

KEYBOARD DOCUMENTATION

KEYBOARD KEYS

In general, we assign more than one value to each key on a keyboard. We achieve this by using the shift, control and alt keys in various combinations with the character keys. (A character is an upper or lower case letter, a number or a symbol).

We indicate the key combinations used to input each character by the position it occupies on the key in one of four quadrants.

#2 Basic Register Shifted
shift + [key] = character

#4 Alt Register Shifted
shift + alt + [key] = character

#1 Basic Register Unshifted
[key] = character

#3 Alt Register Unshifted
alt + [key] = character

There are a few items to note:

- On Latin-script keyboards, the vowels come in upper and lower case pairs. We show the upper case letter in the top left corner and input it by pressing the shift key plus the character key at the same time. We input the lower case letter by touching the character key only. It is the default position and is usually not shown on the key at all.
- We input characters in the Alt Register by using the right-side alt key (usually labeled "Alt-Gr" on European keyboards). Where there is no Alt-Gr key, we simulate it by using the Alt+Ctrl keys together.
- Most keyboards have only a single register and are labeled on the left side of the key. Keyboards with both basic and alt registers are labeled with the four quadrant method shown above. They also require keyboard driver software that supports the Alt register and the language shown on the key.



Dinka Keyboard

ACCENT MARKS

There are three ways to input letters with accent marks. Our keyboard is unusual in that it supports all three methods.

Precomposed Keys

This is the simplest input method because each accented letter has its own key position as a pre-composed, single unit. On the Dinka keyboard, each of these accented letters has a separate key position: ä, å, ë, ï, ö and ø in both upper and lower cases.

Combining Diacritics

Here you create your own accented letters from parts by first typing the plain, unaccented form of the letter and then adding the combining accent. The combining accent is shown with a broken circle beneath it, indicating the position of the vowel. Thus "a" +  = ä.

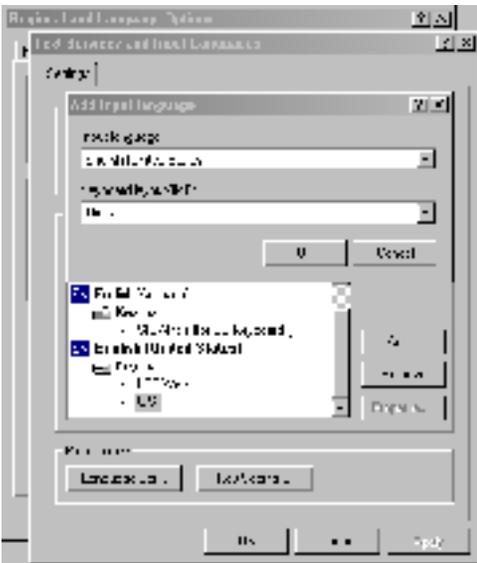
Deadkeys

Deadkeys are another popular method of creating accented vowels. They are the reverse of combining diacritics because first you input the accent mark and then you type the letter. The reason we call them dead keys is because when you type the deadkey accent mark, nothing happens. But when you then type in the letter itself, both the letter and the accent mark show up. The keyboard shows the deadkey (diaeresis)  in red without a broken circle beneath it. Thus  + a = ä.

Our experience is that the method you choose will depend largely on your past experience and personal preference. Although all three methods produce accented letters that look the same, each has its own computer coding that may cause the text to behave differently in browsers or other applications. If you want more information on this technical subject, we will provide it upon request.



4. In the "Text Services and Input Languages" dialog box, click on the "Add" command. This opens the "Add Input Language" dialog box.



5. In the "Add Input Language" dialog box, use the drop-down list to select "English (United States)" as the Input Language. We realize this is not accurate, but we need to use the default category anyway since we cannot create a new one.

6. Use the drop-down list to select "xyz" as the Keyboard layout/IME. If the installation went as planned, xyz will be installed here as an option.

Then select the OK command to close this dialog box.

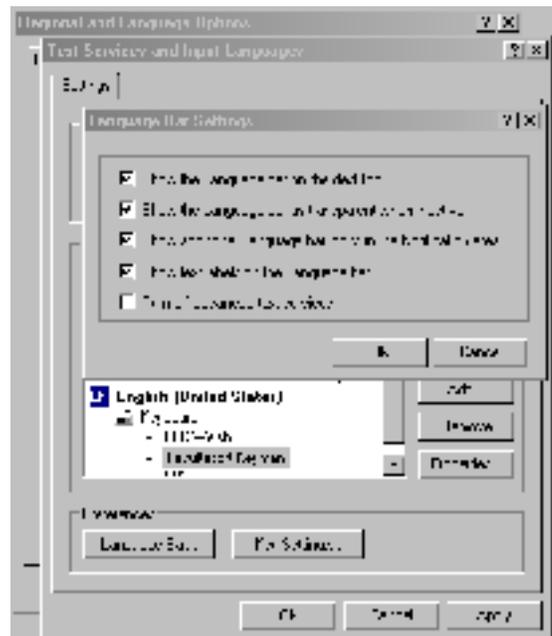
SETTING UP THE LANGUAGE BAR

From the Text Services and Input Languages dialog box, select the "Language Bar..." button. This brings up the Language Bar Settings dialog box.

At a minimum, select the "Show the Language Bar on the Desktop" and "Show additional Language bar icons in the Notification area" check box options.

The click on OK to close this dialog. Then click on the "Apply" command in the Text Services and Input Languages dialog box.

The click on OK until you have exited the Control Panel.





You are now all set up and ready to use the new keyboard.

You will notice the language bar in the lower right corner.

There is a blue square with the letters EN (for English).

There is also a keyboard icon to the right of the blue square.

Select the keyboard icon and you will see a menu with two keyboard options:

- English (United States)
- XYZ

Use this menu to quickly switch back and forth between the two keyboards settings.

Good luck and give us a call if you get stuck!

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