Fun with Fonts: Getting Acquainted With Some Hidden Special Characters

This document is created as a font sampler to display some of the Unicode characters contained in each of those illustrated. The Windows Character Map applet is used to aid getting acquainted with some of the special characters not mapped to the computer keyboard. Font faces are not all created the same, and about the only common features of their character sets is the Roman alphabet and the Arabic numerals from 0 to 9. So each font must be explored individually to determine the contents of its character set.

The **Calibri** font has been widely accepted by users of Microsoft Office 2007, and that may be for good reason. This font contains a multitude of characters that are useful in writing foreign languages, a number of glyphs that aid in writing mathematic equations in addition to some bullets, geographic symbols, legal symbols, monetary symbols, fractions, and a variety of other uses. Therefore, it's a good font to use as the default for generic document creation. So, we'll explore a few of the interesting characters contained in this font.

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Using the Windows Character Map, select Calibri in the Font box at the top of the app window. Scroll down to near the bottom of the Character window click the back circle with the 1 in the center.

That is officially named Dingbat Negative Circled Digit One. Click the Select button. Your selection appears in the Characters to copy: window. Click the Dingbat Negative Circled Digit Two (or U+2777). It will be hidden by the enlarged inset of dingbat digit one, but estimate the location of the next and it will be selected and displayed by the large inset. Click the Select button. Now both selections are displayed in the Characters to copy: window.

- 3 Repeat step 2 until all the black circle dingbats have been selected and appear in the Characters to copy window.
- Click the Copy button, transfer to your document, insert the cursor at the desired location, and paste your dingbats (press Ctrl+V).
- S You'll also find a fair sized collection of fractions: $\frac{3}{3}\frac{5}{3}$

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The Comic Sans MS font has been a staple on Windows computers for a long, long time. I have found that it displays well in Web browsers, so I use it in my Web pages frequently. Here are a few characters found in the character set for this font. $\frac{1}{8}\frac{3}{8}\frac{5}{8}\frac{7}{8}\geq\cdot\prod J$. Notice that the style of the fractions is quite different from Calibri or Arial Black.

We've glanced at a few fonts in this document. Now it's time for you to use the **Character Map** and explore the fonts on your computer. Remember that you can paste characters from the Character Map into any Windows application that uses fonts other than plain ASCII text. You must be using the font that is the source of the characters you paste. And character sets differ from one font to another. Experiment with your fonts to give your documents a fresh, new look. The general rule is to not use more than three fonts in one document unless there is a *very good* reason for doing so. Have **Fun with Fonts** in your documents!