

Beginning Braille for Wisconsinites

Julie Sumwalt, Braille Specialist

WCBVI-DPI

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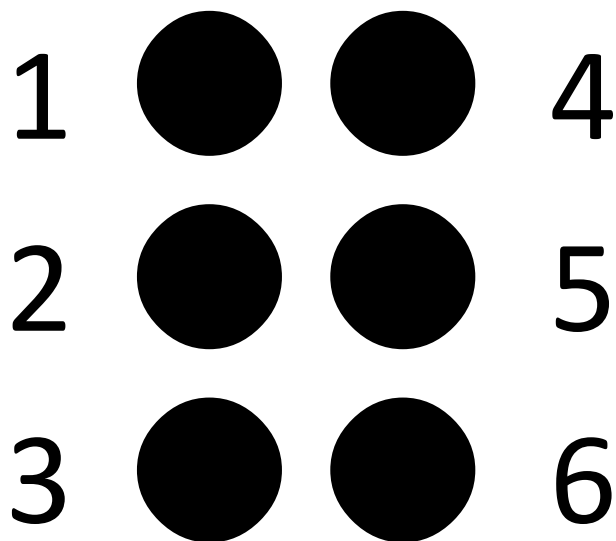
Braille is ...

- Braille is read left to right, top to bottom, just like print.
- Braille is literacy—reading and writing.
- Braille is not a foreign language.

Braille is Systematic

- Dots are arranged into clusters.
- Each cluster has six dots. Some dots are raised, some are not.
- Each cluster of six dots is called a braille cell.
- The dots are arranged into two columns of three dots each.
- The dots are numbered 1-2-3 down the left side and 4-5-6 down the right.
- Dot numbers are used when referring to the dot positions.
- All letters, numbers, and punctuation marks use the same system of braille cells.

The Braille Cell



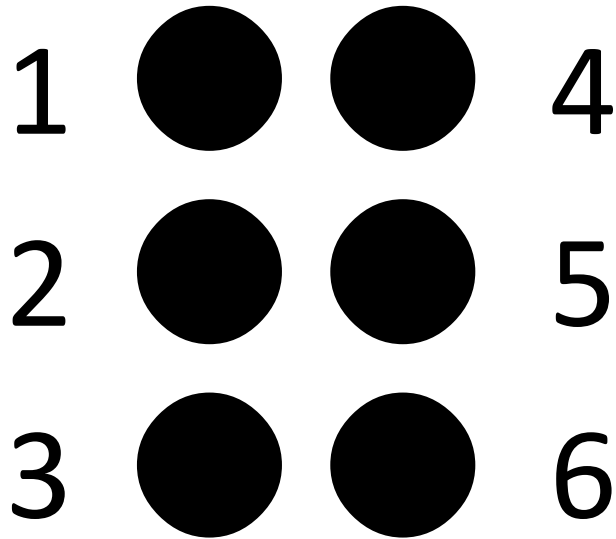
The First Ten Letters

- The first ten letters use only the dots in the upper part of the cell.
(1245)
- These are the most important dot arrangements, as all the other dot arrangements are based on these.
- They must be memorized; there is no easy pattern to them, as we will see for the rest of braille.

The First Ten Letters

⠁	⠃	⠉	⠙	⠑	⠋	⠗	⠕	⠊	⠘
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j

The Braille Cell



The Next Ten Letters

- The next ten letters add a dot 3 (in the lower left) to each of the original ten letters.
- Take away the dot 3 of each letter k-t and you are back to the original ten letters.

The Next Ten Letters

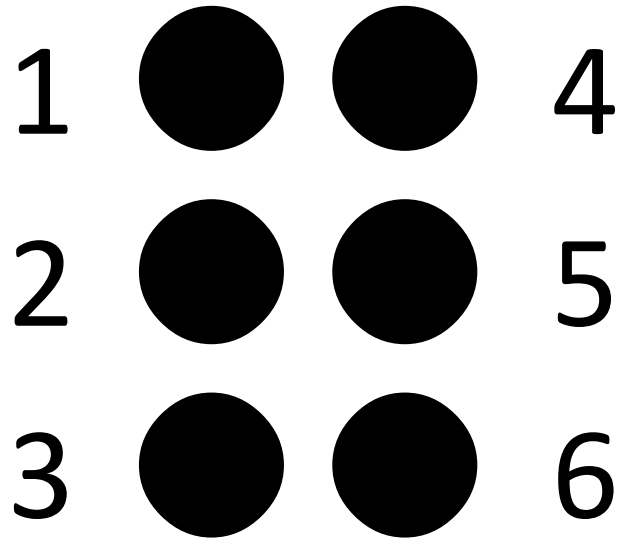


a b c d e f g h i j



k l m n o p q r s t

The Braille Cell



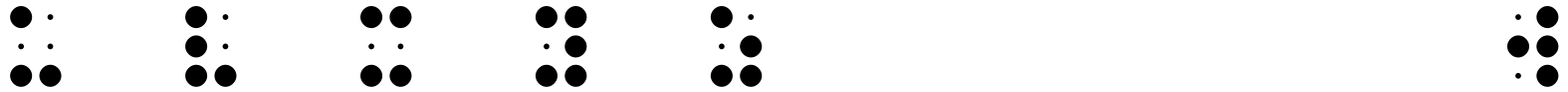
The Last Six Letters

- The last letters add dots 3 and 6, the bottom two dots in the cell.
- Missing is "w". Louis Braille, who invented the braille code in France in the 1800s, spoke French. French does not natively include our English letter "w".
- The letter "w" was added later, following a different pattern. It adds a dot 6, in the lower right of the cell.
- Take away dots 3 and 6, or dot 6 for "w", and you are back to the original ten letters, a-j.

The Last Six Letters

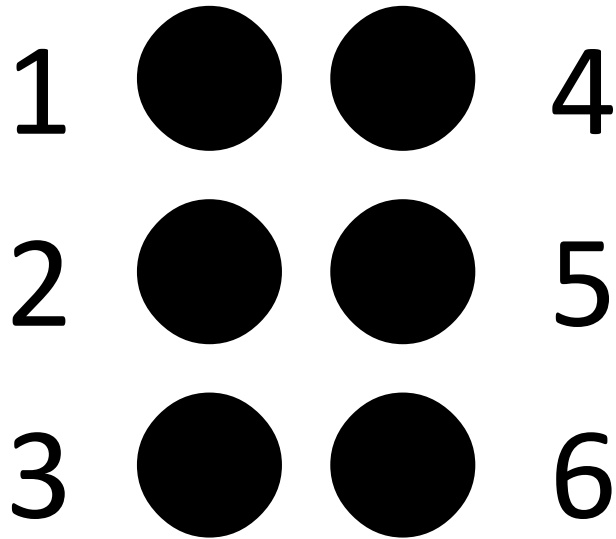


a b c d e f g h i j



u v x y z w

The Braille Cell



Numbers

- Numbers use the same dots as the first ten letters, a-j.
- Dots 3456 are used in the cell before a number so the dots are not read as letters.
- The cell of dots 3456 is called the numeric indicator.
- Only one numeric indicator is needed for each number.

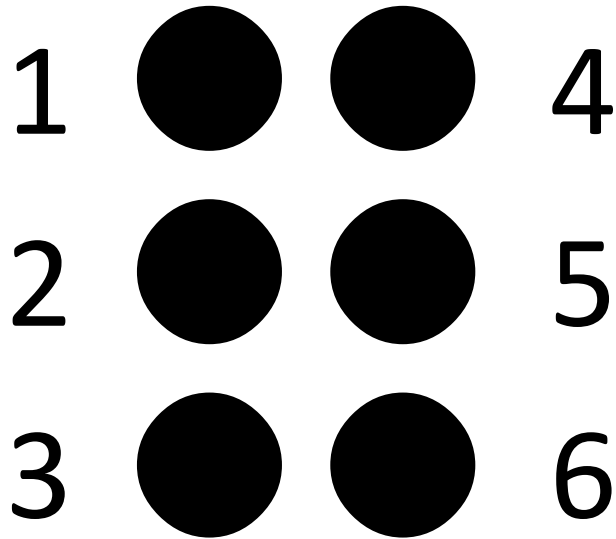
Numbers

⠠ ⠡ ⠢ ⠣ ⠤ ⠥ ⠦ ⠧ ⠨ ⠩ ⠪
a b c d e f g h i j

⠼ ⠾ ⠿ ⠻ ⠼ ⠽
1 2 3 4 5

⠼ ⠼ ⠼ ⠼ ⠼ ⠼ ⠼ ⠼
6 7 8 9 0 10

The Braille Cell



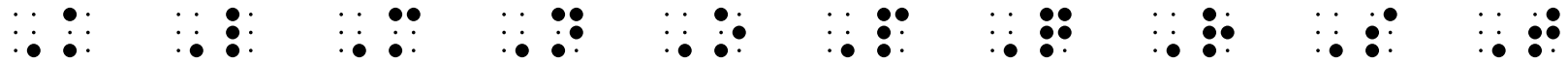
Capital Letters

- There are no separate capital letters.
- Dot 6 from the cell before the letter is used to mean the next letter is capitalized.

Capital Letters



A B C D E F G H I J

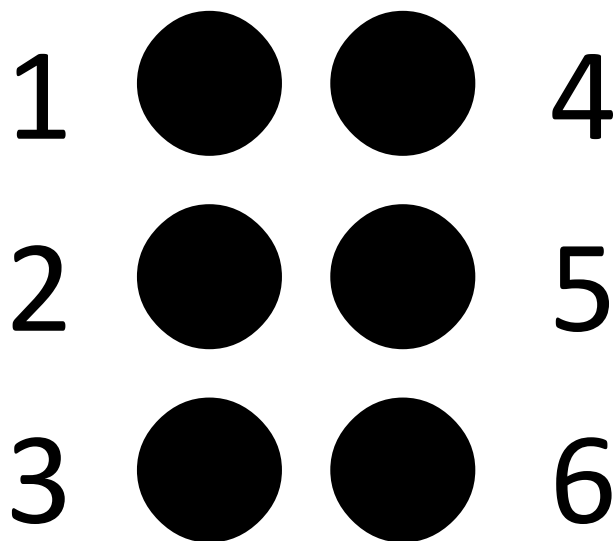


K L M N O P Q R S T



U V W X Y Z

The Braille Cell



Punctuation

- Punctuation is used the same way as it is in print.
- Punctuation marks use dots from the lower part of the cell. (2356)

Punctuation

Period ∴

Comma ∴

Question mark ∴

Exclamation mark ∴

Quotation marks

 Opening ∴

 Closing ∴

Apostrophe ∴

Hyphen ∴

Reading Practice Answers

Now you can read braille!

Isn't this fun?

This is room 914.

But wait, there's more!

Now you can read braille!

Isn't this fun?

This is room 914.

But wait, there's more!

Contracted Braille

- You now know uncontracted braille.
- Uncontracted braille is written letter for letter.
- It takes a lot of space to write uncontracted braille.

- The next step to learning braille is called contracted braille.
- Most people use contracted braille.

Contracted Braille

Contractions ...

- are used for common letter combinations and words.
- are different than English grammar contractions (I'm, don't, etc.).
- save space and time.
- have a systematic formation, just like the alphabet.
- may use one or more cells.
- are grouped by what they have in common.

Other Braille Codes

There are other codes that also use six dots.

- Nemeth Code (for math and science)
- Chemistry Code
- World languages
- Music Code
- International Phonetic Alphabet (linguistics)

Want to Know More?

Julie Sumwalt, Braille Specialist

outreach.wcbvi@wcbvi.k12.wi.us

608-758-4928