Unified English Braille (UEB): Summary of changes for ordinary braille – Uncontracted braille

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1. Introduction

This document is a short summary of the changes to the braille rules for ordinary text, as concerns uncontracted braille. It does not provide a full statement of the rules, nor a full list of the signs which UEB provides. For this, reference should be made to The Rules of Unified English Braille, produced by and available from ICEB (www.iceb.org). UEB doesn't deal with braille layout, and so only braille coding rules are affected.
2. Capitals

Capitals are normally indicated. The indicators are the same as for SEB:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capital indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>symbol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terminator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rules are generally similar to those for SEB: the capital word indicator has force over a sequence of letters or contractions, but is terminated by other signs, such as a hyphen or dash. The capital passage indicator applies up to the capital terminator, and is used for three or more spaced strings (e.g. words).

E.g. LEFT-HAND

I AM HERE!

3. Italics, bold and underline

There are separate indicators for italics, bold and underline. In UEB these are collectively called "typeform indicators":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Italic</th>
<th>Bold</th>
<th>Underline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>word</td>
<td>: : :</td>
<td>: :</td>
<td>: : :</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The symbol indicators apply to the following character only; the word indicators apply to the following string ending with a space (e.g. a word); and the passage indicators apply up to the corresponding passage terminators.

E.g. books

Reading The Times

avant-garde

The passage indicators are used for three or more consecutive spaced strings (e.g. words) of that type. If punctuation ends the passage, the terminator is normally placed after it.


4. Quotation marks

Outer quotation marks have generic braille signs whatever the print type (single or double), but inner quotes use new signs which distinguish between single and double print quotes. The latter can also be used in other circumstances where it is needed to distinguish the type of print quotes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Close</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>outer</td>
<td>::</td>
<td>::</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inner single</td>
<td>' '</td>
<td>' '</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inner double</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E.g. 'He asked, "Can I come in?" ' \\
\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\n

5. Other common signs

round brackets ( ) opening : "" closing : "

square brackets [ ] opening : "" closing : "

asterisk * : "

dagger † : "

double dagger ‡ : "

dash – : "

long dash — : "

underscore _ : " (e.g. a blank to be filled in; the single braille sign is used for any length of underscore in print)

decimal point . : " (i.e. same as full stop)

ellipsis ... : " : " (i.e. a sequence of stops)

pound sign £ : "

dollar sign $ : "

degree sign ° : "

prime ’ : " (e.g. feet or minutes)

double prime ” : " : " (e.g. inches or seconds)

percent % : "

commercial at @ : "

right arrow → : "

4
UEB is designed so that all the signs are capable of being spaced or unspaced in any combination without ambiguity, so arbitrary strings of letters and other signs can be brailled directly as shown in print.

E.g. *x**%  

6. Basic maths signs

The arithmetical signs are similar to SEB, except that dot 5 is used as a prefix instead of dots 56:

plus  +

minus  −

times  ×

divided  ÷

equals  =

These signs can be spaced or unspaced, but a common convention is to space the equals sign, and to leave the others unspaced.

E.g. 2 + 6 = 8

Fractions

Simple numeric fractions use upper numbers for both numerator and denominator, separated by a "fraction line sign", dots 34.

E.g. ½

2¾
7. Phone and other grouped numbers

In phone numbers, spaced groups of digits are separated by a dot 5, rather than by repetition of the numeral sign. Other punctuation signs used as separators, such as hyphens, are retained in UEB.

E.g. 0845 60 85223

The same applies to ordinary numbers where spaces are used in print to group thousands, etc.

E.g. 6 000 250

8. Grade 1 indicator

Grade 1 indicator

symbol ::
word :: ::
passage :: :: ::
terminator :: ::

There is no such thing as the "letter sign" in UEB: dots 56 is instead designated as the grade 1 indicator. It is only used in certain cases to set the meaning of a sign where more than one meaning is possible. Unlike in SEB, abbreviations like "pm" or "am" would not have a grade 1 indicator in UEB, as no disambiguation is needed. The dots 56 grade 1 indicator only applies to the following character; UEB also has a grade 1 word indicator, a grade 1 passage indicator, and passage terminator, used similarly to the indicators for italics, bold and underline.
In general, abbreviations are not specially distinguished from ordinary words in UEB, any distinction is only that given by the print, i.e. by the abbreviation's capitalisation.

E.g. Mr S arrived at the BBC at 6 pm (no grade 1 indicators needed in uncontracted braille)

Mr S arrived at the BBC at 6 pm

The grade 1 indicator is used where letters a-j follow unspaced after numbers so that the letter is not read as a digit.

E.g. 221b

9. Unit abbreviations

Unit abbreviations should be spaced or unspaced from the number according to print, and the grade 1 indicator is used as required according to the above.

E.g. 100 cm = 1 m

25.4 cm = 0.254 m = 10 in

6 feet 10 inches

10. Superscripts and subscripts

UEB has new superscript and subscript indicators:

superscript

subscript
Lower numbers are not used in superscripts and subscripts as they are in SEB.

E.g. $3^2 = 9$

10 m$^2$

10m$^2$

vitamin B$_{12}$

H$_2$O

11. Dates and times of day

Print's use of punctuation and separators should be followed.

E.g. 6/3/12

6.3.12

9:45 am

9.45 am

12. Email and web addresses

Email and web addresses are treated as normal text (there is no such thing as computer code in UEB).

E.g. bbc.co.uk/arts

mark@trade123.co.uk

(In this example note that the grade 1 indicator is needed before "co", otherwise "c" would be read as decimal 3.)
13. Accents

In UEB specific signs are used for the different accent marks; there is no generic accent sign as in SEB.

- acute ′
- grave ′
- circumflex ^
- diaeresis ¨
- cedilla ¸
- tilde ˜

These precede the letter which they modify.

E.g. crème brûlée crême brûlée
blessèd blessèd

14. Transcriber's note indicators

UEB includes special brackets @.< and @.> to enclose explanatory notes or other text inserted by the transcriber, as distinct from the original text. (Previously ordinary square brackets would have been used for this purpose.)

E.g. in the figure below [not reproduced]
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President: Lord Low of Dalston CBE
Registered charity number: 1126966
Registered as a company in England and Wales number: 6748900