

History

Tahoma is a humanist sans-serif typeface designed by Matthew Carter for Microsoft Corporation. The initial distribution was done in 1994 along with Verdana for Windows 95.

The Tahoma typeface family was named after the Native American name for the stratovolcano Mount Rainier (Mount Tahoma) which is a prominent feature of the southern landscape around the Seattle metropolitan area.

Tahoma was an official font supplied with Office 97, Office 2000, and Office XP, and was freely distributed with Word Viewer 97.

Tahoma was the default screen font used by Windows 2000, Windows XP, and Windows Server 2003 (replacing MS Sans Serif) and was also used for Skype and Sega's Dreamcast packaging and promotional material. Bundled in the font library of Windows, the typeface was widely used as an alternative to Arial.

In 2007, Apple announced that Tahoma would be bundled with the next version of Mac OS X v10.5 ("Leopard"). Leopard also shipped with several other previously Microsoft-only fonts, including Microsoft Sans Serif, Arial Unicode, and Wingdings.

Basic Characteristics

Tahoma was first designed as a bitmap font, and TrueType outlines were "carefully wrapped" around those bitmaps. The bold weight was based upon a double pixel width, rendering it closer to a heavy or black weight.

While similar to Verdana, Tahoma has

- a narrower body,
- less generous counters,
- much tighter letter spacing, and
- a more complete Unicode character set.

It has a distinct advantage over such fonts as Arial for use with technical material in that uppercase "I" (eye) is distinguished from lowercase "l" (ell).

Since 2010, Italic and small caps versions are available from Ascender Corporation (but not on Adobe).

Tahoma is often compared to the humanist sans-serif typeface Frutiger. In an interview with Daniel Will-Harris, Matthew Carter acknowledges some similarities with his earlier typeface Bell Centennial.

NOTE: Tahoma is not listed in either 30 Essential Fonts or Font: The Sourcebook.

TAHOMA 36PT

Regular REGULAR REGULAR

Bold BOLD BOLD ITALIC

TAHOMA 48PT

Regular REGULAR REGULAR

Bold BOLD BOLD ITALIC

A B C D E F G

H I J K L M N

O P Q R S T

U V W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i j k l m

n o p q r s t u v w x y z

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA

CHAPTER 1 A SHIFTING REEF

The year 1866 was signalised by a remarkable incident, a mysterious and puzzling phenomenon, which doubtless no one has yet forgotten. Not to mention rumours which agitated the maritime population and excited the public mind, even in the interior of continents, seafaring men were particularly excited.

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