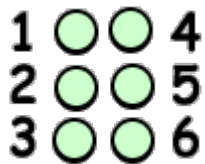


People often think that Braille is a language. Actually there is a Braille code for every foreign language you can imagine including French, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, and Hebrew. There are also Braille codes for mathematics, music, and computers.

The Braille Cell



The Braille characters make up the letters of the alphabet, punctuation marks, numbers, and everything else you can write in print.

The letter "a" is written with only dot 1.



The letter "d" has dots 1, 4, and 5.



The letter "y" has dots 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

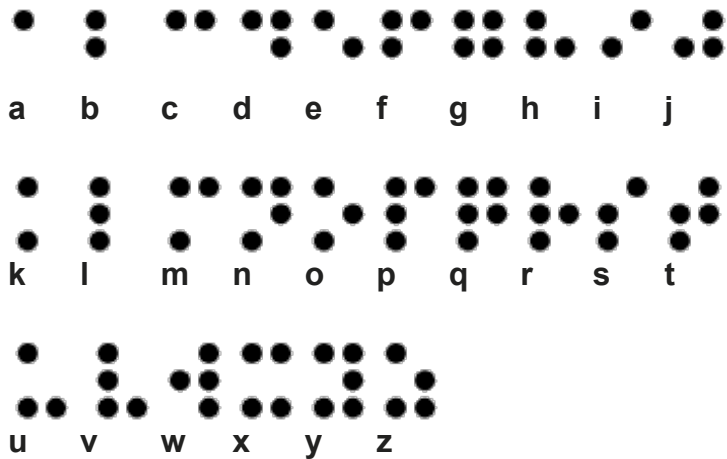


When all six dots are used, the character is called a "full cell."



And when no dots are used it's an "empty cell!"

The picture below shows you how the dots are arranged in the Braille cell for each letter of the alphabet. Do you see a pattern between the lines of the alphabet? Why do you think the "w" is not part of the pattern? Research this to see if your guess is correct.



See if you can find the letters in your name and tell the dot numbers for each one.

Capitalizing in Braille

Braille does not have a separate alphabet of capital letters as there is in print. Capital letters are indicated by placing a dot 6 in front of the letter to be capitalized. Two capital signs mean the whole word is capitalized.

One Letter Capitalized • Entire Word Capitalized • •

Look at these examples:



Braille Punctuation

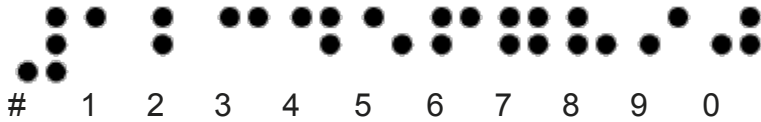
A "period" is written with dots 2, 5, and 6. (Do you see how it is the same shape as the letter "d," only lower in the cell?) There are other characters for each mark of punctuation such as dots 2, 3, and 5 for an

exclamation point. (Do you see that it is the same shape as the letter "f," only lower in the cell? Like the previous example, which is called a "dropped d," this is called a "dropped f").

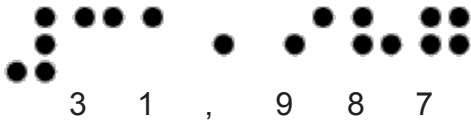


Braille Numbers

Braille numbers are made using the first ten letters of the alphabet, "a" through "j", and a special number sign, dots 3, 4, 5, and 6.



Larger numbers only need one number sign. The comma in Braille is dot 2, and is used in numbers and with words, too.



The Braille code is used for words and for numbers in sentences or page numbers, but when students take math class, they learn a different code called the Nemeth code.