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Euro sign

In Unicode U+20AC € EURO SIGN
(HTML `€` ·
`€`)

Currency

Currency	Euro
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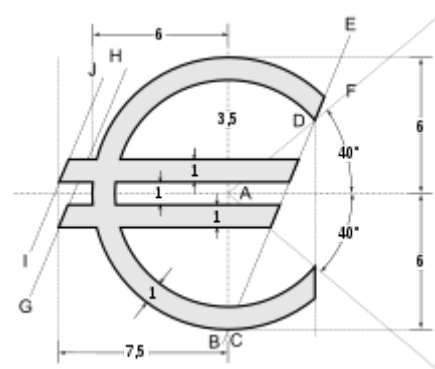
Related

See also U+20A0 CE EURO-CURRENCY SIGN
(HTML ₠)
(predecessor).

Category

Design

There were originally 32 proposed designs for a symbol for Europe's new common currency; the Commission short-listed these to ten candidates. These ten were put to a public survey. After the survey had narrowed the original ten proposals down to two, it was up to the Commission to choose the final design. The other designs that were considered are not available for the public to view, nor is any information regarding the designers available for public query. The Commission considers the process of designing to have been internal and keeps these records secret. The eventual winner was a design created by a team of four experts whose identities have not been revealed. It is assumed that the Belgian graphic designer Alain Billiet was the winner and thus the designer of the euro sign.^[1]



Official graphic construction of the
euro logo

Inspiration for the € symbol itself came from the Greek epsilon (€) – a reference to the cradle of European civilization – and the first letter of the word Europe,

crossed by two parallel lines to 'certify' the stability of the euro.

— European Commission^[2]

The official story of the design history of the euro sign is disputed by Arthur Eisenmenger, a former chief graphic designer for the European Economic Community, who says he had the idea 25 years before the Commission's decision.^[3]

The Commission specified a euro logo with exact proportions and colours (PMS Yellow foreground, PMS Reflex Blue background^[2]), for use in public-relations material related to the euro introduction. While the Commission intended the logo to be a prescribed glyph shape, type designers made it clear that they intended instead to adapt the design to be consistent with the typefaces to which it was to be added.^[4]

Use on computers and mobile phones

Generating the euro sign using a computer depends on the operating system and national conventions. Initially, some mobile phone companies issued an interim software update for their special SMS character set, replacing the less-frequent Japanese yen sign with the euro sign. Subsequent mobile phones have both currency signs.

The euro is represented in the Unicode character set with the character name EURO SIGN and the code position U+20AC (decimal 8364) as well as in updated versions of the traditional Latin character set encodings.^{[a][b]} In HTML, the `€` entity can also be used.

History of implementation

An implicit character encoding, along with the fact that the code position of the euro sign is different in historic encoding schemes (code pages), led to many initial problems displaying the euro sign consistently in computer applications, depending on access method. While displaying the euro sign was no problem as long as only one system was used (provided an up-to-date font with the proper glyph was available), mixed setups often produced errors. Initially, Apple, Microsoft and Unix systems each chose a different code point to represent a euro symbol: thus a user of one system might have seen a euro symbol whereas another would see a different symbol or nothing at all. Another was legacy software which could only handle older encodings such as ISO 8859-1 that contained no euro sign at all. In such situations, character set conversions had to be made, often introducing conversion errors such as a question mark (?) being displayed instead of a euro sign. Widespread adoption of Unicode and UTF-8 encoding means that these issues rarely arise in modern computing.

Entry methods

Depending on keyboard layout and the operating system, the symbol can be entered as:

- AltGr + 4 (UK/IRL)
- AltGr + 5 (US INTL/ESP/SWE)
- AltGr + E (BEL/ESP/FRA/GER/ITA/GRE/POR/CZE/EST/LTU/SVK/SWE/ROS/ROP)
- AltGr + U (HU/PL)



The euro sign in a selection of fonts



The euro sign; logotype and handwritten

- **Ctrl** + **Alt** + **4** (UK/IRL)
- **Ctrl** + **Alt** + **5** (US INTL/ESP)
- **Ctrl** + **Alt** + **e** in Microsoft Word in United States and more layouts
- **Alt** + **0 1 2 8** in Microsoft Windows (depends on system locale setting)^[c]
- **Ctrl** + **↑ Shift** + **u** followed by **2 0 a c** in Chrome OS, most Linux distros, and in other operating systems using IBus.
- **Ctrl** + **k** followed by **= e** in the Vim text editor

On the macOS operating system, a variety of key combinations are used depending on the keyboard layout, for example:

- **⌘ Option** + **2** in British layout
- **⌘ Option** + **↑ Shift** + **2** in United States layout
- **⌘ Option** + **↑ Shift** + **5** in Slovenian layout
- **⌘ Option** + **\$** in French layout^[5]
- **⌘ Option** + **E** in German, Spanish and Italian layout
- **↑ Shift** + **4** in Swedish layout

The Compose key sequence for the euro sign is **Compose** + **=** followed by **e**.

Typewriters

Classical typewriters are still used in many parts of the world, often recycled from businesses that have adopted desktop computers. Typewriters lacking the euro sign can imitate it by typing a capital "C", backspacing, and overstriking it with the equal ("=") sign.

Use



A euro light sculpture at the European Central Bank in Frankfurt

Placement of the sign varies. Countries have generally continued the style used for their former currencies. In those countries where previous convention was to place the currency sign before the figure, the euro sign is placed in the same position (e.g., €3.50).^[6] In those countries where the amount preceded the national currency sign, the euro sign is again placed in that relative position (e.g., 3,50 €).



Euro sign on a €50 banknote

The Commission includes a guideline in its institutional style guide (for its own staff) on the use of the euro sign, stating it should be placed in front of the amount without any space in English, but after the amount in most other languages.^{[7][8][9][10][11]}

In English language newspapers and periodicals, the euro sign—like the dollar sign (\$) and the pound sign (£)—is placed before the figure, unspaced,^[12] as used by publications such as the Financial Times and The Economist.^[13] When written out,

"euro" is placed after the value in lower case; the plural is used for two or more units, and (in English) euro cents are separated with a point, not a comma (e.g., *1.50 euro*, *14 euros*).

Prices of items costing less than one euro (for example ten cents) are often written using a local abbreviation like "ct." (particularly in Germany, Spain, and Lithuania), "snt." (Finland), c. (Ireland) and ₯ (the capital letter *lambda* for Λεπτό ("Leptó") in Greece): (for example, 10 ct., 10c., 10Λ, 10 snt. The US style "¢" or " \$ " is rarely seen in formal contexts.

See also

- List of currency symbols currently in use

Notes

- For details please see the Western Latin character sets (computing)
- For Eastern European character set Latin 10 with the euro sign, please see ISO/IEC 8859-16
- `Alt + 0 1 2 8` is the correct alt code for the Euro under most system locale settings. Under Cyrillic-based system locale settings (using Windows code page 1251), `Alt + 0 1 3 6` must be used. Neither will work under Japanese (932), Korean (949) or Traditional Chinese (950) system locale settings. 0128 works because Microsoft has assigned 0x80 to the Euro sign in these code pages.

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13. "The Economist Style Guide: Currencies" (<https://www.economist.com/style-guide/currencies>). *The Economist*. Retrieved 16 April 2012.

External links

- Euro name and symbol (https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/euro/cash/symbol/index_en.htm), Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs of the European Commission
 - Communication from the Commission: The use of the Euro symbol (https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/publication_summary6125_en.htm), July 1997, Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs of the European Commission
 - Typing a Euro symbol on a non-European QWERTY keyboard. (<https://www.starr.net/is/type/kb.html>) Several methods are shown for and others special characters.
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