

can't type high-bit characters in xterm

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When I type above-ASCII characters (alt-b, alt-c, etc.) into xterm or the console, it beeps sometimes and won't display them. It acts like maybe they invoke bash functions (when bash is running in that terminal); alt-a gets me a beep, alt-n gets me a colon in column 1 as in it's searching for something, alt-r clears the line, etc. rxvt works; I can enter and display high characters at will. If I select high characters with the mouse, I can paste them into an xtermn and they'll display. However, if I cat a file containing them, they show up as blanks. What can I change to make this work in xterm, and to a lesser extent, in the console?

2.4.22

Redhat 8

XFree86 4.2.0

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Logic is a systematic method of coming to
the wrong conclusion with confidence.