Abyssinica SIL - Font Features

Abyssinica SIL is a TrueType font with smart font capabilities added using the OpenType font technology. The Ethiopic script does not require much rendering except for some combining marks for gemination and vowel length. However, there are some glyph variations for the Ethiopic script. Some applications let the user control certain features such as Character Variants to turn on the rendering of variant characters. However, at this point, most applications do not make use of those features so another solution is needed to show the variant characters. TypeTuner creates tuned fonts that use the variant glyph in place of the standard glyph. TypeTuner also provides the ability to turn on support for the Sebat Bet Gurage and Gumuz languages variants.

See Using Font Features. Although that page is not targeted at Ethiopic support, it does provide a comprehensive list of applications that make full use of the OpenType font technology.

Advanced typographic capabilities

This font supports various advanced typographic capabilities using the OpenType font technology.

- Auto placement of diacritics on Ethiopic syllables only (not on Latin characters)
- Kerning of almost 200 pairs of Ethiopic syllables
- OpenType Character Variants (alternately-designed glyphs are also provided for a number of characters for use in particular contexts)
- OpenType support for the Sebat Bet Gurage [sgw] and Gumuz [guk] languages

These capabilities are available in any application that supports OpenType technology, though this requires applications that provide a sufficient level of support for OpenType Character Variant features.

A sample of diacritic placement and kerning is shown below:

Abyssinica SIL Sample - Diacritic placement and Kerning

This page uses web fonts (WOFF2) to demonstrate font features and should display correctly in all modern browsers. For a more concise example of how to use Abyssinica SIL as a web font see Abyssinica SIL Webfont Example. For detailed information see Using SIL Fonts on Web Pages.

If this document is not displaying correctly a PDF version is also provided in the documentation/pdf folder of the release package.

Customizing with TypeTuner

For applications that do not make use of the OpenType Character Variant features, you can now download fonts customized with the variant glyphs you choose. Read the Font Features page, visit TypeTuner Web, then to choose the variants and download your font.

Complete feature list

There are some Ethiopic character shape differences in different Ethiopian languages. These can be accessed by using OpenType Character Variants or language support for Sebat Bet Gurage and Gumuz languages. The documents below can be downloaded in order to see all the user-selectable font features that are available in the font. The feature names, feature ids, settings and examples are provided.

Language

Affects: U+124A, U+124D, U+1298..U+129F, U+12B2, U+12B5, U+12C2, U+12C5, U+1312, U+1313, U+1315, U+1381, U+1385, U+138D

Language	Sample	Feature setting
default		
Sebat Bet Gurage (sgw)		`lang=sgw`
Gumuz (guk)		`lang=guk`

Character variants

Punctuation

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Ethiopic-style	! $ % * + / 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 = ? ¡ © « ² ³ ¹ » × ‘ ’ “ ” ‹ › ⁰ ⁴ ⁵ ⁶ ⁷ ⁸ ⁹ €	`cv01=0`
Latin-style	! $ % * + / 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 = ? ¡ © « ² ³ ¹ » × ‘ ’ “ ” ‹ › ⁰ ⁴ ⁵ ⁶ ⁷ ⁸ ⁹ €	`cv01=1`

Ethiopic digits

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv02=0`
Connected		`cv02=1`

mwa alternates

Affects: U+121F

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv04=0`
Alternate-1	1	`cv04=1`
Alternate-2	2	`cv04=2`

rwa alternate

Affects: U+122F

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv05=0`
Alternate	2	`cv05=1`

xoa alternate

Affects: U+1287

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv17=0`
Alternate		`cv17=1`

xwa alternates

Affects: U+1288..U+128D

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv18=0`
Handwriting		`cv18=1`

nwa alternate

Affects: U+1297

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv19=0`
Alternate	1	`cv19=1`

nya alternates

Affects: U+1298..U+129E

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv20=0`
Disconnected	3	`cv20=1`

nywa alternates

Affects: U+129F

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv21=0`
Disconnected	3	`cv21=1`
Cohen	2	`cv21=2`

kxwaa alternate

Affects: U+12C3

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv26=0`
Alternate	2	`cv26=1`

zha alternates

Affects: U+12E0..U+12E6

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv31=0`
Cohen	4	`cv31=1`
Chaine	5	`cv31=2`

dda alternates

Affects: U+12F8..U+12FE

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv32=0`
Alternate	6	`cv32=1`

gwaa alternates

Affects: U+1313

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv40=0`
Sebat Bet	7	`cv40=1`
Alone Stokes	8	`cv40=2`

gga alternates

Affects: U+1318..U+131E

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv41=0`
Disconnected	9	`cv41=1`

ggwaa alternate

Affects: U+131F

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv42=0`
Disconnected	9	`cv42=1`

phe alternate

Affects: U+1335

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv45=0`
Alternate	10	`cv45=1`

tswa alternate

Affects: U+133F

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv46=0`
Alternate		`cv46=1`

fwa alternates

Affects: U+134F

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv48=0`
Cohen-1	1	`cv48=1`
Cohen-2	1	`cv48=2`

rya alternate

Affects: U+1358

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv49=0`
Alternate	2	`cv49=1`

mya alternate

Affects: U+1359

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv50=0`
Alternate	2	`cv50=1`

mwi alternates

Affects: U+1381

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv60=0`
Sebat Bet	7	`cv60=1`
Leslau	11	`cv60=2`

mwe alternates

Affects: U+1383

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv61=0`
Sebat Bet	7	`cv61=1`
Leslau	11	`cv61=2`

bwe alternate

Affects: U+1387

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv62=0`
Alternate	11	`cv62=1`

fwee alternate

Affects: U+138A

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv63=0`
Alternate	11	`cv63=1`

fwe alternate

Affects: U+138B

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv64=0`
Alternate	11	`cv64=1`

pwe alternate

Affects: U+138F

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv65=0`
Alternate	11	`cv65=1`

ggwa alternates

Affects: U+2D93..U+2D96

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv70=0`
Disconnected	9	`cv70=1`

3rd form alternates

Affects: U+124A U+12B2 U+12C2 U+1312 U+1385 U+138D

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv80=0`
Alternate	7	`cv80=1`

6th form alternates

Affects: U+124D U+12B5 U+12C5 U+1315

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
Standard		`cv85=0`
Alternate	7	`cv85=1`

Ligatures

gzi ligature

Affects: U+130D U+200D U+12DA

Feature	Sample	Feature setting
No Joiner		U+130D U+12DA
Using ZWJ		U+130D U+200D U+12DA

References

Alone, John Philip Herbert Mackenzie. 1946 (Fourth edition). *The Alone-Stokes Short Manual of the Amharic Language (with vocabularies).* Macmillan and Co. Limited: London.

Chaîne, Marius. 1907. *Grammaire éthiopienne.* Imprimerie catholique. Beyrouth.

Cohen, Marcel. 1970 Seconde edition. *Traité de langue amharique (Abyssinie).* Institut d'ethnologie: Paris.

Leslau, Wolf. 1966. *Ethiopians Speak: Studies in Cultural Background. Part 2: Chaha.* University of California Publication. Near Eastern Studies, Volume 9. University of California Press: Berkeley

Praetorius, Franz. 1955. *Aethiopische Grammatik mit Paradigmen, Litteratur, Chrestomathie und Glossar.* Frederick Ungar Publishing Co. New York.

[1]Chaîne (p 3), Cohen (table 2) [2]Cohen (table 2) [3]Gumuz language preference [4]Alone-Stokes, Chaîne (p 3), Cohen (table 1) [5]Chaîne (p 3) [6]Archaic Oromo language preference [7]Sebat Bet language preference [8]Alone-Stokes (inside back cover) [9]Bilen language preference [10]Praetorius (p 6) [11]Leslau