Continued e-mail discussion of the character DOUBLE OBLIQUE HYPHEN proposed in N2611, N2636, and N2639 has resulted in the present document. It has been urged that a document be produced which will address certain implementation concerns.

Semiticists and Cuneiformists familiar with German scholarship were aware that the glyph for U+002D HYPHEN-MINUS which is used in Fraktur typography differs from the glyph used in Roman typography. They have made use of this glyph to indicate certain morphological boundaries while continuing to use the ordinary hyphen to indicate other boundaries. Certainly they were distinguishing between the two characters. Research has shown that they also make use of the ordinary U+003D EQUALS SIGN in other contexts in their documents.

It is interesting to note that other linguists have made use of U+003D EQUALS SIGN to indicate the same kind of morphological boundary. It was suggested that the U+003D EQUALS SIGN be pressed into service with a non-plain text glyph variant in order to represent the Fraktur borrowing, but this is not satisfactory. The EQUALS SIGN has at least variant already (the longer version used in some mathematical typography), and the suggestion that it has adopted an alternate “Copto-Hittite” variant seems to many to be a misunderstanding of the underlying character identity, in addition to introducing a glyph variant for that character which would not be acceptable to anyone in a mathematical context. I suggest that it is the advent of computers which had equals signs and the abandonment of lead typefaces which had Fraktur double oblique hyphens in them might have something to do with conflation of the two characters.

Accordingly it is proposed to add a new character: U+xxxx DOUBLE OBLIQUE HYPHEN. This character is not intended to be used for any instance of an EQUALS SIGN which would be rendered =, even if the linguistic context might otherwise be similar or identical (in other words, there is a glyph-based distinction for what might otherwise be the same semantic function – comparable to the way modifier letters are treated). This character is also not intended to be used for instances of a Fraktur style hyphen, which should be encoded with U+002D, instead.

The repertoire of relevant glyphs is as follows:

| A  | short, single-bar |
| B  | short, double-bar, uptilted |
| C  | medium, single-bar |
| D  | medium, double-bar |
| E  | medium, double-bar, uptilted |
| F  | medium+, single-bar (shorter than em dash) |
| G  | medium+, double-bar |
The repertoire of relevant characters is as follows:

1. U+002D HYPHEN-MINUS
2. U+2010 HYPHEN
3. U+2013 EN DASH
4. U+2212 MINUS SIGN
5. U+003D EQUALS SIGN
6. U+xxxx DOUBLE OBLIQUE HYPHEN

Rendering rules:

1. U+002D HYPHEN-MINUS is ambiguous between use as a hyphen (A: -) and use as a minus sign (C: –), and may be rendered as either of those, depending on use and context.

2. U+2010 HYPHEN is normally rendered with glyph A ( -). In Fraktur style it is rendered with glyph B ( ›). In some fallback contexts it is rendered with glyph C ( –).

3. U+2013 EN DASH is a fixed width dash, and should normally be rendered with glyph C ( –). In some European typographic styles which emphasize the length of dashes as opposed to hyphens, it may end up rendered with glyph F ( —) – but still shorter than an emdash or quotation dash.

4. U+2212 MINUS SIGN is normally rendered with glyph C ( –). In fonts which exaggerate mathematical operator size, it may be rendered with glyph F ( —).

5. U+003D EQUALS SIGN is normally rendered with glyph D ( = ). In fonts which exaggerate mathematical operator size, it may be rendered with glyph G ( == ), and in any case should normally have the same width as the minus sign.

6. U+xxxx DOUBLE OBLIQUE HYPHEN is normally rendered with glyph B ( ›). In certain typographic contexts (e.g. the French Coptic grammar), it may be rendered with glyph E ( ») – but this is rather old-fashioned..

Unicode Character Properties

2055;DOUBLE_OBLIQUE_HYPHEN;Pd;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;

Bibliography


Examples

**Figure 1.** In this example from Seidel the HYPHEN is used in both the Fraktur font (⁻) and the Roman font (−). Here it is clear that the same character (U+002D) is being used with only a font distinction. It is also used as a connector in Khoi-Khoin and in Cape-Town.

**Figure 2.** In this example from Seidel the HYPHEN is used at a linebreak in Wörterbuch. Both the HYPHEN (drawn in Fraktur as a double hyphen) and a short horizontal dash with extra space on either side are used in Deutsch-Otiyorero-Øshikuanjama. Today, in English, we encode such a distinction in Roman as Deutsch-Otiyorero-Oshikuanjama, where the EN DASH serves to separate the first element from the HYPHENated compound second element; this use of EN DASH is not known in modern German.

**Figure 3.** In this example from Seidel the HYPHEN (drawn in Fraktur as a double hyphen) is used in word-breaking, and is also used (drawn in Roman as a single hyphen) to show morphological boundaries. The EM DASH is used to link translations, and the EQUALS SIGN is used to show equivalence.
**Figure 4.** Sample text from Till's grammar showing the use of the DOUBLE OBLIQUE HYPHEN, distinguished from the ordinary single hyphen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Æ</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Ŭ</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>Ŵ</th>
<th>300</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Å</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ô</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Ô</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Æ</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ť</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Ť</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Û</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ì</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Ê</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŀ</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ï</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Ï</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>õ</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ï</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Ï</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ë</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ï</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Ï</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ö</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ï</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Ï</td>
<td>2.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ï</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ï</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Ï</td>
<td>10.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. *Dans la grammaire:* on écrit l'accent aigu ' pour indiquer la voyelle formative qui porte l'accent tonique: *piùi, cólæn, noyf.*

Dans les grammaires et les vocabulaires, on utilise les traits d'union dans les mots composés et pour séparer préfixes et suffixes de la racine. Le mot copie à l'état construit, c'est-à-dire un à son complément, est suivi d'un trait d'union, qui le réunit à son complément éventuel; le mot à l'état pronominal, c'est-à-dire accompagné d'un pronom, est suivi de deux traits obliques, qui annoncent un pronom éventuel.

8. Certains manuscrits copistes sont ponctués. La ponctuation des textes imprimés est généralement ajoutée par l'éditeur.


**Figure 5.** Text from Fossey 1948 describing the use of the horizontal stroke over numerals and the double horizontal stroke over thousands. The text also describes the use of the acute accent to indicate tonic accent, and the distinction between HYPHEN ("trait d'union 'stroke of union'") and DOUBLE OBLIQUE HYPHEN ("deux traits obliques 'two oblique strokes'").

**Figure 6.** The DOUBLE OBLIQUE HYPHEN with its use described in the Webster's Third New International Dictionary.
Figure 7. Example in Roman type from Güterbock & Hoffman 1994 showing the DOUBLE OBLIQUE HYPHEN distinguished from the HYPHEN as well as from the EQUALS SIGN.

dā- „nehmen“

ṭikṣas-šmit „aus ihrem Mund“ (StBoT 8 I 18'); kikkaraz-šmit „aus ihren Händen“ (StBoT 8 II 38); ḫalasaštītaz „vom Thronessel“, ḫāṣṣat „vom Herd“ (StBoT 8 II 39); giTSU-A-bak-šmit „von ihrem Sitz“, karzat-šmit „aus ihrem Herzen“, [tug]gaš-šmit „aus ihrem Körper“ (KBo XVII 7 = StBoT 8 Rv. 4'; 6'-7'); giTSUSUR-az „vom Tisch“ (KBo VI 2 II 44' = HG I, § 47a); A AB BA az „aus dem Meere“ (KBo XXI 2 Vs. 4); ḫalasmataz „aus dem ḫ.-Haus“ (KBo XVII 11 I 17 = StBoT 12 I 33).

Figure 8. Example from Starke 1977 showing the DOUBLE OBLIQUE HYPHEN distinguished from the HYPHEN as well as from the EQUALS SIGN.
In the dictionary and in most grammars the hyphen is used to show at a glance the forms of verbs and prepositions which occur before a noun or pronoun.

Thus the construct form of a verb or preposition before another noun is printed with a single hyphen, e.g., ἐ-, πεζ-, ε-, ἔν-, etc.

When the form is that used with pronoun suffixes (the phonominal form) a double hyphen is used, e.g., ἄ-, ἐ-, ἔ-, ἔν-, ἐπ-, ἐμο-, etc.

Figure 9. Plumley 1948 describes the use of the HYPHEN and the DOUBLE OBLIQUE HYPHEN.