



# BibTeX

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For bibliographic references, LaTeX uses the BibTeX database system. In this session we shall:

1. compile an existing document with bibliographic references; see section 1.2. Both the document and the bibliographic database are included in this session’s set of practice files.
2. convert a fragment of a Wikipedia page to LaTeX with BibTeX citations and references, using a provided bibliographic database; see also section 1.2.
3. convert the provided example file above to natbib-style author-year references (section 2.2) and add new \cite commands. Do the same later with biblatex, which in addition supports citing by title and by url (section 2.5).
4. create or add to a BibTeX database; see sections 3 and 3.9.

The required files are in this session’s zipfile 3bibtex.zip.

## 1 The why and how of BibTeX

Different journals have different requirements for bibliographic references:

- » What to include, in what order
- » Capitalization

- » Punctuation
- » Abbreviations
- » Styling of text

With a bibliography manager you can maintain a single database of bibliographic references and have it generate the references for your paper in the required format.

Below a very short La<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> source which references entries from an existing Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> database (you can find the full Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> entries on page 7):

```
\documentclass{article}
\bibliographystyle{plain}
\begin{document}
```

See `\cite{lcompanion}` and `\cite{biboostrum}`.

```
\bibliography{bibdemo} % this line specifies bibdemo.bib as database
\end{document}
```

As you can guess, `lcompanion` and `biboostrum` are keys of database entries:

```
@Article{biboostrum,
  author = "Piet van Oostrum",
  title = "Een tutorial over het gebruik van {Bib{\TeX}}",
  year = 2004,
  ...
}
@Book{lcompanion,
  Author = "Frank Mittelbach and Michel Goossens",
  Title = "The {\LaTeX{}} Companion",
  year = 2004,
  ...
}
```

We get the following output:

<p>See [1] and [2].</p> <p><b>References</b></p> <p>[1] Frank Mittelbach and Michel Goossens. <i>The <math>\TeX</math> Companion</i>. Addison-Wesley, 2nd edition, 2004.</p> <p>[2] Piet van Oostrum. Een tutorial over het gebruik van Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub>. <i>MAPS</i>, 30:66–86, 2004.</p>
--

You can put the `\bibliographystyle` command anywhere before the `\bibliography` command.<sup>1</sup>

Bibliography styles are provided by `.bst` files: `plain.bst` in the example above, `alpha.bst` in the example from section 2.1, both hidden deep inside the  $\TeX$  Live directory structure.

Once you have prepared your La<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> source and your Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> database, you need to take the following steps:

1. Run `pdflatex` to generate the information that Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> needs
2. Run `bibtex` to generate the list of references

1. La<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> used to be more restrictive in this respect. Therefore, many old-time La<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> users still place the `\bibliographystyle` command right before the `\bibliography` command.

3. Run `pdflatex` to include the list of references
  4. Run `pdflatex` yet again to resolve bibliographic references (just like other cross-references)
- TeXstudio has a `bibtex` command in the Tools menu. You can also use keyboard shortcuts: F6, F11, F6, F6. Note that after further editing a single `pdflatex` run is enough as long as the list of references stays the same.

### 1.1 `nocite`: entries without citations

You can use `\nocite` instead of `\cite` if you don't want an automatically generated citation in the running text but do want an entry in the list of references:

```
\nocite{lcompanion}
```

**Tip.** You can quickly create a formatted printout of your BibTeX database with the `\nocite{*}` command (see `testbib.tex` from the practice files):

```
\documentclass{article}
\bibliographystyle{plain}
\begin{document}
\nocite{*}
\bibliography{your_bibtex_file}
\end{document}
```

### 1.2 Practice

1. Run the `bibdemo` example: after unpacking the practice files in a suitable folder, load `bibdemo.tex` in TeXstudio. Then carry out the four steps listed on page 2.
2. Try to recreate `Factors_refs.html` from the practice files as a LaTeX file with proper cite commands and a proper list of references. Use the `factors.bib` bibliography database.

## 2 Bibliography styles: three generations

### 2.1 The original BibTeX

The original BibTeX from 1988 uses a simple citation style: the entries in the list of references get an automatically generated label – either numerical or alphanumerical – for cross-referencing. We already saw numerical references. Here is an example with alphanumerical labels:

```
\documentclass{article}
\bibliographystyle{alpha}
\begin{document}
```

See `\cite{lcompanion}` and `\cite{biboostrum}`.

```
\bibliography{bibdemo}
\end{document}
```

See [MG04] and [vO04].

#### References

- [MG04] Frank Mittelbach and Michel Goossens. *The L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X Companion*. Addison-Wesley, 2nd edition, 2004.
- [vO04] Piet van Oostrum. Een tutorial over het gebruik van BibTeX. *MAPS*, 30:66–86, 2004.

## 2.2 The next step: author – Year citation styles

The classical bibliography styles didn't provide for author – year citation styles, such as in the examples below:

See Castaldo et al. from 2006 and Knuth (1990).

### References

Castaldo, R. J., M. A. McKay, and V. Tosic (2006). Exposing gnu octave signal processing functions as extensible markup language (xml) web services. In *Proc. Canadian Conf. Electrical and Computer Engineering CCECE '06*, pp. 1442–1445.

Knuth, D. E. (1990). *The T<sub>E</sub>Xbook*, Volume A of *Computers and Typesetting*. Reading, MA, USA: Addison-Wesley.

or, with a different bibliography style:

See Castaldo et al. from 2006 and Knuth (1990).

### References

R. J. Castaldo, M. A. McKay, and V. Tosic, in *Proc. Canadian Conf. Electrical and Computer Engineering CCECE '06* (2006), pp. 1442–1445.

D. E. Knuth, *The T<sub>E</sub>Xbook*, vol. A of *Computers and Typesetting* (Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA, USA, 1990).

Note the absence of labels in the list of references.

Author-year citation styles are provided by the `natbib` package and by various alternatives such as the `apalike` and `harvard` packages. `natbib` is the most popular one and can replace most of the others. This is the L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X preamble code:

```
\usepackage{natbib}
\bibliographystyle{chicago} % first example
%\bibliographystyle{apsrev} % second example
```

Cite commands in the running text:

```
See \citeauthor{castaldo2006} from \citeyear{castaldo2006} and
\cite{texbook}.
```

A sample of citation commands supported by `natbib`:

```
\cite{tamethebeast}      Markey, 2005
\citet{tamethebeast}    Markey (2005)  'in-text'
\citep{tamethebeast}    (Markey, 2005)  'parenthesized'
\citet[noted] {lshort}  Oetiker et al. (2011, noted)
\citep*[lshort]         (Oetiker et al., 2011)
\citeauthor{tamethebeast} Markey
\citeyear{lshort}       2011
```

`\nocite` works as usual.

See the `natbib` manual for more variations and for customization options.

## 2.3 Practice

Try out `natbib`-style citations on a copy of `bibdemo.tex`.

## 2.4 Generating your own bibliography style with custom-bib/makebst

Journals sometimes have very specific requirements as to the formatting of bibliographic entries, without providing a bibliography style implementing this formatting. Even if a suitable style exists, it may be hard to find one, although the *UK T<sub>E</sub>X FAQ* has to offer some advice. One way out is creating your own .bst file.

If a style is almost correct, *and* if you can make some sense out of .bst files (a big if!), then maybe you can fix it yourself.

Another option is the makebst program. This is a two-step process: in the first step, you have to answer a very long list of questions. Your answers are written to an intermediate answers file. In the second step, a .bst file is generated from this list of answers. See the documentation of makebst for details, e.g. file-search for makebst in texdoctk.

However, the process is too involved and time-consuming to practice in this course.

## 2.5 The latest and greatest: biblatex

A radical reimplementaion of bibliography support is biblatex. Bibliography styles aren't written in the unfamiliar .bst syntax but in LaT<sub>E</sub>X, and the role of BibT<sub>E</sub>X is reduced to collecting and sorting the bibliographic data. LaT<sub>E</sub>X itself selects, arranges and formats the fields of the bibliographic entries. Advantages include

- » many variations in bibliography style can be realized simply with package options, without editing .bst files
- » better support for non-Western languages
- » more citation options, because LaT<sub>E</sub>X has access to all the bibliographic information
- » easy per-chapter bibliographies

Fortunately, an old BibT<sub>E</sub>X database is still compatible with biblatex.

**Getting started with biblatex.** You can easily experiment with biblatex. If you include a package option natbib or natbib=true then you can keep using natbib cite commands in your LaT<sub>E</sub>X source.

You should also configure TeXstudio to use biber instead of BibT<sub>E</sub>X (*Options / Configure TeXstudio / Build / Default Bibliography*), or alternatively load biblatex with an option backend=bibtex.

Below biblatex preamble commands, assuming biber as backend; note that with biblatex the \bibliography command should be in the preamble:

```
\usepackage[style=numeric]{biblatex}
\bibliography{bibdemo}
```

And near the end:

```
\printbibliography
```

The complete source for the first example:

```
\documentclass{article}
\usepackage[style=numeric]{biblatex}
\bibliography{bibdemo}
\begin{document}
See \cite{lcompanion} and \cite{bacgri2003}.

\printbibliography
\end{document}
```

Output:

See [2] and [1].

### References

- [1] Lance J. Bachmeier and James M. Griffin. “New evidence on asymmetric gasoline price responses”. In: *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 85.3 (2003), pp. 772–776.
- [2] Frank Mittelbach and Michel Goossens. *The L<sub>A</sub>T<sub>E</sub>X Companion*. 2nd. Addison-Wesley, 2004.

An example with author-year citations and the new `\citetitle` command:

```
\documentclass{article}
\usepackage[bibstyle=authoryear,block=ragged]{biblatex}
\bibliography{bibdemo}

\begin{document}
See \citetitle{lcompanion} by \citeauthor{lcompanion} published in
\citeyear{lcompanion}.

\printbibliography
\end{document}
```

See *The L<sub>A</sub>T<sub>E</sub>X Companion* by Mittelbach and Goossens published in 2004.

### References

- Mittelbach, Frank and Michel Goossens (2004). *The L<sub>A</sub>T<sub>E</sub>X Companion*. 2nd. Addison-Wesley.

By now, there are quite a few biblatex styles (search for ‘biblatex-’ in the CTAN Catalogue), and existing styles can be tweaked with options. Still, it is conceivable that none of the existing styles are usable. And there is no `makebst` (section 2.4) for biblatex. It is also possible that the recipient has an antiquated T<sub>E</sub>X setup and is not willing or not able to handle biblatex. So it is too soon to assign the older solutions to the dustbin.

## 2.6 Practice

Modify a copy of `bibdemo.tex` to make use of biblatex and the `\citetitle` command.

## 3 The Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> database format

This section describes the Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> database format. Like a L<sub>A</sub>T<sub>E</sub>X source, a Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> database is a plain text file. It has an extension `.bib`, and consists of a series of records such as the following:

```
@Article{biboostrum,
  author = "Piet van Oostrum",
  title = "Een tutorial over het gebruik van {Bib{\TeX}}",
  journal = "{MAPS}",
  volume = "30",
  pages = "66--86",
  year = 2004,
}
@Book{lcompanion,
  Author = "Frank Mittelbach and Michel Goossens",
  Title = "The {\LaTeX{}} Companion",
```

```

    Publisher = AW,
    year = 2004,
    Edition = "2nd",
}

```

Note the general structure: a BibTeX record consists of:

- » The type of publication, e.g. article or book
- » A key, e.g. biboostrom or lcompanion, which is used for citing
- » A list of fields

The list of required and optional fields varies with the entry type. You can add additional fields, e.g. as comments for yourself. Any field which is not required or optional will simply be ignored.

For most fields, the values should be enclosed in braces { and }, or in double quotes " ". Values which are clearly numbers, such as years and volume numbers, may be entered 'bare'.

You should enclose LaTeX code in an additional set of braces to keep BibTeX from messing with it. You should do the same with all-caps words.

As to accented characters: the safe solution is always to use macros: {\`e} rather than é, although with care or luck accented letters may work ok; see section 3.4.

### 3.1 BibTeX editors

For creation and maintenance of your BibTeX database you should pick a program that uses BibTeX as its native format. Our TeX Live installation includes *JabRef*, which is a Java application and therefore available on all platforms. On Mac OS, *BibDesk* is a popular choice.

Editing manually with your LaTeX editor is another good option.

### 3.2 Using online resources

Often, you do not need to create entries from scratch. There are various online resources which can export bibliographic entries in BibTeX format. A popular option is *Zotero*, which is a Firefox extension and a reference manager in its own right.

Zotero created the entry below from the Amazon page about a book and exported it to BibTeX format (click the 'save to Zotero' icon in the FireFox address field):

```

@book{voss_latex_2011,
  title = {Latex Quick Reference},
  isbn = {1906860211},
  publisher = {Uit Cambridge Ltd.},
  author = {Voss, Herbert},
  month = sep,
  year = {2011}
}

```

<http://lead.to/amazon/> is another service which creates BibTeX records from Amazon pages.

If you have an ISBN number for a book, you can go to <http://ottobib.com/> to get a BibTeX record.

The university offers access to *RefWorks*. However, its BibTeX support leaves something to be desired.

See also <http://tex.stackexchange.com/questions/143/> for more suggestions from users on where and how to get ready-made BibTeX records.

You should always double-check imported entries when you add them to your database. The tag may be just a database index number, fields or field values may be nonsensical, or there may be syntax errors.

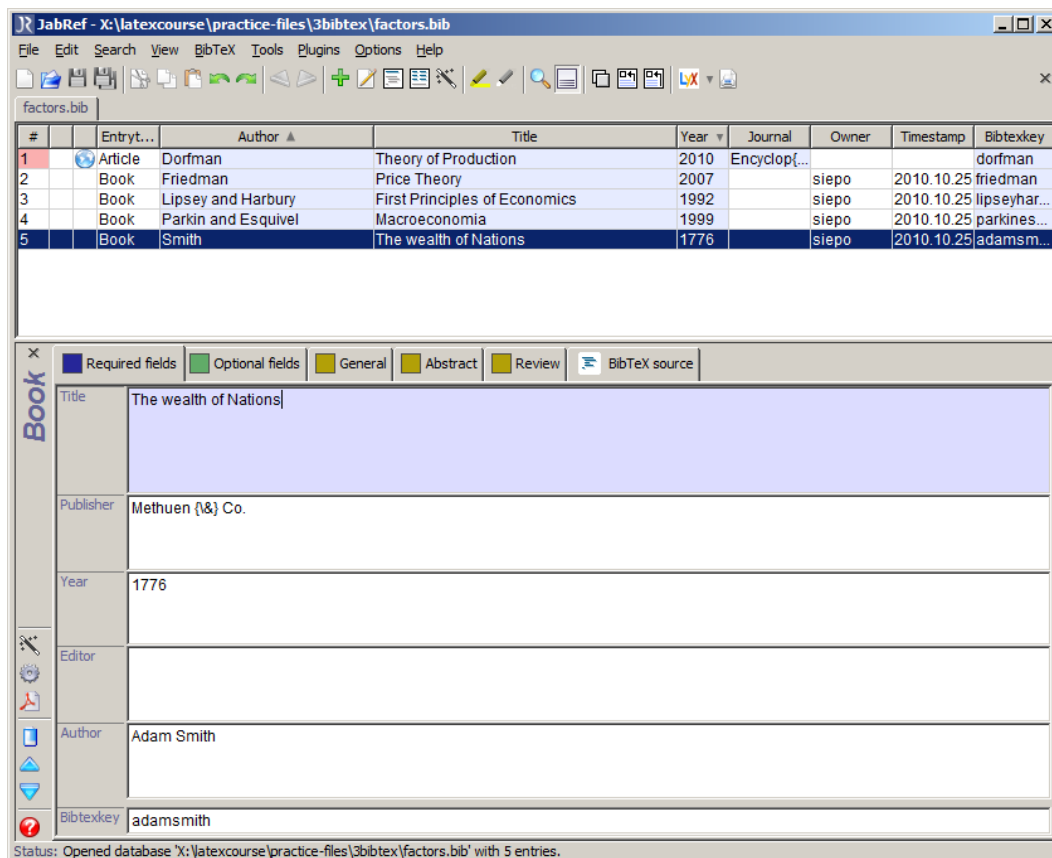


Figure 1. JabRef Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> editor

### 3.3 Examples

Now let us have a more in-depth look at the Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> database format, by looking at a series of examples.

```
@TECHREPORT{canond2003,
  author = "Marcel Canoy and Sander Onderstal",
  year = 2003,
  title = "Tight oligopolies: {I}n search of proportionate remedies",
  number = 29,
  institution = "{CPB} Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis",
  address = "The Hague",
}
```

TECHREPORT is the type of the publication. Capitalization is not significant in Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> entry types and field names.

The key canond2003 is used by the various cite commands.

{CPB} is enclosed in braces to protect it against Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub>'s automatic capitalization.

Also notice the author field: this consists of two authors, each in *first last* format. The names are separated with 'and'.

### 3.4 Example: brace delimiters, alternate author syntax, accented letters

```
@Misc{clementsgalvao2001,
  author = {Clementz, Michael P. and Galv{\~{a}}o, Ana Beatriz},
  title = {A comparison of tests of non-linear cointegration with an application
```



```

    to the predictability of {US} interest rates using the term structure},
    year = 2001,
    howpublished = {Mimeo, Department of Economics, University of Warwick},
}

```

This example encloses values in braces rather than double quotes. This makes it possible to use values which include double quotes (nesting braces within braces is never a problem).

The author field uses the alternate syntax of *last, first*. The BibTeX manual (Patashnik (1988)) has more to say about the parsing of author's names.

Note that this entry has a different set of fields. The bibliography style determines which entry types are recognized and which fields are required or optional for each entry type.

Again, braces around US ensure that BibTeX leaves capitalization alone.

**Accented characters.** The above example includes a macro for an accented letter inside braces: `{\~a}`. You can use accented letters outright, but it requires care: make sure that the encoding, probably either `latin1` or `utf8`, matches the LaTeX source, and that you include a preamble command

```
\usepackage[enc]{inputenc}
```

where `enc` should usually be `utf8` or `latin1`. Or you can use one of the modern TeX engines XeLaTeX or LuaLaTeX, which always expect `utf8`.

### 3.5 Example: a predefined abbreviation and a dummy field

```

@string{AW = "Addison-Wesley"}
...
@Book{lcompanion,
  Author = "Frank Mittelbach and Michel Goossens",
  Title = "The {\LaTeX{}} Companion",
  Publisher = AW,
  year = 2004,
  Edition = "2nd",
  ignorablefield = "too fat for my backpack",
}

```

You can define abbreviations with `@string` entries. You can also create a `.bib` file with `@string` entries, and load it before the actual database file.

This entry also uses a dummy field `ignorablefield` for private information.

### 3.6 Example: author names with a 'von' part; number ranges

```

@article{meycra2004,
  author = {Meyer, Jochen and von Cramon-Taubadel, Stephan},
  title = {Asymmetric Price Transmission: A Survey},
  year = 2004,
  journal = {Journal of Agricultural Economics},
  volume = 55,
  number = 3,
  pages = {581-611},
}

@inproceedings{ricejava,
  author = "Istiqomah Istiqomah and Manfred Zeller and
    Stephan von Cramon-Taubadel",
  title = "Volatility and Integration of Rice Markets in Java, Indonesia",
}

```

```

    booktitle = "Tropentag 2005",
    year = 2005,
}

```

These examples feature an author's name with a 'von' part, first in *von last, first* syntax, then in *first von last* syntax. Again, Patashnik (1988) explains handling of author's names.

Also note that Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> will expand the range 581–611 to 581--611, producing a proper n-dash in the typeset output.

You can read a full description of the .bib format in the original Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> documentation, Patashnik (1988). This documentation doesn't cover extensions from e.g. the Natbib- and biblatex packages and corresponding bibliography styles.

### 3.7 The url field

Some bibliography styles, including styles created with makebst/custom-bst, support an url field. It is even required for the biblatex online entry type. It is a good idea to load the url package, to make sure that special characters such as underscores and tildes are rendered correctly, and to enable line-breaking inside the url. LaTeX source:

```

\documentclass{article}
\usepackage{natbib}
\bibliographystyle{plainnat}
\usepackage{url}
...
\nocite{biboostrum}
\bibliography{bibdemo}
\end{document}

```

Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub> entry:

```

@Article{biboostrum,
  author = "Piet van Oostrum",
  title = "Een tutorial over het gebruik van {Bib{\TeX}}",
  journal = "{MAPS}",
  volume = "30",
  pages = "66--86",
  year = 2004,
  url = "http://www.ntg.nl/maps/pdf/30_15.pdf",
}

```

results in:

Piet van Oostrum. Een tutorial over het gebruik van Bib<sub>T</sub>E<sub>X</sub>. *MAPS*, 30:66–86, 2004. URL [http://www.ntg.nl/maps/pdf/30\\_15.pdf](http://www.ntg.nl/maps/pdf/30_15.pdf).

### 3.8 Urls in other fields

If the bibliography style doesn't use an url field, you can include an url in another field. 'How-published' is a good option, but only in combination with e.g. the Misc entry type, since it is ignored by most other entry types. Alternatively, the 'Note' field is supported by almost all entry types.

```

@Manual{tamethebeast,
  author = "Nicolas Markey",
  title = "Tame {t}he {BeaST}, The B to X of {BibTeX}",
  year = 2005,
  note = "{\url{http://www.lsv.ens-cachan.fr/~markey/BibTeX/doc/ttb_en.pdf}}",
}
@Misc{some,

```

```

author = "Au Thor",
title = "Some title",
howpublished = "\url{http://www.a.site.net/sometitle.html}",
}

```

LaTeX source:

```

\documentclass{article}
\bibliographystyle{plain}
\usepackage{url}
...
\nocite{*}
\bibliography{nourl}
\end{document}

```

[1] Nicolas Markey. *Tame the Beast, The B to X of BibTeX*, 2005. [http://www.lsv.ens-cachan.fr/~markey/BibTeX/doc/ttb\\_en.pdf](http://www.lsv.ens-cachan.fr/~markey/BibTeX/doc/ttb_en.pdf).

[2] Au Thor. Some title. <http://www.a.site.net/sometitle.html>.

The natbib reimplementations plainnat, abbrvnat and unsrnat of the corresponding classical bibliography styles do provide a url field and don't require the above workarounds.

More trickery for working around BibTeX's automatism can be found in Markey (2005) and in the BibTeX chapter of the *UK TeX FAQ*.

### 3.9 Practice

Add entries to `bibdemo.bib` and check your work with `testbib.tex` and the `\nocite{*}` command, as described in section 1.1.

A suggestion: Find a Wikipedia page with many references, e.g. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economics>. Locate entries with enough bibliographic information and turn them into BibTeX entries. Or get more bibliographic details, or even a complete BibTeX entry via e.g. *Google Scholar* and other resources mentioned in <http://tex.stackexchange.com/questions/143/>.

## 4 Troubleshooting

### 4.1 Random things to try

**Rerun LaTeX.** Maybe you just need another LaTeX run to resolve the `\cite` commands.

**Problems with old auxiliary files.** Sometimes it helps to start with a clean slate by getting rid of old auxiliary files: click on 'Clean' on the Tools menu and start over with F6, F11, F6, F6.

This may be necessary if an error or incompatibility in one of the auxiliary files prevents LaTeX from continuing. An incompatibility may arise if you change something in the bibliographic options.

**Input encoding.** Maybe there is a mismatch between the encoding of the BibTeX database and the LaTeX source. Add a line in the LaTeX preamble

```
\usepackage[utf8]{inputenc}
```

or

```
\usepackage[latin1]{inputenc}
```

or, if there is already such a line, change 'latin1' into 'utf8' or vice versa.

## 4.2 JabRef

Make sure you run only one copy of JabRef. In particular, do not load one Bib $\TeX$  file into two copies of JabRef, which can easily happen.

Click *File / Save database* to make sure that Bib $\TeX$  or biber gets up to date information.

## 4.3 Get more information

In TeXstudio, try to get more detailed information, e.g. by clicking on the error tab of the tabbed pane under the edit area.

Log files can also be useful, but often contain masses of useless gibberish. The above-mentioned tabbed pane also has a tab for the La $\TeX$  log, but not for the Bib $\TeX$  log, which may be more useful. You can load the Bib $\TeX$  log into TeXstudio anyway: click on *File > Open*. Make sure that ‘Files of type’ is set to ‘All files(\*)’ and then select `filename.blg`, assuming that the La $\TeX$  file is called `filename.tex`. Another file to look at is `filename.aux`.

# References

*BibDesk*. GUI bibliography manager for the Mac. URL: <http://bibdesk.sourceforge.net/>.

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*Google Scholar*. URL: <http://scholar.google.com/>.

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Oostrum, Piet van (2004). “Een tutorial over het gebruik van Bib $\TeX$ ”. In: *MAPS* 30, pp. 66–86. URL: [http://www.ntg.nl/maps/pdf/30\\_15.pdf](http://www.ntg.nl/maps/pdf/30_15.pdf).

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