Elements of the German Braille Code (incorporating the revisions of 1998 - 2011)

Note: Individual signs in the listings are preceded by ⠿.

The Alphabet

The alphabet is identical to the English braille alphabet with the following additions:

⠿ ⠘	ä Ä
⠿ ⠷	ö Ö
⠿ ⠳	ü Ü
⠿ ⠮	ß

Other accented letters are preceded by ⠈, e.g. Café ⠡⠌⠁⠋⠿

Punctuation

The following signs are different from those of Standard English braille:

⠿⠄	period and abbreviation point
⠿ ⠄	apostrophe
⠿⠢	query
⠿ ⠌	oblique stroke
⠿ ⠤⠤	dash; hyphen in front of a word (*Auslassungsstrich*)

The dash (*Gedankenstrich*) is written unspaced from the preceding word but is followed by a space. When used to mean "from ... to" between words (*Streckenstrich*) as in "der Flug Berlin-London" it is unspaced on both sides. A hyphen before a word (*Auslassungsstrich*) indicates that part of a word is repeated, as in "Semsteranfang und -ende".

Many signs are identical in form and use with their Standard English braille counterparts:

⠿⠂	comma
⠿⠒	colon
⠿⠆	semicolon
⠿⠖	exclamation mark
⠿⠤	hyphen (*Bindestrich* and *Trennstrich*)
⠿⠦ . . . ⠴	parentheses
⠿⠦ . . . ⠴	(double) quotation marks

Miscellaneous signs

⠿ ⠁	*		⠿ ⠪	@
⠿ ⠃	€		⠿ ⠪	_
⠿ ⠇	£		⠿ ⠌	\
⠿ ⠂	&		⠿ ⠒⠒⠕	→
⠿ ⠄	|		⠿ ⠪⠤⠤	←

Capital letters

In most German braille, capitals signs are almost only used in the following situations:

- to indicate the capital letter of the "polite" pronouns: Sie, Ihnen, Ihr
- in abbreviations and acronyms (but not personal initials or abbreviations indicated with an abbreviation point), e.g. BRD, PC, MWSt (but not: J.S. Bach, Schweiz. Rotes Kreuz, bzw., usw.)
- when there is a capital letter at a position other than the first of a word, e.g. McDonald

In school texts it may be as well to mark all capitals with the appropriate signs.

- Single capital letters followed by lowercase letters are preceded by the sign: ⠿ ⠒
- More than one capital letter or single capital letters not followed by lowercase letters are preceded by the sign: ⠒

Examples: Ihnen ⠰⠊⠓⠝⠑⠝, MWSt ⠒⠍⠺⠎⠞, GmbH ⠰⠛⠍⠃⠓, Karl I ⠰⠅⠁⠗⠇ ⠒⠊, 30 MHz ⠼⠉⠚ ⠒⠍⠓⠵ (here the sign ⠒ may also "replace" the space), McDonald ⠰⠍⠉⠠⠙⠕⠝⠁⠇⠙, W.A. Mozart ⠒⠺⠲⠁⠲ ⠰⠍⠕⠵⠁⠗⠞.

There is a sign for lowercase letters (⠠) but this is used much more sparingly than the letter sign in English braille. It is rarely used after capital letters in abbreviations (as can be seen from the examples above). It is used:

- when the lowercase letters a-j follow a numeral: 1a ⠼⠁ ⠠⠁
- for single letters and abbreviations beginning with lowercase letters: Punkt a ⠰⠏⠥⠝⠅⠞ ⠠⠁, 3 mm ⠼⠉ ⠠⠍⠍ (here the sign ⠠may also "replace" the space), 4 kW ⠼⠙ ⠠⠅⠺
- in such cases as: PCs ⠒⠏⠉⠠⠎

Numerals

Cardinals numbers are the same as in English braille. The numeral sign is repeated after a hyphen (*Bis-Strich*): 3 - 4 cm ⠼⠒⠤⠼⠙ ⠉⠍⠂.

Ordinal numbers may either be shown as in print by putting an abbreviation point after the numeral (3. ⠼⠒⠲) or by using lower numerals without the point (3. ⠼⠒). Dates and decimal numbering may be abbreviated by alternating lower and upper numerals: 31.12.1999 ⠼⠉⠁⠄⠃⠄⠁⠊⠊⠊⠂ Paragraph 2.6. ⠠⠏� ⠼⠃⠄⠋.

Fractions are shown as in Standard English braille: ½ ⠼⠂ ⠌ , 1½ ⠼⠁ ⠼⠂ ⠌ . % is treated as a fraction: 50 % ⠼⠢⠚⠼⠚⠚.

Commas and points in numbers are brailled using the usual signs (⠼⠂ ⠼⠄), whatever their meaning: € 3.000,00 ⠈⠑⠼⠒⠄⠚⠚⠚⠂⠚⠚, £3,000.00 ⠈⠇⠼⠒⠂⠚⠚⠚⠄⠚⠚. Apostrophes (as used in Switzerland for separating thousands) are also brailled using points: Fr. 3'000.00 ⠠⠋⠗⠄ ⠼⠒⠄⠚⠚⠚⠄⠚⠚.

All punctuation signs following numbers (and % or °) must be preceded by ⠼ . except for those that cannot be confused with lower numerals (e.g. period, dash).

The mathematical operation and equal signs are preceded by a space but written unspaced from the following number (as in mathematical expressions in Standard English braille).

⠼⠖	+		⠼⠲	: (divide, relation)
⠼⠤	- (minus)		⠼⠌	/ (divide)
⠼⠦	x (multiply)		⠼⠶	=
⠼⠔	°		⠼⠆	² (square)
⠼�	%		⠼⠒	³ (cube)

Examples:

2 + 3 = 5, ⠼⠃ ⠐⠖⠼⠒ ⠐⠶⠼⠑ ⠄

10 m² : 2 = 5 m², ⠼⠁⠚ ⠍⠆ ⠐⠲⠼⠃ ⠐⠶⠼⠑ ⠍⠆ ⠄

4² = 4 x 4 = 16 ⠼⠙⠆ ⠐⠶⠼⠙ ⠐⠦⠼⠙ ⠐⠶⠼⠁⠋

Emphasised words

A single word in italics, bold type, spaced between the letters (ges*perrt*) and so on is preceded by the sign ⠰⠆.

A group of more than one word is preceded by the double sign ⠰⠆⠆. After the last word the sign ⠄⠄ is placed, e.g. der *letzte Tanz* ⠙⠑⠗ ⠰⠆⠇⠑⠞⠵⠞⠑ ⠠⠞⠁⠝⠵ ⠄⠄ (NB: This is different from the practice before 1998.)

Computer braille

E-mail and web addresses are written in an adapted form of computer braille (Eurobraille) and preceded by ⠰⠢. Each letter or sign is written separately and each capital letter is preceded by ⠰. Some of the signs are written with different signs than in German literary braille, most importantly ! ⠖ and / ⠳. If the sequence is too long for a single line, the sign ⠐ is used as a hyphen.

info@braille.ch ⠰⠢⠔⠬⠃⠗⠁⠊⠇⠇⠑⠄⠉⠓

http://www.braille.ch/index.html ⠰⠢⠓⠞⠞⠏⠒⠳⠳⠺⠺⠺⠄⠃⠗⠁⠊⠇⠇⠑⠄⠉⠓⠳ ⠊⠝⠙⠑⠭⠄⠓⠞⠍⠇

German contracted braille

German braille grades

There are officially three grades of German braille (as of 1998):

- *Basisschrift*: this is the equivalent of the English grade I braille.
- *Vollschrift*: like grade I braille but with eight contractions.
- *Kurzschrift*: the German grade II code.

Vollschrift contractions

⠳	au		⠩	sch
⠩	eu		⠌	st
⠡	ei		⠜	äu
⠳	ch		⠏	ie

These contractions may only be used when all the letters in them belong to the same syllable: heute ⠓⠜⠞⠑, Museum ⠍⠥⠎⠑⠥⠍, Fenster ⠋⠑⠝⠌⠑⠗, Dienstag ⠙⠏⠝⠌⠁⠛.

A few *Kurzschrift* contractions

The Kurzschrift (grade II) has following additional single cell contractions that can be used in all positions in a word or - in the case of "es", "ein" and "er" - also as whole words:

⠛	ge	⠂	ein
⠿	es (all six dots)	⠑	er
⠦	em	⠔	in

Some upper wordsigns (with a selection in bold type):

⠁	aber	⠧	**von**
⠃	bei	⠺	was
⠉	sich	⠭	immer
⠙	**das**	⠵	zu
⠑	**den**	⠛	gewesen
⠋	**für**	�	**es**
⠛	gegen	⠙	**dem**
⠚	jetzt	⠙	dass
⠅	kann	⠊	ist
⠇	lässt	⠋	auf
⠍	man	⠺	wie
⠝	**nicht**	⠵	als
⠕	**oder**	⠙	durch
⠏	so	⠎	schon
⠟	voll	⠗	**er**
⠗	**der**	⠳	über
⠎	**sie**	⠡	auch
⠞	mit	⠫	**die**
⠥	**und**	⠌	ich *

Example: Nehmen Sie bitte das Paket. ⠝⠑⠓⠍⠑⠝ ⠎⠊ ⠃⠊⠞⠞⠑ ⠙ ⠏⠁⠅⠑⠞�

A few upper wordsigns can be written with endings:

⠓	hatt	⠎	sein
⠊	ihr	⠓	hätt

Example: ihre ⠊⠑