

Universal Multiple-Octet Coded Character Set  
 International Organization for Standardization  
 Organisation Internationale de Normalisation  
 Международная организация по стандартизации

**Doc Type: Working Group Document**

**Title: Proposal to encode additional Comic Style Symbols in the UCS**

**Source: Karl Pentzlin**

**Status: Individual Contribution**

**Action: For consideration by JTC1/SC2/WG2 and UTC**

**Date: 2011-07-25**

**Supersedes: L2/10-402** (*UTC feedback considered; more sources taken into consideration*)

**1. Introduction**

Since Unicode 6.0, "comic style symbols" are encoded (especially, U+1F4A0...1F4AD are listed under this subheader). Such symbols occur within plain text especially within the speech bubbles of comics, to indicate feelings which are not intended to be expressed by words, or to indicate expletives within plain text which are not intended to be given literally.

Within the specialist literature consulted so far, such symbols are most extensively discussed in the "Lexicon of Comicana" by Mort Walker [1].

In fact, this source is referred by being the source for the "alternative names" of some of the already encoded comic style symbols (e.g. U+1F4A6, U+1F4A8).

Consulting this source, a substantial part of the symbols introduced there already are encoded, but not all (see the table below in section 5.).

This proposal contains the rest of these symbols (as far as they appear in speech bubbles or in similar contexts above of the heads of acting persons). Also, a few other symbols are included which complement the already encoded set (based on their attestation in several sources, or if compelling examples are found associating a meaning to them).

While such symbols are found in comics from the USA, they are more predominant in European comics (possibly because European authors more often write having in mind being subject to translation, and thus more often use symbols to express feelings, as such symbols conserve their meaning in translations. See e.g. fig. 7).

In fact (although such symbol sequences usually are drawn, giving the artist the possibility to invent any kind of symbols), the majority of these symbols apply to a very limited set of abstract symbol concepts (showing e.g. bombs, bold exclamation marks, or spirals). The constancy of the meaning of such symbols, independent of language, is e.g. discussed in [3].

"There is a recognizable relationship to the iconography and pictographs of logographic (or character-based) writing systems, like Chinese *hanzi* or Japanese *kanji*." ([2], p. xvii)

As such symbols already are encoded, and as sources like [1] are referenced in the annotations, the usage of them as abstract symbols (rather than as individual drawings only) in plain text is already been taken into consideration.

Thus, it is not needed to recur to possible other plain text use, like the possibility of using them within short message texts like SMS transmitted by mobile phones, when users want to express their feelings by such symbols.

Fig. 7, 8, 13, 14, 16, 18, 21 in fact show the use of such symbols within true plain text (i.e. interspersed with common text consisting of Latin letters).

## 2. Encoding Considerations

The spiral may have other uses as in comics (e.g. in religious or esoteric context), where the facing may matter. Thus it is given as “ornament”, distinguishing the right-facing and the left-facing form in analogy to U+26E5/26E6 or U+058D/058E (the latter code points according to WG2 N4107 “PDAM 1.2 Draft Repertoire”).

The other characters (with the exception of some pictorial symbols which fit in appropriate gaps below existing subheaders in Unicode 6.0 or in WG2 N4107 = PDAM 1.2 draft) are introduced as “comic style symbols”, in analogy to the already encoded ones at U+1F4A0...U+1F4AD.

The encoding of “amorphous” symbols like the proposed U+1FA0A...1FA0F and U+1FA13...1FA14, as well as having the term “SYMBOL” in their names unless the name addresses the appearance directly, has a precedence e.g. by the already encoded U+1F4A2 ANGER SYMBOL or U+1F4A5 COLLISION SYMBOL.


Following the way of the recent Wingdings/Webdings proposal, black and white (i.e. filled and hollow) versions of some broad symbols (CRANIUM, SPLASH, CLOUD LIGHTNING) are distinguished.

Except for the pistol, which has an inherent pointing appearance (see fig. 15), the orientation of the comic style symbols proposed here (like BONE, etc.) is considered a matter of glyph variation.


## 3. Proposed Characters

### ***Block: Miscellaneous Symbols and Pictographs***

#### **Food symbols**

 U+1F37F HONEY POT WITH SPOON  
= cajoling

#### **Building and map symbols**

 U+1F3F1 TOMBSTONE

#### **Animal symbol**


 U+1F42F SKUNK


#### **Animal symbols**

 U+1F572 BUTTERFLY

### ***Block: Ornament Symbols*** (Name and position according to N4107 “PDAM 1.2 Draft Repertoire”)

#### **Spirals**















 U+1F67E RIGHT-FACING SPIRAL  
→ 1F300 cyclone  
→ 058D right-facing Armenian eternity symbol (PDAM 1.2)








 U+1F67F LEFT-FACING SPIRAL  
→ 169B9 Bamum letter phase-E ngkaami

## **New Block: Miscellaneous Symbols and Pictographs Supplement (1FA00...1FAFF)**

The block "Miscellaneous Symbols and Pictographs" is almost filled up according to WG2 N4107 "PDAM 1.2 Draft Repertoire". Therefore, it is proposed to start a new block, where the symbols proposed here can be presented contiguously.

### **Comic style symbols**

	U+1FA00	CRANIUM = skull without lower jaw · glyph variants exist with and without showing maxillary incisors → 2620 skull and crossbones → 1F480 skull
	U+1FA01	BLACK CRANIUM
	U+1FA02	BONE
	U+1FA03	DAGGER KNIFE → 2020 dagger → (Webdings w-0149, proposed as U+1F5A8 in WG2 N4022)
	U+1FA04	DAGGER KNIFE THROUGH HEART
	U+1FA05	RIGHT-FACING PISTOL → 1F52B pistol
	U+1FA06	RIGHT-FACING PISTOL SHOOTING
	U+1FA07	WHITE CLOUD LIGHTNING → 26C8 thunder cloud and rain
	U+1FA08	BLACK CLOUD LIGHTNING
	U+1FA09	BOLD LIGHTNING
	U+1FA0A	EXPLOSION SYMBOL · glyph usually shows a small circle in the center
	U+1FA0B	SMALL EXPLOSION SYMBOL = nittle · glyph shows a dot in the center
	U+1FA0C	CENTERLESS SPLASH = squean
	U+1FA0D	SPLASH

	U+1FA0E	BLACK SPLASH
	U+1FA0F	BLACK BLOT = dark feeling or wrath symbol
	U+1FA10	RINGED SPHERE = quimp = planet with ring
	U+1FA11	CONICAL SPIRAL = spurl = smashedness symbol
	U+1FA12	ANGULAR SPIRAL = jarn · may be right-facing or left-facing
	U+1FA13	TEXT NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL = grawlix · used for indicating expletives
	U+1FA14	CJK CHARACTER NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL = ideographic grawlix = utterance not to be understood symbol · used for indicating expletives · glyph resembles a bold non-existing CJK character

## Properties:

1F37F;HONEY POT WITH SPOON;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1F3F1;TOMBSTONE;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1F42F;SKUNK;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1F572;BUTTERFLY;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1F67E;RIGHT-FACING SPIRAL;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1F67F;LEFT-FACING SPIRAL;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA00;CRANIUM;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA01;BLACK CRANIUM;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA02;BONE;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA03;DAGGER KNIFE;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA04;DAGGER KNIFE THROUGH HEART;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA05;RIGHT-FACING PISTOL;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA06;RIGHT-FACING PISTOL SHOOTING;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA07;WHITE CLOUD LIGHTNING;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA08;BLACK CLOUD LIGHTNING;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA09;BOLD LIGHTNING;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA0A;EXPLOSION SYMBOL;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA0B;SMALL EXPLOSION SYMBOL;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA0C;CENTERLESS SPLASH;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA0D;SPLASH;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA0E;BLACK SPLASH;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA0F;BLACK BLOT;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA10;RINGED SPHERE;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA11;CONICAL SPIRAL;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA12;ANGULAR SPIRAL;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA13;TEXT NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;  
1FA14;CJK CHARACTER NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;

## Confusability issues:

None of the proposed symbols are intended to be usable in identifiers or IDNs (like URLs or e-mail addresses). Thus, no confusability issues raise in this area.

## 4. New annotations for already encoded characters

U+1FA0E     PISTOL  
  ADD:       = left-facing pistol

## 5. Table showing the correspondence of symbols introduced in [1] to encoded and proposed Unicode characters

The columns in this table are:

1. Page in [1] where the symbol is introduced.
2. See figure below in this proposal.
3. Name in [1] (if any).  
If several similar symbols are listed in [1] under the same name, the name is set in parentheses when not used as "alternative name" for the existing or proposed symbol.
4. If starting with U+...(*and set in italics*):Name of the character already encoded in Unicode 6.0.  
If containing a name only: proposed here.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
28	-	plewds	<i>U+1F4A6 SPLASHING SWEAT SYMBOL</i>
29	1	squean	CENTERLESS SPLASH
29	1	spurl	CONICAL SPIRAL
30/32	-	briffit	<i>U+1F4A8 DASH SYMBOL</i>
48	-	lightbulb	<i>U+1F4A1 ELECTRIC LIGHT BULB = idea</i>
48	-	-	<i>U+1F4A4 SLEEPING SYMBOL</i>
52	2	(jarn)	RIGHT-FACING SPIRAL
52	2	jarn	ANGULAR SPIRAL
52	2	(quimp)	<i>U+263E LAST QUARTER MOON</i>
52	2	quimp	RINGED SPHERE
52	2	(nittle)	BLACK SPLASH
52	2	nittle	SMALL EXPLOSION SYMBOL
52	2	(nittle)	<i>U+2606 WHITE STAR</i>
52	2	gawlix	TEXT NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL
52	3	-	TOMBSTONE
52	3	-	BLACK CLOUD LIGHTNING
52	3	-	DAGGER KNIFE THROUGH HEART
52	3	-	SKUNK

## 6. Acknowledgements

Thanks to Deborah Anderson for reviewing an earlier draft of this proposal and for her valuable comments.

Thanks to Anna Pentzlin for sketching and drawing the glyphs for some of the characters proposed here (1F37F, 1FA00...1FA02, 1FA04, 1FA07...1FA09, 1FA13, 1FA14).

## 7. References

### 7.1 Specialist Literature about Comics

- [1] Walker, Mort: The Lexicon of Comicana. Lincoln, NE (USA), 1980/2000. ISBN 0-595-08902-X
- [2] Eisner, Will: Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative. New York, NY (USA), 2008. ISBN 0-393-33127-X
- [3] McCloud, Scott: Understanding Comics. New York, NY (USA), 1994. ISBN 0-06-097625-X

### 7.2 German collection

*All comics referenced in this list are German editions.*

*The scans are taken from a private collection, which has not preserved the title pages (showing edition place and year) in all cases.*

- [4] Asterix vol. 15 – Streit um Asterix (Berlin, *no year*)
- [5] Asterix vol. 28 – Asterix im Morgenland (Stuttgart, *no year*)
- [6] Asterix German dialect editions vol. 23, Bavarian dialect edition – Asterix drendd im Oriendd (Stuttgart 1998)
- [7] Clever & Smart vol.21 – Zurück ins All, sonst gib'ts Krawall! (Frankfurt a.M. 1976)
- [8] Clever & Smart vol.123 – Faltig und häßlich - wir helfen verlässlich! (Berlin 1993)
- [9] Die Schlümpfe vol. 5 – Die Schlümpfe und der Krakakas (Hamburg 1997)
- [10] Die Schlümpfe vol. 10 – Die Schlumpfsuppe (Hamburg, *no year*)
- [11] Die Abenteuer des Kalifen Harun al Pussah vol. 4 – Die infamen Streiche des Großwesirs Isnogud. Stuttgart 1990, ISBN 3-7704-0573-0
- [12] Donald Duck – Die drei Caballeros (Walt Disney; *no vol. no., no place, no year*)
- [13] Lucky Luke vol. 22 – Calamity Jane (Stuttgart, *no year*)
- [14] Lucky Luke vol. 39 – Kalifornien oder Tod (Stuttgart, *no year*)
- [15] Lucky Luke vol. 51 – Der falsche Mexikaner (Stuttgart, *no year*)
- [16] Lucky Luke vol. 52 – Nitroglyzerin (Stuttgart, *no year*)
- [17] Spirou & Fantasio vol. 28 – Die Eiszeitmaschine (Hamburg 1990)
- [18] Tim & Struppi (i.e. Les aventures de Tintin) vol. 15 – Im Reiche des schwarzen Goldes (*no place, no year*)
- [19] Werner – Na also (Kiel 1996, ISBN 3-928950-15-0)

### 7.3 Miscellaneous sources

- [20] <http://www.sueddeutsche.de/kultur/peanuts-dilbert-co-ich-halte-es-nicht-aus-1.1010469-5> (retrieved 2010-10-16; "Reality check", © United Features Syndicate Inc.)
- [21] Aue, Holger: Motomania vol. 07. Frankfurt a.M. (Germany) 2004; ISBN 3-8218-3097-2
- [22] Uderzo, A.: Asterix and the Magic Carpet. London (Great Britain), *no year*.

## 8. Examples and Figures

Fig. 1: [1], p.29: introducing CENTERLESS SPLASH (squean) and CONICAL SPIRAL (spurl).

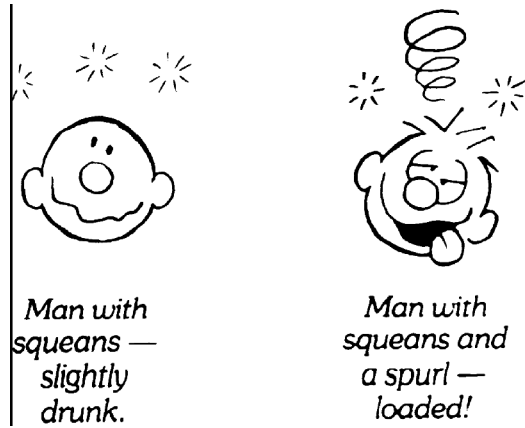


Fig. 2: [1], p.52: introducing several of the symbols proposed here.

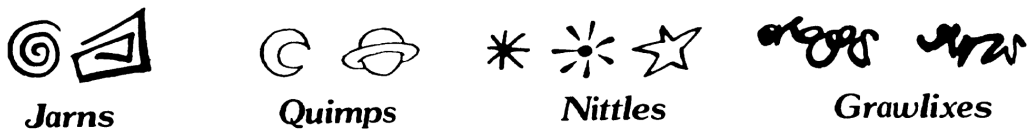
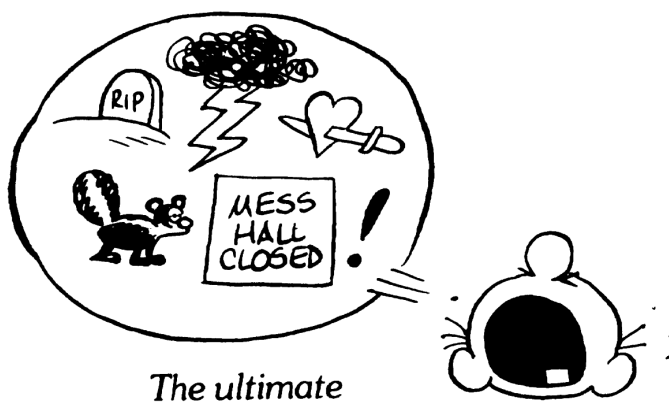


Fig. 3: [1], p.52: showing TOMBSTONE, BLACK CLOUD LIGHTNING, DAGGER KNIFE THROUGH HEART, and SKUNK.





**Fig. 4:** showing CENTERLESS SPLASH in Peanuts comics from 1950 (left) and 1974 (right).  
(by Charles M Schulz, © United Features Syndicate Inc.)



**Fig. 5:** [2], p.65: showing CENTERLESS SPLASH.



**Fig. 6:** [4], p.45: showing EXPLOSION SYMBOL, RIGHT-FACING SPIRAL, CRANIUM, ANGULAR SPIRAL.



**Fig. 7:** [6], p.41; [5], p. 41; [22], p. 41: showing CRANIUM, CJK CHARACTER NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL, ANGULAR SPIRAL, and other symbols.

This example is taken from different translations of the same source. It shows that the symbols proposed here, while redrawn for each translation, keep their general appearance (and thus their character identity), while an amount of glyphic variance is observed which is common for symbol characters.



**Fig. 8:** [20]: showing RIGHT-FACING SPIRAL, U+2606, U+2020, TEXT NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL.



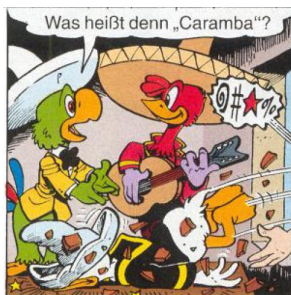
**Fig. 9:** [9], p.21, 22, 29: showing RIGHT-FACING SPIRAL, EXPLOSION SYMBOL, CJK CHARACTER NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL, TEXT NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL, DAGGER KNIFE.



**Fig. 10:** [10], p.16: showing CRANIUM, EXPLOSION SYMBOL, RIGHT-FACING SPIRAL, CJK CHARACTER NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL.



**Fig. 11:** [12], p.14: showing RIGHT-FACING SPIRAL.



**Fig. 12:** [11], p. 37: showing RIGHT-FACING PISTOL SHOOTING (besides other symbols).



**Fig. 13:** [13], p.6: showing several of the proposed symbols. Also, this example shows the character-like appliance of the symbols, by repeating them in a sequence of pictures.



**Fig. 14:** [14], cover, p.11, p. 12, p. 16: showing several of the proposed symbols. Note the SPLASH besides the BLACK SPLASH in the third picture.



**Fig. 15:** [15], p.13: showing RIGHT-FACING PISTOL (besides other symbols). Obviously, in such surroundings, the pistol has to face in the reading direction; thus RIGHT-FACING PISTOL is disunified from U+1F52B PISTOL.





**Fig. 16:** [17], p.14: showing RIGHT-FACING SPIRAL, SPLASH, CJK CHARACTER NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL, a glyph variant of BLACK CLOUD LIGHTNING;  
 p.19: showing CRANIUM, RIGHT-FACING SPIRAL, SPLASH, BLACK BLOT;  
 p. 20: showing BLACK CLOUD LIGHTNING, SPLASH, CJK CHARACTER NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL.



**Fig. 17:** [18], p.12: showing BOLD LIGHTNING (left of the head), CONICAL SPIRAL (over the head), RIGHT-FACING SPIRAL (lower right) besides some other symbols.



**Fig. 18:** [16], p.38: showing DAGGER KNIFE, BLACK CRANIUM, BLACK CLOUD LIGHTNING, U+2757 HEAVY EXCLAMATION MARK SYMBOL.



**Fig. 19:** [7], p.13: showing CJK CHARACTER NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL, U+1F416 PIG, CENTERLESS SPLASH, TOMBSTONE, LEFT-FACED SPIRAL, SMALL EXPLOSION SYMBOL.



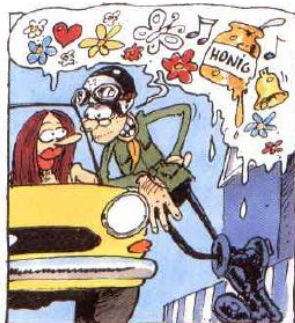
**Fig. 20:** [8], p.4: showing CJK CHARACTER NOT TO BE READABLE SYMBOL.



**Fig. 21:** [19], p.58: showing CRANIUM, LEFT-FACING SPIRAL.



**Fig. 22:** [21], p.31: showing BUTTERFLY, HONEY POT WITH SPOON.



**ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2/WG 2  
PROPOSAL SUMMARY FORM TO ACCOMPANY SUBMISSIONS  
FOR ADDITIONS TO THE REPERTOIRE OF ISO/IEC 10646<sup>1</sup>**

**Please fill all the sections A, B and C below.**

Please read Principles and Procedures Document (P & P) from <http://www.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/principles.html> for guidelines and details before filling this form.

Please ensure you are using the latest Form from <http://www.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/summaryform.html>.

See also <http://www.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/roadmaps.html> for latest Roadmaps.

**A. Administrative**

1. Title:	<i>Proposal to encode additional Comic Style Symbols in the UCS</i>
2. Requester's name:	<i>Karl Pentzlin</i>
3. Requester type (Member body/Liaison/Individual contribution):	<i>Individual contribution</i>
4. Submission date:	<i>2011-07-25</i>
5. Requester's reference (if applicable):	
6. Choose one of the following:	
This is a complete proposal:	<i>Yes</i>
(or) More information will be provided later:	

**B. Technical – General**

1. Choose one of the following:	
a. This proposal is for a new script (set of characters):	<i>No</i>
Proposed name of script:	
b. The proposal is for addition of character(s) to an existing block:	<i>Yes</i>
Name of the existing block:	<i>Miscellaneous Symbols and Pictographs and others (see text)</i>
2. Number of characters in proposal:	<i>27</i>
3. Proposed category (select one from below - see section 2.2 of P&P document):	
A-Contemporary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B.1-Specialized (small collection) <input type="checkbox"/> B.2-Specialized (large collection) <input type="checkbox"/>	
C-Major extinct <input type="checkbox"/> D-Attested extinct <input type="checkbox"/> E-Minor extinct <input type="checkbox"/>	
F-Archaic Hieroglyphic or Ideographic <input type="checkbox"/> G-Obscure or questionable usage symbols <input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Is a repertoire including character names provided?	<i>Yes</i>
a. If YES, are the names in accordance with the "character naming guidelines" in Annex L of P&P document?	<i>Yes</i>
b. Are the character shapes attached in a legible form suitable for review?	<i>Yes</i>
5. Fonts related:	
a. Who will provide the appropriate computerized font to the Project Editor of 10646 for publishing the standard?	<i>The author</i>
b. Identify the party granting a license for use of the font by the editors (include address, e-mail, ftp-site, etc.):	<i>The author</i>
6. References:	
a. Are references (to other character sets, dictionaries, descriptive texts etc.) provided?	<i>Yes</i>
b. Are published examples of use (such as samples from newspapers, magazines, or other sources) of proposed characters attached?	<i>Yes</i>
7. Special encoding issues:	
Does the proposal address other aspects of character data processing (if applicable) such as input, presentation, sorting, searching, indexing, transliteration etc. (if yes please enclose information)?	<i>No</i>

**8. Additional Information:**

Submitters are invited to provide any additional information about Properties of the proposed Character(s) or Script that will assist in correct understanding of and correct linguistic processing of the proposed character(s) or script. Examples of such properties are: Casing information, Numeric information, Currency information, Display behaviour information such as line breaks, widths etc., Combining behaviour, Spacing behaviour, Directional behaviour, Default Collation behaviour, relevance in Mark Up contexts, Compatibility equivalence and other Unicode normalization related information. See the Unicode standard at <http://www.unicode.org> for such information on other scripts. Also see <http://www.unicode.org/Public/UNIDATA/UCD.html> and associated Unicode Technical Reports for information needed for consideration by the Unicode Technical Committee for inclusion in the Unicode Standard.

<sup>1</sup> Form number: N3702-F (Original 1994-10-14; Revised 1995-01, 1995-04, 1996-04, 1996-08, 1999-03, 2001-05, 2001-09, 2003-11, 2005-01, 2005-09, 2005-10, 2007-03, 2008-05, 2009-11)

**C. Technical - Justification**

1. Has this proposal for addition of character(s) been submitted before? If YES explain	<i>No</i>
<i>(one character is also contained in the Wingdings/Webdings proposal)</i>	
2. Has contact been made to members of the user community (for example: National Body, user groups of the script or characters, other experts, etc.)? If YES, with whom?	<i>n/a</i>
If YES, available relevant documents: <i>The proposer himself is a member of the user community</i>	
3. Information on the user community for the proposed characters (for example: size, demographics, information technology use, or publishing use) is included? Reference:	<i>Everybody</i>
<i>See text</i>	
4. The context of use for the proposed characters (type of use; common or rare) Reference:	<i>Common</i>
<i>See text</i>	
5. Are the proposed characters in current use by the user community? If YES, where? Reference:	<i>Yes</i>
<i>See text</i>	
6. After giving due considerations to the principles in the P&P document must the proposed characters be entirely in the BMP? If YES, is a rationale provided? If YES, reference:	<i>No</i>
7. Should the proposed characters be kept together in a contiguous range (rather than being scattered)?	<i>Partially</i>
8. Can any of the proposed characters be considered a presentation form of an existing character or character sequence? If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided? If YES, reference:	<i>No</i>
9. Can any of the proposed characters be encoded using a composed character sequence of either existing characters or other proposed characters? If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided? If YES, reference:	<i>No</i>
10. Can any of the proposed character(s) be considered to be similar (in appearance or function) to an existing character? If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided? If YES, reference:	<i>No</i>
11. Does the proposal include use of combining characters and/or use of composite sequences? If YES, is a rationale for such use provided? If YES, reference: Is a list of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images (graphic symbols) provided? If YES, reference:	<i>No</i>
12. Does the proposal contain characters with any special properties such as control function or similar semantics? If YES, describe in detail (include attachment if necessary)	<i>No</i>
13. Does the proposal contain any Ideographic compatibility character(s)? If YES, is the equivalent corresponding unified ideographic character(s) identified? If YES, reference:	<i>No</i>

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