

Technology Tips

November 10, 2000



Question:

I never know what Word 2000 is going to do when I type two hyphens. Sometimes it changes the hyphens into a long dash and sometimes it doesn't. How can I control what kind of dash I get?



Answer:

By default Word 2000, like Word 97, has a feature called “auto-formatting” turned on. One of the things that auto-formatting does is to change hyphens into an en dash or an em dash. So what are em and en dashes? An em dash is twice as wide as an en dash. According to punctuation guides, you use an en dash in a range of numbers, for example: “pages 1 – 3.” You use an em dash to set off parenthetical matter, for example: “Community organizations—such as Boys and Girls clubs—provide after-school programs.” Here’s how to control what type of dash you get:

- ❶ With auto-formatting turned on in Word 2000, you get an en dash by typing text, a space, a hyphen, another space and then more text. Word will turn the hyphen into an en dash when you finish typing a word or number after the hyphen.
- ❷ With auto-formatting turned on, you get an em dash by typing text, two hyphens and then more text. You do not type a space before or after the hyphens. Word will turn the hyphens into an em dash when you finish typing a word or number after the hyphens.
- ❸ For greater control, turn auto-formatting off and insert the en or em dash manually. To turn off auto-formatting, click **Tools** on the menu bar and then click **AutoCorrect** in the drop-down menu. In the AutoCorrect dialog, click the **AutoFormat As You Type** tab. In the “Replace as You Type” group, clear the check mark next to **Symbol Characters With Symbols** by clicking the box once. Click the **OK** button.
- ❹ To insert a special character with auto-formatting turned off, click **Insert** on the menu bar and then click **Symbol** in the drop-down menu. In the Symbols dialog, click the **Special Characters** tab. At the top of the list, you will see both the em and en dash. Click the dash you want and then click the **Insert** button.
- ❺ Another way to insert a special character in any Windows program (including Word) is to use the numeric keypad on your keyboard to enter the ANSI code for the character. The attached table shows the ANSI characters and their codes. The ANSI character set includes all of the characters that you can type on your keyboard plus the accented letters used in European languages, a few fractions and a variety of special characters. To insert a special character by entering its code:
 - First, make sure that the **Num Lock** light on your keyboard is turned on. If it is not on, press the Num Lock key on your numeric keypad.
 - Then hold down the **Alt** key while you type the 4-digit ANSI code using the **Numeric Keypad**. Do not use the number keys over the letter keys on your keyboard. The ANSI code for an en dash is 0150 and the code for an em dash is 0151.
 - The special character will appear when you finish typing the code and release the Alt key.

ANSI Character Codes for Windows

0001		0044 ,	0087 W	0130 ,	0173 -	0216 Ø
0002		0045 -	0088 X	0131 <i>f</i>	0174 ®	0217 Ù
0003		0046 .	0089 Y	0132 „	0175 ¯	0218 Ú
0004		0047 /	0090 Z	0133 ...	0176 °	0219 Û
0005		0048 0	0091 [	0134 †	0177 ±	0220 Ü
0006		0049 1	0092 \	0135 ‡	0178 ²	0221 Ý
0007		0050 2	0093]	0136 ^	0179 ³	0222 Þ
0008		0051 3	0094 ^	0137 ‰	0180 ´	0223 ß
0009		0052 4	0095 _	0138 Š	0181 µ	0224 à
0010		0053 5	0096 `	0139 <	0182 ¶	0225 á
0011		0054 6	0097 a	0140 Œ	0183 ·	0226 â
0012		0055 7	0098 b	0141	0184 ,	0227 ã
0013		0056 8	0099 c	0142 Ž	0185 ´	0228 ä
0014		0057 9	0100 d	0143	0186 °	0229 å
0015		0058 :	0101 e	0144	0187 »	0230 æ
0016		0059 ;	0102 f	0145 ´	0188 ¼	0231 ç
0017		0060 <	0103 g	0146 ˘	0189 ½	0232 è
0018		0061 =	0104 h	0147 “	0190 ¾	0233 é
0019		0062 >	0105 i	0148 ”	0191 ˘	0234 ê
0020		0063 ?	0106 j	0149 •	0192 À	0235 ë
0021		0064 @	0107 k	0150 –	0193 Á	0236 ì
0022		0065 A	0108 l	0151 —	0194 Â	0237 í
0023		0066 B	0109 m	0152 ~	0195 Ã	0238 î
0024		0067 C	0110 n	0153 ™	0196 Ä	0239 ï
0025		0068 D	0111 o	0154 š	0197 Å	0240 ð
0026		0069 E	0112 p	0155 ›	0198 Æ	0241 ñ
0027		0070 F	0113 q	0156 œ	0199 Ç	0242 ò
0028		0071 G	0114 r	0157	0200 È	0243 ó
0029		0072 H	0115 s	0158 ž	0201 Ò	0244 ô
0030	-	0073 I	0116 t	0159 Ÿ	0202 Ê	0245 õ
0031		0074 J	0117 u	0160	0203 Ë	0246 ö
0032		0075 K	0118 v	0161 ¡	0204 Ì	0247 ÷
0033	!	0076 L	0119 w	0162 ¢	0205 Í	0248 ø
0034	"	0077 M	0120 x	0163 £	0206 Î	0249 ù
0035	#	0078 N	0121 y	0164 ¤	0207 Ï	0250 ú
0036	\$	0079 O	0122 z	0165 ¥	0208 Ð	0251 û
0037	%	0080 P	0123 {	0166 ¦	0209 Ñ	0252 ü
0038	&	0081 Q	0124 |	0167 §	0210 Ò	0253 ý
0039	'	0082 R	0125 }	0168 ¨	0211 Ó	0254 þ
0040	(	0083 S	0126 ~	0169 ©	0212 Ô	0255 ÿ
0041	)	0084 T	0127	0170 ª	0213 Õ	
0042	*	0085 U	0128 €	0171 «	0214 Ö	
0043	+	0086 V	0129	0172 ¬	0215 ×	