

PI_Editor

April 27, 2021

Contents

1	Introduction to Pl_Editor 2						
2	Pl_I	Editor files	2				
	2.1	Input file and default title block	2				
	2.2	Output file	2				
3	Theo	ory of operations	3				
	3.1	Basic page layout items properties:	3				
	3.2	Coordinates definition	3				
	3.3	Reference corners and coordinates:	4				
	3.4	Rotation	5				
	3.5	Repeat option	6				
4	Text	s and formats	7				
	4.1	Format symbols:	7				
	4.2	Multi-line texts:	9				
	4.3	Multi-line texts in Page Setup dialog:	10				
5	Cons	straints	11				
	5.1	Page 1 constraint	11				
	5.2	Text full size constraint	12				
6	Invo	king Pl_Editor	14				
7	Pl_I	Editor Commands	14				
	7.1	Main Screen	14				
	7.2	Main Window Toolbar	15				
	7.3	Commands in drawing area (draw panel)	15				
		7.3.1 Keyboard Commands	15				
		7.3.2 Mouse Commands	16				
		7.3.3 Context Menu	16				
	7.4	Status Bar Information	16				
8	Left	window	17				

9	Right window	18
10	Interactive edition	20
	10.1 Item selection	20
	10.2 Item creation	22
	10.3 Adding lines, rectangles and texts	23
	10.4 Adding logos	24
	10.5 Adding image bitmaps	24

$Reference\ manual$

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Contributors

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Feedback

Please direct any bug reports, suggestions or new versions to here:

- About KiCad document: https://gitlab.com/kicad/services/kicad-doc/issues
- About KiCad software: https://gitlab.com/kicad/code/kicad/issues
- About KiCad software i18n: https://gitlab.com/kicad/code/kicad-i18n/issues

Publication date and software version

may 23, 2015.

1 Introduction to PI_Editor

Pl_Editor is a page layout editor tool to create custom title blocks, and frame references.

The title block, associated to frame references, and other graphic items (logos) is called here a page layout.

Basic page layout items are:

- Lines
- Rectangles
- **Texts** (with format symbols, that will be replaced by the actual text, like the date, page number…) in Eeschema or Pcbnew.
- Poly-polygons (mainly to place logos and special graphic shapes)
- Bitmaps.



Warning

Bitmaps can be plotted only by few plotters (PDF and PS only) Therefore, for other plotters, only a bounding box will be plotted.

• Items can be repeated, and texts and poly_polygons can be rotated.

2 PI_Editor files

2.1 Input file and default title block

Pl_Editor reads or writes page layout description files *.kicad_wks (KiCad worksheet).

An internal default page layout description to display the default KiCad title block is used until a file is read.

2.2 Output file

The current page layout description can be written in a ***.kicad_wks** file, using the S-expression format, which is widely used in KiCad.

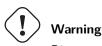
This file can be used to show the custom page layout in Eeschema and/or Pcbnew.

3 Theory of operations

3.1 Basic page layout items properties:

Basic page layout items are:

- Lines
- Rectangles
- **Texts** (with format symbols, with will be replaced by the actual text, like the date, page number…) in Eeschema or Pcbnew.
- **Poly-polygons** (mainly to place logos and special graphic shapes). These poly polygons are created by **Bitmap2compone** and cannot be built inside pl_editor, because it is not possible to create such shapes by hand.
- **Bitmaps** to place logos.



Bitmaps can be plotted only by few plotters: PDF and PS only.

Therefore:

- Texts, poly-polygons and bitmaps are defined by a position, and can be rotated.
- Lines (in fact segments) and rectangles are defined by two points: a start point and a end point. They cannot be rotated (this is useless for segments).

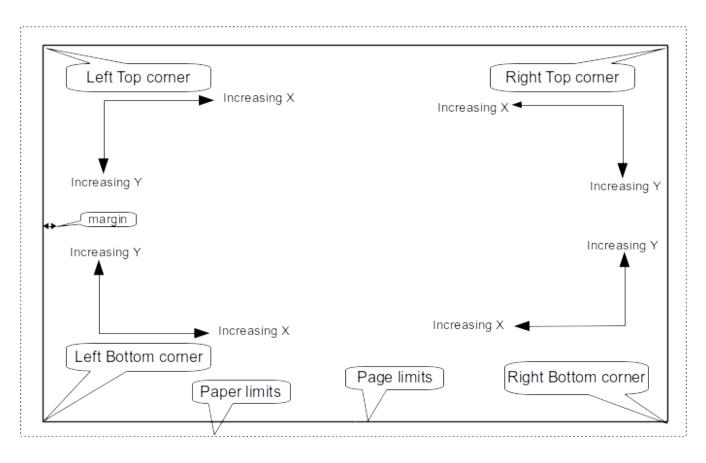
These basic items can be repeated.

Texts which are repeated accept also an increment value for labels (has meaning only if the text is one letter or one digit).

3.2 Coordinates definition

Each position, start point and end point of items is always relative to a page corner.

This feature ensure you can define a page layout which is not dependent on the paper size.



3.3 Reference corners and coordinates:

- When the page size is changed, the position of the item, relative to its reference corner does not change.
- Usually, title blocks are attached to the right bottom corner, and therefore this corner is the default corner, when creating an item.

For rectangles and segments, which have two defined points, each point has its reference corner.

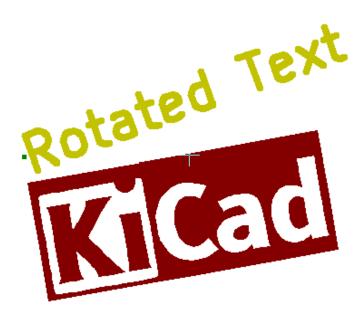
3.4 Rotation

Items which have a position defined by just one point (texts and poly-polygons) can be rotated:

Normal: Rotation = 0



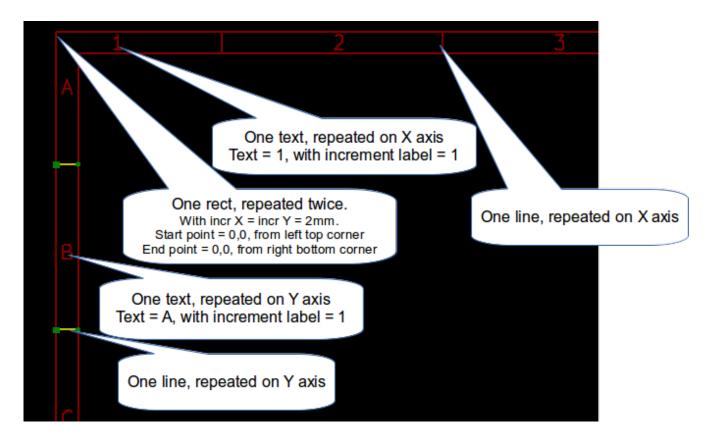
Rotated: Rotation = 20 and 10 degrees.



3.5 Repeat option

Items can be repeated:

This is useful to create grid and grid labels.



4 Texts and formats

4.1 Format symbols:

Texts can be simple strings or can include format symbols. Format symbols are replaced by the actual values in Eeschema or Pcbnew.

They are like format symbols in printf function.

A format symbol is % followed by 1 letter.

The %C format has one digit (comment identifier).

Formats symbols are:

%% = replaced by % %K = KiCad version %Z = paper format name (A4, USLetter …) %Y = company name %D = date %R = revision %S = sheet number %N = number of sheets %Cx = comment (x = 0 to 9 to identify the comment) %F = filename %P = sheet path (sheet full name, for Eeschema) %T = title Example: "Size: %Z" displays "Size: A4" or "Size: USLetter" User display mode: I activated. Title block displayed like in Eeschema and Pcbnew

Sheet: File: pagelayout	logo kicad wks
Title:	
Size: A4	Date:
KiCad E.D.A. p	_editor (2015-04-09 BZR 5589)-r
4	5

"Native" display mode: activated. The native texts entered in Pl_Editor, with their format symbols.

%UU		
% Y		
Sheet: %P		
File: %F		
Title: %T		
Size: %Z	Date: %D	
%К		
4		5

4.2 Multi-line texts:

Texts can be multi-line.

There are 2 ways to insert a new line in texts:

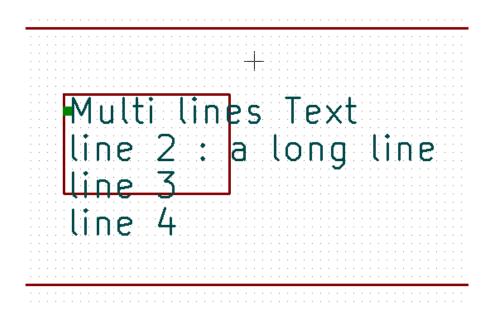
- 1. Insert the "\n" 2 chars sequence (mainly in Page setup dialog in KiCad).
- 2. Insert a new line in Pl_Editor Design window.

Here is an example:

Setup

Text	
Multi lines Text	
line 2 : a long line line 3	
line 4	-
H justification Left	▼ □ Bold
V justification Center	Ttalic
Text Height (mm)	Text Width (mm)
0,000	0,000
Constraints:	
Max Size X (mm)	Max Size Y (mm)
0,000	0,000

Output



4.3 Multi-line texts in Page Setup dialog:

In the page setup dialog, text controls do not accept a multi-line text.

The "\n" 2 chars sequence should be inserted to force a new line inside a text.

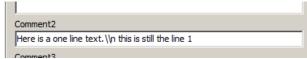
Here is a two lines text, in $comment \ 2$ field:



Here is the actual text:

```
Here is a 2 lines text.
this is the line 2
Sheet:
```

However, if you really want the "n" inside the text, enter "n".



And the displayed text:

T

Here	is	а	опе	líne	text.\n	this	is	still	the	line	1	
						+						
Sheet	t											

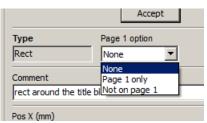
5 Constraints

5.1 Page 1 constraint

When using Eeschema, the full schematic often uses more than one page.

Usually page layout items are displayed on all pages.

But if a user want some items to be displayed only on page 1, or not on page 1, the "page 1 option" this is possible by setting this option:



Page 1 option:

- None: no constraint.
- Page 1 only: the items is visible only on page 1.
- Not on page 1: the items is visible on all pages but the page 1.

5.2 Text full size constraint

Text	
Multi lines Text line 2 : a long line	<u> </u>
line 3 line 4	v
H justification Left	▼ □ Bold
V justification Center	💌 🗌 Italic
Text Height (mm)	Text Width (mm)
Constraints:	
Max Size X (mm)	Max Size Y (mm)
10,000	5

Only for texts, one can set 2 parameters :

- the max size X
- the max size Y

which define a bounding box.

When these parameters are not 0, when displaying the text, the actual text height and the actual text width are dynamically modified if the full text size is bigger than the max size X and/or the max size Y, to fit the full text size with this bounding box.

When the actual full text size is smaller than the max size X and/or the max size Y, the text height and/or the text width is not modified.

The text with no bounding box. Max size X = 0.0 Max size Y = 0.0

The same text with constraint. Max size X = 40,0 Max size Y = 0,0



13 / 24

A multi line text, constrained:

Setup

Text	
Multi lines Text line 2 : a long line line 3 line 4	
H justification Left 🗾 🗖 Bold	
V justification Center 🔽 🗌 Italic	
Text Height (mm) Text Width (mm) 10,000 0	
Constraints:	
Max Size X (mm) Max Size Y (mm)	
10,000 5	

Output

÷									:
÷	Mult	i lii	nes	T	ext			-	-
	Mult line line	2:	8	lo	ng	li	Ne		•
	line	3		· · ·		:	· ·	1	
ł	line	4		· · ·				1	÷
:		•							:

6 Invoking PI_Editor

Pl_Editor is typically invoked from a command line, or from the KiCad manager.

From a command line, the syntax is pl_editor $<*.kicad_wks$ file to open>.

7 PI_Editor Commands

7.1 Main Screen

The image below shows the main window of Pl_Editor.

😣 🖨 🗊 Page Layou	⊗ ● □ Page Layout Editor — no file selected						
File Edit View Pla	ice Preferences Help						
	🕒 🗑 🔶 🖷	ତ କ୍ ର୍ ଦ୍ 🔍 🕻	📔 📃 🛛 Left Top paper cor	rner ‡ Page 1 ‡			
Design				Properties			
▼ → <default></default>				Item Properties General Options			
rect1:Rect				Type Page 1 option			
rect2:Rect				Text			
L segm1:Line				None			
T text1:Text				Text			
L segm2:Line		<u>, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , </u>		Title: %T			
T text2:Text							
L segm3:Line				Horizontal justification 🛛 Left 🛫 👿 Bold			
T text3:Text							
L segm4:Line				Vertical justification Center 🛟 👿 Italic			
T text4:Text			•	Text width (mm) Text height (mm)			
T text5:Text				2.000 2.000			
L segm5:Line			1	Constraints:			
T text6:Text				Maximum width (mm) Maximum height Y (mm)			
L segm6:Line			•				
T text7:Text							
T text8:Text				Accept			
T text9:Text		5 					
L segm7:Line		Alle Mar Lite		Comment			
T text10:Text							
T text11:Text				Position X (mm)			
L segm8:Line				109.000 Origin			
T text12:Text				Position Y (mm) Lower Right 💌			
T text13:Text							
Page size: width 297 he	eight 210	Z 0.50 X 487 Y -1	dx 487 dy -1	coord origin: Left Top paper corner mm			

The left pane contains the list of basic items.

The right pane is the item settings editor.

7.2 Main Window Toolbar

🔲 🗖 🛃 🔛 🗑 🗐	🧼 🕞 🕀 ରୁ 🕻	🔍 🔲 🔜 🛛 Left Top paper corner	*	Page 1	-
-------------	------------	-------------------------------	---	--------	---

The top toolbar allows for easy access to the following commands:

	Select the net list file to be processed.
	Load a page layout description file.
	Save the current page layout description in a .kicad_wks file.
	Display the page size selector and the title block user data editor.
	Prints the current page.
Ŵ	Delete the currently selected item.
5 🔿	Undo/redo tools.
$ \oplus $	Zoom in, out, redraw and auto, respectively.
T	Show the page layout in user mode: texts are shown like in Eeschema or
	Pcbnew: text format symbols are replaced by the user texts.
	Show the page layout in native mode: texts are displayed "as is", with the contained formats, without any replacement.
Left Top paper corner Pac Left Top paper corner Right Bottom page corner Left Bottom page corner Right Top page corner Left Top page corner	Reference corner selection, for coordinates displayed to the status bar.
Page 1 Page 1 Other pages	Selection of the page number (page & or other pages).
	one page).
Right Top page corner Left Top page corner Page 1	Selection of the page number (page & or other pages). This selection has meaning only if some items than have a page option, are not shown on all pages (in a schematic for instance, which contains more than

7.3 Commands in drawing area (draw panel)

7.3.1 Keyboard Commands

F1	Zoom In
F2	Zoom Out

F3	Refresh Display
F4	Move cursor to center of display window
Home	Fit footprint into display window
Space Bar	Set relative coordinates to the current cursor position
Right Arrow	Move cursor right one grid position
Left Arrow	Move cursor left one grid position
Up Arrow	Move cursor up one grid position
Down Arrow	Move cursor down one grid position

7.3.2 Mouse Commands

Scroll Wheel	Zoom in and out at the current cursor position
Ctrl + Scroll Wheel	Pan right and left
Shift + Scroll Wheel	Pan up and down
Right Button Click	Open context menu

7.3.3 Context Menu

Displayed by right-clicking the mouse:

- Add Line
- Add Rectangle
- Add Text
- Append Page Layout Descr File

Are commands to add a basic layout item to the current page layout description.

- Zoom selection: direct selection of the display zoom.
- Grid selection: direct selection of the grid.

Note

Append Page Layout Descr File is intended to add poly polygons to make logos.

Because usually a logo it needs hundred of vertices, you cannot create a polygon by hand. But you can append a description file, created by Bitmap2Component.

7.4 Status Bar Information

The status bar is located at the bottom of the Pl_Editor and provides useful information to the user.

					-
Z 391,8	X 40,9 Y 261	dx -246 dy 60,9	coord origin: Right Bottom page corner	mm	11.

Coordinates are **always relative to the corner** selected as **reference**.

8 Left window

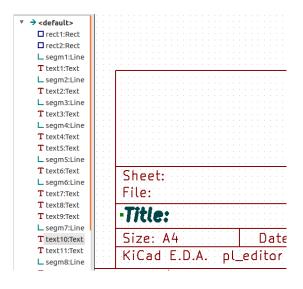
The left windows shows the list of layout items.

One can select a given item (left clicking on the line) or, when right clicking on the line, display a pop up menu.

This menu allows basic operations: add a new item, or delete the selected item.

\rightarrow A selected item is also drawn in a different color on draw panel.

Design tree: the item 19 is selected, and shown in highlighted on the draw panel.



9 Right window

The right window is the edit window.

Properties		
Item Properties General Options		
Type Page 1 option		
None		
Text		
H justification Left 🔽 🗖 Bold		
V justification Center 🔽 🗖 Italic		
Text Height (mm) Text Width (mm)		
Constraints: Max Size X (mm) Max Size Y (mm)		
Accept		
Comment		
Pos X (mm)		
Origin	Properties	
Pos Y (mm) Lower Right 💌	Item Properties General Options	
	Default Values:	
End X (mm)	Text Size X (mm) Text Size Y (mm)	
Origin	1,500 1,500	
End Y (mm)	Line Thickness (mm) Text Thickness	
Thickness	0,150 0,150	
Set to 0 to use default	Page Margins	
Rotation	Left Margin (mm) Right Margin (mm)	
Repeat parameters:	10,000 10,000	
Repeat count Text Increment	Top Margin (mm) Bottom Margin (mm) 10,000 10,000	
Step X (mm) Step Y (mm)	Accept	
	Accept	

On this dialog you can set the page property and the item property of the current item.

Displayed settings depend on the selected item:

Settings for lines and rectangles	Settings for texts
Accept Type Page 1 option Line None Comment Origin Pos X (mm) 50,000 Origin Pos Y (mm) Upper Left 2,000 Origin End X (mm) Origin End Y (mm) Upper Left 0,000 Set to 0 to use default Repeat parameters: Repeat count 30 Step Y (mm)	Accept Type Page 1 option Text None Image: Colspan="2">Text %K Image: Colspan="2">Image: Colspan="2" Image:
50,000 0,000	0,000 0,000
Settings for poly-polygons	Setting for bitmaps
Accept Type Page 1 option Poly Page 1 only Comment Dos X (mm) 136,002 Origin Pos Y (mm) Lower Right Thickness 0,010	Properties Item Properties General Options Type Page 1 option Bitmap None Accept Comment Pos X (mm) 169,002 Origin Pos Y (mm) Lower Right ▼ 18,007 Bitmap PPI 300
Rotation 20,000 Repeat parameters: Repeat count 1 Step X (mm) 5tep X (mm) 5tep Y (mm) 0,000 0,000	Repeat parameters: Repeat count 2 Step X (mm) 0,000 30,000

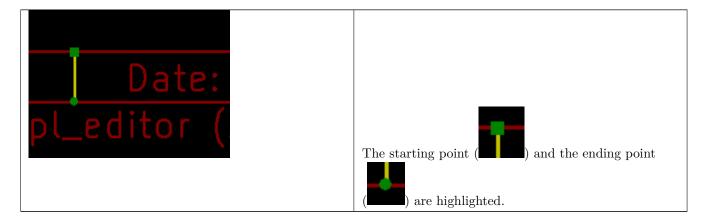
10 Interactive edition

10.1 Item selection

An item can be selected:

- From the Design tree.
- By Left clicking on it.
- By Right clicking on it (and a pop up menu will be displayed).

When selected, this item is drawn in yellow.

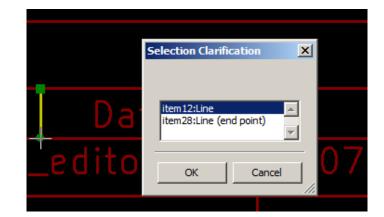


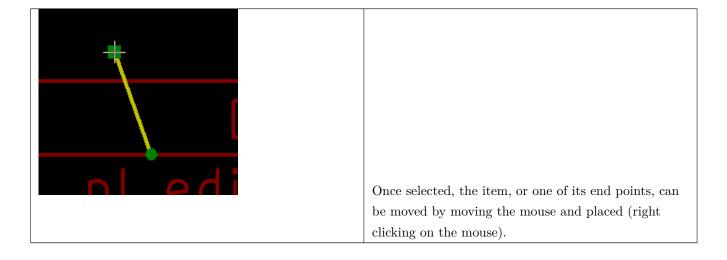
When right clicking on the item, a pop-up menu is displayed.

The pop menu options slightly depend on the selection:



If more than one item is found, a menu clarification will be shown, to select the item:



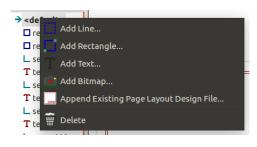


10.2 Item creation

To add a new item, right click the mouse button when the cursor is on the left window or the draw area.

A popup menu is displayed:

Pop up menu in left window



Pop up menu in draw area.

Add Line	
Add Rectangle	
Add Text	
💽 Add Bitmap	
Append Existing Page Layout Design File	
💽 Center	F4
🛞 Zoom In	
🕞 Zoom Out	
🔿 Redraw View	F3
Zoom Auto	
🕲 Zoom Select	
Grid Select	
🗙 Close	

Lines, rectangles and texts are added just by clicking on the corresponding menu item.

Logos must first be created by Bitmap2component, which creates a page layout description file. The Append Page Layout Descr File option append this file, to insert the logo (a poly polygon).

10.3 Adding lines, rectangles and texts

When clicking on the option, a dialog is opened:

Adding line or rectangle

New Item		×
Pos X (mm) <mark>0,000</mark>		Origin
Pos Y (mm) 0,000		Lower Right 💌
End X (mm) 0,000		Origin
End Y (mm) 0,000		Lower Right
Text		<u>^</u>
		Ţ
	ОК	Cancel

Adding text

New Item		×
Pos X (mm)		
0,000		Origin
Pos Y (mm)		Lower Right 💌
0,000		
		······································
End X (mm) 0,000		
·		Origin Lower Right 💌
End Y (mm) 0,000		
0,000		
Text		
Text		^
		v
	ОК	Cancel

Position of end points, and corner reference can be defined here.

However they can be defined later, from the right window, or by moving the item, or one of its end points.

Most of time the corner reference is the same for both points.

If this is not the case, define the corner reference at creation is better, because if a corner reference is changed later, the geometry of the item will be a bit strange.

When an item is created, if is put in move mode, and you can refine its position (this is very useful for texts and small lines or rectangles)

10.4 Adding logos

To add a logo, a poly polygon (the vectored image of the logo) must be first created using Bitmap2component.

Bitmap2component creates a page layout description file which is append to the current design, using the **Append Page Layout Descr File** option.

Bitmap2component creates a page layout description file which contains only one item: a poly polygon.

However, this command can be used to append any page layout description file, which is merged with the current design. Once a poly polygon is inserted, it can be moved and its parameters edited.

10.5 Adding image bitmaps

You can add an image bitmap using most of bitmap formats (PNG, JPEG, BMP ...).

- When a bitmap is imported, its PPI (pixel per inch) definition is set to 300PPI.
- This value can be modified in panel Properties (right panel).
- The actual size depend on this parameter.
- Be aware that using higher definition values brings larger output files, and can have a noticeable draw or plot time.

A bitmap can be repeated, but not rotated.