Publication: Review F: Attributes available on tables (00813532-DD_1)

Topic: Attributes for table review (DD00813519)

Paragraph-level comments

This group includes attributes that are defined on table elements but not simple table elements. These attributes are part of the OASIS Exchange Table Model, unless otherwise noted. Table elements generally use only a subset of the attributes that are defined in this group. This group contains the following attributes: `@align`, `@char`, `@charoff`, `@colsep`, `@rowheader`, `@rowsep`, and `@valign`.

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
For some reason, I tripped over "table elements but not simple table elements". Part of me wants to use <table> and <simpletable>, but that's not quite right either. My brain is having a hard time parsing "table elements" and "simple table elements" as a Thing without some sort of formatting...but probably not required. May just be my brain being dumb.	zlawson	updated comment		9/1/2022 00:14:11	
Not cure what we can do here. Marking this comment as **CLOSED.**	keberlein	updated comment		9/1/2022 10:01:24	

Specifies the alignment of text in a table column. The following values are valid:

left
    Indicates left alignment of the text.
right
    Indicates right alignment of the text.
center
    Indicates center alignment of the text.
justify
    Justifies the contents to both the left and the right.
char
    Indicates character alignment. The text is aligned with the first occurrence of the character specified by the `@char` attribute.
-dita-use-conref-target
    See Using the -dita-use-conref-target value for more information.

The `@align` attribute is available on the following table elements: `<tgroup>`, `<colspec>`, and `<entry>`.

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
Specifies the alignment of text in a table column or entry ~~cell~~ .	gjoseph	updated change		3/1/2022 16:32:22	

The following values are valid: left Indicates left alignment of the text. right Indicates right alignment of the text. center Indicates center alignment of the text. justify Justifies the contents to both the left and the right. char Indicates character alignment. The text is aligned with the first occurrence of the character specified by the @char attribute.-dita-use-conref-targetSee Using the -dita-use-conref-target value for more information. The @align attribute is available on the following table elements: , , and .

@Gershon, I'm not sure about either the current wording or the wording that you have suggested: • When @align is set on tgroup, it applies to all entries in the table. • When @align is set on colspec, it applies to all entries in that particular column • When @align is set on entry, it applies to just that entry So, it all cases, setting the @align attribute affects table entries. I wonder if perhaps the most precise wording is "Specifies the horizontal alignment of text in one or more table entries"	keberlein	updated comment	3/1/2022 21:02:59
It can get even more complex than that, because when set on an entry it specifies the alignment for that entry, while setting it on a column specifies a default for that column (can be overridden by entry), and setting it on a tgroup specifies a default for all entries (can be overridden by colspec, which can be overridden by entry).	randerson	updated comment	7/1/2022 20:01:59
Changed to "Specifies the horizontal alignment of text in table entries." Marking this comment COMPLETED.	keberlein	updated comment	8/1/2022 20:46:26
@Kris, I like your suggested wording. Should we be even more precise with ", depending on which table element the attribute applies"? Or is that just making it more confusing? UGH. Sorry. Didn't see this as closed. Apologies for commenting on something you already fixed. Ignore my comment.	zlawson	updated comment	9/1/2022 00:16:35
No problem. Marking this comment as CLOSED.	keberlein	updated comment	9/1/2022 15:02:02

Specifies the alignment of text in a table column. The following values are valid:

left
> Indicates left alignment of the text.

right
> Indicates right alignment of the text.

center
> Indicates center alignment of the text.

justify
> Justifies the contents to both the left and the right.

char
> Indicates character alignment. The text is aligned with the first occurrence of the character specified by the `@char` attribute.

-dita-use-conref-target
> See Using the -dita-use-conref-target value for more information.

The `@align` attribute is available on the following table elements: `<tgroup>`, `<colspec>`, and `<entry>`.

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
Alphabeticize the elements that @align can be specified on. ---------- Done, and marking comment as **COMPLETED.**	keberlein	updated	comment	3/1/2022 21:03:52	

Specifies the horizontal offset of the alignment character. The value is a greater-than-zero number that is less than or equal to 100. It represents the percentage of the current column width by which the text is offset to the left of the alignment character.

For example, if `align="char"`, `char="."`, and `charoff="50"` are all specified, then text in the table entry is aligned 50% of the distance to the left of the first occurrence of the period character within the table entry.

The `@charoff` attribute is available on the following table elements: `<colspec>` and `<entry>`.

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
as with @char, do we want to add This attribute applies when align="char". to show when it's needed? I don't know if there's an example of this, but I'd love to see one, because this use case makes my head hurt. I'm guessing this comes from the OASIS XML table spec, but do we need to keep it? Does anyone use it?	zlawson	updated	comment	9/1/2022 00:22:12	
Changed the first sentence to read "Specifies the horizontal offset of the alignment character that is specified by the @char attribute."	keberlein	updated	comment	11/1/2022 01:58:24	

Marking this comment **COMPLETED.**

Specifies whether to render column separators between table entries. The following values are valid: 0 no separators) and 1 (separators).

The `@colsep` attribute is available on the following table elements: `<colspec>`, `<entry>`, `<table>`, and `<tgroup>`.

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
Specifies whether to render column separators between table entries. The following values are valid: 0 (no separators) and 1 (separators). The @colsep attribute is available on the following table elements:,, , and.	gjoseph	updated	change	3/1/2022 16:34:47	
Added the missing parenthesis. Marking this comment as **COMPLETED.**	keberlein	updated	comment	3/1/2022 18:17:28	

Specifies whether to render column separators between table entries. The following values are valid: 0 no separators) and 1 (separators).

The `@colsep` attribute is available on the following table elements: `<colspec>`, `<entry>`, `<table>`, and `<tgroup>`.

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
Along the lines of my later comment for @frame, do we want to add (somewhere, not necessarily here) behavior for which sides get lines when you use colsep or rowsep? I'm thinking to align with the @frame options, to "easily" figure out what options you need to use in different tables for similar effects. Or is that getting into implementation/processor dependent?	zlawson	updated	comment	9/1/2022 00:46:04	
@Zoe, @frame is a different set of controls than @colsep and @rowsep. @frame applies to both table and simple table; it controls the border of a table Marking this comment **CLOSED.**	keberlein	updated	comment	11/1/2022 01:45:03	

Specifies whether the entries in the respective column are row headers. The following values are valid:

firstcol
> Indicates that entries in the first column of the table are row headers. This applies when the `@rowheader` attribute is specified on the `<table>` element.

headers
> Indicates that entries of the column that is described using the `<colspec>` element are row headers. This applies when the `@rowheader` attribute is specified on the `<colspec>` element.

norowheader
> Indicates that entries in the first column are not row headers. This applies when the `@rowheader` attribute is specified on the `<table>` element.

-dita-use-conref-target
> See Using the -dita-use-conref-target value for more information.

Note:

This attribute is not part of the OASIS Exchange Table Model upon which DITA tables are based. Some processors or output formats might not support all values.

The `@rowheader` attribute is available on the following table elements: `<table>` and `<colspec>`.

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
Personally, I'd love to be sure there's examples somewhere so I can follow what's going on. If I don't want any column formatted as a header, I set @rowheader="norowheader" in the <table>. Is this a 'default'? Since by default generally, tables don't have row headers? If I want the first column as formatted as a header, I set @rowheader="firstcol" in the <table> If I want the last column (or a middle column) formatted as a header, I set @rowheader="headers" in the appropriate <colspec>. If I want multiple columns formatted, can I do that? Can I combine settings on <table> and <colspec> or would I have to do it all in the <colspec> elements? In some archtectural part of the spec, do we discuss inheritence and tables? If similar attributes are set in a row vs a table, etc., what happens? Or am I getting into User Guide/Implementation mud?	zlawson	updated comment		9/1/2022 00:33:17	
OK, I'll try to tackle your questions here: 1. There are examples about using @rowheader in the table topic. They'll probably be moved into an accessibility section in the archSpec. 2. I'm not sure what setting rowheader="norowheader" gets you, but it's there. 3. Yes, if you want the first column in a table to be formatted as a vertical header, you set @rowheader="firstcol" on the table element.	keberlein	updated comment		11/1/2022 01:55:29	

4. Yes, if you want the last column (or a middle column) formatted as a header, you set @rowheader="headers" on the applicable colspec element.
5. Yes, you can set multiple columns to be vertical headers. I have no earhtly clue what would happen if you combine setting headers on both table and colspec elements. It is undefined what processors should do in this case.
6. There is no inheritance or cascading of attributes on tables.

Marking this comment **CLOSED.**

Specifies the vertical alignment of text in a table entry. The following values are valid:

bottom
    Indicates that text is aligned with the bottom of the table entry.
middle
    Indicates that text is aligned with the middle of the table entry.
top
    Indicates that text is aligned with the top of the table entry.
-dita-use-conref-target
    See Using the -dita-use-conref-target value for more information.

The `@valign` attribute is available on the following table elements: `<entry>`, `<tbody>`, `<thead>`, and `<row>`.

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
Specifies the vertical alignment of text in a table entry or row . The following values are valid: bottom Indicates that text is aligned with the bottom of the table entry. middle Indicates that text is aligned with the middle of the table entry. top Indicates that text is aligned with the top of the table entry. -dita-use-conref-targetSee Using the -dita-use-conref-target value for more information. The @valign attribute is available on the following table elements:,,, and.	gjoseph	updated	change	3/1/2022 16:40:34	
@Gerson, similar to the @align attribute, I'm not sure about this. • When @valign is set on entry, it applies only to that specific entry • When @valign is set on tbody, it applies to all entries in the table • When @valign is set on thread, it applies to all entries in the table header • When @valign is set on row, it applies to all entries in that specific row	keberlein	updated	comment	3/1/2022 21:09:04	

So, in each case, the effect is on the table entries, which argues for leaving the wording as-is.

Changed to "Specifies the vertical alignment of text in table entries."

Marking this comment **COMPLETED.**

Specifies the vertical alignment of text in a table entry. The following values are valid:

bottom
    Indicates that text is aligned with the bottom of the table entry.
middle
    Indicates that text is aligned with the middle of the table entry.
top
    Indicates that text is aligned with the top of the table entry.
-dita-use-conref-target
    See Using the -dita-use-conref-target value for more information.

The `@valign` attribute is available on the following table elements: `<entry>`, `<tbody>`, `<thead>`, and `<row>`.

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
I have been trying to work out why @align is valid on <tgroup> but @valign is valid on <tbody> and <thead>. as <tbody> and <thead> are part of <tgroup>, obviously @align on <tgroup> applies to both. But might you want to specify something like center only on the <thead> rather, than the whole <tgroup> or the individual rows. Or might you want to specify @valign of middle on the entire <tgroup>, rather than on the individual colspecs? It seems like @align and @valign should apply to similar elements, with the exception of colspec or row. I'm sure it has something to do with the row and column distinction -- thead and tbody are row based, tgroup has colspecs and is therefore column based? But it still seems like it should be possible from a convenience perspective.	dstevens	updated comment		4/1/2022 15:19:39	
I don't know if there was a logic behind this. I'll defer to Robert, but I suspect this is just what is in the OASIS Exchange Table Model. Remember that complex tables in DITA follow the OASIS Exchange Table Model, with the exception of some attributes that were added to support accessibility, content reuse, and specialization. At the time that DITA was being developed (and later, released as a standard), many processors had built support for tables built on the OASIS Exchange Table Model, and the	keberlein	updated comment		4/1/2022 15:48:49	

TC certainly wanted application vendors to be able to leverage that as they developed support for DITA.

| This comes directly from the OASIS exchange model, and I'm not sure what their original reasoning is. Given the background there (reusing that model so that applications can reuse support), I don't think we'd want to change this. The attributes we've added to the model are all DITA specific, like the class attribute and accessibility attributes. | randerson | updated comment | 7/1/2022 19:56:01 |
| Marking this comment **CLOSED.** | keberlein | updated comment | 8/1/2022 20:42:43 |

Specifies the horizontal placement of the element. The following values are valid:

column
> Indicates that the element is aligned with the current column margin.

page
> Indicates that the element is placed on the left page margin for left-to-right presentation or the right page margin for right-to-left presentation.

spread
> Indicates that the object is rendered across a multi-page spread. If the output format does not have anything that corresponds to spreads, then spread has the same meaning as page.

textline
> Indicated that the element is aligned with the left (for left-to-right presentation) or right (for right-to-left presentation) margin of the current text line and takes indentation into account.

-dita-use-conref-target
> See Using the -dita-use-conref-target value for more information.

For `<table>`, in place of the `@expanse` attribute that is used by other DITA elements, the `@pgwide` attribute is used in order to conform to the OASIS Exchange Table Model.

Some processors or output formats might not support all values.

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
Specifies the horizontal placement of the element. The following values are valid: columnIndicates that the element is aligned with the current column margin.pageIndicates that the element is placed on the left page margin for left-to-right presentation or the right page margin for right-to-left presentation.spreadIndicates that the object is rendered across a multi-page spread. If the output format does not have anything that corresponds to spreads, then spread has the same meaning as page.textlineIndicate s d that the element is aligned with the left (for left-to-right presentation) or right (for right-to-left presentation) margin of the current text line and takes indentation into account.-dita-use-conref-targetSee Using the -dita-use-conref-target value for more information. For	gjoseph	updated change		3/1/2022 16:44:32	

, in place of the @expanse attribute that is used by other DITA elements, the @pgwide attribute is used in order to conform to the OASIS Exchange Table Model.Some processors or output formats might not support all values.

Changed "Indicated" to "Indicates". Thanks for catching this. Marking this comment as **COMPLETED.**	keberlein updated comment	3/1/2022 18:19:55

Specifies which portion of a border surrounds the element. The following values are valid:

all
    Indicates that a line is rendered at the top, bottom, left, and right of the containing element.

bottom
    Indicates that a line is rendered at the bottom of the containing element.

none
    Indicates that no lines are rendered.

sides
    Indicates that a line is rendered at the left and right of the containing element.

top
    Indicates that a line is rendered at the top of the containing element.
topbot
    Indicates that a line is rendered at the top and bottom of the containing element.
-dita-use-conref-target
    See Using the -dita-use-conref-target value for more information.

Some processors or output formats might not support all values.

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
Am I correct that <table> uses @rowsep and @colsep and <simpletable> uses @frame? We mention explicitly that <table> uses @pgwide instead of @expanse, should we do something similar for @frame?	zlawson	updated comment		9/1/2022 00:42:19	
No -- @frame can be used on both table and simple table. Adding an exception statement here would not make sense. Marking this comment **CLOSED.**	keberlein	updated comment		11/1/2022 01:46:52	

Specifies the width of each column in relationship to the width of the other columns. The value is a space-separated list of relative column widths. Each column width is specified as a positive integer or decimal number followed by an asterisk character.

For example, the value `relcolwidth="1* 2* 3*"` gives a total of 6 units across three columns. The relative widths are 1/6, 2/6, and 3/6 (16.7%, 33.3%, and 50%). Similarly, the value `relcolwidth="90* 150*"` causes relative widths of 90/240 and 150/240 (37.5% and 62.5%).

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
If relcolwidth is not specified or if the values don't have the asterisks, the widths are dynamic, based on the contents of the columns, correct? Should that be said explicitly? Also there is no way to indicate if cells should have a hard-coded width with a unit. Although I tell my clients never to do this with their tables, I think it could be important to some people to know that if they need to do this, they would have to use <table>	dstevens	updated comment		4/1/2022 15:35:47	
We don't state here what happens if @relcolwidth is not specified, so I suspect that it is left up to the processor and might depend on the output format. **@Robert?** I think that telling folks to use table if they need to be able to specify fixed-unit measurements for table columns is information that would be appropriate for a DITA primer, but not the spec. Marking this comment **CLOSED.**	keberlein	updated comment		4/1/2022 18:27:49	
Agree that it is left up to the processor and probably varies by format / by capability of that processor. Also agree that the definition of relcolwidth doesn't need to explain alternatives to that attribute available on other markup.	randerson	updated comment		7/1/2022 19:49:07	

This group includes attributes that are designed to be used by DITA practitioners when they create specializations: @specentry and @spectitle. These attributes are not intended for direct use by authors

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
We say this not intended for direct use by authors here at the intro to the list and in each list item. Seems redundant -- if it's part of the intro, we don't need to repeat in the list.	dstevens	updated comment		4/1/2022 15:38:53	
Yes, it does seem repetitive as presented there. But this is not necessarily the presentation that will be in the final spec. Look at the full PDF of the draft spec; there, the attributes are alphabeticized and present in a long list. I did find as I edited the attributes for this review that I needed them to be grouped together, so that I ensure that	keberlein	updated comment		4/1/2022 15:56:54	

there was parallelism in the descriptions. I also thought that reviewers would want to approach them that way.

I'm still talking about this with Robert -- and we will want TC feedback about the final design, but I think the spec needs to present the attributes in both the following ways:

- A topic that groups the attributes under the specific group (as done in the PDF for this review)
- An alphabeticized list of all attributes (where we definitely would need the phrase "Not intended for use by authors")

Given the confusion we've had with these in the past, I think I'd also be OK with the redundancy here, where I would not want that in most situations. I know we got requests in 1.2 or 1.3 to make this "not for use by authors" more obvious on the class attribute; these are used much less frequently but the same issue might apply.

| | randerson | updated comment | 7/1/2022 19:51:41 |

Marking this comment **CLOSED.**

| | keberlein | updated comment | 10/1/2022 21:44:58 |

Specifies a fixed or default header title for a specialization of the `<stentry>` element. This attribute is not intended for direct use by authors.

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
I'm actually not sure what this does, probably because I never specialize anything. But if I wanted to, I don't follow what it does. Does this mean I could have a table entry that automagically adds a label? or something like the properties table where a column would specifically be titled "Property name" ? Maybe there's a better example elsewhere, but I am not sure how to use this attribute at all. (or @spectitle, for that matter) Most likely this needs explanation in the Specialization topics.	zlawson	updated comment		9/1/2022 01:01:15	
This attribute has bothered me since DITA 1.0 and it might be time to get rid of it (along with spectitle). I'll send an email to the TC to discuss further.	randerson	updated comment		10/1/2022 21:54:58	
Marking this comment as **REFERRED**. It's on the agenda for the TC call on 11 January 2022.	keberlein	updated comment		11/1/2022 14:27:34	

Topic: colspec (DA00508850)

Topic-level comments

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
Don't suppose that there's any way to enable conditions on a column at this point?	sdoherty	updated comment		5/1/2022 16:18:06	
Not at this point - it's a much bigger change than it sounds, and would require a full feature proposal, so at this point it should be deferred to DITA 2.1. The filtering attributes were held off of DITA 1.0 because we knew at the time that they would break many implementations based on the CALS / OASIS Exchange model. At a very simple level, the model requires that each tgroup element specify the number of columns in a table, and the table is invalid if the cell count for any row does not match. Filtering breaks this; it is not possible for both the unfiltered table and a table with a filtered column to match the static value on that tgroup. It's possible for DITA to break this, but it would require that we address this edge case (and uglier ones about col spanning), and would require that every tool dealing with CALS-like table rendering have exceptions in place for DITA. Marking this comment **CLOSED**	randerson	updated comment		7/1/2022 20:37:08	

Paragraph-level comments

Specifies the column width. Valid values are either a proportional or fixed measure:

Proportional measure
> A value of 5* indicates five times the proportion.

Fixed measure
> A value of a coefficient followed by a unit of measurement. The coefficients are positive integers or fixed point numbers. The fixed unit values are case-insensitive. The allowed units of measure are cm (centimeters), in (inches), pi (picas), and pt (points). The default unit of measure is pt.

If the `@colwidth` attribute is not specified or is empty, a proportional measure of 1* is assumed.

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
"A value of 5* indcates five times the proportion." . . . not clear.	sdoherty	updated comment		5/1/2022 16:17:13	
@Stan, how would you suggest that we reword this? This is	keberlein	updated comment		6/1/2022 14:25:13	

what is stated in the OASIS Exchange Table Model ...

Changed to use the same definition as @relcolwidth.

Marking this comment **COMPLETED.**

Topic: table (DA00509284)

Paragraph-level comments

Specifies the horizontal placement of the element for print-oriented rendering. The following values are valid:

0
    Aligns the element with the left margin of the current text line and takes indention into account

1
    Places the element on the left page margin

Annotation	Reviewer	Status	Type	Date	Topic version
Add terminal periods.	sdoherty	updated	comment	5/1/2022 16:19:12	
We do not use periods when ALL the items in a list are sentence fragments, per our designated style guide. Marking this comment **CLOSED.**	keberlein	updated	comment	6/1/2022 14:28:59	