digit exponent powers - don't work 20^{-12}

But it seems it should — ConTEXt magazine3 May 2003, from which the following non-working examples come

spacing and decimal points 12 345 000.90 Has the same effect as this hard-coded beasty. 12 345 000.78 Digits without exponents seem to work.... 1230.92 12 460 800.89 Now a little challenge - write out the speed of light, with units. So to combine units with digits $299792458 \text{ m}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$ So try the digits command - two possibilities Conclusion digits and units don't play nicely together...unless someone has a nice solution Maybe a bit hard coding - fugly, but maybe... 299 792 458 meter inverse second $299\ 792\ 458\ {\rm m}\cdot{\rm s}^{-1}$ Now for trying to write in standard form. first the inelegant form, but giving a passable result Speed = $3 \times 10^8 \text{ m} \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$ But I'd guess this will not be inside a tex box, so the layout might be dodgy... numbers and units should not be split over two lines... A much more elegant solution would be: Speed = $3^8 \text{ m} \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$ This one would be cleanly coded, if only the exponentiation worked... spread of a physical quantity One more, whilst I'm here. People will want to indicate a spread in a physical quantity, so: 400 – 700 THz You can again kludge, by 400-700 THz But elegant coding it ain't ... and again probably no bounding tex box, so may get split over two lines.