

Category: Sans-serif
Designer: Steve Matteson
Foundry: Microsoft Typography
Date released: 2004
Category: Sans-serif
Designer: Steve Matteson
Foundry: Microsoft Typography
Date released: 2004

Segoe

Basic Characteristics

Segoe UI is a member of the Segoe family used in Microsoft products for user interface text, as well as for some online user assistance material, intended to improve the consistency in how users see all text across all languages. It is distinguishable from its predecessor Tahoma and the Mac OS user interface font Lucida Grande by its rounder letters.

Several letters have distinctly different forms in Segoe UI and Frutiger, reflecting Segoe UI's different intended use — low-resolution screen display, rather than airport signage (Frutiger). However, many of these differences were introduced in later versions of Segoe UI — earlier versions of Segoe UI were closer to Frutiger.

Segoe UI is optimized for Vista's default ClearType rendering environment, and it is significantly less legible when ClearType is disabled, except at key user interface sizes (8, 9 and 10 point) where Segoe UI has been hinted for bi-level rendering. The standard font size increased to 9 pt. in Windows Vista to accommodate for better layout and readability for all languages.

The Windows Vista version of Segoe UI (version 5.00) contains complete Unicode 4.1 coverage for Latin, Greek, Cyrillic and Arabic (romans only), totaling 2843 glyphs in the regular weight.

Segoe UI has a true cursive italic, unlike the oblique used in Frutiger and Helvetica.

History

Segoe (/ˈsiːɡoʊ/ see-goh) is a typeface, or family of fonts, that is best known for its use by Microsoft. The company uses Segoe in its online and printed marketing materials, including recent logos for a number of products. Additionally, the Segoe UI font sub-family is utilized by numerous Microsoft applications, and may be installed by applications (such as Microsoft Office 2007 and Windows Live Messenger 2009). It was adopted as Microsoft's default system font beginning with Windows Vista, and is also used on outlook.com, Microsoft's web-based email service. In August 2012, Microsoft unveiled its new corporate logo based on the Segoe font, replacing the logo it had used for the previous 25 years.

Licensing controversy: In 2004, Microsoft registered certain Segoe and Segoe Italic fonts as original font designs with the European Union trademark and design office. The German font foundry Linotype protested, citing Segoe UI's similarity to its licensed Frutiger family of typefaces. In its submission to the EU, Microsoft claimed that Linotype had failed to properly prove that it had been selling Frutiger and Frutiger Next prior to 2004. The EU rejected these claims, and in February 2006 the EU withdrew Microsoft's registration.[2] Microsoft did not appeal the decision. Microsoft still holds US design patents to various Segoe based fonts. During the same period, in late 2004, after six years under the Agfa Corporation, the Monotype assets were acquired by TA Associates and the company was incorporated as Monotype Imaging. Later, in August 2006, Monotype Imaging acquired Linotype.[3] So at the end of 2006, Linotype — the company that had challenged the validity of Microsoft's Segoe patents — was a wholly owned subsidiary of the company — Monotype — that had originally licensed Segoe to Microsoft.

In November 2005, Simon Daniels, a program manager in Microsoft's typography group, stated that "The original Segoe fonts were not created for or by Microsoft. It was an existing Monotype design which we licensed and extensively extended and customized to meet the requirements of different processes, apps and devices."

In April 2006, a Microsoft public relations spokesman, who asked not to be named, stated:

Segoe was an original design developed by Agfa Monotype (now Monotype Imaging) in 2000. In 2003, we acquired the original Segoe fonts and used them to develop an extended family of fonts retaining the Segoe name. Many of these new fonts received design patent protection in the United States. Segoe was not derived from Frutiger. Microsoft also has a current up-to-date license that allows us to distribute certain Frutiger fonts in connection with Microsoft products including Office and Windows. There are distinct differences between Segoe and Frutiger. Additionally, unlike clone typefaces, the Segoe family of fonts are not metrically compatible with Frutiger so cannot be used as replacements.

Under United States copyright law, the abstract letter shapes of functional text fonts cannot be copyrighted; only the computer programming code in a font is given copyright protection. This makes the production and distribution of clone fonts possible.

The Segoe name is a registered trademark of the Microsoft Corporation, although the typeface was originally developed by Monotype.

Segoe UI was produced by Monotype Imaging.

Light and **Semibold** versions of Segoe UI were introduced with Windows 7.

A Semilight version was introduced in order to make a perfect lightweight down to 11 pixels.

True italic variants were introduced for the Light, Semilight, and Semibold weights.

The Light and Semibold versions have been tuned for better quality for screen reading.

Typography design changes were made that closely resemble the Segoe WP font family. Notable changes have been made from Windows Vista and Windows 7, such as to the letters "l" and "Q", and the digits 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8.

Additional scripts and character sets are supported, such as Arabic, Armenian, Georgian (Mkhedruli and Khutsuri), Hebrew, and Fraser alphabet (Lisu).[15]

OpenType variants were included.

The updated Segoe UI from Windows 8 has also been officially backported to Windows 7.[16]

In Windows 8.1 Segoe UI gained Black and Black Italic weights, but only for Latin, Greek and Cyrillic scripts.[17]

Variations

Segoe UI Mono is a variation of Segoe UI with monospace characters. It supports Latin (including Eastern European, and Turkish), Greek, Cyrillic, Hebrew and Thai characters, and symbols, geomet-