

Windows 11 Sitka Font Bug Circumvention (Aktis)

Pete Matthews Jr – <https://3nt.xyz> – © August 26, 2025

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The Bug

On Windows 10, the Sitka font family can be exported to a PDF from Office Home and Student 2021, but on Windows 11, it cannot. The problem is in the repackaging of the font family (from version 1.12 in Windows 10¹ to 2.00 in Windows 11²). On either operating system, the Sitka fonts work as expected inside Office, for editing and printing. It's only when publishing to a PDF, for posting to a website or a book publisher, that the bug arises. If a font will not export, the resulting PDF will likely be unacceptable for publication. The new packaging improves efficiency and semi-bold is included, along with the bug.³

¹ https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/typography/fonts/windows_10_font_list.
² https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/typography/fonts/windows_11_font_list.
³ <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/answers/questions/5159631/windows-11-disables-export-of-sitka-fonts>, posted by the author in April 2022, but apparently ignored by Microsoft. See also <https://github.com/MicrosoftDocs/typography-issues/issues/1160>.

Choices of Circumvention

Because Windows 10 is losing security support, it's important to upgrade soon to Windows 11. We need to resolve the Sitka issue now.

Replace Sitka 2.00 with Sitka 1.12 [nope, fails]. Unfortunately, the Windows 11 Sitka fonts cannot be superseded. Attempts to replace them with Sitka from Windows 10 were unsuccessful. [Downgrading Windows 11 to 10 worked well.]

Print to a Third-Party PDF Driver [maybe works]. The new restrictions in Sitka 2.00 are enforced by Microsoft's Print to PDF driver, which is accessed via File-Export or when selected as the printer via File-Print. Selecting a third-party driver may bypass this check. [I use CutePDF Writer with some old apps. If this does work, it will probably store the PDF into the most recent folder used by the driver, not necessarily where the document is stored – a nuisance.]

Upgrade Software [probably works]. Sitka 2.00 may have been intentionally disabled for export from Office Home & Student (or Windows Home). [If so, that's morally corrupt. I won't pay Microsoft for ripping the rug out from under me, and ignoring my complaints for several years.]

Second System. Use a second system, either physical or virtual, to run Office and Windows 10 – without Internet access. VMware Workstation is now free for personal use. Running a Windows VM under Windows probably requires additional licenses. If Linux appeals, you could install it and run a VM of your current Windows 10 system. [I supported my in-house customers doing that for over a decade.] Most of the work will be on Linux and configuring VMware. That VM will be stuck on Windows 10 as long as we need Sitka.

Change Software. Google Docs, OpenOffice, and LibreOffice are out there. [I tried and abandoned Libre Office years ago – Word H&S 2010 was better at some things that I do routinely. Google Docs has come on strong.]

Change Fonts. Obtain a font that is suitable for your needs from a font foundry or from one of the free apps (check the licensing). Copy it to \Source (or such) to preserve it, and install it. You will own the solution. To avoid the current problem in the future, and for portability to a non-Microsoft environment, do not pick a Microsoft font. Test export to a PDF immediately for candidate fonts!

Rename Sitka 1.12 – This Article. Make a copy of the Sitka font family, rename it (I chose Aktis, Sitka spelled backwards), and install it onto the system. Then change fonts to the new font. *This article describes this plan in detail.*

Microsoft sold me the Sitka font family for use with Windows 10, and it worked beautifully. If I was not supposed to use it to publish my books and articles as

PDFs, they should have enforced that when they released Sitka in Windows 8.1, and included it in Windows 10. I would have picked another font.

My site, 3NT.XYZ, is not for profit. Normally, I would post my Aktis-.ttc files and make them available for free. That’s clearly not legal. If you own Windows 10, then it’s entirely fair to create and modify your own copy of Sitka 1.12 for your own personal use. However, it is inappropriate either to share the fonts or to use the fonts to create documents in a non-Microsoft environment.

[I’m not an attorney, and this is not legal advice.]

The Sitka Font Family

Matthew Carter designed the Sitka font family for readability on screen; its development was informed by active testing.⁴ The fonts have serifs, so they are also quite readable in print – definitely superior to Calibri, the default font in Microsoft Word at the time. This article uses Sitka Heading, which I chose in 2021 as “my font,” first for headings (replacing the disappointing Cambria font) and then for most other text (replacing the sans serif Calibri font).

Sitka Heading has served me well for *This Singing World* (a poetry anthology), two editions and counting of *EZ-Expert Bidding Tools* (a bridge book), and numerous articles. Highly readable in text, Sitka’s digits, with their varying heights and widths, do leave something to be desired for numerical applications such as spreadsheets:

0123456789

A key to my decision is what I call the *footprint* of Sitka Heading: the amount of text or a specific character that can be crammed into a given space. My goal was to maximize the font size while keeping the footprint within that of Calibri in both height and width, making the conversion from Calibri easy.

The emphasis on predictable footprint supports my semi-typeset printing plan. That’s different from the Sitka font family design, where Sitka Small has the largest relative footprint to maximize readability, decreasing the footprint through increasing application size of the Text, Subheading, Heading and Display fonts, until Sitka Banner has the smallest relative footprint.

At the end of this article is the chart that I used to understand the footprints of the Sitka font family, as well as the Times New Roman and Calibri fonts.

⁴ <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/research/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Larson-Carter-2015-Sitka.pdf>

Analysis.⁵ After building chart in another file, I printed it directly from Word and measured it. W was the width of “The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.” And H was the height of the current row/box, line to line. *They cheated!*

All six Sitka fonts have the same line height, but the character sizes on the line differ. The characters intended for small use are bigger – of course they are easier to read, with nothing above or below them. However, paragraphs contain multiple lines. Sitka Small has the least white space between lines, while Sitka Banner has the most. White space definitely makes a difference in comprehension. There may be minor tweaks to different fonts, but this size difference is fundamental. Just because the design says Sitka Text is best for 11 point text does not make it so. The testers were not presented paragraphs, but individual characters, either alone or with other characters left and right.

My choice is Sitka Heading for most applications; at 11 point, it has the closest [smaller] footprint to 11.5 pt Calibri or Times New Roman. Sitka Subheading would take more space (width), and Sitka Display would take less space – either could be appropriate. The Sitka font family lets us pick our own footprint. I did use Sitka Text for the Index in Bidding Tools, where its larger relative footprint helps. For articles, such as this one, I prefer 14 point Sitka Heading.

Alternative text fonts. Of all the other Serif fonts on my computer, only Georgia made my short list – *you are reading it* – I find it too tall.

Details of the Circumvention

Summary: Make copies of the Windows 10 Sitka fonts (version 1.12) with new names on Windows 10.⁶ Test the fonts on Windows 10. When satisfied, *back up the font*, upgrade to Windows 11, and test again. (If the upgrade damaged the renamed font, restore/install it from backup.)

We won’t get the improved efficiency of Microsoft’s repackaging of the Sitka fonts for Windows 11. All use of Sitka fonts in a document must be changed to the new names, before exporting the document to a PDF on Windows 11.

Capture All Fonts on Windows 10

1. Make a “Windows 10 Fonts” folder, perhaps under \Source.
2. Search > Control Panel > Fonts

⁵ Excerpt from https://3nt.xyz/about/Publication_Notes.pdf, which also includes a brief comparison of fonts for back matter. Normal text in *EZ-Expert Bidding Tools* is 11.5-pt Sitka Heading; References are 10-pt Sitka Heading, and the Index is a highly readable 9-pt Sitka Text.

⁶ A few versions of individual Sitka fonts are available at <https://www.dafontfree.io/sitka-font/>, <https://fontsinuse.com/typefaces/38628/sitka>, and <https://www.onlinewebfonts.com/fonts/sitka>. There are not enough fonts to provide regular, bold, italic, and bold-italic for just one size (such as Heading).

3. Ctrl+A [select all fonts], Ctrl+C [copy]
4. Navigate to Windows 10 Fonts folder (above) > Ctrl+V [paste]
5. Back up this folder for potential use on Windows 11.

Create a Repository for new Aktis-Sitka Fonts

Aktis and Sitka have the same number of characters, which might prove useful; starting with A, Aktis will appear toward the top of the font list in Office, an advantage.

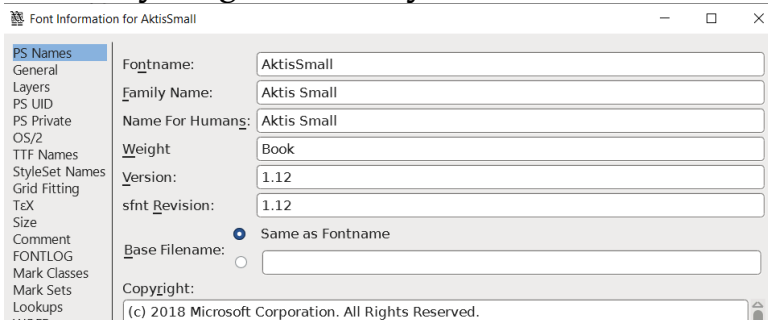
6. Make an “Aktis-Sitka Fonts” folder, perhaps under \Source.
7. Copy the four Sitka files from Windows 10 Fonts to Aktis-Sitka Fonts.

Download and Install FontForge

8. Download the FontForge installer⁷ and stash it safely, perhaps in \Source\FontForge.
9. Right-click on the installer file > Run as Administrator > Yes.

Make 24 New Aktis Fonts from Corresponding Sitka Fonts⁸

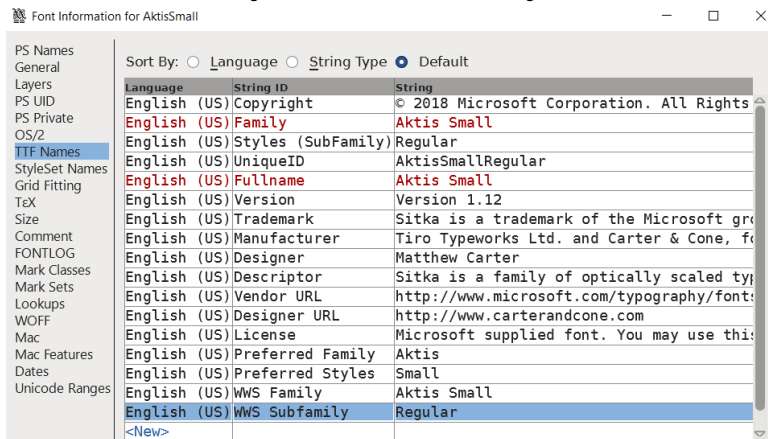
10. Repeat these steps for each of the four TrueType font collections:
 - a. Right-click on FontForge > Run as Administrator > Yes.
 - b. In the app, click  > click the Aktis-Sitka Fonts location. (If it's not there, navigate to “Aktis-Sitka Fonts” > click  > Bookmark Current Dir.)
 - c. Select: (a) Sitka.ttc, (b) SitkaB.ttc, (c) SitkaI.ttc, (d) SitkaZ.ttc.
 - d. Repeat these steps within each font collection for each of the six sizes:
 - i. There are multiple fonts in this file, pick one: [1] Small, [2] Text, [3] Subheading, [4] Heading, [5] Display, [6] Banner; click OK.
 - ii. Element > Font Info ...
 - iii. On the initial “PS Names” tab, change each occurrence of the five characters “Sitka” to the five characters “Aktis”. Preserve spaces and everything else as they were.



⁷ <https://fontforge.org/en-US/downloads/windows-dl/>. (Instructions say to run as Administrator, so I do it.)

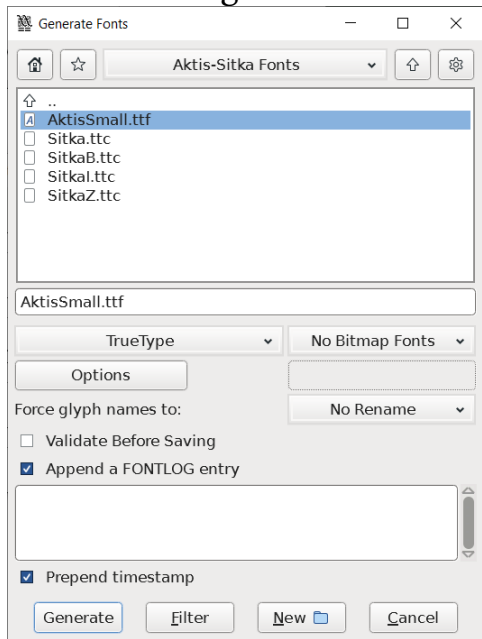
⁸ <https://themissy.com/2018/font-tutorial-renaming-font-files-for-duplicates-and-organization>.

- iv. Click the “TTF Names” tab. Aktis should already be here on the Family and Fullname lines. Change Sitka to Aktis on the UniqueID, Preferred Family and WWS Family lines.

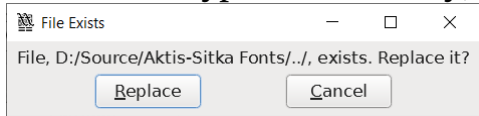


(In theory, the four lines starting with Preferred Family can be deleted.) Don’t change any of the other mentions of Sitka. We are not trying to steal this font; we just want to make it work the way it was sold to us.

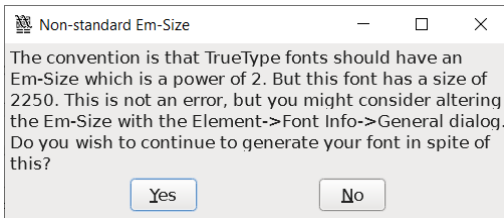
- v. Click OK.
- vi. *Back on the main window, with its grid of fonts: File > Generate Fonts... > navigate to Aktis-Sitka Fonts (via pulldown, if necessary).*



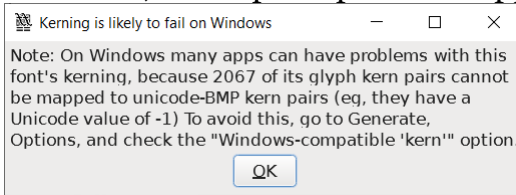
- vii. Select TrueType [if necessary; file becomes .ttf] > click Generate



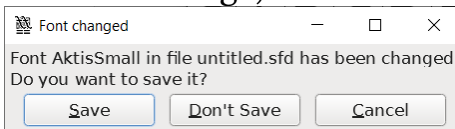
- viii. Click Replace, if the prompt above appears.



- ix. Click Yes, if the prompt above appears.



- x. Click OK, if the prompt above appears.
If desired, go back to step [v], change the specified Option, and repeat to here. I did not, at this time – seems fine.
- xi. Close FontForge, to close all open font files and prevent an accident.



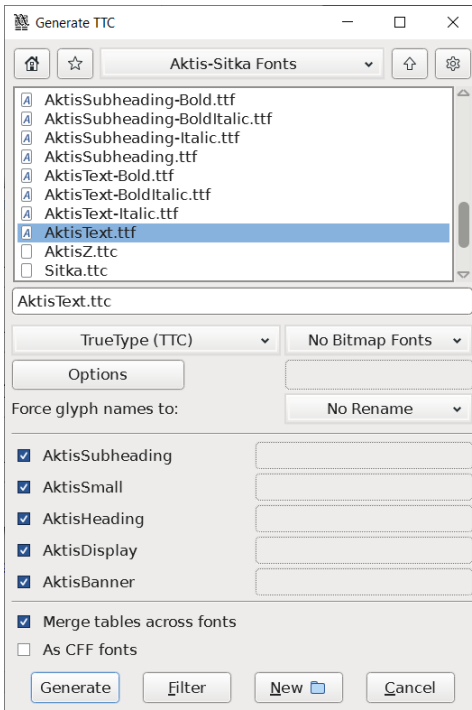
Click Don't Save for the untitled file.

- e. ... 5 more times around the steps above, starting with [i.] ...
11. ... 3 more times around the steps above, starting with [a.] ...
12. Start Font Forge > Navigate to Aktis-Sitka Fonts > check that you have 4 each for 6 sizes of Aktis TrueType files (.ttf), 24 files total.

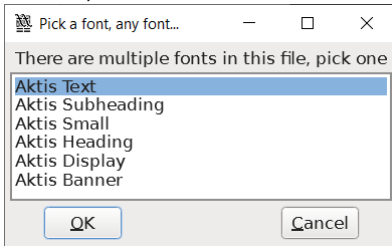
Combine Six Aktis Fonts into Each of Four Collections⁹

13. Repeat the following steps for each of the four TrueType font collections (regular, bold, italic and bold-italic):
- Start Font Forge > Navigate to Aktis-Sitka Fonts.
 - Open each of the six fonts to be included in this collection:
 - When the app starts, click on the Banner file.
 - Ctrl+click on the corresponding Display, Heading, Small, Subheading, and Text files.
 - File > Generate TTC
 - Change** the .ttc name (AktisText below) to the corresponding name: Aktis.ttc, AktisB.ttc, AktisI.ttc, or AktisZ.ttc. (The last font selected is not listed with a check mark, but as the output file!)

⁹ <https://support.atlassian.com/confluence/kb/how-to-create-ttc-family-font-file/>.



- v. There are lots of Options, none of which I used. Click Generate.
- vi. Close all six font windows.
- vii. Start the app and open the new .ttc file. Check that all six fonts are there, such as for Aktis.ttc:



- c. ... 3 more times around the steps above, starting with [a.] ...

Install the Four TrueType Font Collections¹⁰

- 14. In Windows itself, navigate to Aktis-Sitka Fonts.
- 15. Select Aktis.ttc, AktisB.ttc, AktisI.ttc, and AktisZ.ttc.
- 16. Right click on them > Install for all users.

Change a Document to Use Aktis Fonts

All pages in this article, except the page with the Sitka chart, must use Aktis fonts. First, change everything, and then bring in a fresh copy of the Sitka version of the chart.

¹⁰ <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/add-a-font-b7c5f17c-4426-4b53-967f-455339c564c1>

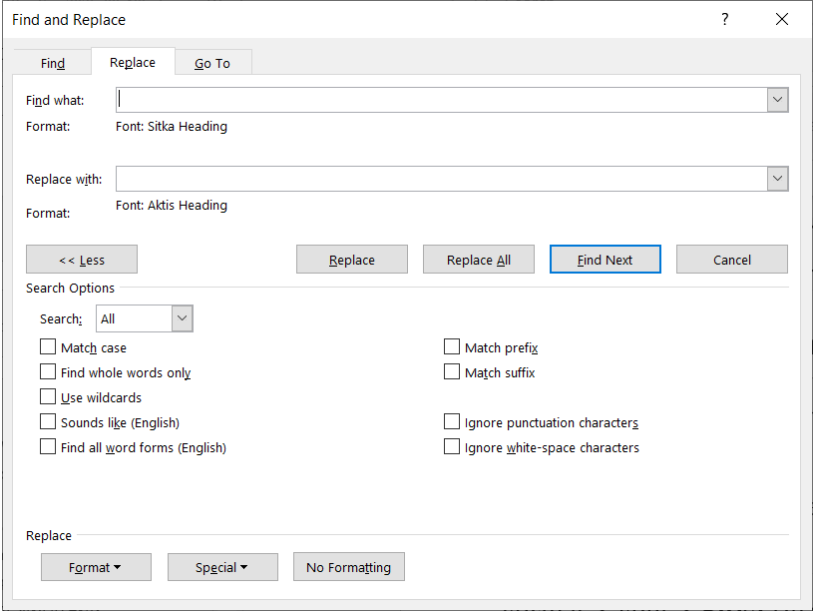
Change Existing Sitka Heading to Aktis Heading

Repeat this step for each Aktis font (Small, Text, Subheading, Heading, Display, or Banner) used in the document. I have mostly Heading.

Each document in Word may contain more than one “story.” Typical text and headings are one story. In this article, the footnotes form a second story. We could click inside one story, effect the change there, and then apply the same steps to the next story. It turns out we can do this more efficiently:

- 1. Click within the normal text area.
- 2. Home > Replace
- 3. Assure that the “Find what” field is empty and selected.
Format > Font > **Sitka** Heading > OK
- 4. Click to select the “Replace with” field, and assure it is empty.
Format > Font > **Aktis** Heading > OK

Notice how the specified font is shown below each box:



- 5. Click Replace All, and then, if asked, continue from the beginning. Repeat Replace All to process other stories, until Word reports o changes.

Change Styles

The changes above will do the job admirably, until we start updating the document. Even then, a new paragraph, for example, may inherit its style from the preceding, and be fine.

However, if we have styles that we modified to specify Sitka fonts, applying those styles, such as clicking Normal or updating an Index, will do the wrong thing. We need to change those styles to use Aktis fonts.

Caution: It is common to override the font within a styled area. To avoid changing such a desired font, do *not* apply any style revision to the document! (We should have already made all the changes we need.)

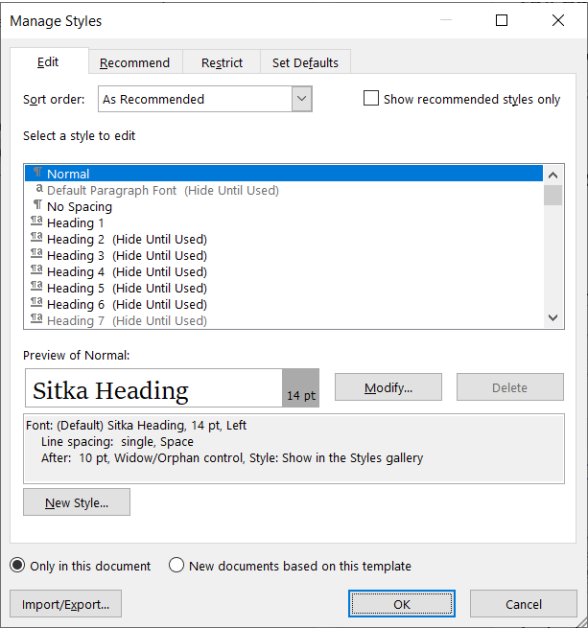


In the Styles area of the ribbon, click the tiny arrow (↗) at the lower right, to bring up the Styles box.

Do not click on any style here – it will change the document text.

Instead, click the “A-check” box (A✓), third from the left at the bottom, to bring up the Manage Styles box.

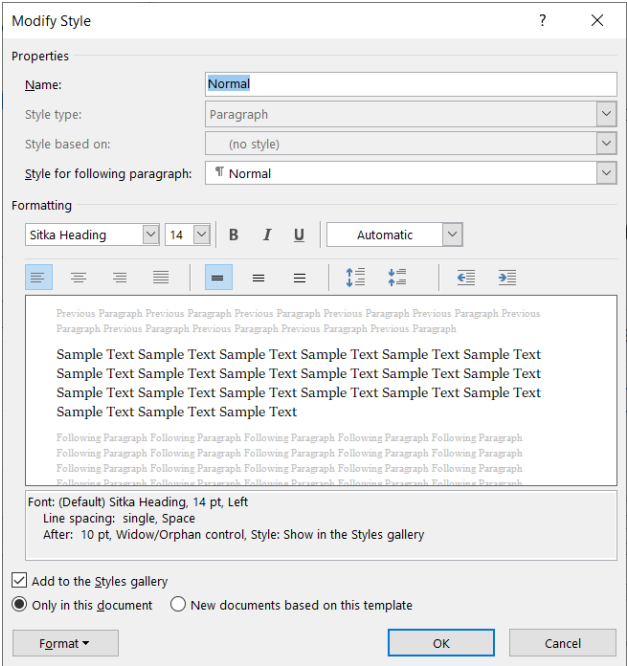
(It would be OK to instead right-click on a style > Modify, thereby skipping the Manage Styles box.)



The Normal style is already selected, and the Preview shows it uses the Sitka Heading font.

Many other styles inherit their font from Normal, so this is the most important to change.

Click Modify...



In the Modify Style box, click Sitka Heading and select Aktis Heading.

Now is a good time to fix any other issues that will be useful. The default space after a paragraph is 10 points – OK here, but in the book, I’ll use Format > Paragraph to specify 6.

Click OK when done with changes.

Back at Manage Styles, click Heading 1, and if a Sitka font is specified, change it in the same manner.

If Sitka is *inherited*, in the Modify box, the font will be blank. Do nothing and click Cancel.

Proceed down the whole list in this manner.

Note that, as specified, these changes apply only to the current document.

In this article, I needed to change: Normal, Heading 1-6, Title, Quote, Intense Quote, List Paragraph, Caption, Bibliography, TOC1-9, Body Text (+2-3), Body Text First Indent (+2), Body Text Indent (+2-3), Closing. Also on the Set Defaults tab, I selected Aktisis Heading. This mess grew over time. I need to fix or replace my model files for new articles and books.

Testing the Font Families

Most of the text in this article is at 14 points, with footnotes at 10 points. The charts on the following pages use the point sizes listed.

To test, I printed the charts for both Sitka and Aktis from the Windows 10 PDF, each on its own sheet. When I put them together and held them up to the light, they were identical, except for the names of the font families.

Years after I took the listed measurements, current measurements differ. The differences don't change my conclusions. The heights of all the Aktis and Sitka boxes is now consistent at 0.75 inch with my current system, software configuration, and printer.

26 Aug 2025: I upgraded my system to Windows 11, and then exported this file again (with this update). The Sitka chart is inferior in the PDF only, the Windows 11 export bug. As my system is configured, fonts that cannot be exported are bitmapped. In the PDF, the **bold** font names in the **Sitka** chart are no longer bold. If you look carefully, you will see that the bitmapped fonts in the six Sitka boxes are inferior to the quality of the Aktis fonts – which perpetuate the original quality of Sitka.

If you are one of the few people in the world who still cares about this issue, I would be pleased if you drop me a line (the link to my address is my name, below the title).

Aktis Font Comparison at 11 pt

Aktis Small (for 0-9.5 pt) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	3.50" W 0.77" H
Aktis Text (for 9.5-13.5 pt) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	3.25" W 0.77" H
Aktis Subheading (for 13.5-18.5 pt) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	3.03" W 0.77" H
Aktis Heading (for 18.5-23.5 pt) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	2.88" W 0.77" H
Aktis Display (for 23.5-27.5 pt) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	2.72" W 0.77" H
Aktis Banner (for 27.5-∞) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	2.62" W 0.77" H
Times New Roman (11.5 pt, for comparison) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	2.92" W 0.73" H
Calibri (11.5 pt, for comparison) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	2.91" W 0.79" H

W: The width of “The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.”

H: The height of the current row, line to line.

Sitka Font Comparison at 11 pt

Sitka Small (for 0-9.5 pt) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	3.50" W 0.77" H
Sitka Text (for 9.5-13.5 pt) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	3.25" W 0.77" H
Sitka Subheading (for 13.5-18.5 pt) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	3.03" W 0.77" H
Sitka Heading (for 18.5-23.5 pt) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	2.88" W 0.77" H
Sitka Display (for 23.5-27.5 pt) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	2.72" W 0.77" H
Sitka Banner (for 27.5-∞) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	2.62" W 0.77" H
Times New Roman (11.5 pt, for comparison) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	2.92" W 0.73" H
Calibri (11.5 pt, for comparison) 0123456789 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The QuIcK bRoWn FoX jUmPs OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. tHe qUiCk BrOWn fOx JuMpS oVeR tHe LaZy DoG.	2.91" W 0.79" H

W: The width of “The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.”
H: The height of the current row, line to line.