

Chapter 8

Han Radical-Stroke Index

To expedite locating specific Han ideographic characters within the Unicode Han ideographic set, this chapter contains a set of radical-stroke charts. 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 讠 and seven additional strokes. To find the character 說 within a dictionary, one would first locate the section for its radical, 讠, 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.

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 侃 is found under the same radical, 讠, as its traditional form (侃). The only exceptions are those characters for which the radical itself is simplified. Characters with a simplified radical are placed in a block separate from their traditional forms; this block follows immediately after the block for characters with the traditional radical. Thus, immediately following the block of characters with the radical 讠 is a block of characters with its simplified form, 讠. The simplified character 说 is found in the latter block; its traditional counterpart, 說, in the former.

Characters within the compatibility range (U+F900 → U+FAFF) are not included in the radical-stroke charts.