

Special Characters

Putting the ñ in jalapeño

Platform: Mac/PC

Level of Difficulty: Beginner

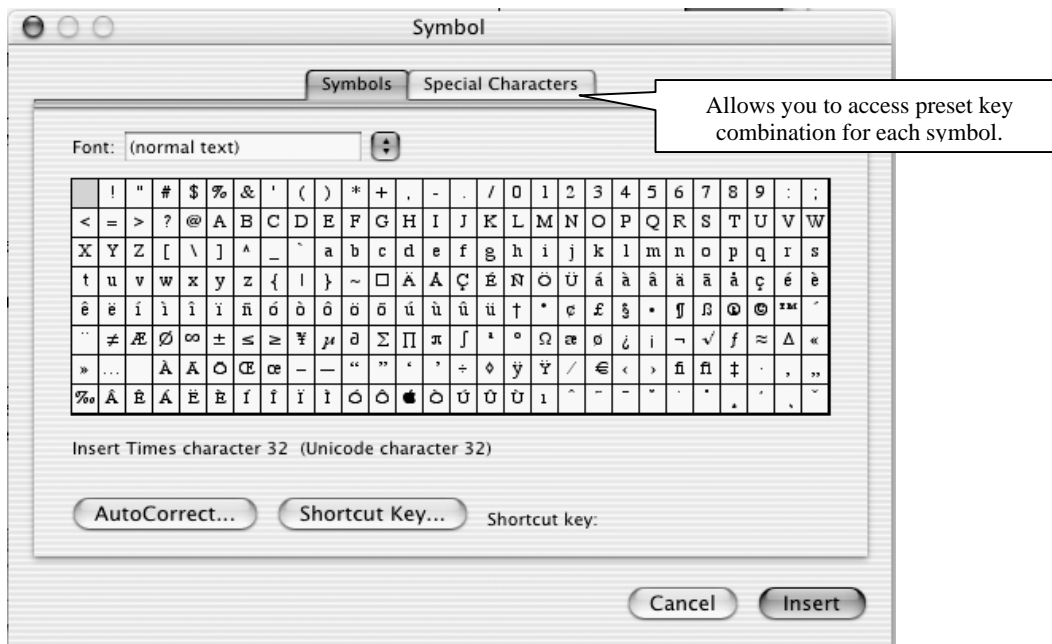
This document will explain how to put special characters into text using MS Word, Windows, and Macs.

Introduction

There are many times when you need to write in a foreign language or use symbols in your text document. There are hundreds of characters available that are not on the standard keyboard. Many commonly used symbols are letters from the Greek alphabet (π , Φ , β), accented or other letters from foreign alphabets (é, ö, ç) and icons (, ☼, ♥).

Microsoft Word

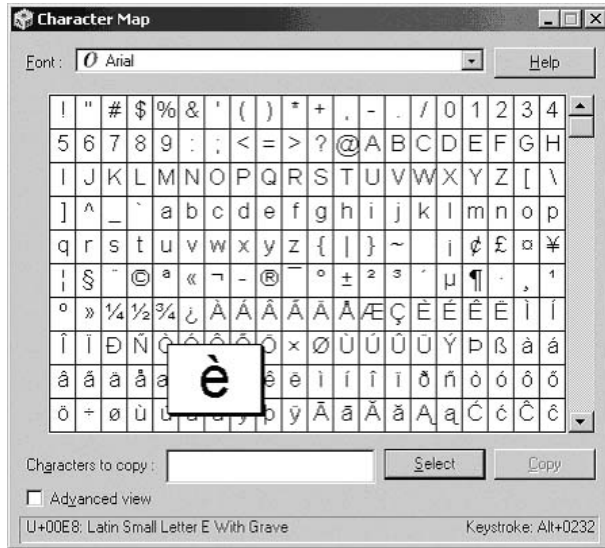
In Microsoft Word, symbols and foreign language letters can be directly added to the document by going into the **Insert** menu and selecting **Symbol**. You will get a dialogue box like the one shown below. On the **Symbols** tab, make sure that the font is set to (*normal text*) for most special letters. Icons and other symbols can be found under other options. The **Special Characters** tab is used for more common grammatical symbols.



Find the character you want by clicking on the box it appears in. Click on INSERT to place the character in your document exactly where you left the cursor. When you add the character, it will show up in the font that you are currently using. If you are going to be using the character frequently in the document, you should take note of the Shortcut Key listed in the box when the

character is highlighted and use that keystroke combination instead of the menu option. If there is no shortcut key or you prefer to use your own, click on **SHORTCUT KEY**. This option will prompt you to choose a customized shortcut keystroke combination to make it quicker and easier to insert that character.

Windows 2000 Character Map



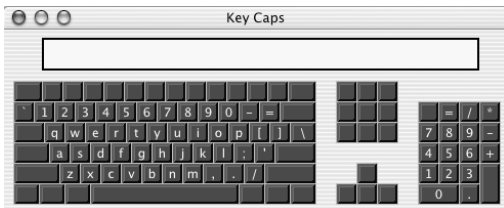
When using an application without the Insert → Symbol option, you can use the PC’s default shortcuts. Click on **Start** and go up to **Programs**. Go to **Accessories**, then **System Tools** and select **Character Map**. This will open the character map shown here.

Select the desired font from the drop-down menu and find the character you want. You can use the keystroke listed for the character or copy it to the clipboard. To do this, highlight the character, click on **SELECT** (this will put your character in the white box on the top right), and click on **COPY**. Now you can go to the application where you want to insert the character and go to **Edit** and select **Paste** (or use the keystroke

“Control”+“V”). You can always use the keystroke listed for the character as a shortcut from any program. Hold down “Alt” and press the sequence of numbers to produce that character.

Macintosh OS X

All the available symbols can be inserted into any application by using the regular keyboard keys in addition to holding down “shift”, “option/alt”, or both “shift” and “option”. To see which key combinations produce what, go to the **Applications** folder, select the **Utilities** folder, then click on **Key Caps**. Select the font you want from the **Font** menu. The keyboard diagram in the window will show you all characters in that font available by striking a single key on the keyboard. Press the “shift” key to see all available symbols that can be inserted by holding “shift” while you strike the key. Continue to search for your desired symbol by using the combinations mentioned above.



Key combinations for accented letters:

- ❖ á, é, í, ó, ú (Acute) Press and hold option” while you hit “e”. Release. Hit the letter you want.
- ❖ â, ê, î, ô, û (Circumflex) Press and hold “option” while you hit “i”. Release. Hit the letter you want.
- ❖ à, è, ì, ò, ù (Grave) Press and hold “option” while you hit “/~”. Release. Hit the letter you want.
- ❖ ä, ë, ï, ö, ü (Umlaut) Press and hold “option” while you hit “u”. Release. Hit the letter you want.
- ❖ ã, õ, ñ (Tilde) Press and hold "option" while you hit "n". Release. Hit the letter you want.