

ASCII

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ASCII. ASCII is the abbreviation of “American Standard Code for Information Interchange”. There are 256 ASCII characters, each with its own code number, but the meanings of only the first 128 have been standardized. You can find these meanings in an ASCII “code table” such as the one on page 367 of *The T_EXbook*. Characters 32–126 are “printable characters”, such as letters, numbers, and punctuation marks. The remaining characters are “control characters” that are typically used (in the computer industry, not in T_EX) to control input/output and data communications devices. For instance, ASCII code 84 corresponds to the letter ‘T’, while ASCII code 12 corresponds to the “form feed” function (interpreted by most printers as “start a new page”). Although the ASCII standard specifies meanings for the control characters, many manufacturers of equipment such as modems and printers have used the control characters for purposes other than the standard ones.

The meaning of a character in T_EX is usually consistent with its meaning in standard ASCII, and fonts that contain ASCII printable characters usually have those characters in the same positions as their ASCII counterparts. But some fonts, notably those used for math, replace the ASCII printable characters by other characters unrelated to the ASCII characters. For instance, the Computer Modern math font `cmsy10` has the math symbol ‘V’ in place of the ASCII digit ‘8’.