PopChar™ X

User's Guide
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Contents

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WWW: https://www.ergonis.com

Welcome to PopChar

PopChar is a utility application that lets you insert characters from all installed fonts into your documents. You never need to search for and remember keystrokes any longer. Just pop up the PopChar window, click the desired character, and the character will appear in your current document.

System requirements

PopChar requires Mac OS X 10.6 or newer. OS X 10.11 or newer is recommended.

Installation

Installation of PopChar is easy. Download the disk image from our web server:

> https://www.ergonis.com/downloads/

Mount the disk image and double-click the PopChar icon in the Finder window that opens. PopChar helps you with the installation by copying itself to the Applications folder and launching the installed copy.

That's it. You will notice that a small box labeled with the letter "P" has appeared in the top-left corner of the menu bar.

PopChar is a background-only application. It will never show up in the dock. The small "P" in the menu bar indicates that PopChar is running. Though small and unobtrusive, the "P" is always there when you need it. Whenever you need a special character, just click it.

Uninstallation

If you wish to remove PopChar from your computer permanently, we recommend the following procedure:

- Disable the "Start PopChar at Login" option in the Activation tab of PopChar's preferences.
- Quit PopChar and move the PopChar application to the trash.

Inserting characters

Suppose you want to insert the copyright symbol in a text document. Put the insertion point where you wish to insert the symbol, then click the "P" in the menu bar.

A window with all characters in a preselected font appears:
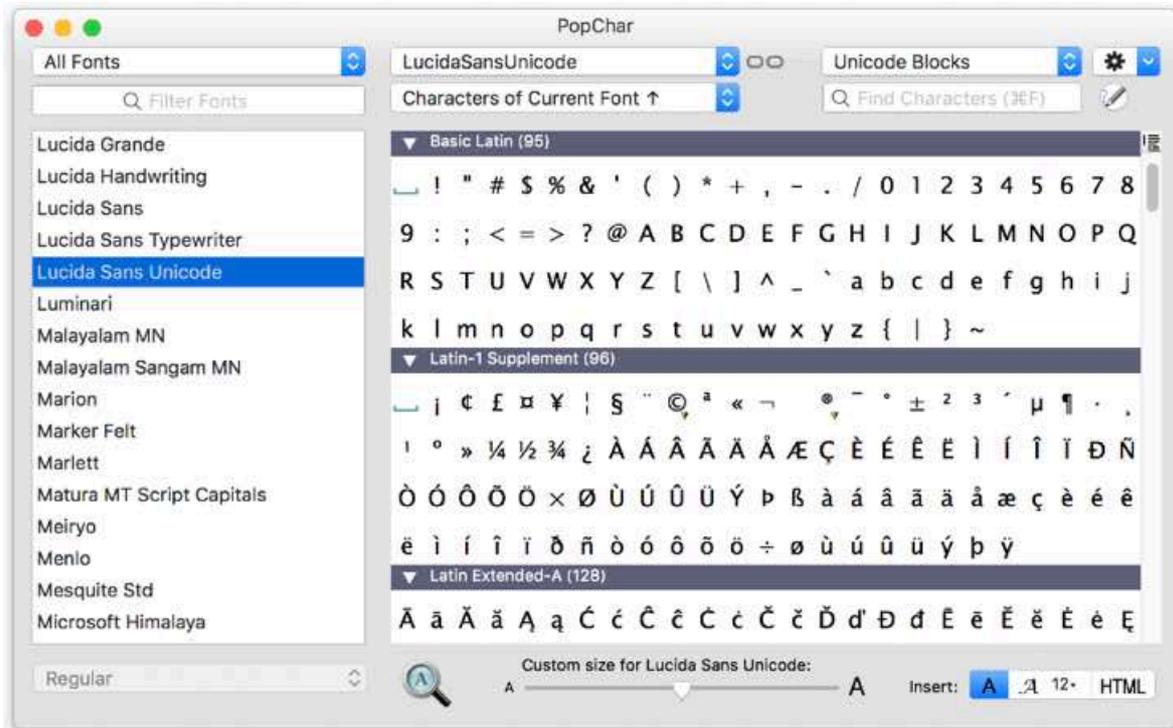
To insert the copyright symbol in your document, simply click the symbol.

When you point at a character, some information about the selected character appears at the bottom of the window:

This information tells you that the copyright symbol has the Unicode number 169, or "00A9" in hexadecimal, and the name of the symbol is "COPYRIGHT SIGN".

PopChar also displays the keystrokes needed to generate this character. In the example above, it tells you that you can create the copyright symbol by typing alt+"G" on a US keyboard. If a character cannot be typed with the current keyboard, the keyboard symbol appears crossed out:
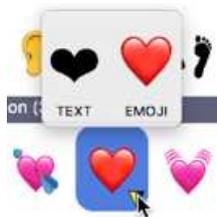
Apple Color Emoji

When you look at characters in the Apple Color Emoji font, you will notice that some of them have a small circle (⬤) in the bottom right corner. This is the "skin tone indicator" that shows which characters (mostly faces, but also some hand gestures) are available in different skin tones. Click the circle to insert a variant of the character with a specific skin tone:

To use these skin tones, you need at least OS X Yosemite 10.10.3.

Some other characters have a small yellow/black triangle (▼) in the bottom right corner. This symbol indicates that a character can be represented in a text version and an emoji version. Click the character directly to let the target application choose an appropriate representation. To explicitly select the text or emoji representation, click the triangle and choose the desired variant:

Another special case in Apple Color Emoji is the "Color Flags" group:

Like the skin tones, these flag symbols have been added in Yosemite 10.10.3 (and extended in El Capitan 10.11). They are therefore not available on older versions of OS X. Flags are actually not represented by individual characters; they are created by combining so-called "regional indicator symbols". For example, the combination of the regional indicators "C" and "H" produces the flag of Switzerland (with the country code "CH").

With PopChar, you do not need to know country codes or be aware of the technical foundation of the flag symbols. Just look at the "Color Flags" section of Apple Color Emoji and click one of the flags to insert it in your current document. In addition to that, you can also search for the country names. For example, you can enter "Switzerland" in PopChar's search field and do not even need to know that the country code is "CH".

To use these flags, the target application must be able to combine the regional indicator symbols. Applications that are compatible with Unicode 8 should be able to do this. Otherwise, these symbols appear as separate characters, represented as letters in dotted boxes (such as C and H in the case of the Swiss flag). Note that this is not an error of PopChar, but a limitation of the target application, which fails to correctly combine the characters.

Furthermore, Apple Color Emoji contains a few symbols that are created by linking multiple emoji characters with a special "zero width joiner" character. Up to eight different characters are needed to create such combinations. For example, the family symbol with a man, a woman, a girl and a boy (👨‍👩‍👧‍👦) consists of seven Unicode characters. Other examples are combinations for "person roles", where person characters, male/female indicators ($♂$/$♀$) and role symbols (such as a staff of aesculapius for medical professions) are combined into a single symbol (such as a "woman health worker"). In addition to that, you can apply skin tone variants to many of these combinations. With PopChar, you do not need to know the required sequences and how to generate them. Just click one of the symbols to insert it in your current document:
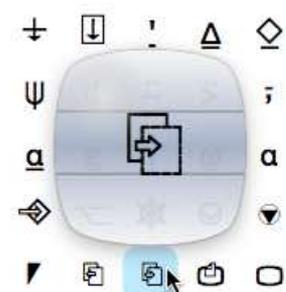
Close-up

To see an enlarged view of characters with small details, activate the magnifier symbol below the character table. Whenever you point at a character, PopChar then displays a close-up view of the character.

Hint: You can toggle the current setting of the magnifier at any time by pressing the shift (⇧) key. Even with the magnifier turned off, you just need to press the shift key to temporarily display a close-up of the currently selected character. When the magnifier is turned on,

pressing the shift key temporarily hides the close-up view, so you can see the surrounding characters.

Selecting fonts

The font list to the left of the character table shows all globally available fonts, arranged by the font families. If a font family has multiple members (such as Regular, Bold, Italic), you can select the desired member from the pop-up menu beneath the list.

You can use the pop-up menu above the list to display only those fonts that belong to a certain font collection. PopChar lets you choose among all font collections that you define in the font panel of OS X or Font Book.

PopChar remembers the current font setting separately for each application. For example, you can select Times as the font to be displayed when you work with Pages, and Monaco as the font to be shown in BBEdit. If you prefer to see the same font no matter which application is active, open PopChar's preferences / "View & Insert" section, and switch to "Remember selected font: globally for all applications".

Whenever you insert a character from a font, PopChar adds that font to the pop-up menu that contains the recently used fonts (at the top left of the character table). You can control the number of fonts to be listed here in PopChar's preferences.
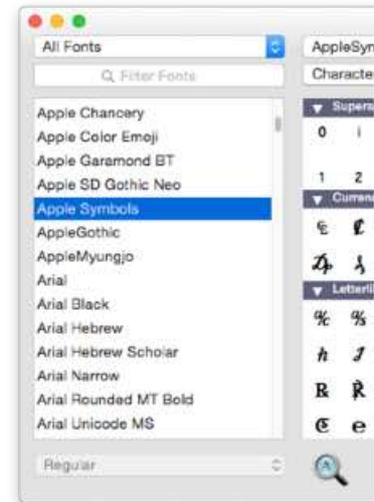
Matching the font in the current document

PopChar can automatically detect the current font for some popular applications, including Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, BBEdit, and more. This means that PopChar displays the font currently in use by the active application. To enable this feature, select the second item "As in Document" in the font-pop-up menu:

When PopChar displays the same font as used in the current document, an insertion marker with an arrow appears in the font pop-up menu:
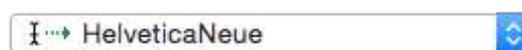
When PopChar has not been able to detect the font used in your document, it displays a question mark and continues to use the previously shown font:
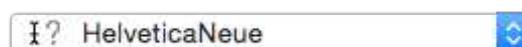
This can happen sometimes when the frontmost window of the current application does not contain editable text with variable fonts (such as a find dialog window).

It is also possible that PopChar is never able to detect the current font in a specific application. PopChar uses a couple of sophisticated techniques to find the font. However, these techniques require support by the current application. When you discover that PopChar is unable to detect the current font in a certain application, you need to manually synchronize the font shown in PopChar with the font being used in the application.

Views

The pop-up menu below the recent fonts menu at the top of the PopChar window provides five different ways to look at and work with your fonts. These items are arranged in three groups that serve different purposes:

- The first group contains the items "Characters of Current Font", "Union of All Available Fonts", and "All Unicode Characters". When one of these options is selected, PopChar shows the available characters in a grid, arranged by the Unicode groups. These options are described in the section *Unicode characters*, below.

- The second group contains the items "Font Preview" and "Sample Text". These options show the font from a designer's perspective and give an impression of text in the selected font. These options are described further below in the section *Preview and Sample Text*.

- The last group contains the single item "Font Info". When this item is selected, PopChar shows information *about* the font rather than characters inside the font.

You can use the command key with the number keys 1 to 5 to quickly switch between the available views. But note that these keyboard shortcuts only work when the mouse pointer is inside the PopChar window.

Unicode characters

When "Characters of Current Font", "Union of All Available Fonts" or "All Unicode Characters" are selected in the view pop-up menu, PopChar shows the available Unicode characters. The order and arrangement of the characters typically follow the definitions specified in the Unicode standard. It is therefore necessary to briefly explain the background behind the Unicode standard and font technology.

All text that appears on your screen is internally represented as a series of numbers. When an application displays text, these numbers are converted into "glyphs" – the visible shapes that you finally see. The mapping from numbers to glyphs is called an *encoding*. On a Macintosh, most applications use a sophisticated encoding based on the Unicode standard (for more information about Unicode, see the web pages of the Unicode Consortium at https://www.unicode.org).

In Unicode, every character has a unique number that defines the meaning and basic appearance of a character, but not the exact shape. For example, the number 65 represents the capital letter "A", and 8594 stands for an arrow pointing to the right (→). Not all characters are available in all fonts. For example, the right-pointing arrow is available in Lucida

Grande and Arial, but not in Helvetica and Verdana. When multiple fonts contains a certain character, there may still be differences in the appearance. For example, an "A" in Helvetica consists only of three straight lines, whereas it has additional "serifs" in Courier and Times, and the Brush Script variant of "A" is composed of curved lines. Still, the character with the number 65 can be recognized as the "Latin capital letter A" in all fonts that conform to the Unicode standard.

The theoretical limit of characters in a Unicode font is approximately 1.1 millions, but most fonts only support a small subset of the Unicode repertoire. Typical fonts for western languages contain a few hundreds of characters, but fonts for some Asian languages can contain more than 10,000 characters. No matter how many characters there are in a font, PopChar allows you to use all of them in your documents.

When you use PopChar for inserting characters in documents, you will typically use it in the "Characters of Current Font" or "Union of All Available Fonts" views. When "Characters of Current Font" is selected, PopChar shows the repertoire of the currently selected font only. This is ideal for inspecting the contents of a font.

When "Union of All Available Fonts" is selected, PopChar shows all characters that are available in *any* installed font. This mode is ideal when you are looking for a certain character but do not know which fonts contain this character.

The "All Unicode Characters" view displays all characters that are defined by the Unicode standard, regardless of whether a character is actually available in the fonts installed on your computer. If none of the installed fonts contains a certain character, you will typically see a red rectangle with a question mark ( ), which indicates a "missing symbol". You will rarely need the "All Unicode Characters" view, but it can help to identify issues with documents in which certain characters cannot be diplayed properly because of a missing font.

In the Unicode character table, the available characters are arranged in groups, each with a dark heading:

The number in parentheses is the number of characters in this group. You can click the triangle to collapse groups you don't need (for example, because you don't speak the language represented by a group). In this way, you can reduce the number of characters shown in the PopChar table, so you get a better overview of the remaining characters. This can be particularly handy for fonts with thousands of Chinese characters. To quickly collapse or expand *all* groups, hold down the option/alt key (⌥) while clicking the triangle in front of a group name.

To get a quick overview of the groups available in a font, click the small button above the vertical scrollbar. Select a group from the menu to quickly jump there. The vertical bars show which groups are currently visible, and the summary at the bottom tells you how many characters the current font contains. In the "Union of All Available Fonts" view, the menu will contain all groups from the union of all installed fonts, and the summary in

the last line tells you how many Unicode characters you can use all in all.

The text display and editing components of OS X handle Unicode in a very flexible way. When a piece of text contains a Unicode character that is missing in the current font, OS X uses a "fallback strategy" and uses a similar font for displaying the desired character. In most cases, you will not even notice that a different font was substituted for a certain character, but sometimes you will see that certain characters appear in a different "style" or have different proportions than surrounding characters. In the "Union of All Available Fonts" view, the character table shows how all the available Unicode characters will appear in text that is formatted in the currently selected font. Characters that exist in the current font are shown in black; characters that are substituted from a different font appear in blue, as shown in the following snapshot of the "Cyrillic Supplement" section of Lucida Grande:
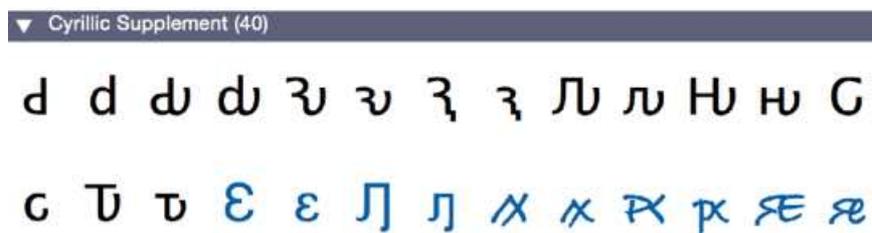

"Union of All Available Fonts" is great when you are working with a Unicode-compatible application and want to insert a special symbol, no matter which font contains this symbol. Browse through the Unicode blocks, or search for the desired character (see below). Then just click the character to insert it in your text.

Some symbol fonts (for example, Webdings and the Wingdings family) contain many special characters in the "Private Use Area". This is a section of Unicode that can be used by font designers for font-specific special characters. Different fonts will therefore contain different characters in this section. When you use PopChar to insert special characters from such symbol fonts, you should therefore switch to "Characters of Current Font" instead of "Union of All Available Fonts". Also make sure that the current font in your text document matches the symbol font. When PopChar appears to insert a different character, check the inserted character's attributes and apply the correct symbol font to the character.

Ligatures

Ligatures are sequences of multiple characters that are represented as a single glyph. They are frequently used by font designers to display certain letter combinations with better spacing or connecting lines. A popular example is the "f+i" ligature, where the top arc of the letter "f" is merged with the dot of the letter "i":
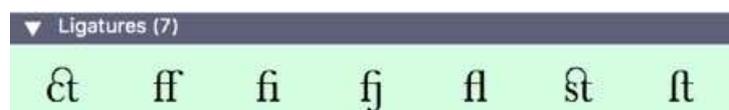
$$f+i = \begin{cases} \text{fi} & \text{as separate characters} \\ \text{fi} & \text{as ligature} \end{cases}$$

If a font contains such an "f+i" ligature, the corresponding glyph is used wherever these two letters occur next to each other. However, the result also depends on the target application. On a Mac, most applications use the built-in text components of macOS, which automatically detect and handle ligatures, but certain applications may ignore ligatures.

PopChar can detect ligatures in fonts. If a font contains ligatures, they are shown with a green background in a separate section at the end of the character table. Note that ligatures seem to look like and behave like single characters, although they consist of multiple characters. When you click a ligature, PopChar inserts the corresponding character sequence in the current document. It is then the target application's responsibility to recognize the character sequence as a ligature and translate it into the corresponding glyph. This requires that the inserted sequence is formatted using the same font as shown in PopChar.

Favorite characters

You will find an extra group "Favorites" at the top of the character table. You can customize this group by adding characters that you frequently need. To do this, right-click or ctrl-click any character to pop up the context menu, then choose "Add to Favorites". You will see that all your favorite characters still remain in their original places, but now with a pink background so you can see which characters already appear in the Favorites group. To remove a character from the Favorites group, right-click or ctrl-click a pink character and select "Remove from Favorites" from the context menu.

When you switch fonts in the "Characters of Current Font" view, PopChar displays only those of your favorite characters that are available in the current font. And if you wish to see all of them, switch to "Union of All Available Fonts". Or use PopChar's "Reverse Search" feature to find those fonts that contain a needed character (for more information, see the section *Finding Fonts That Contain Certain Characters* further below).

If you wish to transfer a collection of favorite characters to another computer, click the button with the gear-wheel symbol in the upper right of the PopChar window and select "Export Favorites…". This command creates a text file with all your favorite characters. You can then transfer this file to another computer and use the "Import Favorites…" command to load the favorite characters from that file.

Recent Characters

Right below the Favorites group, there is another special group that contains
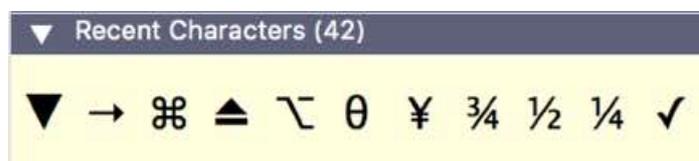
those characters that you have recently used, in reverse order, so that the most recently used characters are listed first.

This section is automatically updated whenever you click characters to insert them in documents. As in the Favorites section, recent characters are visible only if they match the current font and view selections.

The Recent Characters section is a great place to find potential favorites. When you find yourself inserting recent characters frequently, consider adding them permanently to the Favorites section with the "Add to Favorites" context command. Favorite characters are under your control, but the recent characters section is limited to two lines, so a recent character will eventually disappear when you use many other characters.

Layouts

In the character table views, the pop-up menu at the top right of the PopChar window lets you choose among various layouts of characters. Two of these are built-in in PopChar and represent two arrangements defined by the Unicode standard:

Unicode Blocks arranges the characters based on the grouping as defined by the Unicode standard.

Scripts and Symbols arranges the characters in groups that represent language scripts (such as Latin, Cyrillic, and East Asian) and various types of symbols (such as phonetic, geometric, and technical).

The layouts listed after the separator line are "custom layouts" that you can define yourself. PopChar comes with a few such layouts, which you can use as the starting point for your own layouts. To add or edit layouts, select "Custom Layouts…" at the end of the menu. This command opens PopChar's Layouts folder in the Finder. Layouts are text files that you can open and modify with TextEdit. The Layouts folder also contains an "Info" subfolder with descriptions of the layout file format. You can find more layouts on our "Extras" download page. To visit that page, select "More Layouts…" from the menu.

Normally, selecting a different layout has a global effect. It switches to a different layout, which then remains active, even when you select a different font. However, some fonts are best viewed with certain font-specific layouts. For example, the "Emojis 5.0" layout shows a systematic arrangement of emoji characters by their meaning. This is especially useful for Apple Color Emoji. To link a font with a preferred layout, select the font, enable the link symbol, then select the layout to be used for that font:

Once you have linked a font to a layout, PopChar automatically uses the associated layout whenever you select this font. When you select an "unlinked" font, PopChar uses the global layout that is shared by all other fonts.

Insertion modes

In the bottom right corner of the PopChar window, you can find a control that lets you choose how PopChar should insert selected characters.

The first option stands for **plain text**. PopChar inserts the selected character in the font that is in effect in the current document. This is the recommended choice when the font shown in PopChar matches the font being used in the current document. When the fonts do not match, a different character may appear in your document. When this happens, reformat the inserted character with the desired font or try the second insertion mode option.

The second option stands for **formatted text**. PopChar inserts the selected character along with formatting information about the current font. Since text formats also include the font size, you can select the desired font size by clicking the formatted text segment again. Please note that some applications may ignore the formatting information. If an application cannot copy or paste formatted text, it will also be unable to apply the correct font to characters inserted by PopChar. This is, for example, the case for applications that do not support multiple fonts per document (such as BBEdit).

The last option inserts the **HTML code** for the selected character. For example, selecting the copyright symbol will result in "©" and the capital cyrillic letter DE will get inserted as "Д". If you construct web pages in plain HTML, you can use this insertion mode to quickly insert arbitrary symbols. Note that there is a preferences option that gives you more control over the form in which HTML symbols get inserted.

PopChar remembers the insertion mode separately for each application.

Instead of inserting characters with a single click, you can also use a control-click or right-click to pop up a contextual menu. You can then choose to copy the selected character to the clipboard as a character, as its HTML code, as the corresponding Unicode number, or as it's Unicode name.

Finding characters

When you select characters in the PopChar table, you will notice that most characters have names that are shown in capital letters at the bottom of the PopChar window. You can use the search field above the character table to quickly look up characters by their names. Just type one or more words to search for, and PopChar will display only those characters that match the search criteria.

The following examples show what you get when you search the font LucidaGrande for the letter "e" and the word "number".
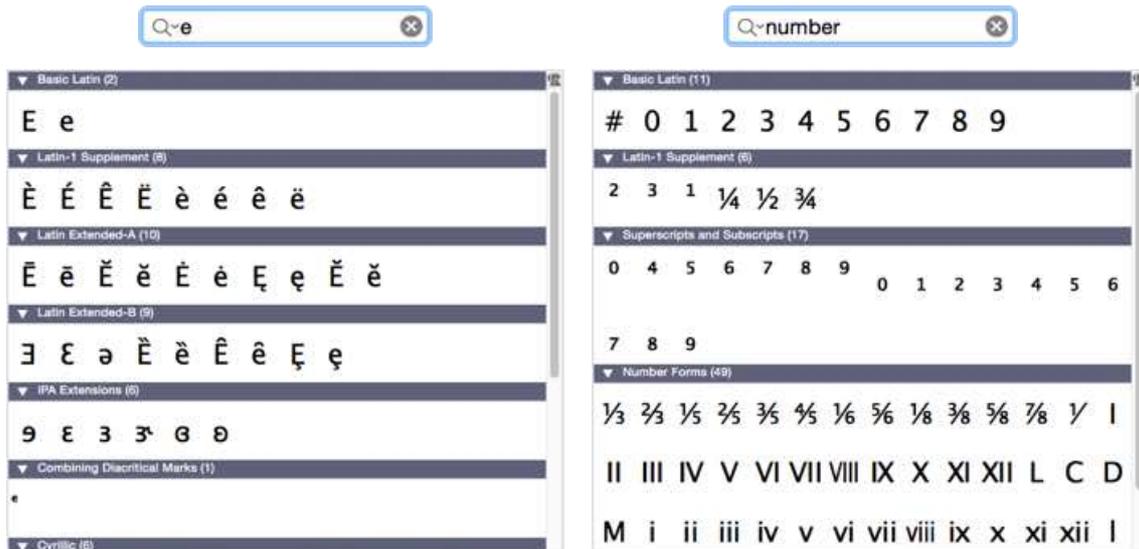
Search hints:

- When you enter a single letter, you get all variants of this letter.
- You can enter numbers to search for various number forms and fractions.
- To search for all kinds of numbers, type "number".
- Entering decimal or hexadecimal numbers also finds the characters with the corresponding Unicode number. Since decimal numbers can also be interpreted as hexadecimal numbers, entering "100" will find both the lower-case "d" (decimal 100) and the capital letter A with macron "Ā" (hexadecimal 100). To search for decimal numbers only, prefix the number with "#" ("#100"). To search for hexadecimal numbers only, prefix the number with "x" or "0x" ("0x100").
- When you enter multiple words, PopChar displays all characters that match *all* words.
- You can enter incomplete words. For example, "dia" will match both "DIAERESIS" and "DIAMOND".
- You can also search for Unicode block names. For example, "math" will display all characters in the "Mathematical Operators" block, although none of them have the term "math" in their names.
- Last but not least, you can copy an arbitrary piece of text and paste it into PopChar's search field. PopChar then displays all characters that occur in the text you entered. To enforce this search mode, just make sure that the text contains at least one special character. For example, enter a period after pasting the text.

You can also click the triangle in the search field and select one of the predefined phrases. The last item (Unnamed) applies a special filter that lists all characters without Unicode names.

If you want to see a particular character in the context of the entire Unicode table, use the search field to find the desired character, then ctrl-click or right-click the character and select the command "Show X in the Unicode Context" from the menu. This command clears the search field, scrolls the table such that the selected character is visible and briefly shows the character with a blue background, so you can see where it is.

Finding fonts that contain certain characters

PopChar makes it easy to start with a font and explore the font's repertoire. But sometimes you will need to search in the opposite direction: You want to use a certain Unicode character and wish to know in which of the installed fonts you can find it.

For example, select the font Verdana in PopChar, select "Characters of Current Font", then enter the word "arrow" in the search field. PopChar will display a message that tells you that Verdana does not contain any arrows. Now select "Union of All Available Fonts". You will see that there are hundreds of arrows of different shapes and orientation, but they all are shown in blue because they come from other fonts. Now control-click or right-click one of the arrows and select the command "Mark fonts containing …" from the context menu. All fonts that contain this character will now appear with a small bullet in the font list. For example, the following display will tell you that Courier contains the selected symbol, but Corsiva Hebrew and Courier New don't:

To see only those fonts that contain the marked character, click the collection pop-up menu above the font list and select the item "Marked Fonts".

To quickly locate the character in one of the fonts that contain it, click the bullet next to the font name. PopChar then selects the font and highlights the symbol in the character table.

To remove the bullets from the font list, right-click or control-click inside the character table or the font list and select the "Reset Marks" command.

Hint: When you have a three-button mouse with the middle button configured as "Button 3", you can also middle-click a character to quickly mark all fonts containing this character.

Finding characters by their shapes

Searching characters by their names is fast and simple when you can guess the name of a character. But the names as defined in the Unicode standard are sometimes not so intuitive. Starting with PopChar 7, you can use the "Shape Finder" if you do not know the name of a symbol. The Shape Finder allows you to draw the shape of a character on the screen in order to tell PopChar what you are looking for.


To search for a character by its shape, click the round button with the pen symbol in the upper right corner of the window, next to the "Find Characters" field. In the sheet that appears, just draw the desired shape and click the Find button. Basic usage of the Shape Finder is simple and straightforward. Here are a few tips that help you get the most out of it:

- If you do not know how to draw shapes, just open the Shape Finder, wait a few seconds and watch the demo.

- Draw the character in a natural position and size in the center of the yellow area. The auxiliary lines indicate the base line, the descender line, and the heights of typical capital and lower-case letters.

- To draw straight lines, press the shift key. You can even press the shift key in the middle of a stroke. Release the shift key to return to freehand drawing.

- When you make a mistake, click the arrow in the bottom left corner to undo the last stroke. You can go back stroke by stroke and redo them with the right arrow. To clear a previously drawn shape, click the "X" below the shape or hit the backspace key.

- You can start with a regular character and add additional strokes. For example, you can type a letter and then add accents. Or, you can type "O" to start with a round shape and then add additional strokes.

- The Shape Finder works best with simple lines. Do not add serifs, loops and ornaments. Draw a shape as you would expect it to appear in a clean font like Arial or Helvetica.

- Currently, PopChar cannot find Chinese characters and special symbols that are unique to certain graphical fonts. This includes characters in the Private Use Area.

- When you click the Find button, PopChar shows matching characters. The very best matches appear with a green background.

- If you cannot see a character in the results, it could be that the current font does not contain a corresponding character. In that case, try switching to "Union of All Available Fonts" to check whether another font contains a suitable character.

- You can also start from the character table. Control-click or right-click a character and select "Find Similar Shape…". This command opens the Shape Finder, where you can add further strokes before you click the Find button.

Preview and Sample Text

The "Font Preview" and "Sample Text" views give an impression of typical text fragments, as they would appear when formatted with the current font:
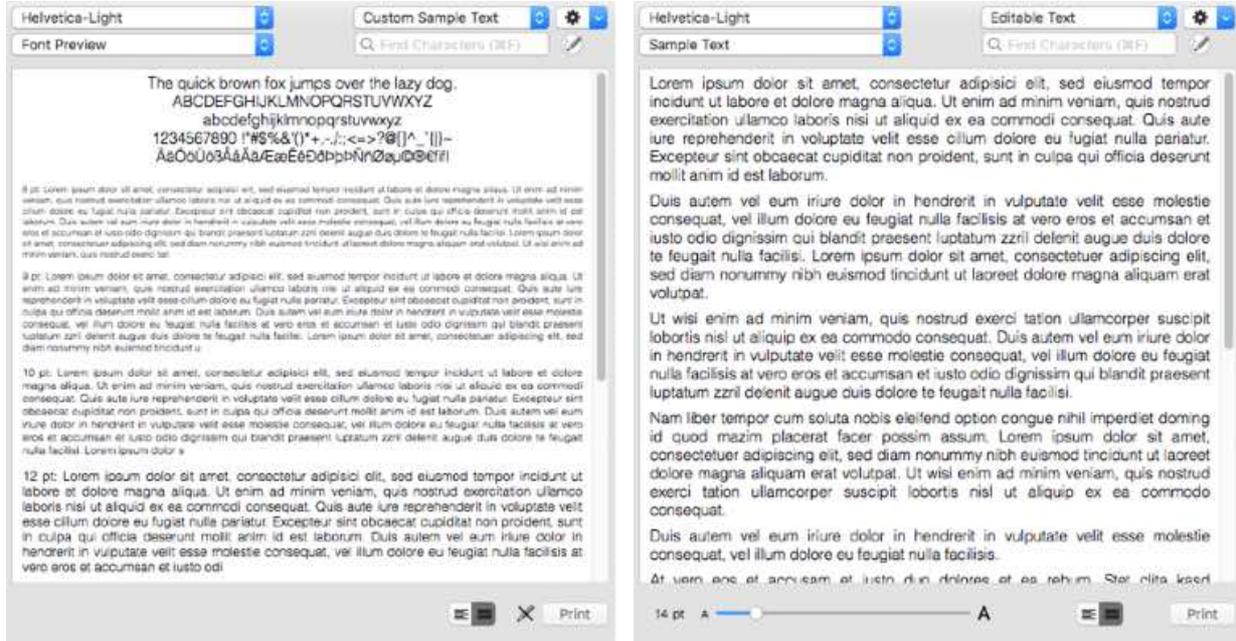
The "Font Preview" shows a few lines with typical characters and a text fragment in font sizes from 8 to 18 pt. In the "Sample Text" view, you can see an even longer text fragment, and you can use the slider at the bottom of the window to quickly view the text in different font sizes.

You can use the pop-up to the right to switch between different predefined pieces of text:

- *Lorem ipsum* is the famous pseudo-Latin text, consisting of multiple paragraphs.
- *Fillerati* is an English novel-like text (source: http://www.fillerati.com).
- *Blindtext* is a German fragment, written in a single long paragraph (source: http://www.all2e.com/Blindtexte).
- *La Bastille* is a historical essay in French (source: http://www.maketext.be).

In addition to these predefined texts, *Repertoire* shows all characters of the selected font, laid out in multiple "paragraphs".

In the "Sample Text" view, you can also select *Editable Text* to create your own text template. You can, for example, copy a real piece of text and paste it into the *Editable Text* to see what your text will look like in various fonts. When you switch to the "Font Preview", your text will be listed as "Custom Sample Text".

In both "Font Preview" and "Sample Text", you can print a single sheet that shows a full page with text in the current font.

As in the character table, characters that are not available in the current font are shown in light blue. For example, the picture to the right shows a font that is not suitable for
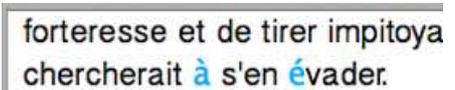
French text because it does not contain accented letters.

You can also enter search terms in the "Find Characters" field to highlight certain characters in the text. For example, you can enter "number" or a Unicode name (like "copyright") to quickly find important characters in the text.

The action menu

The action pop-up menu with the gear wheel icon in the top-right of the window provides the following commands:

- **About PopChar…** displays information about PopChar and the current version.
- **Contact Us…** opens a window with a couple of buttons that makes it easy for you to get in touch with us. You can visit one of our web pages or send a mail message to technical support and customer service.
- **Registration…** displays a dialog for entering or changing your license key.
  If you use PopChar under the terms of a site license, the registration dialog displays the name of the license holder.
- **Preferences…** opens the preferences sheet. See the next section for details.
- **Check for Updates…** visits our web server to check whether a new version of PopChar is available.
- **Import Favorites…** imports a collection of favorite characters from a text file.
- **Export Favorites…** exports all your favorite characters to a text file.
- **Help** displays this document.
- **Quit** terminates PopChar, so that it is no longer running in the background.

You can also open this menu with the right mouse button or with a control-click on the "P" in the menu bar.

Preferences

The "Preferences…" command gives you a couple of options to configure the display and behavior of PopChar. It is divided in three sections, *Activation*, *View & Insert*, and *Updates*:

Activation:

- Use the radio buttons at the top to specify where the "P" should appear in the menu bar.
- When you choose one of the corners, you can choose to make the "P" invisible, so it appears only when you move the mouse pointer into the corner.
- In addition to the "P" in the menu bar, you can also define a hotkey for quickly opening and closing the PopChar window.

- The "animate" option controls whether the PopChar window fades in and out when you open and close it.

- In the "close automatically" section, you can specify under which circumstances the window should automatically disappear. If you prefer to keep the window open at all times, uncheck all options. To make the window as unobtrusive as possible, try checking all options.

- "Start PopChar at Login" adds PopChar to your list of login items. This setting is active by default, so PopChar will automatically be launched when you restart your computer or log out and in again. We recommend that you leave this item checked.

View & Insert:

- Use the Character Size slider to choose an appropriate display size. PopChar computes the font size based on this setting, such that characters from any font take up approximately the same space. The size that you set with this slider affects all fonts. You can then fine-tune the sizes of individual fonts, using the slider at the bottom of the PopChar window. For example, you may want to enlarge the characters of a single font that contains very small or fine characters. The button "Reset Custom Font Sizes" resets all these font-specific adjustments.

- In "Remember selected font", you can define which font should be selected when you open the PopChar window. This can be the font that you saw the last time in the current application, or you can choose to see the same font in all applications. For further details, please see the section Selecting fonts.

- If you wish, you can also set PopChar to display the characters with drop shadows. Since this is a matter of personal taste, it is up to you if you prefer sharp characters or softer shadows.

- The option "Show font names in their on font" affects the appearance of the font names in the font list. When enabled, PopChar displays the font names in the actual font, which creates a preview that makes it easier to find fonts.

- "Recent fonts in menu" specifies how many recent fonts should be shown in the font pop-up menu. When you have a large screen, you may want to see more fonts listed in the menu, so you will need to open the font list less often.

- "Highlight recent characters" lets you choose how many of your recently selected characters should be highlighted in the character table with a yellow background. This option helps you to locate frequently used characters faster.

- The last option controls whether HTML symbols are inserted by their names ("HTML entities") or numerically. HTML entities are easier to read in HTML text, but numeric HTML codes are supported by more browsers.

Updates:

In this section, you can control whether PopChar should check our server for new versions regularly. To disable automatic version checking, select "never".

Registration

If you use PopChar under the terms of a site license, this section does not apply for you. If PopChar asks for a license key when you launch it, ask your system administrator about the proper installation procedure.

PopChar is distributed on a "try before you buy" basis. When you do not yet have a license key, PopChar runs in trial mode. You can try how it works, but many special characters will be disabled.

To order a license key, please visit our online store at

https://www.ergonis.com/store/

or select "Registration…" from the PopChar menu and click the "Order" button.

When you order online, you usually receive your license key immediately with your order (in rare cases via e-mail within the next business day). To enter the license key, select "Registration…" from the PopChar menu. Enter your license key exactly as you have received it.

Hint: To avoid typing errors, you can copy the license key from the browser window or mail message and paste it into PopChar's registration sheet by typing command-V.

Once you have registered PopChar, the demo limitation is immediately removed; you don't need to quit and relaunch PopChar.

Known issues

- Some fonts (in particular Carta) do not work properly with Adobe applications (in particular, Photoshop and InDesign). Wrong characters or black/white rectangles get inserted when you try to insert certain Carta characters in these applications. This problem has nothing to do with PopChar; the same problem occurs when you try to copy/paste Carta characters from other applications into Photoshop or Indesign.

- Insertion of Unicode characters requires active Unicode support by applications. Older applications with limited or missing Unicode support will insert wrong characters for certain Unicode characters. If this happens, select ASCII or MacRoman from the pop-up menu at the right to see the limited character set that you can use with this application.

- The Apple Color Emoji font (on OS X 10.7 and newer) is a special font that contains hundreds of emoticons and various other symbols in color (😃❤️🌻🌀🚗⚽). These symbols are not pictures but rather Unicode characters; they therefore take up very little space. However, text containing these symbols can be correctly displayed only on OS X 10.7 or newer. Do not use them in text that may be viewed on another computer that does not meet these requirements. When the insertion of an Emoji symbol yields a black&white character, try to explicitly format it with the Apple Color Emoji font. This may help for certain characters that also exist in other fonts, but with a slightly different appearance. Unfortunately, many applications cannot handle Apple Color Emoji correctly, at least not yet. For example, the applications of iWork '09 (Pages 4.1, Keynote 5.1 and Numbers 2.1) cannot display color characters, and Microsoft Office 2011 does not even display Apple Color Emoji font in the font menu.

Credits

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