**Entering Special Characters Quickly**

It is easy to add special characters to a document. When you display the Symbol dialog box and select the character you want to insert (in this case the degree symbol), you should see some information about the character at the bottom of the dialog box. In the case of the degree symbol, you see the value 176 (the ASCII value for the degree symbol) or 00B0 (the Unicode value for the degree symbol, in hexadecimal). You should also see a shortcut for the symbol which is "Control+@, Space" (without the quote marks). This information provides two ways you can use the keyboard to enter the degree symbol.

The first way is to simply use the shortcut shown: Just press **Ctrl+@** (remember that you need to hold down the **Shift** key to get the @ character) and then press the spacebar. Bingo! The degree symbol appears in your document.

You could also use the ASCII or Unicode values to enter the character. To use the ASCII value, just hold down the **Alt** key as you type **0176** on the numeric keypad. To use the Unicode value, type **00B0** (although you can leave off the leading zeroes) and then press **Alt+X**.

If you choose to go the route of using the Unicode value, you should understand that what you have before the code is important. If you have some other number immediately before the code (especially if you shorten the code to B0), Word gets confused because it can't tell if the preceding number is part of the code or not. The solution is to put a space before the code and then delete it afterward.

If you don't want to use one of these methods to enter the degree symbol, you could also create your own shortcut. Display the Symbol dialog box, select the degree symbol, and then click the Shortcut Key button. Word then lets you decide which shortcut you want to use.

Another approach is to create an AutoCorrect entry for the degree symbol. Follow these steps:

1. Display the Symbol Box and select the symbol you want.
2. At the bottom, click the Auto Correct button.
3. In the Replace box, enter a mnemonic you want to use, such as "<o>" (without the quote marks).
4. Click on OK.

Now, whenever you want that symbol you selected, all you need to do is type your mnemonic and when you press the spacebar Word expands it to your symbol.