# Syntax Color: Utilities

Version 9.0

**Scott Owens** 

November 21, 2025

The "syntax-color" collection provides the underlying data structures and some helpful utilities for the color:text<%> class of framework.

## Contents

1	Parenthesis Matching	3
2	Lexer Contract and The Don't-Stop Structure Type	6
3	Racket Lexer	8
4	Default Lexer	11
5	Module Lexer	12
6	Scribble Lexer	15
7	Splay Tree for Tokenization	17
8	Interface for Clients of Syntax Color Output	19
9	Racket S-Expression Indentation and Navigation	22
	9.1 S-Expression Navigation	22
	9.2 S-Expression Indentation	23

### 1 Parenthesis Matching

Parenthesis matching code built on top of token-tree%.

```
paren-tree% : class?
  superclass: object%

(new paren-tree%
     [matches matches]
     ...superclass-args...)
  → (is-a?/c paren-tree%)
  matches : (listof (list/c symbol? symbol?))
```

Creates a paren-tree% object that treats (map car matches) as open parens and (map cadr matches) as close parens, where each element of matches is a matching pair of parens.

Each paren tree tracks a sequence of tokens (added with add-token) and can respond to queries about the location of a paren that matches a paren at some specific location via match-forward and match-backward. The paren-tree% also supports a notion of invisible parentheses that take up no space, where the opens exist only at the start of a token and the closes exist only at the end of a token.

Changed in version 1.6 of package syntax-color-lib: Added support for invisible parens.

```
(send a-paren-tree add-token
  type
  length
[#:invisible-opens invisible-opens
  #:invisible-closes invisible-closes])
  → void?
  type : (or/c #f symbol?)
  length : natural?
  invisible-opens : natural? = 0
  invisible-closes : natural? = 0
```

Adds one token to the end of the current tree. If type is a symbol, it is expected to be one of the symbols in matches. If it is #f, then there are no visible parenthese in this token. The invisible-opens and invsible-closes indicate how many of each there are on this token (note that the invisible opens all exist at the start of the token and the invisible closes all exist at the end of the token).

Changed in version 1.6 of package syntax-color-lib: Added #:invisible-opens and #:invisible-closes arguments.

Determines if there is a match for the paren at pos.

If *invisible* is #f, then the invisible parens are ignored and the match considers only the parentheses that were explicit in the *token* argument to addtoken.

If *invisible* is a natural number, then the matching starts outside of that many invisible parens. For example, if there are two invisible open parenthes on the token at *pos*, then passing 1 as *invisible* will find the match to only the inner invisible paren. If it is 2, it will find the match to the outer invisible paren. If *invisible* is 'all, then it is the same as passing the total number of invisible parens that are on the token at *pos*.

The first return is the starting position of the open paren The second return is the position of the matching close paren. If the third return is #f, then the first two returns represent a real match. If the third return is a number, it is the maximum position in the tree that was searched. If the third result indicates an error, the first two results give the starting and stopping positions for error highlighting. If all three are #f, then there was no tree to search, or the position did not immediately precede an open.

Changed in version 1.6 of package syntax-color-lib: Added #:invisible argument.

Like paren-tree% match-forward, except matches backwards from the given paren.

The matching goes backwards from *pos* to the matching paren; accordingly, the count of invisibles starts from the close parens and goes through the opens (unlike paren-tree% match-forward which starts with the opens and goes through the closes).

The results are, however, identical to paren-tree% match-forward. So, if the match is successful, the first result is the location of the open paren and the second is the close.

Changed in version 1.6 of package syntax-color-lib: Added #:invisible argument.

```
(send a-paren-tree split-tree pos) → void?
pos : natural?
```

Splits the tree at *pos*, which must not be in the middle of a token. Everything following *pos* is marked as invalid.

```
(send a-paren-tree merge-tree num-to-keep) → void?
num-to-keep : natural?
```

Makes the num-to-keep last positions that have been marked invalid valid again.

```
(send a-paren-tree truncate pos) → void?
pos : natural?
```

Removes the tokens after pos.

```
(send a-paren-tree is-open-pos? pos) → (or/c #f symbol?)
pos : natural?
```

Returns #f if the position does not have a visible paren. Returns the corresponding close if it does have an open.

```
(send a-paren-tree is-close-pos? pos) → (or/c #f symbol?)
  pos : natural?
```

Returns #f if the position does not have a visible paren. Returns the corresponding open if it does have a close.

```
(send a-paren-tree get-invisible-count pos) → natural? natural?
pos : natural?
```

Returns the number of invisible opens and invisible closes at pos.

Added in version 1.6 of package syntax-color-lib.

## 2 Lexer Contract and The Don't-Stop Structure Type

Checks to be sure a lexing function is well-behaved, constrained to functions where the second return value is a symbol. For more details, see start-colorer in color:text<%>.

```
lexer*/c : contract?
```

Checks to be sure a lexing function is well-behaved. For more details, see start-colorer in color:text<%>.

It also supplies a few random arguments to the lexer and checks the results, using option/c's #:tester argument.

Added in version 1.2 of package syntax-color-lib.

```
lexer*/c-without-random-testing : contract?
```

The same contract as lexer\*/c, except without the random testing.

```
(struct dont-stop (val))
  val : any/c
```

A structure type used to indicate to the lexer that it should not allow itself to be interrupted. For more details, see start-colorer in color:text<%>.

```
(check-colorer-results-match-port-before-and-afters
who
  type
  pos-before
  new-token-start
  new-token-end
  pos-after)
  → void?
  who : symbol?
  type : any/c
  pos-before : (or/c exact-positive-integer? #f)
  new-token-start : (or/c exact-positive-integer? #f)
  new-token-end : (or/c exact-positive-integer? #f)
  pos-after : (or/c exact-positive-integer? #f)
```

Checks that the results of a colorer make sense with respect to the positions of the port, before and after the lexer is called.

The pos-before argument is expected to be the third result of port-next-location before a lexer is called and the pos-after argument is expected to to be the third result of port-next-location after the lexer is called. The type, token-start, and token-end arguments should be the corresponding results from the colorer (c.f. start-colorer).

This function raises an error unless the following boolean expression is true:

but it checks the individual parts of the expression to raise a more meaningful error message when some part is not true.

The who argument is used to start the error message.

Added in version 1.4 of package syntax-color-lib.

#### 3 Racket Lexer

A lexer for Racket, including reader extensions (§13.7 "Reader Extension"), built specifically for color:text<%>.

The racket-lexer function returns 5 values:

- Either a string containing the matching text or the eof object. Block comments and specials currently return an empty string. This may change in the future to other string or non-string data.
- A symbol in '(error comment sexp-comment white-space constant string no-color parenthesis hash-colon-keyword symbol eof other).
- A symbol in '(|(| |)| |[| |]| |{| |}|) or #f.
- A number representing the starting position of the match (or #f if eof).
- A number representing the ending position of the match (or #f if eof).

Like racket-lexer, but uses the extended lexer protocol to track and report regions that are commented out with #;. It also uses current-lexeme->semantic-type-guess to potentially add 'semantic-type-guess to the second result.

Added in version 1.2 of package syntax-color-lib.

Changed in version 1.7: Added use of current-lexeme->semantic-type-guess.

Like racket-lexer, but returns an extra value. The last return value indicates whether the consumed token should count as a datum, an opening parenthesis (or similar starting token to group other tokens), a closing parenthesis (or similar), or a prefix (such as whitespace) on a datum.

Like racket-lexer/status, but with comment tracking and 'semantic-type-guess addition like racket-lexer\*.

Added in version 1.2 of package syntax-color-lib.

Changed in version 1.7: Added use of current-lexeme->semantic-type-guess.

```
(racket-nobar-lexer/status in)
  → (or/c string? eof-object?)
    symbol?
    (or/c symbol? #f)
    (or/c number? #f)
    (or/c number? #f)
    (or/c 'datum 'open 'close 'continue)
    in : input-port?
```

Like racket-lexer/status, except it treats | as a delimiter instead of quoting syntax for a symbol. This function is used by scribble-lexer.

Like racket-nobar-lexer/status, but with comment tracking and 'semantic-type-guess addition like racket-lexer\*.

Added in version 1.2 of package syntax-color-lib.

Changed in version 1.7: Added use of current-lexeme->semantic-type-guess.

```
(current-lexeme->semantic-type-guess)
  → (string . -> . (or/c #f symbol?))
(current-lexeme->semantic-type-guess proc) → void?
  proc : (string . -> . (or/c #f symbol?))
```

A parameter to determine when a 'semantic-type-guess attribute should be added to a token result of type 'symbol by racket-lexer\* and similar functions. An attribute is added whenever the *proc* value of the parameter returns a symbol (instead of #f).

Added in version 1.7 of package syntax-color-lib.

#### 4 Default Lexer

A lexer that only identifies  $(,), [,], \{,\}$  and  $\}$  built specifically for color:text<%>.

default-lexer returns 5 values:

- Either a string containing the matching text or the eof object. Block specials currently return an empty string. This may change in the future to other string or non-string data.
- A symbol in '(comment white-space no-color eof).
- A symbol in '(|(| |)| |[| |]| |{| |}|) or #f.
- A number representing the starting position of the match (or #f if eof).
- A number representing the ending position of the match (or #f if eof).

#### 5 Module Lexer

```
(require syntax-color/module-lexer)
               package: syntax-color-lib
(module-lexer in offset mode)
→ (or/c string? eof-object?)
   symbol?
   (or/c symbol? #f)
   (or/c number? #f)
   (or/c number? #f)
   exact-nonnegative-integer?
   (or/c #f
          (-> input-port? any)
          (cons/c (-> input-port? exact-nonnegative-integer?
                      any/c
                      any)
                  any/c)
          (struct/c dont-stop
                    ((cons/c (-> input-port?
                                 exact-nonnegative-integer?
                                 any/c
                                 any)
                             any/c))))
 in : input-port?
 offset : exact-nonnegative-integer?
 mode : (or/c #f
               (-> input-port? exact-nonnegative-integer?any)
               (cons/c (-> input-port?
                           exact-nonnegative-integer?
                           any/c
                           any)
                       any/c))
```

Like racket-lexer, but with several differences:

- The module-lexer function accepts an offset and lexer mode, instead of just an input port.
- In addition to the results of racket-lexer, module-lexer returns a backup distance and a new lexer mode.
- When mode is #f (indicating the start of the stream), the lexer checks in for a #lang specification.

If a #lang line is present but the specified language does not exist, the entire *in* input is consumed and colored as 'error.

If the language exists and the language provides a get-info function, then it is called with 'color-lexer. If the result is not #f, then it should be a lexer function for use with color:text<%>. The result mode is the lexer—paired with #f if the lexer is a procedure arity 3—so that future calls will dispatch to the language-supplied lexer.

If the language is specified but it provides no get-info or 'color-lexer result, then racket-lexer is returned as the mode.

- When *mode* is a lexer procedure, the lexer is applied to *in*. The lexer's results are returned, plus the lexer again as the mode; if the lexer produces a hash-table attribute result, however, the 'type value is extracted and returned in place of the hash table.
- When mode is a pair, then the lexer procedure in the car is applied to in, offset, and the mode in the cdr. The lexer's results are returned, except that its mode result is paired back with the lexer procedure.

```
(module-lexer* in offset mode)
→ (or/c string? eof-object?)
   (or/c symbol?
         (and/c (hash/c symbol? any/c) immutable?))
   (or/c symbol? #f)
   (or/c number? #f)
   (or/c number? #f)
   exact-nonnegative-integer?
   (or/c #f
         (-> input-port? any)
         (cons/c (-> input-port?
                      exact-nonnegative-integer?
                      any/c
                      any)
                  any/c)
          (struct/c dont-stop
                    ((cons/c (-> input-port?
                                 exact-nonnegative-integer?
                                 any/c
                                 any)
                             any/c))))
 in : input-port?
 offset : exact-nonnegative-integer?
 mode : (or/c #f
               (-> input-port? any)
               (cons/c (-> input-port?
                           exact-nonnegative-integer?
                           any/c
                           any)
                       any/c))
```

Like module-lexer, except that the attribute result propagated from a language-specific lexer can be a hash table.

Added in version 1.2 of package syntax-color-lib.

#### 6 Scribble Lexer

Like racket-lexer\*, but for Racket extended with Scribble's @ notation (see §2 "@ Syntax").

Changed in version 1.2 of package syntax-color-lib: Changed to be like racket-lexer\* instead of racket-lexer.

Like scribble-lexer, but starting in "text" mode instead of Racket mode.

Changed in version 1.2 of package syntax-color-lib: Changed to be like racket-lexer\* instead of racket-lexer.

```
(make-scribble-lexer [#:command-char at]) → lexer/c
at : (and/c char? (not/c (or/c #\] #\[))) = #\@
```

Produces a lexer like scribble-lexer, but using at in place of @.

Added in version 1.1 of package syntax-color-lib. Changed in version 1.2: Changed like scribble-lexer.

```
(make-scribble-inside-lexer [#:command-char at]) → lexer/c
at : (and/c char? (not/c (or/c #\] #\[))) = #\@
```

Produces a lexer function like scribble-inside-lexer, but using at in place of @.

Added in version 1.1 of package syntax-color-lib. Changed in version 1.2: Changed like scribble-lexer.

## 7 Splay Tree for Tokenization

A splay-tree class specifically geared for the task of on-the-fly tokenization. Instead of keying nodes on values, each node has a length, and they are found by finding a node that follows a certain total length of preceding nodes.

FIXME: many methods are not yet documented.

```
(new token-tree% [len len] [data data])
  → (is-a?/c token-tree%)
  len : (or/c exact-nonnegative-integer? fasle/c)
  data : any/c
```

Creates a token tree with a single element.

```
(send a-token-tree get-root) → (or/c node? #f)
```

Returns the root node in the tree.

```
(send a-token-tree search! key-position) → void?
  key-position : natural-number/c
```

Splays, setting the root node to be the closest node to offset key-position (i.e., making the total length of the left tree at least key-position, if possible).

```
(node? v) → boolean?
  v : any/c
(node-token-length n) → natural-number/c
  n : node?
(node-token-data n) → any/c
  n : node?
(node-left-subtree-length n) → natural-number/c
  n : node?
(node-left n) → (or/c node? #f)
  n : node?
(node-right n) → (or/c node? #f)
  n : node?
```

Functions for working with nodes in a token-tree%.

```
(insert-first! tree1 tree2) → void?
  tree1 : (is-a?/c token-tree%)
  tree2 : (is-a?/c token-tree%)
```

Inserts tree1 into tree2 as the first thing, setting tree2's root to #f.

```
(insert-last! tree1 tree2) → void?
  tree1 : (is-a?/c token-tree%)
  tree2 : (is-a?/c token-tree%)
```

Inserts tree1 into tree2 as the last thing, setting tree2's root to #f.

```
(insert-last-spec! tree n v) → void?
  tree : (is-a?/c token-tree%)
  n : natural-number/c
  v : any/c
```

Same as

This optimization is important for the colorer.

## 8 Interface for Clients of Syntax Color Output

```
(require syntax-color/color-textoid)
                  package: syntax-color-lib
Added in version 1.3 of package syntax-color-lib.
color-textoid<%> : interface?
The color-textoid<%> interface matches a subset of the color:text<%> interface. It
specifies methods that indentation and expression-navigation functions can use so that they
work either on actual color:text<%> objects or in other environments that use the start-
colorer in color:text<%> protocol without racket/gui.
 (send a-color-textoid get-text [start end]) → string?
   start : exact-nonnegative-integer? = 0
   end : (or/c exact-nonnegative-integer? 'eof) = 'eof
     Like get-text in text%.
 (send a-color-textoid get-character start) → char?
   start : exact-nonnegative-integer?
     Like get-character in text%.
 (send a-color-textoid last-position)
  → exact-nonnegative-integer?
     Like last-position in text%.
 (send a-color-textoid position-paragraph start
                                              [at-eol?])
  \rightarrow exact-nonnegative-integer?
   start : exact-nonnegative-integer?
   at-eol?: any/c = #f
     Like position-paragraph in text%.
 (send a-color-textoid paragraph-start-position paragraph
                                                     [visible?])
  → exact-nonnegative-integer?
   paragraph : exact-nonnegative-integer?
   visible? : any/c = #t
```

Like paragraph-start-position in text%.

```
(send a-color-textoid paragraph-end-position paragraph
                                              [visible?])
 → exact-nonnegative-integer?
 paragraph : exact-nonnegative-integer?
 visible? : any/c = #t
   Like paragraph-end-position in text%.
(send a-color-textoid skip-whitespace position
                                       direction
                                       comments?)
→ exact-nonnegative-integer?
 position: exact-nonnegative-integer?
 direction : (or/c 'forward 'backward)
 comments? : boolean?
   Like skip-whitespace in color:text<%>.
(send a-color-textoid backward-match position
                                      cutoff)
→ (or/c exact-nonnegative-integer? #f)
 position : exact-nonnegative-integer?
 cutoff : exact-nonnegative-integer?
   Like backward-match in color:text<%>.
(send a-color-textoid backward-containing-sexp position
                                                cutoff)
 → (or/c exact-nonnegative-integer? #f)
 position : exact-nonnegative-integer?
 cutoff : exact-nonnegative-integer?
   Like backward-containing-sexp in color:text<%>.
(send a-color-textoid forward-match position
→ (or/c exact-nonnegative-integer? #f)
 position : exact-nonnegative-integer?
 cutoff : exact-nonnegative-integer?
   Like forward-match in color:text<%>.
(send a-color-textoid classify-position position)
 \rightarrow (or/c symbol? #f)
 position : exact-nonnegative-integer?
```

```
Like classify-position in color:text<%>.
 (send a-color-textoid classify-position* position)
 → (or/c (and/c (hash/c symbol? any/c) immutable?) #f)
 position : exact-nonnegative-integer?
    Like classify-position* in color:text<%>.
 (send a-color-textoid get-token-range position)
 → (or/c #f exact-nonnegative-integer?)
    (or/c #f exact-nonnegative-integer?)
  position : exact-nonnegative-integer?
    Like get-token-range in color:text<%>.
 (send a-color-textoid get-backward-navigation-limit start)
  → exact-integer?
  start : exact-integer?
    Like get-backward-navigation-limit in color:text<%>.
(send a-color-textoid get-regions)
 → (listof (list/c exact-nonnegative-integer? (or/c exact-nonnegative-integer? 'end)))
```

Like get-regions in color:text<%>.

## 9 Racket S-Expression Indentation and Navigation

The "syntax-color" collection provides Racket indentation and navigation functions that take advantage of the token categories and parenthesis information produced by a coloring lexer. They can work with any object that implements color-textoid<%>, which is extended by color:text<%>.

Added in version 1.3.

#### 9.1 S-Expression Navigation

```
(require syntax-color/racket-navigation)
                    package: syntax-color-lib
(racket-forward-sexp text pos)
→ (or/c #f exact-nonnegative-integer?)
 text : (is-a?/c color-textoid<%>)
 pos : exact-nonnegative-integer?
(racket-backward-sexp text pos)
→ (or/c #f exact-nonnegative-integer?)
 text : (is-a?/c color-textoid<%>)
 pos : exact-nonnegative-integer?
(racket-up-sexp text pos) → (or/c #f exact-nonnegative-integer?)
 text : (is-a?/c color-textoid<%>)
 pos : exact-nonnegative-integer?
(racket-down-sexp text pos)
→ (or/c #f exact-nonnegative-integer?)
 text : (is-a?/c color-textoid<%>)
 pos : exact-nonnegative-integer?
```

Each of these functions takes a position *pos* within *text* and returns a position corresponding to S-expression movement. The result is #f if no movement in the corresponding direction is possible.

```
(racket-stick-to-next-sexp? text pos) → boolean?
  text : (is-a?/c color-textoid<%>)
  pos : exact-nonnegative-integer?
```

Returns whether the content at pos in text corresponds to a token that should "stick" to the following parenthesized sequence for navigation purposes. For example, the result is #t when the token corresponds to ', ", or #'.

#### 9.2 S-Expression Indentation

```
(require syntax-color/racket-indentation)
                     package: syntax-color-lib
(racket-amount-to-indent text
                         [#:head-sexp-type head-sexp-type]
                         #:graphical-width graphical-width)
→ (or/c #f exact-nonnegative-integer?)
 text : (is-a?/c color-textoid<%>)
 pos : exact-nonnegative-integer?
 head-sexp-type : (string?
                    (or/c #f 'lambda 'define 'begin 'for/fold 'other))
                 = (racket-tabify-table->head-sexp-type
                    racket-tabify-default-table)
 graphical-width : (or/c #f (-> (is-a?/c color-textoid<%>)
                                 exact-nonnegative-integer?
                                 exact-nonnegative-integer?
                                 (or/c #f exact-nonnegative-integer?)))
```

Returns an amount of indentation to use for the line in text that contains the position pos. The result may be more or less than the current amount of indentation on the line.

The head-sexp-type function is used to map identifiers at the start of an S-expression to the indentation rule that the identifier should use. See compute-racket-amount-to-indent in racket:text<% for more information.

The graphical-width function is used to get the graphical width (distance between the "x" coordinates) of content in text between a start and end position. If graphical-width returns #f, then characters in text are assumed to be all the same width. If graphical-width is #f, it is treated the same as if it had been ( $\lambda$  (t start end) #f).

Changed in version 1.5 of package syntax-color-lib: Allow graphical-width to return #f.

Converts a serializable representation *spec* of an indentation configuration to a function suitable for use with racket-amount-to-indent.

The first element of <code>spec</code> maps individual symbols to indentation styles. The remaining elements provide patterns to recognize identifiers with the corresponding style, in the order <code>'lambda, 'define, 'begin, and 'for/fold</code>.

A default configuration suitable as an argument to  ${\tt racket-tabify-table->head-sexp-type}.$