Rich's PinYin Fonts

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PinYin is a phonetic representation of Mandarin Chinese using Roman characters. Chinese symbols represent syllables rather than letters, and each syllable can be pronounced in several intonations, giving different meanings (I guess). In PinYin, Roman characters with special diacritical marks above them, indicating a specific intonation, are used to display Chinese. However, the typical Macintosh font doesn't contain all the necessary marks, and the accent marks that are available are hard to find on the keyboard.

Oh yeah? Well, there actually ARE people who need this stuff. I created this pair of TrueType fonts, based loosely on Helvetica and Times, because I couldn't find fonts on the Internet that were useful, and Apple's Chinese Language Kit doesn't seem to have any way to display these characters (at least not easily, and I can't find that feature if it's there).

There's a keyboard layout included in this package. Most foreign accented characters on the Mac are accessed by first typing a key combination, which seemingly does nothing (these are called dead-keys), followed by another key. An example would be hitting 'option-n' and then the letter 'n' to get 'ñ'.

When you install these fonts into the Fonts folder of your System Folder, install the PinYin keyboard layout in your System file, too. Select the keyboard layout in the Keyboard Control Panel, or in the Keyboard Menu in the menu bar, for those of you who have that activated. What this keyboard layout does is organize these new characters a little better on the keyboard. Type a certain dead-key combination, like option-a, and select the correct character with the number keys. For example, typing option-a, then 2, would give you á. option-e, then 4, would give you è, etc. Pressing the spacebar after hitting the dead-key combination just gives you the plain letter. Check this stuff out in the Key Caps desk accessory that comes with system software.

option-a, then 1-4
option-e, then 1-5
option-i, then 1-4
option-o, then 1-4
option-u, then 1-9

For those rare occasions when you need an uppercase vowel with the accent over it, type the dead-key, then shift-1, or whatever.

If you find this package helpful for you, and decide to keep using it, please send me 10 bucks. Or, send me some e-mail with suggestions or comments. Let me know what you think. Thanks to Tim Richardson for accidentally motivating me to make these fonts.

Enjoy!

Rich D.