

GUIDE AND HINTS FOR MISSY MEYER HAIRLINE/SINGLE LINE FONTS!

Single-line fonts and hairline fonts don't work the same way as regular computer fonts do. Regular computer fonts are made up of outlined shapes, where the outline stroke connects with itself. Single-line fonts, on the other hand, are made up of strokes that don't connect back with themselves. Hairline fonts are in a middle ground between the two: they do consist of a fully closed outline, but the strokes overlap each other, to give the appearance of a single line.

Both single-line and hairline fonts are made for very specific uses in specific programs. Other programs may be able to use them, but it isn't always pretty. For example, here's my hairline font Dear Agatha, typed out in Microsoft Word:

Hello, my name is Dear Agatha!

You should be able to see the letters, but they're probably faint and slim, they're kind of pixelated here, and you wouldn't want to use the font for a document like this, since it's so hard to read. (I've made this bold and added a drop shadow to make them show up even more.)

But some programs love hairline and single-line fonts, and thrive with them! These are mainly programs that use a stylus, pen, nib, or other pointed tool. Popular cutting machine programs like Cricut Design Space and Silhouette Studio can use hairline fonts to draw lines, and modeling programs like Rhinoceros can use single-line fonts for engraving.

WHICH VERSION SHOULD I USE?

I've created two versions of every font: a single-line version (the name will end with the number 1) of the font and a hairline version (the name will end with the number 2). Very few programs will actually use the single-line version; most will need the hairline version. It will all depend on the program's ability to separate the two ends of the single-line stroke. (See the next page for an example.) If you aren't sure which version to use, you can always install both and give each a try!

Silhouette Studio: hairline (2)

Affinity Designer: hairline (2)

Cricut Design Space: hairline (2)

Inkscape: hairline (2)

Adobe Illustrator: hairline (2)

Rhinoceros: single-line (1)

CorelDRAW: hairline (2)

EngraveLab: single-line (1)

Glowforge: hairline (2)

SINGLE-LINE vs. HAIRLINE IN ACTION:

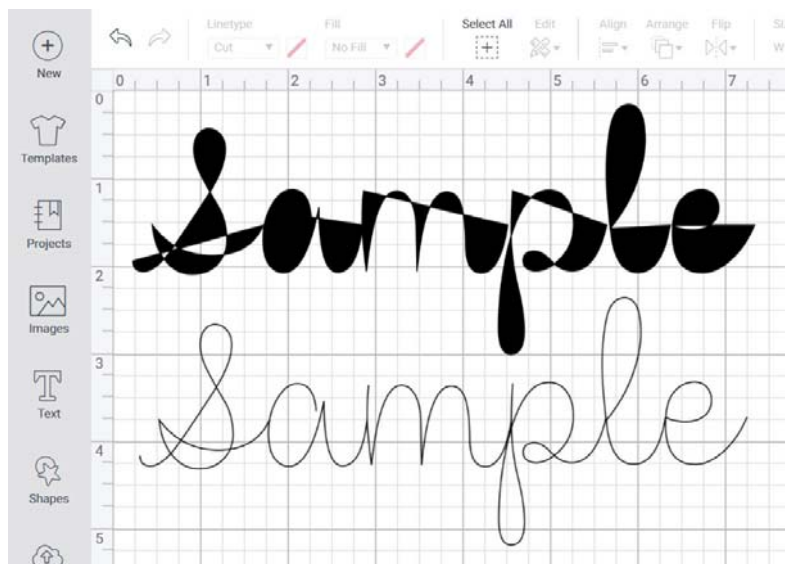
Here's an example of the two versions in Cricut Design Space. (The font here is Dear Agatha.)

The single-line version (1) is on the top, and the hairline version (2) is on the bottom.

This program can't understand the single-line version, so it's connecting the start and end points of the letter shape with a straight line between them. Many other programs will do the same thing.

When using the hairline version, the pen, quill, or other tool will trace each line twice, since it's technically a double line with the two lines on top of each other. But it won't connect the ends with that straight line; instead, your tool will trace the letter from the start to the end, then double back and retrace the same line until it gets back to the start point again.

A lot of programs see single-line fonts the same way; even pricey ones like Adobe Illustrator. So in most programs, unless they're very specifically set to use a single-line font, you'll want to use the hairline version.



ACCESSING THE ALTERNATES AND EXTRAS

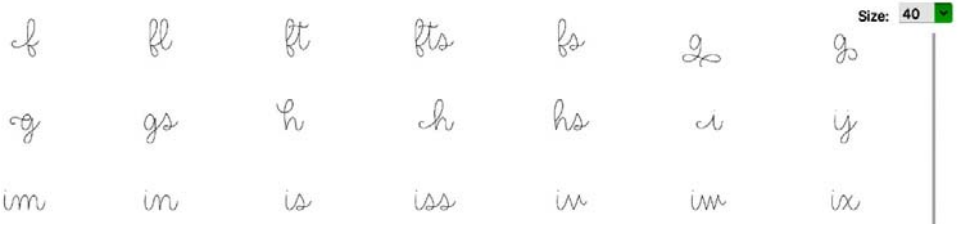
Some programs will have their own built-in character map or Glyphs panel, which allows you to choose and place an alternate, ligature, or extra character wherever you want it. If you normally use an internal Glyphs panel, character map, or symbols list, all alternates should appear in that area as expected for you. As of this writing, the one big exception that I know of is Silhouette Studio, which doesn't appear to understand the hairline letters in its internal Glyphs panel. For Studio, you'll need to use a secondary program.

If you're used to using a secondary program already to access your alternates (for example, if you're designing in Cricut Design Space or Inkscape, and you use Font Book or Character Map to copy and paste in the extras), you should be able to use your regular secondary program to access all characters.

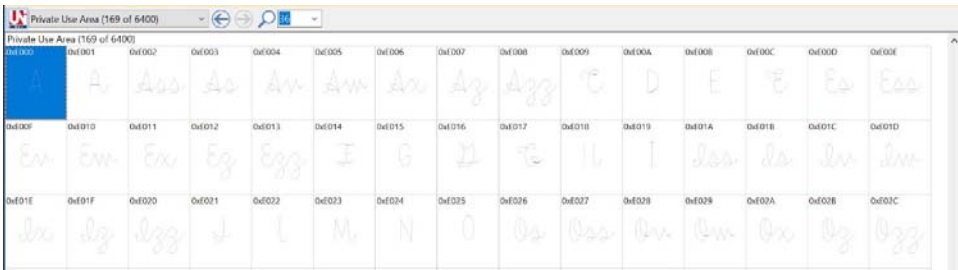
Even though these are TTF font files, they have OpenType coding, and all characters are PUA-encoded.

SECONDARY PROGRAMS FOR ALTERNATE ACCESS

Font Book (Mac):
In Repertoire Mode



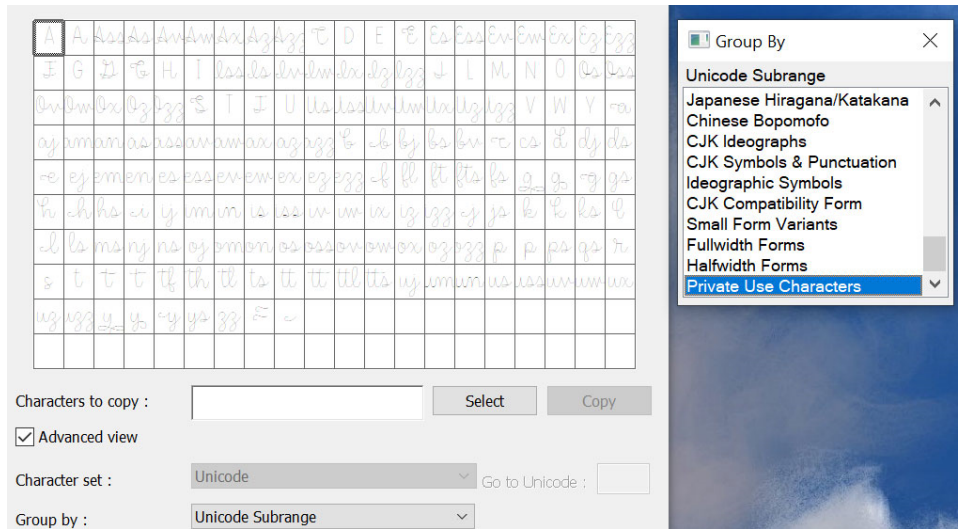
MainType (PC):
Choose Private Use Area in the
drop-down of Unicode sections



NexusFont (PC):
Choose Private Use Area in
UNICODE Subranges



Windows Character Map (PC):
Group by: Unicode Subrange
Select Private Use Characters

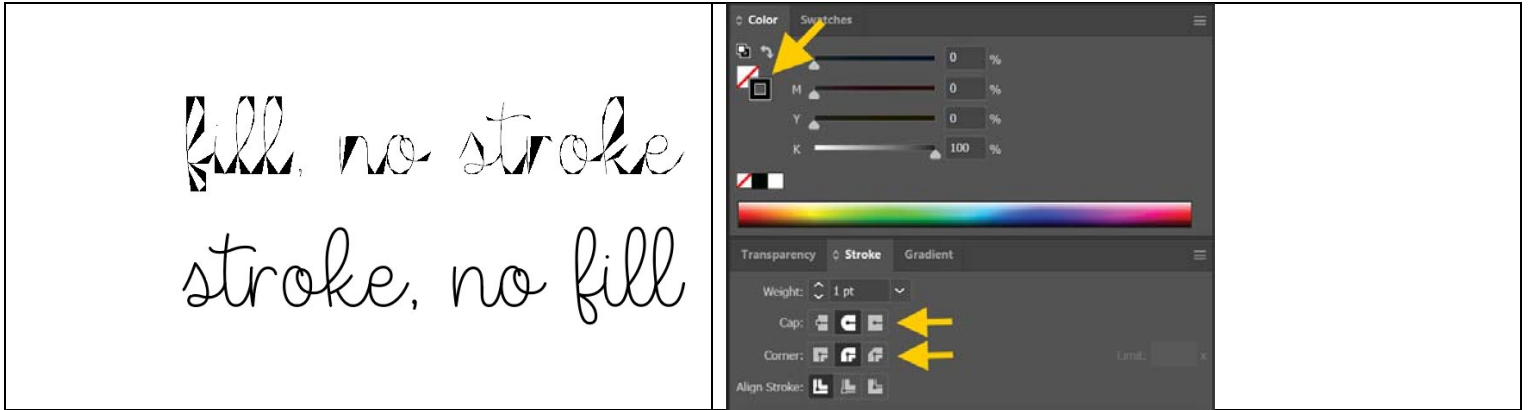


For fonts that include alternates, ligatures, extras, and any other PUA-encoded characters, I've also included a PDF in your download, which you can copy and paste from! Depending on the size of the grid in your usual secondary program, it may be easier to see the characters in the PDF.

USING THE HAIRLINE VERSION IN VECTOR PROGRAMS

Here's an added bonus – you can apply a stroke to the hairline (2) version of a font, and turn it into lettering that can be printed and cut! You have the flexibility to make that stroke as heavy or as light as you want.

ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR:

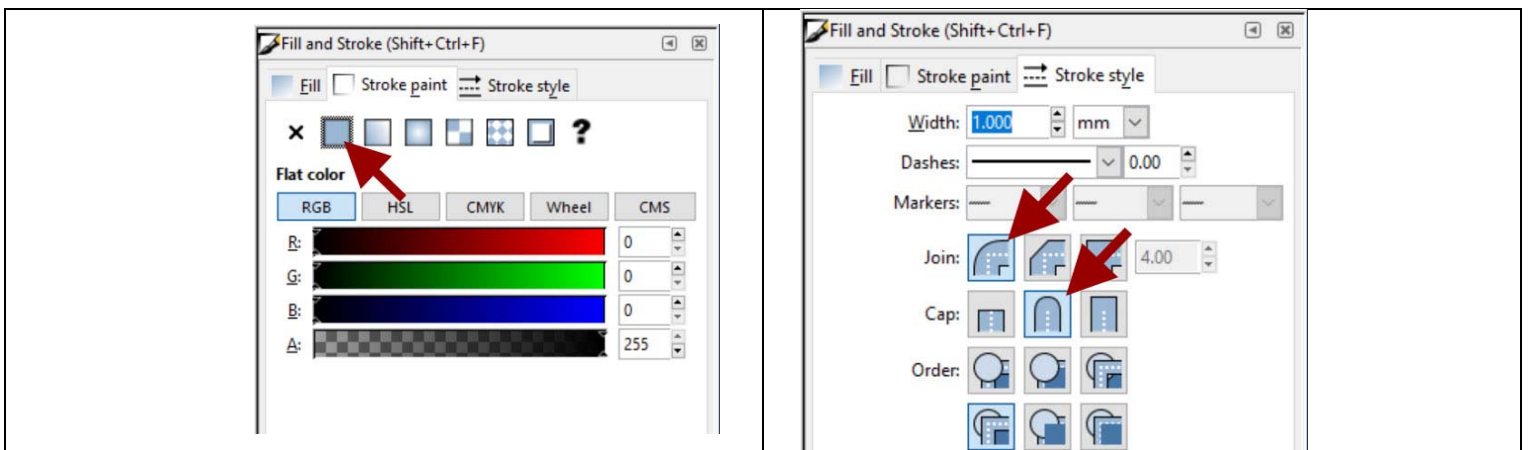


In your Color menu, be sure to set your fill color to transparent, and select a stroke color. I've included an example of what things look like with a fill color selected, but no stroke. It's definitely funky!

In your Stroke menu, set the Cap and Corner options to the center selection for the smoothest curves and corners. Here you can change the weight to make the strokes as heavy or as light as you like!

To expand the strokes, go to Object>Expand in the top menu, only check the "Object" box, and click OK; then go back to Object>Expand, only check the "Stroke" box, and click OK again.

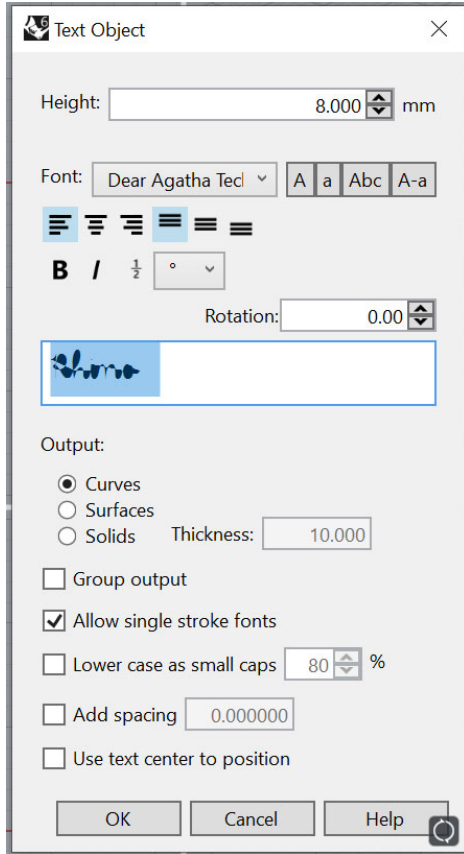
INKSCAPE:



In your Fill and Stroke menu, click the X to clear out any fill in the Fill tab. In the Stroke tab, click the solid box. In the Stroke Style tab, choose the left option for Join and the center option for Cap for the smoothest curves and corners. The Width box is where you can change the weight to make the strokes as heavy or light as you'd like.

To expand the strokes once you have them the width you'd like, go to Path>Stroke to Path in the top menu.

USING THE SINGLE-LINE (1) VERSION IN RHINOCEROS



(Example image is from Rhinoceros 6)

Be sure to tick the “Curves” option under “Output,” and check the “Allow single stroke fonts” box.

Checking that box is what tells Rhino to not draw that final straight line between the beginning and end points of each letter.

Don’t worry about the funky way the letters look in the preview window in the middle of the Text Object panel (as you can see in this example image). It will always show the ends connected by the final straight line. But when you click “OK” and get the text in your workspace, it should have those straight lines removed.

Here’s an example image of how the single-line (1) version will appear in the Rhino workspace, as long as that “Allow single stroke fonts” box has been ticked:

