

# Re: Viewing Control Characters instead of the associated symbol

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<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.general/2006-01/msg10416.html>

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- *From:* Malke <[notreally@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:notreally@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Tue, 24 Jan 2006 09:06:38 -0800
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Mike Williams wrote:

> chrism wrote:

>> Hi all. I seem to be having some trouble viewing a data file that  
>> was created in a unix based system. When viewing this file in a unix  
>> text editor every character is visible. Specifically, characters that  
>> were entered while pressing the control button are displayed with the  
>> ctrl symbol in front of the character. While viewing this same file  
>> on a windows machine (notepad, wordpad, word, etc...) the characters  
>> entered while pressing the ctrl button are displayed with some type  
>> of symbol. This symbol changes depending on the type of font selected  
>> and ends up being unusable information in that form. Now I have been  
>> told by one of our unix gurus that windows is incapable of separating  
>> and displaying the two keystrokes individually.

>

> Rubbish. If Windows couldn't discriminate between a control key and  
> another character keystroke then most keyboard applications wouldn't  
> work.

>

> The issue is more that the application has saved the data in a form  
> where it knows whether it is important to render the two key-strokes  
> as independent or a combination. The unix text editor would presumably  
> have the same problem opening a Word document or a data file created  
> in another application. The issue is similar to opening an ANSI text  
> document from another code-page: unless the opening application knows  
> which code-page is the source, the results will be partly or totally  
> gibberish.

>

> There are a few ways of tackling this:

> 1. see if the unix application can save data to a portable file  
> format, rather than one that assumes a particular character encoding.  
> Or if that app has a Windows version, then maybe it can render/save  
> the file. 2. Use Word and one of its text filters to specify a  
> particular character encoding at import time.  
> 3. Open in Word and use search-and-replace to convert "control  
> characters" to character sequences like "<ctl>a" etc.

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I'll bet it is the "End Of Line" issue. \*nix editors do EOL differently than Windows does. Depending on the \*nix editor you are using, you can save your document with the Windows EOL formatting.

Malke

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Elephant Boy Computers  
www.elephantboycomputers.com  
"Don't Panic!"  
MS-MVP Windows – Shell/User  
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• **References:**

- ◆ **Re: Viewing Control Characters instead of the associated symbol**

◇ From: Mike Williams

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