



How to type German characters

By Walt Sturrock, 12 Aug 2019

The following describes how to type German characters on English-based keyboards, such as:

ä Ä é ö Ö ü Û ß ä ü ö

Fonts

Keep in mind that not all fonts contain these characters. So, if you are having trouble using one font try using a different one. The most popular fonts like Times and Helvetica usually work fine.

PC vs. Mac

PC and Mac keyboards have different keys. Specifically, PC's have an Alt key and Mac's the Option key. Both can be used to type German characters.

PC keyboard

Numeric codes:

On a PC most applications (except Microsoft Word?) support the creation of special characters using their ASCII numeric code. For example, to create ä hold down the Alt key and on the Numeric Keypad (not the normal number keys) and type 0228. An ä will appear.

TIP: If you don't have a numeric keypad on your keyboard you can alternately turn on "Number Lock" using it key.

Also, if this doesn't work in your application (such as Microsoft Word) you can try it in the "Notepad" application and then copy & paste the characters from there.

Other characters created this way are:

ä	(Alt + 0228)
Ä	(Alt + 0196)
é	(Alt + 0233)
Ö	(Alt + 0214)
ö	(Alt + 0246)
Û	(Alt + 0220)
ü	(Alt + 0252)
ß	(Alt + 0223)

Using the Alt key:

Some PC applications allow you to create special characters by holding down the Alt key and then press the appropriate letter. For example, to type ä, press and hold the Alt key and then press the A key; to type ß, press Alt + S.

To create uppercase letters with accents, hold down the Shift key as you press the appropriate letter. For example, to type Ä, press and hold the Alt key and then press the A key; to type ß, press Alt + S.

Apple/Mac OS X

Option Key:

The Mac "option" key allows you to easily type most foreign letters and symbols on a standard English-language Apple keyboard. To create special characters hold down the option and then press the appropriate letter. For example, to type ä, press and hold the option key and then press the A key; to type ß, press option + S.

To create uppercase letters with accents, hold down the Shift key as you press the appropriate letter. For example, to type Ä, press and hold the option key and then press the U key, and then press and hold down the Shift key as you press the A key.

The following list describes the keys to use when creating German characters on a Mac keyboard:

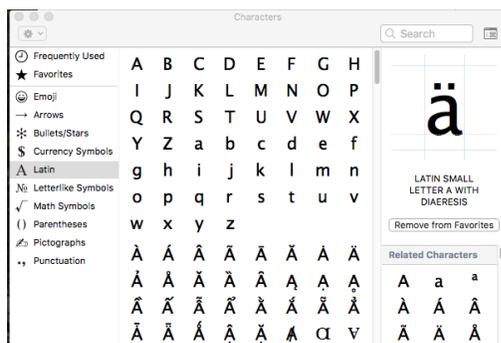
- ä (option + u, then a)
- Ä (option + u, then shift + a)
- é (option + e, then e)
- ö (option + u, then o)
- Ö (option + u, then shift + o)
- ü (option + u, then u)
- Ü (option + u, then shift + u)
- ÿ (option + u, then y)
- ß (option + s)

Emoji & Symbols:

In Mac OS X you can use the "Character" palette to select a character and drag it into your document. These include umlauts with a breve, such as:

ä ü ö

To view the Character palette, go to the finder (click on the desktop) and in the Finder's Edit menu select "Emoji & Symbols." The Character Palette will appear. Use the Latin filter on the left to see characters commonly used in German.



Using the character:

To add the symbol to your document simply click-drag the symbol in the Character palette over your document. A little black cursor appears in your document indicating where the character

will be inserted. Move the cursor so that it is in the location you want the character and release the mouse button, and the character is insert there.

Favorites menu:

Adding a symbol to your favorites in the Character palette allows you to easily find and use your most popular symbols. To do this, click on the symbol and it is displayed in the upper-right corner of the palette. Just under the large symbol click on the “Add to Favorites” button. To view your saved favorites, click on the Favorites menu in the upper-left of the Palette.

Websites:

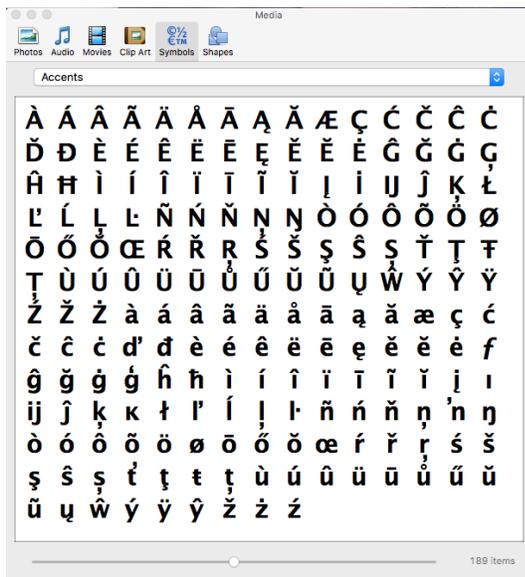
There are websites that allow you select the character you want and copy and paste it into you your doc. This might be helpful on limited keyboards, such as on tablets.

Here is an example:

www.Typeit.org

MS Word

Microsoft Word provides a special menu to select and insert special characters. The “Symbol Browser” (or Advanced Symbol) allows you to paste a symbol into your document.



Using the Symbol Browser/Advanced Symbol

1. In Microsoft Work go to the Insert menu and choose Symbol, then Symbol Browser (or Advanced Symbol). The Symbol Browser window appears.
2. From its drop-down menu at the top of the browser choose “Accents” to reduce the list to ones that contain German symbols.
3. In the document you are working make sure the cursor is in the exact place on your page where you want to insert the German character.
4. Back in the Symbol Browser locate the symbol you want and click on it. That symbol will be pasted into your document where the cursor is located.

Example:

Baden-Württemberg