
X.X Cirth (draft by Michael Everson, 2000-04-22)
Cirth 1xx00–1xx7F

The Cirth script was invented by the philologist and author J. R. R. Tolkien as part of the mythological world he created and was widely popularized through his work, *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Silmarillion*, etc. Along with a family of artificial languages and a large corpus of etymological data describing their relationships, the Cirth script has attracted the attention of a community of linguists and other enthusiasts interested in this expression of Tolkien's expertise in historical and comparative linguistics (*cirth* is plural of Sindarin *certh* 'rune'; the Quenya singular and plural are **certa* and *certar*). The Cirth should be treated as a Category D (Attested Extinct) script: there is a relatively limited corpus, and a relatively small scholarly body studying it. In order to provide a standard Cirth character coding for both scholars and enthusiasts (many of whom create new texts with the Cirth), it has been suggested that this character set be included in Plane 1 of the UCS. Eight columns are reserved to encode the Cirth.

The Cirth are used to write the languages Sindarin and Khuzdûl, among others. They have also been used to write English, as on the title page of *The Lord of the Rings*.

General Principles of the Cirth script. The Cirth are a Runic-type alphabet, although they are not connected with Germanic runes except due to a general resemblance resulting from the constraints of letterforms carved in wood or stone. Some of the Cirth had two different forms, which seem to represent glyphic variants; these variants are explicitly encoded because they may be significant. The Cirth were written from left to right. One positional variant is known to exist; this can be rendered as a ligature with the ZERO-WIDTH JOINER: U+xx1E † l + ZWJ + U+xx1E † l yields † ll. Note that a related ligature has been encoded as a unique character † ll.

Ordering follows the presentation of the Cirth of Eregion and Moria followed by the earliest Beleriand runes (from *The Return of the King*, Appendix E, and *The Treason of Isengard*, Appendix on Runes). Additional early Doriathrin and Noldorin Cirth follow these in the main sequence, as have other Cirth used for English, etc. Where duplication in letter names occurs, a modifier has been added to the name to differentiate it from the primary form. Pronouncible or meaningful names are not known for the Cirth, so their phonetic values are used for the names; as usual, long vowels are written doubled in the names.

Punctuation and diacritics. Little is known about punctuation marks, though four have been identified: a single dot serves sometimes to separate letters or words; two vertical dots is used to break up groups longer than a word; three or four vertical dots are used at the beginning and ending of texts. The first three of these are attested in the Mazarbul texts (Tolkien 1992b). U+xx6B ≡ DOUBLE EM DASH is also attested in the Mazarbul texts. Vowel or consonant length is sometimes indicated by a horizontal bar below the letter; U+0331 COMBINING MACRON BELOW should be used for this. Nasality or consonant length can be indicated by the use of U+0302 COMBINING CIRCUMFLEX ACCENT.

Numbers. Only three Cirth numbers are attested (in the Mazarbul texts); each is formed by placing a dot beneath an existing *certh*: \aleph ‘3’, Υ ‘4’, \mathbb{W} ‘5’. To indicate that a *certh* has numeric value, U+0323 COMBINING DOT BELOW should be used.

Sometimes word space is not used; word separation may be achieved in that case with U+200B ZERO-WIDTH SPACE. Hyphenation is not generally used, but in one instance where it is found (Carpenter 1981:132) the glyph has two strokes like a short equals sign.

Sources for characters

The characters in this proposal are attested in the following sources. Page numbers follow the UCS code positions given.

Carpenter 1981 (*Letters*)

xx0E:132, xx1D:132

Tolkien 1965a (*Fellowship of the Ring*)

xx23:2, xx3C:333, xx3D:2, xx40:333, xx6A:2

Tolkien 1965b (*Return of the King*)

xx04:402, xx06:402, xx09:402, xx0F:402, xx12:402, xx13:402, xx16:402, xx17:402, xx18:402, xx19:402, xx1A:402, xx1B:402, xx1F:402, xx21:402, xx24:402, xx25:402, xx29:402, xx2D:402, xx2E:402, xx32:402, xx35:402, xx36:402, xx37:402, xx38:402, xx3B:402, xx3E:402, xx3F:402

Tolkien 1992a (*Treason of Isengard*)

xx42:461, xx43:461, xx44:461, xx45:461, xx46:464, xx47:461, xx48:461, xx49:461, xx4A:461, xx4B:461, xx4C:464, xx4C:460, xx4F:461, xx50:461, xx53:461, xx56:461, xx58:461, xx59:461, xx5B:461, xx5C:461, xx5D:464, xx5F:461, xx60:464, xx61:461, xx62:461, xx64:461, xx65:461, xx66:461

Tolkien 1992b (*Pictures*)

xx00:24, xx01:24, xx02:24, xx03:24, xx05:24, xx07:24, xx08:24, xx0A:2, xx0B:24, xx0C:24, xx0D:24, xx10:24, xx11:24, xx14:24, xx15:24, xx1C:24, xx1E:24, xx20:24, xx22:24, xx26:24, xx27:24, xx28:24, xx2A:24, xx2B:24, xx2C:24, xx2F:24, xx30:24, xx31:24, xx33:24, xx34:24, xx39:24, xx3A:24, xx41:24, xx4E:24, xx51:24, xx52:24, xx54:24, xx55:24, xx57:24, xx5A:24, xx5E:24, xx63:24, xx67:24, xx68:24, xx69:24, xx6B:24

Unused positions:

xx6C, xx6D, xx6E, xx6F, xx70, xx71, xx72, xx73, xx74, xx75, xx76, xx77, xx78, xx78, xx7A, xx7B, xx7C, xx7D, xx7E, xx7F

Encoding Structure. The Cirth block is divided into the following ranges:

U+xx01 -> xx66	Cirth
U+xx67 -> xx6B	Punctuation
U+xx6C -> xx7F	unassigned

Unicode Character Properties

(These have not been sorted out yet.)

Spacing letters, category “Lo”, bidi category “L” (strong left to right)

xx00–xx65

Symbols, category “Po”, bidi category “L” (strong left to right)

xx66–xx69

References

TABLE XX - Row xx: CIRTH

	xx0	xx1	xx2	xx3	xx4	xx5	xx6	xx7
0	𐌱	𐌲	𐌳	𐌴	𐌵	𐌶	𐌷	
1	𐌸	𐌹	𐌺	𐌻	𐌼	𐌽	𐌾	
2	𐌿	𐍀	𐍁	𐍂	𐍃	𐍄	𐍅	
3	𐍆	𐍇	𐍈	𐍉	𐍊	𐍋	𐍌	
4	𐍍	𐍎	𐍏	𐍐	𐍑	𐍒	𐍓	
5	𐍔	𐍕	𐍖	𐍗	𐍘	𐍙	𐍚	
6	𐍛	𐍜	𐍝	𐍞	𐍟	𐍠	𐍡	
7	𐍢	𐍣	𐍤	𐍥	𐍦	𐍧	·	
8	𐍨	𐍩	𐍪	𐍫	𐍬	𐍭	:	
9	𐍮	𐍯	𐍰	𐍱	𐍲	𐍳	⋮	
A	𐍵	𐍶	𐍷	𐍸	𐍹	𐍺	⋮	
B	𐍼	𐍽	𐍾	𐍿	𐎀	𐎁	=	
C	𐎂	𐎃	𐎄	𐎅	𐎆	𐎇		
D	𐎈	𐎉	𐎊	𐎋	𐎌	𐎍		
E	𐎎	𐎏	𐎐	𐎑	𐎒	𐎓		
F	𐎔	𐎕	𐎖	𐎗	𐎘	𐎙		

G = 00
P = 01

TABLE XX - Row xx: CIRTH

dec	hex	Name
000	00	CIRTH LETTER P
001	01	CIRTH LETTER B
002	02	CIRTH LETTER F
003	03	CIRTH LETTER V
004	04	CIRTH LETTER HW
005	05	CIRTH LETTER M
006	06	CIRTH LETTER MB
007	07	CIRTH LETTER T
008	08	CIRTH LETTER D
009	09	CIRTH LETTER TH
010	0A	CIRTH LETTER DH
011	0B	CIRTH LETTER N
012	0C	CIRTH LETTER CH
013	0D	CIRTH LETTER J
014	0E	CIRTH LETTER SH
015	0F	CIRTH LETTER ZH
016	10	CIRTH LETTER NJ
017	11	CIRTH LETTER K
018	12	CIRTH LETTER G
019	13	CIRTH LETTER KH
020	14	CIRTH LETTER GH
021	15	CIRTH LETTER ENG
022	16	CIRTH LETTER KW
023	17	CIRTH LETTER GW
024	18	CIRTH LETTER KHW
025	19	CIRTH LETTER GHW
026	1A	CIRTH LETTER NGW
027	1B	CIRTH LETTER NW
028	1C	CIRTH LETTER R
029	1D	CIRTH LETTER RH
030	1E	CIRTH LETTER L
031	1F	CIRTH LETTER LH
032	20	CIRTH LETTER NG
033	21	CIRTH LETTER S
034	22	CIRTH LETTER KHUZDUL GLOTTAL STOP
035	23	CIRTH LETTER Z
036	24	CIRTH LETTER KHUZDUL NG
037	25	CIRTH LETTER ND
038	26	CIRTH LETTER EI
039	27	CIRTH LETTER I
040	28	CIRTH LETTER KHUZDUL Y
041	29	CIRTH LETTER KHUZDUL HY
042	2A	CIRTH LETTER U
043	2B	CIRTH LETTER UU
044	2C	CIRTH LETTER W
045	2D	CIRTH LETTER UE
046	2E	CIRTH LETTER UI
047	2F	CIRTH LETTER E
048	30	CIRTH LETTER EE
049	31	CIRTH LETTER A
050	32	CIRTH LETTER AA
051	33	CIRTH LETTER O
052	34	CIRTH LETTER OO
053	35	CIRTH LETTER VARIANT OO
054	36	CIRTH LETTER OE
055	37	CIRTH LETTER VARIANT OE
056	38	CIRTH LETTER KHUZDUL N
057	39	CIRTH LETTER H
058	3A	CIRTH LETTER KHUZDUL REVERSED SCHWA
059	3B	CIRTH LETTER SHORT REVERSED SCHWA
060	3C	CIRTH LETTER KHUZDUL SCHWA
061	3D	CIRTH LETTER SHORT SCHWA
062	3E	CIRTH LETTER KHUZDUL PS
063	3F	CIRTH LETTER KHUZDUL TS
064	40	CIRTH MODIFIER LETTER H
065	41	CIRTH AMPERSAND
066	42	CIRTH LETTER SP
067	43	CIRTH LETTER SB
068	44	CIRTH LETTER SC
069	45	CIRTH LETTER SG
070	46	CIRTH LETTER NDZH
071	47	CIRTH LETTER DORIATHRIN KW
072	48	CIRTH LETTER DORIATHRIN GW
073	49	CIRTH LETTER DORIATHRIN KHW
074	4A	CIRTH LETTER DORIATHRIN GHW
075	4B	CIRTH LETTER DORIATHRIN L
076	4C	CIRTH LETTER ENGLISH ND
077	4D	CIRTH LETTER DORIATHRIN Z
078	4E	CIRTH LETTER LL
079	4F	CIRTH LETTER IU
080	50	CIRTH LETTER AI
081	51	CIRTH LETTER AU
082	52	CIRTH LETTER AY
083	53	CIRTH LETTER AE
084	54	CIRTH LETTER EA
085	55	CIRTH LETTER EW
086	56	CIRTH LETTER NOLDORIN O
087	57	CIRTH LETTER VARIANT NOLDORIN O
088	58	CIRTH LETTER NOLDORIN OO

dec	hex	Name
089	59	CIRTH LETTER IO
090	5A	CIRTH LETTER EU
091	5B	CIRTH LETTER OU
092	5C	CIRTH LETTER NOLDORIN OE
093	5D	CIRTH LETTER DORIATHRIN O
094	5E	CIRTH ENGLISH THE
095	5F	CIRTH NOLDORIN L
096	60	CIRTH ENGLISH OF
097	61	CIRTH LETTER Y
098	62	CIRTH LETTER VARIANT Y
099	63	CIRTH ENGLISH IS
100	64	CIRTH LETTER YY
101	65	CIRTH LETTER NOLDORIN OE
102	66	CIRTH LETTER NOLDORIN OOE
103	67	CIRTH SEPARATOR SINGLE DOT
104	68	CIRTH SEPARATOR DOUBLE DOT
105	69	CIRTH SEPARATOR TRIPLE DOT
106	6A	CIRTH START OR END OF TEXT
107	6B	CIRTH DOUBLE EM DASH
108	6C	(This position shall not be used)
109	6D	(This position shall not be used)
110	6E	(This position shall not be used)
111	6F	(This position shall not be used)
112	70	(This position shall not be used)
113	71	(This position shall not be used)
114	72	(This position shall not be used)
115	73	(This position shall not be used)
116	74	(This position shall not be used)
117	75	(This position shall not be used)
118	76	(This position shall not be used)
119	77	(This position shall not be used)
120	78	(This position shall not be used)
121	79	(This position shall not be used)
122	7A	(This position shall not be used)
123	7B	(This position shall not be used)
124	7C	(This position shall not be used)
125	7D	(This position shall not be used)
126	7E	(This position shall not be used)
127	7F	(This position shall not be used)