA
  {%
```

```
    \long\def\ekv@parse@noeq
        ##1\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@eq@active@\ekv@stop\ekv@mark
  }%
  {\ekv@parse@noeq}
\def\ekv@parse@was@blank##1%
  {%
    \def\ekv@parse@was@blank
        \ekv@ifempty@A\ekv@ifempty@B
        \ekv@strip@a\ekv@mark####1\ekv@nil\ekv@mark##1##1\ekv@nil\ekv@stop
        \ekv@parse@key
      {\ekv@parse@other}%
  }
\ekv@parse@was@blank{ }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@parse@noeq`.)

`\ekv@endparse@other`

```
\long\def\ekv@endparse@other
    \ekv@stop
    \ekv@eq@other\ekv@mark\ekv@stop\ekv@nil\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@eq@other@a
    =\ekv@mark\ekv@parse@eq@active
  {\ekv@parse}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@endparse@other`.)

`\ekv@parse@pair`
`\ekv@parse@pair@`

```
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\long\def\ekv@parse@pair##1##2\ekv@nil}%
  {%
    \ekv@strip{##2}\ekv@parse@pair@{##1}%
  }
\long\def\ekv@parse@pair@##1##2##3##4%
  {%
    \unexpanded{##4{##2}{##1}}%
    \ekv@parse@other##3##4%
  }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@parse@pair` *and* `\ekv@parse@pair@`.)

`\ekv@parse@key`

```
\long\def\ekv@parse@key##1##2##3%
  {%
    \unexpanded{##2{##1}}%
    \ekv@parse@other##2##3%
  }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@parse@key`.)

Finally really setting things up with `\ekvset`'s temporary meaning:

```
}
\catcode`\,=13
\catcode`\==13
\ekvset,=
```

\ekvsetSneaked This macro can be defined just by expanding \ekvsneak once after expanding \ekvset. To expand everything as much as possible early on we use a temporary definition.

```
\edef\ekvsetSneaked
  {%
    \unexpanded{\ekvsneak{#2}}%
    \unexpanded\expandafter{\ekvset{#1}{#3}}%
  }
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\long\def\ekvsetSneaked#1#2#3}}%
  {\ekvsetSneaked}
```

(*End definition for* \ekvsetSneaked*. This function is documented on page* 3.)

\ekvchangeset Provide a macro that is able to switch out the current ⟨*set*⟩ in \ekvset. This operation is slow (by comparison, it should be slightly faster than \ekvsneak), but allows for something similar to pgfkeys's ⟨*key*⟩/.cd mechanism. However this operation is more expensive than /.cd as we can't just redefine some token to reflect this, but have to switch out the set expandably, so this works similar to the \ekvsneak macros reading and reinserting the remainder of the ⟨*key*⟩=⟨*value*⟩ list.

```
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\def\ekvchangeset#1}%
  {%
    \expandafter\expandafter\expandafter
    \ekv@changeset\expandafter\csname\ekv@undefined@set{#1}\endcsname\ekv@empty
  }
```

(*End definition for* \ekvchangeset*. This function is documented on page* 5.)

\ekv@changeset This macro does the real change-out of \ekvchangeset. #2 will have a leading \ekv@empty so that braces aren't stripped accidentally, but that will not hurt and just expand to nothing in one step.

```
\long\def\ekv@changeset#1#2\ekv@set@other#3%
  {%
    #2\ekv@set@other#1%
  }
```

(*End definition for* \ekv@changeset*.*)

\ekv@set@pair
\ekv@set@pair@a
\ekv@set@pair@b
\ekv@set@pair@c
\ekv@set@pair@d
\ekv@set@pair@e
\ekv@set@pair gets invoked with the space and brace stripped and \detokenized key-name as its first, the value as the second, and the set name as the third argument. It provides tests for the key-macros and everything to be able to throw meaningful error messages if it isn't defined. We have two routes here, one if \lastnamedcs is defined and one if it isn't. The big difference is that if it is we can omit a \csname and instead just expand \lastnamedcs once to get the control sequence. If the macro is defined the value will be space and brace stripped and the key-macro called. Else branch into the error handling provided by \ekv@set@pair.

```
\ekv@if@lastnamedcs
  {%
    \long\def\ekv@set@pair#1\ekv@mark#2\ekv@nil#3%
      {%
        \ifcsname #3{#1}\endcsname\ekv@set@pair@a\fi\@secondoftwo
          {#2}%
          {%
            \ifcsname #3{}u\endcsname\ekv@set@pair@a\fi\@secondoftwo
              {#2}%
```

```
              {%
                \ekv@ifdefined{#3{#1}N}%
                  \ekv@err@noarg
                  \ekv@err@unknown
                  #3%
              }%
              {#1}%
          }%
          \ekv@set@other#3%
        }
      \def\ekv@set@pair@a\fi\@secondoftwo
        {\fi\expandafter\ekv@set@pair@b\lastnamedcs}
    }
    {%
      \long\def\ekv@set@pair#1\ekv@mark#2\ekv@nil#3%
        {%
          \ifcsname #3{#1}\endcsname
              \ekv@set@pair@a\fi\ekv@set@pair@c#3{#1}\endcsname
            {#2}%
            {%
              \ifcsname #3{}u\endcsname
                  \ekv@set@pair@a\fi\ekv@set@pair@c#3{}u\endcsname
                {#2}%
                {%
                  \ekv@ifdefined{#3{#1}N}%
                    \ekv@err@noarg
                    \ekv@err@unknown
                    #3%
                }%
                {#1}%
            }%
          \ekv@set@other#3%
        }
      \def\ekv@set@pair@a\fi\ekv@set@pair@c{\fi\expandafter\ekv@set@pair@b\csname}
      \long\def\ekv@set@pair@c#1\endcsname#2#3{#3}
    }
\long\def\ekv@set@pair@b#1%
    {%
      \ifx#1\relax
        \ekv@set@pair@e
      \fi
      \ekv@set@pair@d#1%
    }
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\long\def\ekv@set@pair@d#1#2#3}{\ekv@strip{#2}#1}
\long\def\ekv@set@pair@e\fi\ekv@set@pair@d#1#2#3{\fi#3}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@set@pair` *and others.*)

`\ekv@set@key` `\ekv@set@key@a` `\ekv@set@key@b` `\ekv@set@key@c`

Analogous to `\ekv@set@pair`, `\ekv@set@key` builds the `NoVal` key-macro and provides an error-branch. `\ekv@set@key@` will test whether the key-macro is defined and if so call it, else the errors are thrown.

```
\ekv@if@lastnamedcs
  {%
    \long\def\ekv@set@key#1\ekv@mark#2%
```

```
      {%
        \ifcsname #2{#1}N\endcsname\ekv@set@key@a\fi\@firstofone
          {%
            \ifcsname #2{}uN\endcsname\ekv@set@key@a\fi\@firstofone
              {%
                \ekv@ifdefined{#2{#1}}%
                  \ekv@err@reqval
                  \ekv@err@unknown
                  #2%
              }%
              {#1}%
          }%
        \ekv@set@other#2%
      }
    \def\ekv@set@key@a\fi\@firstofone{\fi\expandafter\ekv@set@key@b\lastnamedcs}
  }
  {%
    \long\def\ekv@set@key#1\ekv@mark#2%
      {%
        \ifcsname #2{#1}N\endcsname
            \ekv@set@key@a\fi\ekv@set@key@c#2{#1}N\endcsname
          {%
            \ifcsname #2{}uN\endcsname
                \ekv@set@key@a\fi\ekv@set@key@c#2{}uN\endcsname
              {%
                \ekv@ifdefined{#2{#1}}%
                  \ekv@err@reqval
                  \ekv@err@unknown
                  #2%
              }%
              {#1}%
          }%
        \ekv@set@other#2%
      }
    \def\ekv@set@key@a\fi\ekv@set@key@c{\fi\expandafter\ekv@set@key@b\csname}
    \long\def\ekv@set@key@c#1N\endcsname#2{#2}
  }
\long\def\ekv@set@key@b#1%
  {%
    \ifx#1\relax
      \ekv@fi@secondoftwo
    \fi
    \@firstoftwo#1%
  }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@set@key` *and others.*)

`\ekvsetdef` Provide a macro to define a shorthand to use `\ekvset` on a specified ⟨*set*⟩. To gain the maximum speed `\ekvset` is expanded twice by `\ekv@expB@unbraceA` so that during runtime the macro storing the set name is already built and one `\expandafter` doesn't have to be used.

```
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{%
\protected\def\ekvsetdef#1#2}}}}%
  {%
```

```
    \ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\long\def#1##1}}%
      {\ekvset{#2}{##1}}%
  }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekvsetdef`. *This function is documented on page* 4.)

`\ekvsetSneakeddef` `\ekvsetdefSneaked` And do the same for `\ekvsetSneaked` in the two possible ways, with a fixed sneaked argument and with a flexible one.

```
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{%
\protected\def\ekvsetSneakeddef#1#2}}}}%
  {%
    \ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\long\def#1##1##2}}%
      {\ekvsetSneaked{#2}{##1}{##2}}%
  }
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{%
\protected\def\ekvsetdefSneaked#1#2#3}}}}%
  {%
    \ekv@expB@unbraceA{\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\long\def#1##1}}%
      {\ekvsetSneaked{#2}{#3}{##1}}%
  }
```

(*End definition for* `\ekvsetSneakeddef` *and* `\ekvsetdefSneaked`. *These functions are documented on page* 4.)

`\ekv@err` `\ekv@err@` Since `\ekvset` is fully expandable as long as the code of the keys is (which is unlikely) we want to somehow throw expandable errors, in our case via undefined control sequences.

```
\begingroup
\edef\ekv@err
  {%
    \endgroup
    \unexpanded{\long\def\ekv@err}##1%
      {%
        \unexpanded{\expandafter\ekv@err@\@firstofone}%
        {\unexpanded\expandafter{\csname ! expkv Error:\endcsname}##1.}%
        \unexpanded{\ekv@stop}%
      }%
  }
\ekv@err
\def\ekv@err@{\expandafter\ekv@gobbleto@stop}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@err` *and* `\ekv@err@`.)

`\ekv@err@common` `\ekv@err@common@` `\ekv@err@unknown` `\ekv@err@noarg` `\ekv@err@reqval` Now we can use `\ekv@err` to set up some error messages so that we can later use those instead of the full strings.

```
\long\def\ekv@err@common #1#2{\expandafter\ekv@err@common@\string#2{#1}}
\long\def\ekv@err@common@#1‘#2’ #3.#4#5{\ekv@err{#4 (‘#5’, set ‘#2’)}}
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\long\def\ekv@err@unknown#1}%
  {\ekv@err@common{unknown key}{#1}}
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\long\def\ekv@err@noarg  #1}%
  {\ekv@err@common{value forbidden}{#1}}
\ekv@expB@unbraceA{\long\def\ekv@err@reqval #1}%
  {\ekv@err@common{value required}{#1}}
```

(*End definition for* `\ekv@err@common` *and others.*)

Now everything that's left is to reset the category code of `@`.

```
\catcode‘\@=\ekv@tmp
```

Index

The italic numbers denote the pages where the corresponding entry is described, numbers underlined point to the definition, all others indicate the places where it is used.