Finding ASCII Codes for Special Fonts and Characters

WingDings and WebDIngs are special fonts that are pre-installed on all copies of Microsoft Windows XP. These fonts do not contain letters and numbers as we usually think of them. Rather, they are made up of small graphic characters and symbols. Here is what a few of the WingDings look like:

Some of these characters are suitable for use in embroidery and some have too many details to be of use. But we will look at using many of these characters. Here is what some of the WebDings look like:

You can see that the WebDings have even more detail than the WingDings. Actually, there are three sets of WingDings on your computer. The two additional fonts are named WingDings2 and WingDings3. The secret to using these characters in your design lies in knowing which keystrokes you must use to bring the character to the screen. Once you understand how your computer interprets the keystrokes, you will know exactly what to do.

First, I have to get a little technical. Don't worry, it won't hurt or last long. Basically, what you must understand is that all of the characters available in any font are represented by numbers (as far as your computer understands). These numbers range from 0 to 255. If you want to tell the computer that it is supposed to understand some numbers as a printable character, then you have to type in the number in a special way (otherwise, the computer would think that you're just typing in a number). The special way you do this is to use the **Alt** key on your keyboard. If, for example, you hold down the **Alt** key and then type **65**, you computer will think that you want it to display a capital A (in most fonts). I say in most fonts because most fonts have the letters of the alphabet, numbers, special characters such as (! @ # $ % ^ & *) _ - + = { [}] | \ and so on. They may also have certain characters not found on your keyboard. Can you find the **¢** on your keyboard? It used to be the uppercase character on the key with the number 6 on it. Now the uppercase for 6 is **^**. You can insert a **¢** into your writing if you know what number code is assigned to it. I am about to reveal these secret codes to you. Codes that were only available to the **SPOCP** (that's the **Secret Priesthood Of Computer Programmers.** Even the existence of the **SPOCP** was unknown to most **until now!**) Seriously, only geeks like me were interested in this stuff, but you need to know how to use it if you want to use the **WingDings, WebDings,** and **Special non-English characters** (such as **ñ**) in your designs.

When you want to use a character that is not present on your keyboard, then you must enter the **ASCII Code** (ASCII is an acronym for American Standard Code for Information Interchange) for that character in the **Letters** text box on the **Letter Control Panel**. However, you must use **a special, secret technique** to enter those numbers. No, I don't just mean that you have to hold down the **Alt** key while entering the numbers. You have to use the **correct** number keys to enter these numbers. This is another secret known only to the **SPOCP** set up to confuse and confound the uninitiated. The secret is this. You must use only the number keys on the separate number keypad on the right side of your computer. To make it easy to use those keys you can hit another **special** key on your keyboard…the **Num Lock** key. I'll bet that you always wondered what that key was for and why anyone would want to use it. Try it now. Press the **Num Lock** key on your keyboard and a little LED (light emitting diode) on your keyboard that might be labeled **Num Lock** or simply have a number **1** next to it, will light up and then turn off as you repeatedly press the **Num Lock** key. But wait a minute. I hear all of you laptop users out there saying, "I don't have a separate number keypad on my laptop." Some may even be saying, "I don't have a **Num Lock** key either." You have fallen into **yet another** trap set by the **SPOCP**. I will now reveal the **third** secret to using **ASCII Codes** on your laptop computer.

Look at the keyboard on your laptop. Notice that certain keys have words, numbers, or special symbols on them that appear in a different color. (On my computer, a Gateway laptop, the special symbols are light blue.) As you look at your laptop keyboard, you should find a special key that has an arcane symbol on it in a color that matches the alternate color of the other characters. On my keyboard this key is labeled **Fn**. This is short for **Function**. On my keyboard it is located in the bottom row of keys at the extreme left side of the keyboard. Yours may be in a different location and it may even be labeled differently. You might have to look in the books that came with your laptop to find it. When you **hold down** the **Fn** key and then hit one of the keys that has something written on it in an alternate color, then that **Function** of that key is put into action. As an example, you might have two keys, usually closely located on your keyboard that looks like **a little sun** ☼ with an up arrow ▲ on the same key and another key with the little sun and a down arrow▼ on the same key. If you **hold down** the **Fn** key and tap repeatedly on either of these keys, the **brightness** of your screen will increase, or decrease slightly each time you hit the keys. Notice that several of the keys on your keyboard have both a letter and a number on them. The numbers are in the same color as the **Fn** key. On my laptop my **Fn** numbers are as follows: M = 0, J = 1, K = 2, L = 3, U = 4, I = 5, O = 6, 7 = 7, 8 = 8, 9 = 9. (Those last three numbers 7, 8, and 9 look exactly alike, but you will only get the correct code if you are holding down the **Fn** key when you hit them! More evil work by the **SPOCP.**) By the way, you might not have a **Num Lock** key or even **function** on your keyboard. It may be labeled something like **Pad Lock** which is located on the **F9** key on my Gateway laptop.

Now you know how to hit the **correct keys** to generate the **ASCII Code** needed to generate each character. All you need now is a chart to reveal which characters appear when you enter a given **ASCII Code**. The charts on the next two pages will show you which code generates which character. Notice that some of the codes do not generate a printable character. This is because they were reserved for the old-time hardware like a special code to ring the bell on the teletype machine back in the pre-historic days of computing like the 1960's. When it comes to the characters shown, however, all fonts are the same. Here are the **ASCII Code** charts.

ASCII Codes 1-127

ASCII Value	Character	ASCII Value	Character	ASCII Value	Character	ASCII Value	Character
000	Nothing	032	Nothing	064	@	096	Nothing
001	Nothing	033	!	065	A	097	a
002	Nothing	034	“	066	B	098	b
003	Nothing	035	#	067	C	099	c
004	Nothing	036	$	068	D	100	d
005	Nothing	037	%	069	E	101	e
006	Nothing	038	&	070	F	102	f
007	Nothing	039	‘	071	G	103	g
008	Nothing	040	(	072	H	104	h
009	Nothing	041	)	073	I	105	i
010	Nothing	042	*	074	J	106	j
011	Nothing	043	+	075	K	107	k
012	Nothing	044	‘	076	L	108	l
013	Nothing	045	-	077	M	109	m
014	Nothing	046	.	078	N	110	n
015	Nothing	047	/	079	O	111	o
016	Nothing	048	0	080	P	112	p
017	Nothing	049	1	081	Q	113	q
018	Nothing	050	2	082	R	114	r
019	Nothing	051	3	083	S	115	s
020	Nothing	052	4	084	T	116	t
021	Nothing	053	5	085	U	117	u
022	Nothing	054	6	086	V	118	v
023	Nothing	055	7	087	W	119	w
024	Nothing	056	8	088	X	120	x
025	Nothing	057	9	089	Y	121	y
026	Nothing	058	:	090	Z	122	z
027	Nothing	059	;	091	[	123	{
028	Nothing	060	<	092	\	124	|
029	Nothing	061	=	093	]	125	}
030	Nothing	062	>	094	Nothing	126	~
031	Nothing	063	?	095	Nothing	127	⌂

ASCII Codes 128 - 255

ASCII Value	Character	ASCII Value	Character	ASCII Value	Character	ASCII Value	Character
128	Ç	160	á	192	Nothing	224	Nothing
129	ü	161	í	193	Nothing	225	ß
130	é	162	ó	194	Nothing	226	Nothing
131	á	163	ú	195	Nothing	227	Nothing
132	ä	164	ñ	196	Nothing	228	Nothing
133	à	165	Ñ	197	Nothing	229	Nothing
134	å	166	Nothing	198	Nothing	230	Nothing
135	ç	167	Nothing	199	Nothing	231	Nothing
136	ê	168	Nothing	200	Nothing	232	Nothing
137	ë	169	Nothing	201	Nothing	233	Nothing
138	è	170	Nothing	202	Nothing	234	Nothing
139	ï	171	Nothing	203	Nothing	235	Nothing
140	î	172	Nothing	204	Nothing	236	Nothing
141	ì	173	í	205	Nothing	237	Nothing
142	Ä	174	Nothing	206	Nothing	238	Nothing
143	Å	175	Nothing	207	Nothing	239	Nothing
144	É	176	Nothing	208	Nothing	240	Nothing
145	æ	177	Nothing	209	Nothing	241	Nothing
146	Æ	178	Nothing	210	Nothing	242	Nothing
147	ô	179	Nothing	211	Nothing	243	Nothing
148	ö	180	Nothing	212	Nothing	244	Nothing
149	ò	181	Nothing	213	Nothing	245	Nothing
150	û	182	Nothing	214	Nothing	246	Nothing
151	ù	183	Nothing	215	Nothing	247	≈
152	ÿ	184	Nothing	216	Nothing	248	Nothing
153	Ö	185	Nothing	217	Nothing	249	Nothing
154	Ü	186	Nothing	218	Nothing	250	Nothing
155	¢	187	Nothing	219	Nothing	251	Nothing
156	£	188	Nothing	220	Nothing	252	Nothing
157	¥	189	Nothing	221	Nothing	253	Nothing
158	₧	190	Nothing	222	Nothing	254	Nothing
159	Nothing	191	Nothing	223	Nothing	255	Nothing

You can see that most of the characters present in the ASCII chart are available on your keyboard. If you want to select a certain character from the font you are working with, you may enter either the keyboard character, such as A-Z, a-z, 0-9, or any of the special characters or punctuation marks on your keyboard. There is a problem, though, it you want to use the character represented by a foreign character such as "Æ". In that case, you have to use the ASCII code for that character which is ASCII Code 146.