

How to sort your fonts

Description

If you have been collecting a lot of fonts or purchasing bundles, you are likely to have hundreds if not thousands of fonts. Going through that many fonts when you are looking only for one or two is far from efficient. In a [previous article](#), we looked at the suggested organization for your fonts, but in the end, HOW will you do that?

Choose categories

Fonts can be categorized in many ways, but some common types will be **Dingbats, Script, Grungy, All caps, Decorated**, and such. Then, inside those main categories, you can have sub-categories, to have fewer fonts to browse through when you are looking for one. For example, the **Script** category could have **Slanted, Straight, Formal, Curly**, and maybe **Decorated**. Those are only suggestions, and will often depend on what kinds of fonts you have accumulated. In order to get an idea of what categories you might want, ask yourself what would you be searching for? Are you looking for a "grungy font"? "Christmas decorated letters"? Or are you looking for an "all cap font"? Those should give you some starting points. Remember that you can also have other categories like "Hard to read" or "Symbols" which would be good to be separated from the rest.

View to sort

You can use different font viewers to view the entire alphabet for a font to decide in which category each one would go. If you can do that, it is great. I find that whether I am using [TheFontThing](#) or [NexusFont](#), it takes quite a long time to render the font display every time I scroll a bit to view more fonts. That can be a bit frustrating and a waste of time.

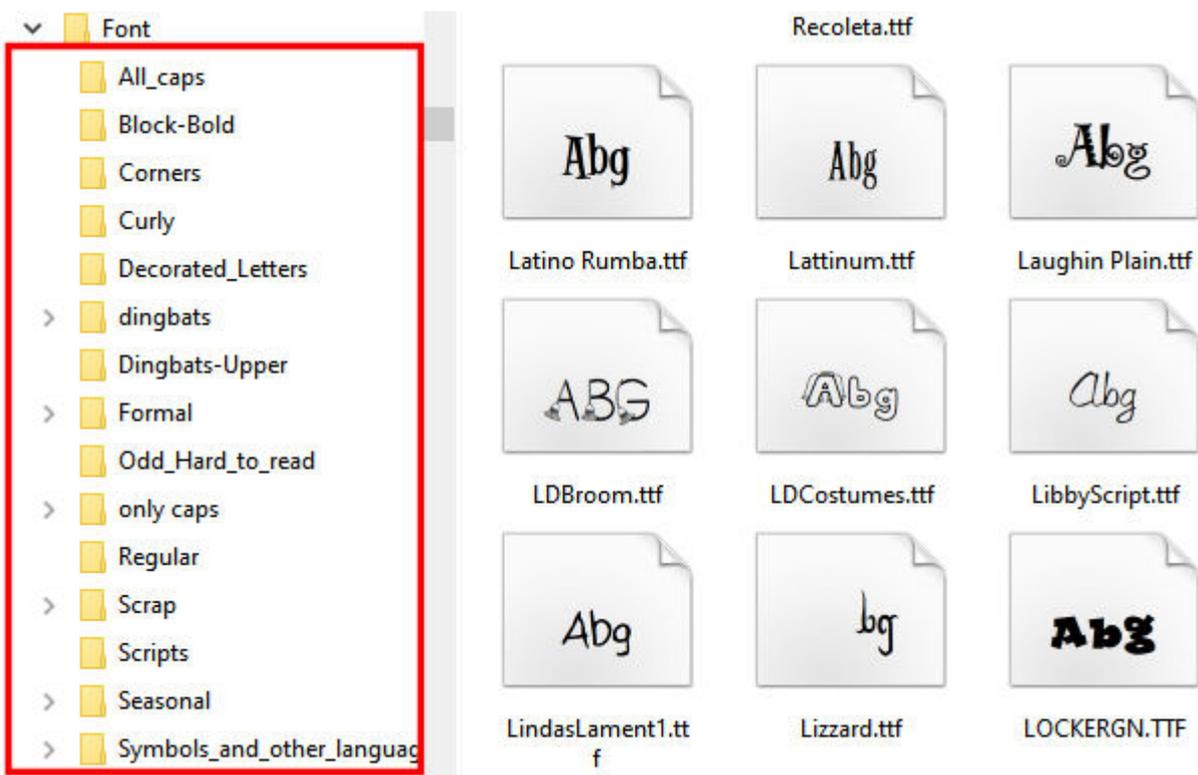
Another way is to view the fonts in your Windows Explorer. Yes, you can have a thumbnail of each font in your folder. Simply adjust the display to "Small icons", "Medium icons", "Large icons", or "Extra large icons", depending on the size of your monitor (and your eyesight). I am using the "Large icons" display and have something like this:



These icons will display the uppercase A and lowercase b and g. It is often enough to give you at least a general idea of what each font is about. You can see if it looks like a dingbat, a script, or a bold font.

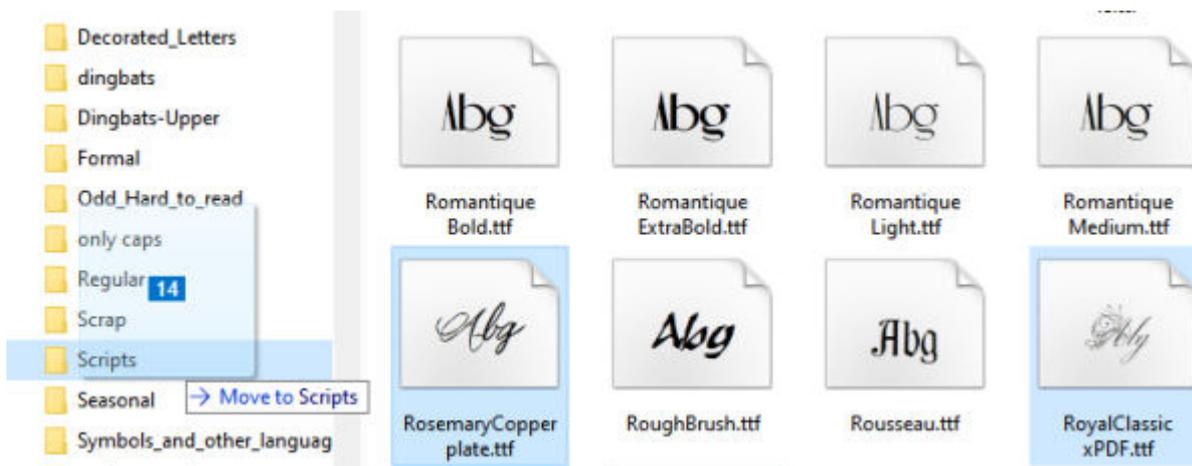
Have your categories ready

If you have already created your categories (at least the main ones), they should display on the left of your explorer.



Select and drag

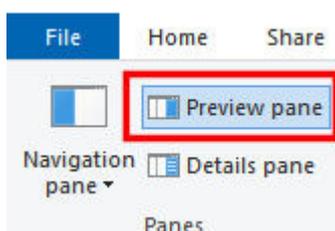
Now that you are seeing your fonts, or have a general idea of what they look like, and you have your categories ready to receive them, it is time to select the fonts and move them as needed. You can select one font, drag it to the correct category, and repeat that process one by one, but that is adding more time to this process. The easiest way would be to choose a category (ex: Script) and select all the script fonts you see among the icons. Hold the **Ctrl** key to select multiple fonts. This way, you can select dozens at a time, and then, when you are finished scrolling through those icons (or when you want a break), you just have to drag and drop them on the category to the left.



At this point, you might want to stick to the main categories instead of immediately sorting for the sub-categories. It will move you further into the sorting process and you can likely sort more fonts in that way. Later, you can repeat the process from one category to the sub-categories, but at least, you will already have a general organization of your fonts.

View more

If you are not really sure what the font looks like, or you don't feel you can see enough with those three characters displayed in the icon, you can click on the icon and allow the font to display on the right pane of your Windows Explorer.



If you are not using that right pane, you should. Not only it allows you to view the fonts you want to look at, but it also allows you to preview other documents (txt, docx, etc.) which saves you time as you don't have to open those files to decide if they are the ones you want to open!

But back to our fonts, once you click on an icon, you will see this in the right pane:

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890.,: ' (?) +*/=

12 THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG. 1234567890
18 THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG.
24 THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG.
36 THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG.
48 THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG.
60 THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG.
72 THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG.

This will give you a better idea of what this font will look like. You can see whether all the lowercase are actually all uppercase (sometimes, just a bit shorter), or you can see if only the uppercase will have dingbats while the lowercase are "normal" letters.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz @@@@
1234567890.,: ' (?) +*/=

12 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. @@@@
18 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. (1)(2)(3)(4)(5)(6)(7)(8)
24 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. @
36 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. @
48 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. @
60 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. @
72 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. @

Sort by usage too

Remember that you might also need to sort your fonts by usage. Some fonts are free only for personal use, so if you are making projects for yourself or for gifts for your family, you are ok. However, if you were to use those fonts for alphabets you want to sell, or posters you are paid to create, then you would need commercial use license. Don't mix both. You never know when you will get asked to do something for someone else... for money!

Take it a little at the time

If you have thousands of fonts, this whole process will surely take a while. Don't expect to do it all in one sitting. Work with a plan. Sort all the scripts font one day. Sort all the dingbat fonts another day. And so on. That way, you will know you are getting more organized with each day.

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