

**Design**

Kris Sowersby

**Publication date**

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**About**

Metric & Calibre are a pair of typefaces that share a fundamental geometry yet differ in the finish of key letterforms. Metric is a geometric humanist, sired by West Berlin street signs. Calibre is a geometric neo-grotesque, inspired by the rationality of Aldo Novarese's seldom seen Recta. They were conceived as a pair but function independently of each other. *Continued on page two...*

**Weights**

Thin	<i>Thin Italic</i>
Light	<i>Light Italic</i>
Regular	<i>Regular Italic</i>
Medium	<i>Medium Italic</i>
<b>Semibold</b>	<b><i>Semibold Italic</i></b>
<b>Bold</b>	<b><i>Bold Italic</i></b>
<b>Black</b>	<b><i>Black Italic</i></b>

**Available formats****Cross platform**

OpenType PS (OTF) format

**Price****Family**

7 weights, Roman + Italic  
\$350 US

**Set**

All of Metric & Calibre  
\$450 US

**Weight pairs**

1 weight, Roman + Italic  
\$75 US

**Single weight**

1 weight, Roman or Italic  
\$50 US

## About

*Metric & Calibre* are a pair of typefaces that share a fundamental geometry yet differ in the finish of key letterforms. *Metric* is a geometric humanist, sired by West Berlin street signs. *Calibre* is a geometric neo-grotesque, inspired by the rationality of Aldo Novarese's seldom seen *Recta*. They were conceived as a pair but function independently of each other.

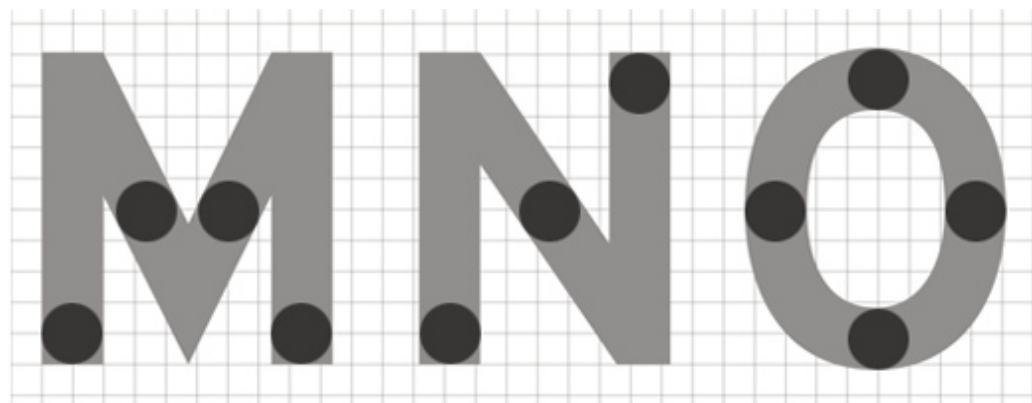
The development of *Metric & Calibre* is based upon two ideas—1: “engineered geometry” and it’s application to street signage, 2: alternate letterforms in typefaces.

### 1. ENGINEERED GEOMETRY



Comparison of ‘perfect’ geometry (light grey) and optical correction in *Futura* (dark grey).

According to the Vox classification “Geometric typefaces are sans serif faces constructed from simple geometric shapes, circles and/or rectangles. The same curves and lines are often repeated throughout the letters, resulting in minimal differentiation between letters”. Geometry implies a certain amount of rationality and rigidity, two things that are difficult to reconcile with letterforms. Early attempts like *Bayer’s Universal Alphabet* are fascinating, but ultimately flawed as usable, working typefaces. One of the most successful in this genre is the seminal *Futura* designed by Paul Renner in the early 20th century. It is a triumph of rationalism and control over the arbitrary shapes of letterforms.



The mathematically-even stroke weights of the ‘official’ FHWA Series E typeface.

Typeface designers apply geometry differently than engineers—trained in the subtleties of letterform construction, sensitive to positive and negative space and optical correction. Engineers are unfettered by such matters. To them, a circle is a circle and a capital **O** can be adequately drawn as such. Stroke weights are uniform and overshoots are irrelevant.

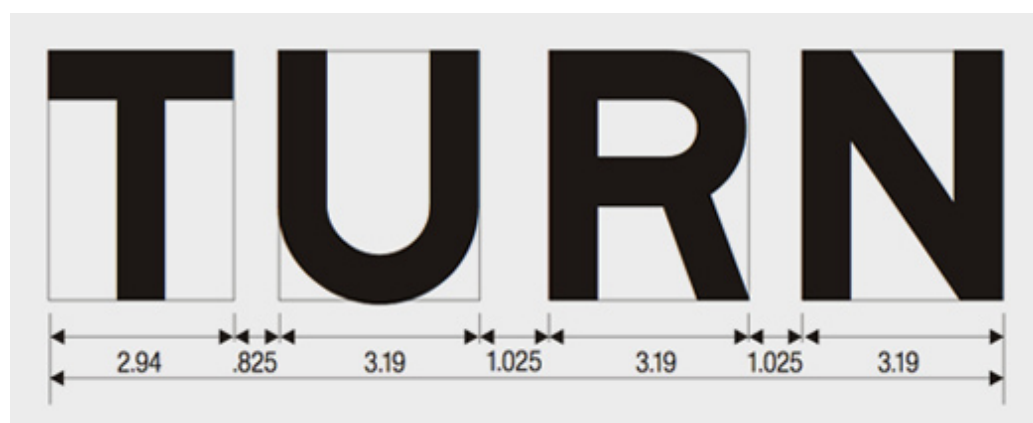
# Lombardsbrücke

Example from the DIN 1451-2 specification. Note the centred placement of the type—the space above and below the baseline and cap-height are equal.

Street signs are a common place to find ‘engineered’ typefaces, and have provided much inspiration to typeface designers. The best-known are *FF DIN* by Albert Jan-Pool and *Interstate* by Tobias Frere-Jones. *FF DIN* is inspired by the letterforms in the *Deutsches Institut für Normung 1451* specification, and *Interstate* by the *Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Standard Alphabets For Traffic Control Devices*. The enduring popularity of these classics is testament to the appeal of ‘crude’ letterforms to designers, proof that typefaces can successfully originate from outside the canon of book-centric history.



Rules and measurements from the DIN 1451-2 specification.



Rules and measurements from the FHWA specification.

Street sign guidelines are effectively mini-corporate identity manuals. They contain (very strict) rules for typefaces, colours and layout. They appear to be designed by, and for, engineers—measured and described exhaustively, leaving no room for error. The resulting typefaces are suitably rigid, crude in their construction but charming in spite of it.



I first saw the West Berlin Signs in 2010. In stark contrast to street signs I was accustomed to, the letterforms struck me with their elegance and clarity.



The geometry intrigued me, allowing the letters to stretch and condense to accommodate various lengths of street names. The **o** looked like a perfect oval, **b d p q** felt like a practical joining of the **o** and a stroke, **t** is a simple cross, **B** is beautifully sharp and the stroke weight is ideal, functionally monoline. However, I was most intrigued by the **a**. Using an oval for the bowl is a delicate solution, harmonising with the rest of the letters and contrasting nicely with its vertical terminal.



It became apparent that there was no 'correct' form of constructing the letterforms, they had seemingly been interpreted from a sort of master template. Unlike *Futura*, there is consistency to the severe vertical terminal cuts, and the geometry is present but subtle. It is thought that the template is based on *Erbar*, but according to Verena Gerlach's research the templates were lost after the Berlin wall came down. (Verena has co-created a rather faithful family of typefaces based on the Berlin signs.)

Metric is an attempt to temper the geometric tendencies of the engineer by the hand of the typeface designer. The letterforms in *Metric* & *Calibre* are, of course, optically corrected. I've tried to keep it as subtle as possible, I wanted letterforms that felt monoline, rational and unpretentious. Like the street sign letterforms that informed the development but without the shortcomings inherent to strict geometry.



36 - 12 A - 30 a - 10 x 1 - Kg. 11.00

Romanticismo italiano

36 - 12 A - 29 a - 10 x 1 - Kg. 11.00

Pour vous monsieur

36 - 12 A - 27 a - 10 x 1 - Kg. 11.00

Eisenbahnbetrieb

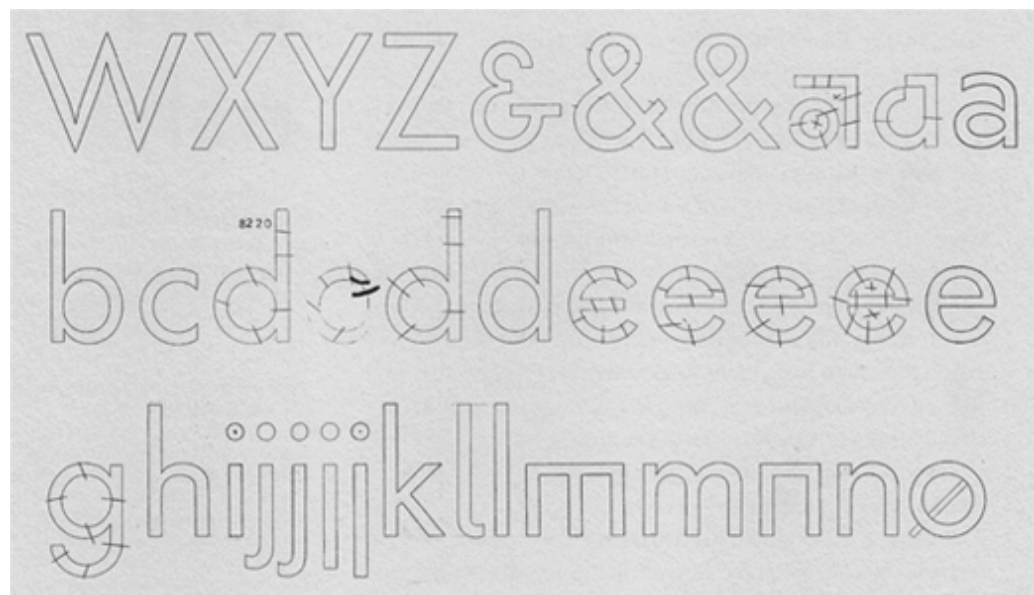
36 - 10 A - 25 a - 9 x 1 - Kg. 11.00

Hauswörterbuch

From the top: Recta Serie Tonda Chiara, Neretta, Nera and Nerissima.

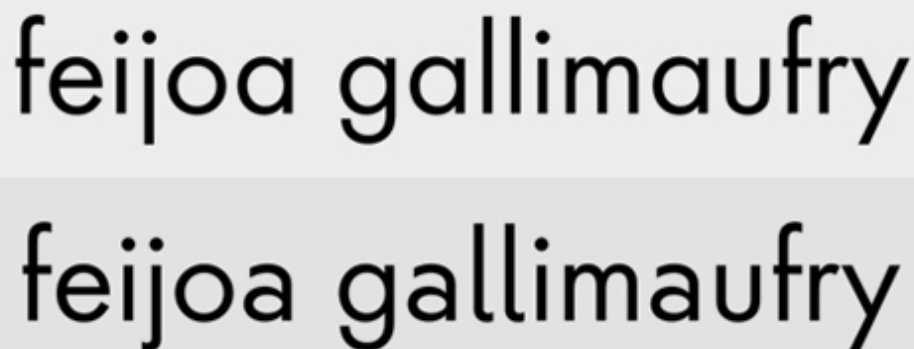
The release of *Helvetica* and *Univers* spurred many type foundries into action. All of a sudden everyone had to have their own neo-grotesque—Berthold even revisited *Akzidenz Grotesk* and released *AG Buch*. The now-defunct Nebiolo foundry released *Recta* in the late '50s, designed by Aldo Novarese. Like Novarese's *Microgramma* & *Forma*, *Recta* seems to be an attempt to rationalise the genre. Unfortunately it's marred by over optical correction and awkward branching—neither smooth nor sharp. However, *Recta*'s rationalisation of the neo-grotesque genre appealed to me and was a logical starting point for *Calibre*.

## 2. ALTERNATE LETTERFORMS IN TYPEFACES



Several alternate letterforms from the development of Futura. Image from Paul Renner: *the art of typography* by Christopher Burke, published by Hyphen Press.


Many typefaces are released with alternate letterforms. It's not a new idea by any means, and these days it seems almost compulsory to include several. Stylistic alternates are the most common, typically **a g y** "schoolbook" glyphs. Alternates can dramatically change the tone and flavour of a typeface, not only in a single word but also across a block of text. It's common practice for typeface designers to test several alternate letterforms during the development process. Like a good editor weeding out weak sentences, most alternates are eliminated to create a stronger overall typeface.



*Top line: Finalised Futura letterforms. Bottom line: rejected "humanist" developmental versions.*

The unorthodox alternates of *Futura* are well known and documented. What I find interesting are the lesser known, more 'humanist' versions. Above is an example of *Futura* with recreated 'humanist' alternates. It demonstrates how a few small changes can create a striking difference to the tone of the typeface and what we understand to be 'Futura'. It steps out of one genre and into another—changing from a strict geometric typeface to a warmer, more humanist one.

Several stylistic factors are usually at play within serif typefaces: terminals, stroke variation, stress and the shape of the serifs themselves. There are many serif typefaces with alternate letterforms, but they're typically 'schoolbook' and have to remain firmly within the established genre. A core set of Garalde letterforms with Modern alternates would likely be a terrible idea.



*Top line: Comparison of core letterforms from a "Garalde" serif and those from Metric.*

*Bottom line: Demonstrates how a single letterform (e) can define the genre of a sans-serif typeface.*

Unlike serifs, many letterforms in a sans-serif are "pan-genre". It is due to the shapes of a few key letterforms to establish the specific genre of the sans-serif. During the development of *National* in 2006 I created grotesque, neo-grotesque and humanist alternates—attempting to give three different textures to the overall flavour. It was an interesting, but ultimately failed experiment—the core letterforms of *National* were too idiosyncratic to work with a variety of alternate genre-glyphs. The concept stayed with me and now manifests in *Metric & Calibre*.

A B D E F H I L N O  
P Q R T U V W X Y

*The core uppercase letterforms for Metric & Calibre.*

C G J K M S Z &

*The genre uppercase letterforms for Metric.*

C G J K M S Z &

*The genre uppercase letterforms for Calibre.*

b d f h i j l m n o  
p q r u v w x y

*The core lowercase letterforms for Metric & Calibre.*

a c e g k s ſ t z

*The genre lowercase letterforms for Metric.*

acegksßtz

*The genre lowercase letterforms for Calibre.*

The Calibre alternates were not developed to work within the genre of Metric, they're fully-formed and work by themselves.

MRhgai43

THIN

LIGHT

REGULAR

MEDIUM

SEMIBOLD

BOLD

BLACK

Me Me Me Me Me Me Me  
Me Me Me Me Me Me Me

*The Metric Range*

*Metric was the first of the two typefaces. Born of geometry and rationality it functions competently on its own. It shares many things with Calibre: it's underlying geometry, several core letterforms and the range of weights and styles.*

MRhgai43

THIN

LIGHT

REGULAR

MEDIUM

SEMIBOLD

BOLD

BLACK

Ca Ca Ca Ca Ca Ca Ca  
Ca Ca Ca Ca Ca Ca Ca

*The Calibre Range*

*Calibre takes these things and adds letterforms from a separate genre, defined by such classics as Recta. They are fully independent typeface families, starting from a similar line but finishing in very different places.*

I was faced with two choices during the development of *Metric* and *Calibre*. Either have one superfont with one set of alternates activated by ss01 or split them into two separate families. As they both stand independently of one another they are therefore sold separately, but generously discounted if licensed together. They ship in OpenType format and are available exclusively from [vllg.com](http://vllg.com).



# 12-Gauge Einzelfeuer

HECKLER & KOCH., G36

# Feuerstoß

*Government Issue 9mm*

# Kalashnikov

# PRIMER

NOTABLY  
REVEUSE  
INTEGRAL  
FLUXIONS  
NODULED  
DOSSIERS  
TUTWORK

**WHAIZLE**  
**XYLONIC**  
**SPAEMAN**  
**COSHERY**  
**MEROMES**  
**DOSSIERS**  
**AMYGDAL**

# Görlitzer Nordufer Leipziger Kreuzberg Während Ließenberg Stromnetz



***Zentrum***  
***Westhafen***  
***Südosten***  
***Geprägten***  
***Neukölln***  
*Liebknecht*  
*Ermöglicht*

**5 KG SMOKELESS POWDER**  
**Sterling Submachine Gun**

**EINZELFEUER-FEUERSTOSS**  
**Labora Fontbernard M-1938**

**DANSK INDUSTRI SYNDIKAT**  
**Single-Shot Duelling Pistols**

**PROPRIETARY CARTRIDGES**  
**Confined Burning Propellant**

**ŁUCZNIK ARMS FACTORY**  
**Extreme Penetration Abilities**

**GOVERNMENT ISSUE 9MM**  
**D. Waffen & Munitionsfabriken**

**HORNADY MAGNUM RIMFIRE**  
**Short-Range Varmint Hunting**

**CASELESS AMMUNITION**  
***Sustained Fire Applications***

**FABRICACIONES MILITARES**  
***Browning Automatic Rifle***

**COLT DRAGOON REVOLVER**  
***Utilise Asymmetrical Recoil***

**SPENCER REPEATING RIFLE**  
***Star Bonifacio Echeverria S.A.***

**LEVER-DELAYED BLOWBACK**  
***Firing Mechanism Recocked***

**FIRING MULTIPLE ROUNDS**  
***Trigger-Actuated Machine Gun***

**LOW BULLET VELOCITIES**  
***Likelihood of Unintended Harm***

28 / 31 point Bold

**In a rifled barrel, the distance is to be measured between opposing lands or grooves which are common in cartridge designations originating in the United States, while land measurements are more common elsewhere. It is very important to performance that a bullet closely matches the groove diameter of a barrel for a good seal.**

16 / 20 Semibold

**THE SPENCER REPEATING RIFLE IS ONE OF THE EARLIEST CARTRIDGE ARMS. IT SAW SERVICE IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR. IT WAS NAMED BASED UPON THE CHAMBER DIMENSIONS, RATHER THAN THE BORE DIAMETER, WITH THE EARLIEST CARTRIDGE CALLED THE “NO. 56 CARTRIDGE”.**

10 / 13 Regular &amp; Semibold

#### **CARTRIDGE NAMING METHODOLOGY**

Makers of early cartridge arms had to invent methods of naming the cartridges, since there was at the time no established convention. One of the earliest established cartridge arms was the Spencer repeating rifle, which saw service in the American Civil War. It was named based on the chamber dimensions, rather than the bore diameter, with the earliest cartridge called the “No. 56 cartridge,” indicating a chamber diameter of .56 inches; the bore diameter varied considerably, from .52 to .54 inches. Later various derivatives were created using the same basic cartridge but with smaller diameter bullets; these were named by their cartridges’ diameter at the base and mouth. The original No. 56 became the .56-56, and the smaller versions, .56-52, .56-50, and .56-46. The .56-52, the most common of the new calibers.

#### **THE WHITE POWDER ERA**

Other early white powder-era (Ballistite and Poudre blanche) gun cartridges used naming schemes that appeared similar, but they measured with such entirely different characteristics. .45-70, .and 38-40, and also .32-20 were designated by bullet diameter in hundredths of an inch and standard black powder charge in grains. Optionally the bullet weight in grains was designated, e.g. .45-70-405. This scheme was far more popular and was then carried over after the advent of the early smokeless powder cartridges.

#### **METRIC CALIBERS FOR SMALL ARMS**

Metric calibers for small arms are usually expressed with an “x” between the width and the length; for example, the 7.62x51 NATO. This indicates that the cartridge uses a 7.62 mm diameter bullet, loaded into a case 51 mm long. Similarly, the 6.5x55 Swedish cartridge has a bullet diameter of 6.5 mm and has a case length of 55 mm. The means of measuring a rifled bore varies, and may refer to the diameter of the lands or the grooves of the rifling; this is why the .303 British, measured across the lands, actually uses a .311 inch bullet (7.70 mm vs. 7.90 mm), while the .308 Winchester, while dimensionally similar to (but should not be considered interchangeable with) the 7.62x51 mm NATO cartridge, is measured across the grooves and uses a .308” diameter (7.82 mm) bullet. An exception to this rule are the proprietary cartridges used by U.S. maker Lazzaroni, which are named based upon the grooves diameter in millimeters, such as the 7.82 Warbird.

#### **OTHER METRIC CALIBER DENOMINATIONS**

Modern small arms range in bore size from approximately .17 (4.5 mm) up to .50 caliber (12.7 mm). Arms that are used to hunt large dangerous game, such as those used in express rifles, may be as large as .80 caliber. In the middle of the 19th century, muskets and muzzle-loading rifles were .58 caliber or larger; such as the Brown Bess flintlock which had a bore diameter of .75 caliber.



**Light, 10/12**

Germany, officially the Federal Republic of Germany (German: Bundesrepublik Deutschland), is a country in Western and Central Europe. Germany is a federal parliamentary republic of sixteen states. The capital and largest city is Berlin. It covers an area of 357,021 km<sup>2</sup> and has a largely temperate seasonal climate. With 81.8 million inhabitants, it is the most populous member state and the strongest economy of the European Union. It is one of the major political powers of the European continent and a technological leader in many fields.

**Regular, 10/12**

Germany, officially the Federal Republic of Germany (German: Bundesrepublik Deutschland), is a country in Western and Central Europe. Germany. It is a federal and parliamentary republic of sixteen states. The capital and largest city is Berlin. It covers an area of 357,021 km<sup>2</sup> and has a largely temperate seasonal climate. With more than 81.8 million inhabitants, it is the most populous member state and the strongest economy of the European Union. It is one of the major political powers of the European continent.

**Medium, 10/12**

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**Bold, 10/12**

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**Light Italic, 10/12**

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**Regular Italic, 10/12**

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**Medium Italic, 10/12**

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**Bold Italic, 10/12**

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## Basic uppercase

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

## Basic lowercase

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

## Currency symbols

€ \$ ¢ £ ¥

## Ligatures

ff fi fl

## Fractions

**$\frac{1}{4}$   $\frac{1}{2}$   $\frac{3}{4}$   $\frac{1}{3}$   $\frac{2}{3}$   $\frac{1}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{5}{8}$   $\frac{7}{8}$**

## Currency & punctuation

[illegible]

## Accented characters

## Uppercase

À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ É Ç Ê Ë  
 Ď Đ È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó  
 Ô Õ Ö Ø Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ ß à á  
 â ã ä å æ ç è é ê ë ì í î ï  
 ð ñ ò ó ô õ ö ø ù ú û ü ý þ  
 ß à á â ã ä å æ ç è é ê ë ì  
 í î ï ð ñ ò ó ô õ ö ø ù ú û  
 ü ý þ ß

## Lowercase

à á â ã ä å æ ç è é ê ë ì  
 í î ï ð ñ ò ó ô õ ö ø ù ú  
 û ü ý þ ß à á â ã ä å æ ç  
 è é ê ë ì í î ï ð ñ ò ó ô  
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Numerals

Proportional lining

1234567890

Tabular lining

1234567890

Superscript

1 2 3



**Ligatures****OpenType features**

Shuffling the final acts of the flashy play  
Shuffling the final acts of the flashy play

**Capital forms:** Activating the All Caps feature converts lowercase to upper-case and subs in cap-specific punctuation, parenthesis, dashes, slashes, and @...

Q–R ¿Yes? «Baum» + Co @ (5)

Q–R ¿YES? «BAUM» + CO @ (5)

**Proportional lining**

These are the default figures

\$9.50 £6.32 €6.15

**Tabular lining**

All numbers & math operators share a common width. Period, comma, colon & semicolon are half-tab width

\$9.50 £6.32 €6.15

\$9.50 £6.32 €6.15

**Fractions**

Pre-built fractions in quarters, halves, thirds & eighths

1/2 Cup, 3/8 Inch

½ Cup, ⅜ Inch

**Language support**

Și al compușilor  
Și al compușilor

**All weights & styles****Supported languages****Latin-1 Support**

Albanian  
Danish  
Dutch  
English  
Faroese  
Finnish  
Flemish  
German  
Icelandic  
Indonesian  
Irish  
Italian  
Malay  
Norwegian  
Portuguese  
Scottish Gaelic  
Spanish  
Swahili  
Swedish  
Tagalog

**Latin Extended-A Support**

Afrikaans  
Basque  
Breton  
Bosnian  
Catalan  
Croatia  
Czech  
Esperanto  
Estonian  
Fijian  
French  
Frisian  
Greenlandic  
Hawaiian  
Hungarian  
Latin

Latvian  
Lithuanian  
Maltese  
Māori  
Polish  
Provençal  
Rhaeto-Romanic  
Romanian  
Moldavian  
Romany  
Sámi (Inari)  
Sámi (Luli)  
Sámi (Northern)  
Sámi (Southern)  
Samoan  
Slovak  
Slovenian  
Sorbian  
Turkish  
Welsh

**Supported ISO codepages**

**8859-1 Latin 1** (West European)  
**8859-2 Latin 2** (Central European)  
**8859-3 Latin 3** (South European)  
**8859-4 Latin 4** (Baltic)  
**8859-9 Latin 5** (Turkish)  
**8859-10 Latin 6** (Scandinavian)  
**8859-13 Latin 7** (Baltic 2)  
**8859-15 Latin 9**  
**8859-16 Latin 10**

# Zajištěny Spravedlivě Přirozené Urážejícím Přesvědčení Důstojnosti Vyhledávat

# Forståelse Vilkårligt Uafhængigt Påberåbes Erklæringen Økonomiske Arbejdsvilkår

**Willkürlich**  
**Tätigkeit**  
**Fähigkeiten**  
**Größerer**  
**Öffentliches**  
**Gewählte**  
**Regelmäßige**



**Délictueux**  
**Chômage**  
**Scientifique**  
**Bien-fondé**  
**D'accomplir**  
**Généralisé**  
**Eux-mêmes**

Supported language Íslenska

# Lýðfrjálsu Viðurkenna Þjóðirnar Fjölskyldan Yfirlýsingu Ríkisstjórnar Aðstæðna

**På møte**  
**Øydeleggje**  
**Fråsegna**  
**Røystemåte**  
**Levevilkår**  
**Nødvendig**  
**Trælekår**

# Większość Środków Małżeństwa Porządkuje Służebności Członków Narażeniem

**Territórios**  
**Científico**  
**Populações**  
**Inspiração**  
**Intromisssões**  
**Econômicos**  
**Manutenção**



# Güvenliğe Üyelerinde Kurtulmuş Sağlamaya Korunmasına Öğretimden Kışkırtmaya

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