
Stage three: #292: Add @colspan, @rowspan, @headers, @scope, and <title> to <simpletable>

The <simpletable> in DITA 1.3 does not allow custom definition of the number of columns or rows that a cell should span. Likewise, the <simpletable> content model in DITA 1.3 does not include a caption or title for a table. Allowing column/row spanning and title will make the <simpletable> element more similar to the HTML5 table, which should make it more usable for authors working in web contexts and also more compatible with content structures in HDITA (the Lightweight DITA authoring format that is based on HTML5).

Champion

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Tracking information

Event	Date	Links
Stage 1 proposal accepted	Aug 6 2019	https://lists.oasis-open.org/archives/dita/201908/msg00027.html
Stage 2 proposal submitted	Jan 21 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">DITA version: http://tools.oasis-open.org/version-control/browse/wsvn/dita/trunk/DITA-2.0/stage-2/Issue292-simpletable-Update-revised.ditaPDF version: https://www.oasis-open.org/apps/org/workgroup/dita/email/archives/202001/msg00025/Issue292-simpletable-Update-revised.pdf
Stage 2 proposal discussed	Jan 21 2020	https://www.oasis-open.org/committees/download.php/61199/minutes20170711.txt
Stage 2 proposal approved	Jan 21 2020	https://www.oasis-open.org/apps/org/workgroup/dita/download.php/66592/latest/minutes20200121.txt
Stage 3 proposal submitted to reviewers	Mar 18 2020; revised Mar 25 2020	Sent to Robert Anderson, Carsten Brennecke
Stage 3 proposal (this document) submitted	Mar 27 2020	Issue292-stage3-simpletableUpdate.dita

Approved technical requirements

- Add <title> as optional first child of <simpletable>
- Add @colspan, @rowspan, @headers, and @scope as optional attributes to <stentry>

Dependencies or interrelated proposals

The grammar file changes presented in this proposal are needed in the entries for <properties> and <choicetable> in the technical content package.

Modified Grammar files

The following files must be modified:

- (DTD): commonElements.mod
- (RNG): commonElementsMod.rng

Figure 1: Changes to commonElements.mod

```
<!--          LONG NAME: Simple Table          -->
<!ENTITY % simpletable.content
          "(%title;)?,
           (%sthead;)?,
           (%strow;)+)"
>
```

```
<!ENTITY % stentry.attributes
          "specentry
           CDATA
           #IMPLIED
           %univ-atts;
           outputclass
           CDATA
           #IMPLIED"
          colspan
          NMTOKEN
          #IMPLIED
          rowspan
          NMTOKEN
          #IMPLIED
          scope
          (row |
           col |
           rowgroup |
           colgroup |
           -dita-use-conref-target)
          #IMPLIED
          headers
          NMTOKENS
          #IMPLIED"
>
```

Figure 2: Changes to commonElementsMod.rng

```
<div>
  <a:documentation>LONG NAME: Simple Table</a:documentation>
  <define name="simpletable.content">
    <optional>
      <ref name="title"/>
    </optional>
    <optional>
      <ref name="sthead"/>
    </optional>
  </define>
</div>
```

```
<define name="stentry.attributes">
  <optional>
    <attribute name="specentry"/>
  </optional>
  <ref name="univ-atts"/>
</define>
```

```

    <attribute name="outputclass"/>
  </optional>
<optional>
  <attribute name="colspan">
    <data type="NMTOKEN"/>
  </attribute>
</optional>
<optional>
  <attribute name="rowspan">
    <data type="NMTOKEN"/>
  </attribute>
</optional>
<optional>
  <attribute name="scope">
    <choice>
      <value>row</value>
      <value>col</value>
      <value>rowgroup</value>
      <value>colgroup</value>
      <value>-dita-use-conref-target</value>
    </choice>
  </attribute>
</optional>
<optional>
  <attribute name="headers">
    <data type="NMTOKENS"/>
  </attribute>
</optional>
</define>

```

Modified terminology

No new or updated terminology.

Modified specification documentation

Changes to simpletable.dita

Table 1: Before/after changes

Current language	Proposed language
<i>Short description:</i> Simple tables are tables that are regular in structure and do not need a caption.	<i>Short description:</i> Simple table is a basic tabular environment to present organized content.
<i>Usage information:</i> Choose the <simpletable> element when you want to show information in regular rows and columns.	<i>Usage information:</i> Choose the simple table environment when close control of tabular formatting is not as important. The main advantage of simple table is for compatibility with HTML5 tables.

Current language	Proposed language
<p><i>Example:</i></p> <pre><simpletable> <sthead> <stentry>P</stentry> <stentry>not P</stentry> </sthead> <strow> <stentry>>true</stentry> <stentry>>false</stentry> </strow> <strow> <stentry>>false</stentry> <stentry>>true</stentry> </strow> </simpletable></pre>	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <pre><simpletable> <title>Food log for today</title> <sthead> <stentry>Meal</stentry> <stentry>Food</stentry> </sthead> <strow> <stentry colspan="2">Fasting period</ stentry> </strow> <strow> <stentry>Lunch</stentry> <stentry rowspan="2">Chicken</stentry> </strow> <strow> <stentry>Dinner</stentry> </strow> </simpletable></pre> <p>The @keycol example can remain in the topic without affecting the proposed changes.</p>

Changes to table.dita

Table 2: Before/after changes

Current language	Proposed language
<p><i>Short description:</i> The <table> element organizes arbitrarily complex relationships of tabular information. This standard table markup allows column or row spanning and table captions or descriptions. An optional title allowed inside the <table> element provides a caption to describe the table.</p>	<p><i>Short description:</i> The table element organizes arbitrarily complex relationships of tabular information.</p>

Changes to stentry.dita

The short description for <stentry> in the 2.0 draft spec still works for this proposal. List of attributes and examples would need to be updated. The example should be reused from <simpletable>.

Changes to simpletableAttributes.dita

Append the following to the existing paragraph on attributes:

@colspan

Specifies the number of columns that a cell is to span inside a simple table.

@headers

Content can be reused from attribute in `entry.dita` (as long as the TC approves its usage in <stentry>)

@rowspan

Specifies the number of rows that a cell is to span inside a simple table.

@scope

Content can be reused from attribute in `entry.dita` (as long as the TC approves its usage in `<stentry>`)

Changes to table-elements.dita

Table 3: Before/after changes

Current language	Proposed language
The other table structure in DITA is called <code><simpletable></code> . As the name implies, it is structurally less complex than the OASIS table, and it can be used as a very simple, regular table for which close control of formatting is not as important. The main advantage of <code><simpletable></code> is for describing lists of data with regular headings, such as telephone directory listings, display adapter configuration data, or API properties.	The other table structure in DITA is called <code><simpletable></code> . As the name implies, it is structurally less complex than the OASIS table, and it can be used as a table for which close control of formatting is not as important. The main advantage of <code><simpletable></code> is for compatibility with HTML5 tables.

Migration plans for backwards incompatibilities

The proposed changes will not affect backwards compatibility because the `<title>` (for `<simpletable>`) element and `@rowspan`, `@colspan`, `@headers`, and `@scope` attributes (for `<stentry>`) will be optional. Existing `<simpletable>` implementations will not need the proposed changes.