

# Terminal Shell Clock

## Preface

I am coding this clock just out of fun and because I admire beautiful and funny clocks. Instead of searching and downloading an old terminal-clock, I decided to rather create my own one and include the date as well.

This is also proof that a fully functional program can be created with a Bash script. The advantages are obvious: a minimal installation of Linux is sufficient without having to use a bloated programming language.

## Description

Measured on several platforms, the CPU-Load should remain below 2% – but mostly even below 1%.

Note that the label «SWISS MADE» of this clock is correct indeed – I am living in the «clock-country» Switzerland and try to continue the art of designing clocks. It is just that this one is made out of pure software

## Installation and Dependencies

### Linux

As this is a bash script, it is not needed to be installed. Copy it to wherever you like. However, there are a few dependencies:

- `bash`: It is a fundamental and almost universally pre-installed package on nearly all Linux distributions. Use `sudo apt install bash` if not installed.
- `tput`: The `tput` command is part of the `ncurses-bin` package (at least in Debian). Use `sudo apt install ncurses-bin` if not installed.
- `date`: In Debian and almost all other Linux distributions, the `date` executable (usually found at `/bin/date` or `/usr/bin/date`) is part of the `coreutils` package.

After all, if you feel unsure whether you have to install those mentioned packages, most probably you don't.

### Windows

Due to the lack of a native Bash Shell, you can install [GIT Bash for Windows](#) that is intended for GIT usage and is emulating the Bash only. The `clock.bash` script will run nevertheless.

## Restrictions in general

1. Depending on the font and terminal shell, not all characters (Unicode!) may be displayed correctly or might look pretty.
2. Especially the Unicode triangle chars like ▲ might not be displayed correctly and might be shifted or too small in size. As terminal-font, I have tested sucessfully with `Monospace Regular 9`. As for the Terminal-Shell, I've tested with [`xfce4-terminal`](#) and [`kitty`](#), native linux console and xterm so far.
3. Not every terminal shell is capable of RGB colors although most do nowadays. If using a historic one, it might be a good idea to use one of the 16 specified colors.

## Options

### **--style**

To give your clock a personal note and for your taste, you can choose one specific style based on an era.

Usage:

```
./clock.bash --style=50 # run clock using a style from the 50ies  
./clock.bash --style=E-13B # same as --style=50 using alias
```

Available styles:

#### **50 or E-13B**

- Visual: MICR / bank-check style — blocky, machine-readable digits. This style is close looking to *E-13B font* that was used for [Magnetic ink character recognition code](#), known in short as MICR code. It was introduced in 1958.
- Purpose: High-contrast, rigid digit shapes.
- Good for: Retro industrial / MICR look; terminals rendering box characters well.

#### **51 or E-13B-simple**

- Visual: Simplified block-only variant of E-13B.
- Purpose: Same style with fewer decorative glyphs for better compatibility.
- Good for: Terminals with limited Unicode/box-drawing support.

## **55 or NIXIE**

- Visual: Nixie-tube inspired glyphs with rounded/segment-like shapes.
- Purpose: Emulate vintage nixie tube numerals.
- Good for: Retro-electronic, steampunk or museum-like displays.

## **60 or OCR-A**

- Visual: OCR-A (Optical Character Recognition) inspired segmented glyphs with distinctive gaps. This style is almost identical to [OCR-A](#). OCR-A is a font issued in 1966 and first implemented in 1968. A dedicated font was needed in the early days of computer optical character recognition, when there was a need for a font that could be recognized not only by the computers of that day, but also by humans.
- Purpose: Readable “machine/early-computer” aesthetic.
- Good for: Classic OCR look where digits are clearly

## **61 or OCR-A-SIMPLE**

- Visual: Block-only simplification of OCR-A.
- Purpose: Better terminal compatibility while keeping OCR feel.
- Good for: Terminals with limited Unicode/box-drawing support.

## **70 or DATA-70**

- Visual: Futuristic, angular glyphs strongly inspired by Data 70. It is intended to look like a space-age-clock. Data 70 was the rival to the also famous Westminster font.
- Purpose: Retro-futuristic / space-age display.
- Good for: Sci-fi themed terminals and old-console styling.

## **71 or DATA-70-SIMPLE**

- Visual: Simplified Data-70 blocks.
- Purpose: Same theme with increased compatibility.
- Good for: Terminals with limited Unicode/box-drawing support.

## **72 or 7-SEGMENT**

- Visual: Seven-segment display emulation.
- Purpose: Classic digital clock/readout appearance.
- Good for: Minimal, highly legible numeric output.

## **80 or default**

- Visual: Large broad block characters; default layout.
- Purpose: Balanced option intended to render well in most terminals.
- Good for: Most users — recommended when unsure.

## **90 or MODERN**

- Visual: Contemporary, cleaner glyphs / modernized styling.
- Purpose: A modern alternative to the retro sets.
- Good for: users preferring a sleeker look.

## **--color**

- Use `--color=<color>` to set the display color (default: red).
- Supported formats:
  - Colornames:
    - black
    - cyan
    - yellow
    - bright
    - yellow
    - bright\_green
    - blue
    - bright\_magenta
    - bright\_blue
    - red
    - bright\_white
    - bright\_black
    - bright\_red
    - bright\_cyan
    - white
    - green magenta
  - Numeric: 00..15
  - ANSI codes: 30..37 and 90..97
  - Hex: #RRGGBB
  - RGB triplet R,G,B (0..255)

## **Feature requests?**

For any kind of feature you would like to see or bug reporting or thank you's:

[Email me](#)

Take care! Simon