

Raising the colon off the ground

 devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20180913-00

September 13, 2018



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There's a fine typographical detail in the Windows 8 TDBN. [See if you can spot it.](#)

In the clock, it says 7:00.

Not 7:00.

The colon between the hour and minutes has been raised slightly.

People that care a lot about these things prevailed upon the development team to make this small refinement to the clock on the TDBN as well as the clock on the taskbar.

Of course, the globalization team had their own concerns about this, because the time separator is not always a colon. And even if it is, changing the character from U+003A to U+2236 would affect right-to-left layout because U+003A is category CS (common number separator) whereas U+2236 is character ON (other neutral), which would result in “7:00” rendering incorrectly as “00:7”.

HTML	Result
<code><DIV DIR="rtl">7:00</DIV></code>	7:00
<code><DIV DIR="rtl">7:00</DIV></code>	00:7

Furthermore, in languages like Chinese, the U+2236 is wider than U+003A, resulting in too much white space on either side.

A compromise was reached: The colon would be raised off the ground, but only if the current locale uses Latin script. The accessibility name continues to use U+003A so that screen readers will still read the time correctly.

Even though TDBN disappeared in Windows 10, the refinements to the the way time is displayed still exist in the taskbar clock.

Which you probably never noticed, unless you're a typography nerd.

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