

File naming conventions

This page defines the file naming conventions used in this repository.

General principles

- Use descriptive filenames.
- Avoid spaces in filenames.
- Use lowercase letters.
- Separate words consistently using hyphens or underscores depending on context.

Documentation and manuscripts

Documentation files, manuscripts, figures, tables, and other human-readable artifacts use **hyphens** to separate words.

Examples:

```
cover-letter.tex  
cover-letter.pdf  
review-response.tex  
review-response.pdf  
fig-study-basin.tex  
fig-study-basin.pdf  
tab-algorithms.tex  
submission-docs/
```

Hyphens improve readability and match conventions commonly used in documentation, URLs, and open-source repositories.

Source code

Source code files use **underscores** to separate words.

Examples:

```
flow_direction.py  
longest_flow_path.py  
mesh_builder.cpp  
grid_utils.h
```

Underscores are preferred because they are compatible with programming identifiers and module imports.

Command-line tools

Command-line interface (CLI) programs use **hyphens** in their executable names because they are user-facing commands.

Examples:

```
flow-direction  
longest-flow-path  
mesh-builder
```

Hyphenated command names improve readability and are consistent with common Unix command naming practices.

Generated files

Generated files should normally keep the same base name as their source files.

Example:

```
cover-letter.tex → cover-letter.pdf
```

This avoids unnecessary renaming during the build process.

Exceptions

Some ecosystems have their own naming conventions and should follow those conventions. For example, GRASS modules follow the GRASS naming scheme.

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