

Release Management Group Report to UTC #186

January 7, 2026

Peter Constable & UTC Release Management Group

The Release Management Group (“RMG”) is composed of UTC working group leaders and other volunteers working on the process for development of the Unicode 18.0 release and for evolving processes for future Unicode Standard releases.

1. Unicode 18.0 timeline

A timeline for the development and release of Unicode 17.0 was proposed in [L2/24-258](#) and confirmed by UTC #181 (cf. [181-C59](#)). The following is a summary of key dates:

- 2026-01-23, UTC #186: Finalize alpha content
- 2026-02-10: Start of alpha
- 2026-03-31: End of alpha, snapshot of feedback
- 2026-04-23, UTC #187: Finalize beta content
- 2026-05-26: start of beta review
- 2026-07-07: end of beta public review, snapshot of feedback
- 2026-07-30, UTC #188: Finalize 18.0 content
- 2026-09-15: Unicode 18.0 release

2. Unicode 18.0 alpha review

The 18.0 alpha review period will begin soon after UTC #186, on February 10. (Note: this is one work week later than last year.) Primary focus for the alpha review will be the new character repertoire. Expected deliverables will include:

- code charts;
- draft data files;
- in-progress UAX/UTS updates;
- a PRI cover page; and
- a Unicode Blog post.

As in the past, we assume that data files will minimally include those needed to establish the character and emoji repertoire, and that charts will include draft delta charts for new repertoire, glyph changes to existing repertoire, and changes to variation sequences that are reflected in charts.

RMG recommends the following UTC actions:

[186-C] Consensus: The UTC authorizes starting the alpha review for Unicode 18.0.

[186-A] Action Item for Peter Constable, RMG: Coordinate the publication of the Unicode 18.0 alpha review.

[186-A] Action Item for Ken Whistler, RMG: Prepare the Unicode 18.0 landing page for a PRI on the Unicode 18.0 alpha review.

[186-A] Action Item for Michelle Perham, UTC: Post the PRI for the Unicode 18.0 alpha review, to close March 31, 2026.

3. Additional characters recommended for 18.0

At UTC #185, RMG recommended approval of a tentative character repertoire for Unicode 18.0, and the decisions [185-C39](#) and [185-C40](#) were recorded approving 1,276 characters in three new blocks plus 321 additions to several existing blocks. These additions included several Leibniz math symbols, plus one Hebrew “mudgash” character. In subsequent review it was noted that UTC has provisionally assigned some other Leibniz math symbols plus one other Hebrew “mudgash” character. Our view is that it makes sense to combine these related additions in this next version.

Thus, RMG recommends the following UTC action:

[186-C] Consensus: UTC accepts for encoding in Unicode 18.0 05C9 HEBREW POINT DAGESH HAZAQ MUDGASH and eight mathematical symbols provisionally assigned at 1CEF6..1CEFD.

[186-A] Action Item for Robin Leroy, RMG: Update the pipeline to reflect the assignment of provisionally assigned code points for encoding in Unicode 18.0. [Ref. consensus 185-C??]

[185-A] Action Item for Markus Scherer, PAG: Update the relevant UCD data files in preparation for Unicode version 18.0 to include the additional characters approved for encoding. [Ref. consensus 185-C??]

Note: we anticipate that the SEW working group will also recommend a small number of character additions for Unicode 18.0 at this meeting.