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Chapter 18

Han Radical-Stroke Index

To expedite locating specific Han ideographic characters in the code charts, radical-stroke indices are provided on the Unicode web site. An interactive radical-stroke index page enables queries by specific radical numbers and stroke counts. Two fully formatted traditional radical-stroke indices are also posted in PDF format. The larger of those provides a radical-stroke index for all of the Han ideographic characters in the Unicode Standard, including CJK compatibility ideographs. There is also a more compact radical-stroke index limited to the IICore set of 9,810 CJK unified ideographs in common usage (see *Section 12.1, Han*). The following text describes how radical-stroke indices work for Han ideographic characters and explains the particular adaptations which have been made for the Unicode radical-stroke indices.

Under the traditional radical-stroke system, each Han ideograph is considered to be written with one of a number of different character elements or radicals and a number of additional strokes. For example, the character 說 has the radical 言 and seven additional strokes. To find the character 說 within a dictionary, one would first locate the section for its radical, 言, and then find the subsection for characters with seven additional strokes.

This method is complicated by the fact that there are occasional ambiguities in the counting of strokes. Even worse, some characters are considered by different authorities to be written with different radicals; there is not, in fact, universal agreement about which set of radicals to use for certain characters, particularly with the increased use of simplified characters.

The most influential authority for radical-stroke information is the eighteenth-century *KangXi* dictionary, which contains 214 radicals. The main problem in using *KangXi* radicals today is that many simplified characters are difficult to classify under any of the 214 *KangXi* radicals. As a result, various modern radical sets have been introduced. None, however, is in general use, and the 214 *KangXi* radicals remain the best known. See "CJK and KangXi Radicals" in *Section 12.1, Han*.

The Unicode radical-stroke charts are based on the *KangXi* radicals. The Unicode Standard follows a number of different sources for radical-stroke classification. Where two sources are at odds as to radical or stroke count for a given character, the character is shown in *both* positions in the radical-stroke charts.

Simplified characters are, as a rule, considered to have the same radical as their traditional forms and are found under the appropriate radical. For example, the character 倶 is found under the same radical, 人, as its traditional form (俱).

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