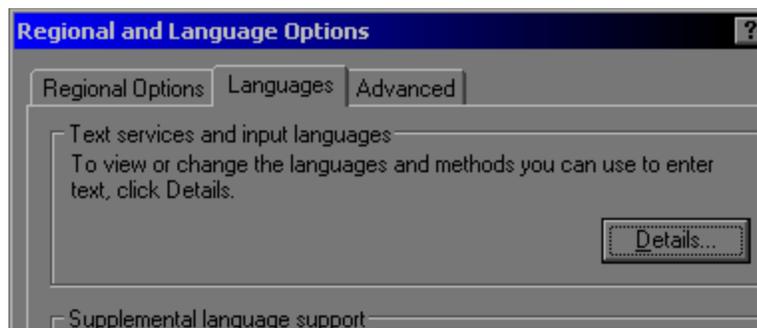# Inputting International Characters
Windows XP/Vista/2003

One of the features added to Windows XP was international language support. To easily enter international characters under Windows XP on a US QWERTY keyboard, you need to install the US-International keyboard type. In order to do this, you must:

1. Open the start menu, and click on "***Control Panel***" to open the control panel. You can quickly jump to the control panel icon by hitting "C" on your keyboard until "Control Panel" has been highlighted, then press Enter. By default, the control panel uses the "Category View." You will want to switch to "Classic View" by clicking on "***Switch to Classic View***" from the links on the left of the control panel view:

2. After you have switched to classic view, you will need to open up the "***Regional Settings and Language Options.***" To quickly jump this icon, just keep hitting the "R" key until the ***Regional Settings and Language Options*** icon is highlighted, then press enter (or double-click with your favorite pointing device).

3. Next, click on the "***Languages***" tab from the Regional Settings and Languages window you just opened. After you have done that, click on Details and a new window will open.
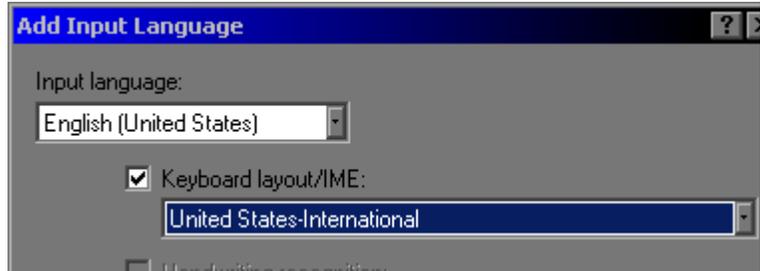
4. From the new window, you will see your language settings and installed keyboard. For those in the US, the installed keyboard will be "US." "US" is in bold under keyboard because it is the current active keyboard profile. This will change after we add a new keyboard profile.
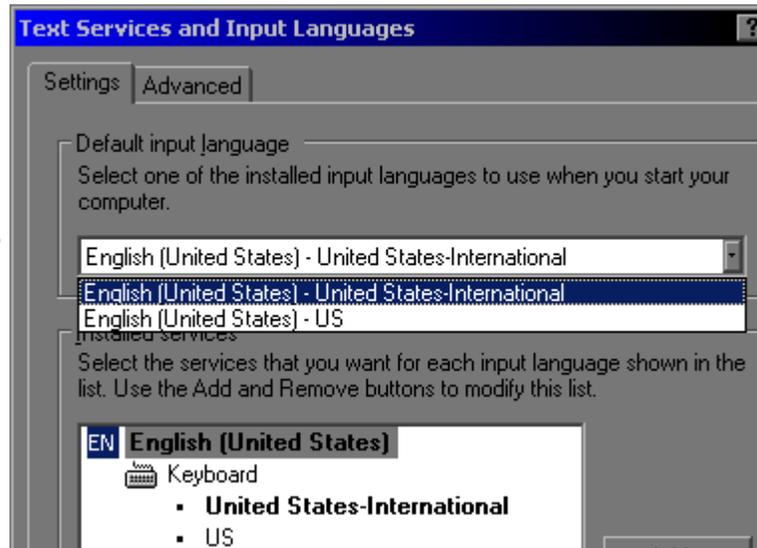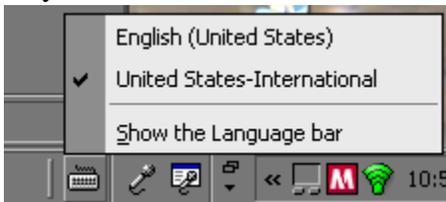
You may also see "Speech

Recognition"if you installed it with Microsoft Office (don't get too excited, the speech recognition isn't very good at all, even with training).

Your next step will be to click on "***Add***." and a new window will appear.

5. From this new window, we can install new languages and keyboard layouts. Leave the input language as is for now, since we are only installing the *US-International* keyboard layout. Do not select any of the Dvorak keyboards unless you own one. Click "***Ok***" and return to the "***Text Services and Input Languages***" window. It will now have "United States-International" under the list of keyboard layouts. Hit ***Apply*** now to save your changes, otherwise they will be lost when you close the window.

6. To activate the international keyboard layout, select "***English (United States) – United States-International***" from the "Default input language" menu. You can also change the active keyboard and language by clicking on the new keyboard icon on the task bar:

On some systems, for some unknown reason, this menu may not work properly. In which case, you'll have to go to the control panel to change the current active language and keyboard.

The international keyboard works just like the normal keyboard until you try and enter quotation and other punctuation marks. For instance, if you type a quotation mark, nothing will appear at all! However if you type the letter **E** right after it, then you will get **ë**. If you want that punctuation mark to appear, then just hit the space bar instead of a letter.

Key Sequence	Character
`e	è
"o	ö
^e	ê
'e	é
~n	ñ
'c	ç

Macintosh (Mac OS X)

For those of you using a Macintosh, you don't need to add a new keyboard layout, but the keys are different.

Keystroke	Accent	Example	
Alt-N	~	alt-n n	ñ
Alt-e	´	alt-e e	é
Alt-`	`	alt-`e	è
alt-i	^	alt-i e	ê
Alt-u	¨	alt-"o	ö
alt-c	ç	alt-c	ç
alt-"	æ	alt-"	æ

Linux Fedora Core US-International Keyboard Layout

Under Linux, you have two options after you select the US-International keyboard layout (In Fedora Core, go to the System menu then Administration->Keyboard). Either you can use the accent key and a letter like you would in Windows, or a combination of the left meta (alt) key and a letter, or use the various accent keys similar to the way they are used in Windows XP. The international language support is far superior in Linux than any other operating system present today.

Here is the big difference between how the accent keys are handled in Linux than in windows: If you hit the accent key twice, the accent appears without a character below it, ***this accent is not not a punctuation character!*** This is important to remember, especially if you're writing a program or HTML file. If you want the punctuation mark, hit the space bar after hitting the accent/punctuation key just like you would in windows. You can also hit the alt-key with the punctuation key to get the punctuation by it's self so you can skip. The international keyboard layout will take a little more time getting used to in Linux because you could easily end up typing something like "youŕe" when you meant to type "you're," whereas in Windows, it wouldn't display anything because the ŕ character isn't one Microsoft thinks you need.

Here is a table of Characters that can be entered when using the alt-key by it's self (the shift key can also be used in combination with most of these keys).

Meta-key (Left Alt)	A	C	D	E	I	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	W	Y	Z	/?	1!	4	5	<	[	]
Character	á	©	ð	é	í	ø	µ	ñ	ó	ö	ä	®	ß	þ	ú	å	ü	æ	¿	¡	¤	€	ç	«	»
Shifted	Á	¢	Ð	É	Í	Ø	µ	Ñ	Ó	Ö	Ä	®	§	Þ	Ú	Å	Ü	Æ		¹	£		Ç	«	»

Other special sequences:

Sequence	Character
Shift-Meta-Zero a,u	å ů
Shift-Meta-9 a, g	ă ğ
Shift-Meta-8 a, e, i, u	ą ę į ų
Shift-Meta-3 a, e, i, o, u	ā ē ī ō ū
Shift-Meta-2 u, o	ű ő
Shift-Meta-> e, c, s, z, n	ě č š ž ň

Closing notes:

Any questions or comments can be sent to aragorn@stellimare.com. Eventually I'll be adding an updated version to my website at outpost1.stellimare.com. Keep in mind that this version is a draft.

No, I was not able to find an effective way of inputting the œ or Œ characters, however it is possible to redefine the keyboard under Linux.   This also means that it is possible for some of the meta key combinations to produce different results than those described above for different installations of Linux.

I highly recommend the OpenOffice.org office package, it's free, written by people that really really hate Microsoft, and can do pretty much anything that Microsoft Office can do, plus some. Spelling dictionaries are available for many languages, including several variants on English (American, Canadian, and UK).