

Installing a Non-Latin Font in Windows and OS/2

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Many of us have occasion to use a non-Latin font in word-processing and web browsing. The following documents a procedure to install Thai fonts and a Thai keyboard driver in Windows 3.1 and in Windows 98, and to enable Thai viewing of web pages in both Navigator and Internet Explorer. Similar techniques will install on other platforms *mutatis mutandis*. For Thai users this will work "out of the box", but more than that the procedure should work equally well for other non-Latin fonts. However the reader will have to source fonts, keyboard drivers and keyboard templates for other languages. Feel free to submit your discoveries to Database to help others!

Installing Thai fonts in Windows

Step 1: Create a temporary directory <\THAIFONTS>.

Step 2: Go to <<http://thaigate.nacsis.ac.jp/refer/windows/thai-ns.html>> and download <w95t-ttf.exe> into the <\THAIFONTS> directory. Execute to extract the fonts. This executable will run on DOS and OS/2 as well as in Windows. The following fonts will appear upon extraction:

DBTT.TTF	40764	10-02-92	8:42a
DBTTB.TTF	40144	10-02-92	8:57a
DBTTF.TTF	40772	1-04-96	3:06p
DBTTFB.TTF	40156	1-04-96	3:08p

Move or copy these fonts into the <C:\WINDOWS\FONTS> directory. The parent file <w95t-ttf.exe> may be now be deleted, or indeed the entire <\THAIFONTS> directory, if desired.

Several other Truetype and Type 1 fonts are available which may reward experimentation in one's own application. However the above procedure will work immediately to get you started.

Installing Thai keyboard driver in Windows

Step 1: Go to <<http://thaigate.nacsis.ac.jp>> to obtain Thai keyboard driver and DLL. Install these in any convenient place e.g. create <\WINDOWS\THAIKBD>.

Step 2: (Optionally) install THAIKBD.EXE as an executable. Use the File\New function in Windows 3.1 or the Shortcut function in Windows 98.

Step 3: In Thailand one can obtain Thai keyboard press-on labels from many sources including stationers, Panthip Plaza, and IBM. One can also create using the keyboard layout appearing at <<http://thaigate.nacsis.ac.jp/refer/thaiio.html>>.

Outside Thailand, or for other languages, contact the Hooleon Corporation (sales@hooleon.com; <http://www.hooleon.com>; telephone +1 800 937-1337 or +1 520 634-7515; telefax +1 520 634-4620). They currently sell a wide range of transparent foreign language labels, allowing the original letter to show through.

Using the Thai keyboard driver and fonts

Each time you want to input Thai to a Windows application, or to a Windows application running under OS/2, click the icon to run THAIKBD.EXE (if you installed it) before running the application program, or just use File\Run\<(pathname)\thaikbd (if you did not). Then load the program you are using to create text and select the Thai font using whatever method that program uses. For example in Windows Write, select Font; the installed Thai fonts will now appear in the list of available fonts. In WordPad all installed fonts are selectable on screen.

Switch between English and Thai with Alt-LShift and Alt-RShift. In Windows 98 a small image will appear in the upper left corner of the screen indicating the active language.

You may have to select 16 point or larger to achieve legibility.

Installing Thai fonts in Internet Explorer

Select View\Internet Options\General\Fonts, then scroll down the list of character sets to User Defined; highlight this. Then for Proportional font select <DB Thai Text> and for Fixed-width font select <FixedDB Thai Text>. Selecting Largest for font size improves legibility. Click OK and OK to save selections and exit. One could change the Default Language to User Defined but this is not advisable due to the poor legibility of the English glyphs in the aforementioned Thai fonts. However experimentation may locate a Thai font or fonts with acceptable English rendering. Database would love to hear the results of readers' own tests.

This process only creates the possibility of Thai rendering of web pages. When one encounters a Thai-coded page using the default Western Alphabet character set, Thai text appears as gibberish in English. At this point select View\Fonts\User Defined. Poof! Gibberish becomes intelligible (if you read Thai!).

Installing Thai fonts in OS/2

Step 1: Create directory <\THAIFONTS> and install fonts as described above.

Step 2: Open OS/2 folder <OS/2 System> and then <System Setup>. Click on the icon.

Step 3: Click on <Edit Font>, then click on <Add>. Input correct path <d:\path\THAIFONTS> where <d:\path> is the correct path to the <\THAIFONTS> directory.

Installing Thai fonts in Navigator (current Windows and OS/2 versions from Netscape Communicator)

Open Navigator, select <Appearance>, then <Fonts>. In the dialog window, select <User Defined>. For Proportional Font select <DB Thai Text>; for the Fixed Font, select <FixedDB Thai Text>.

Using Thai in Navigator

When viewing an html page, one may move between <Western (Latin 1)> (default Times Roman) and <User Defined> (now Thai) according to the base content of the page . Do this by clicking on <View>, select <Character Set> and then either of the two aforementioned choices for maximum legibility. However the Latin glyphs in the Thai font set are greatly inferior to Navigator's default Latin 1 fonts so one will usually want to switch back to the default font set when viewing Latin-character pages.

Universal-Language Keyboard Drivers

Dozens of alphabets can be enabled with universal keyboard drivers; in fact THAIKBD.EXE grew out of one of them.

For OS/2 one can freely download from <<http://hobbes.nmsu.edu>> the file KBDREDEF.ZIP, which unzips to include a universal keyboard redefiner developed by the Hungarian Ferenc Pal and a readme file explaining its applications and procedures to utilize. The program cannot handle DBCS fonts such as now used with e.g. Chinese and Korean, so one must agree to use SBCS versions of these fonts with correspondents.

For Windows a variety of solutions is available, including commercial, freeware and shareware. Check out:

<<http://solair.eunet.yu/~janko/engdload.htm>> (shareware for Win9x, with links to many other useful resources for dozens of languages)

<<http://www.gdgsystems.com/Keygo.htm>> (commercial product for Windows 3.1, Windows 9x and Windows NT)

<<http://www.thecompany.de/keymatic.html>> (commercial product for Windows 9x including clever pop-up display permitting immediate visualization of multiple fonts include musical symbols and Wingdings)

<<http://user.dtcc.edu/~berlin/>> (also points to font resources for more than 40 foreign languages)

Like the OS/2 driver, these Windows drivers may not be DBCS-capable.

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