Alphabetical Incisions – A Review

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Abstract

Incisions are the primary step of almost all invasive procedures, as each and every surgery gets initiated by certain specific shaped incision on a specific site for rectifying the underlying pathology. Apart from the detailed narration mentioned in Ancient Ayurvedic surgical texts, no other concrete historical contribution is available. Surgical science has evolved enormously over the years and numerous surgical procedures have been added with the prime focus of aiding the ill. With this stupendous growth, several incisions are also being invented analogous to various shapes of letter, object, animal, and fruit. This review details on the incisions evolved based on the shape of specific English Alphabet.

Keywords: Incision, Alphabet

Introduction

Incision is one of the widely used surgical procedure practiced across globe. Almost all surgeries across departments of surgery gets initiated by incision. A number of incision types have been detailed in various surgical texts and new incisions are being invented over the period of years for attaining specific target oriented goals with best post-operative outcomes.

The earliest, systematic and detailed written record about Incisions are traced from Ancient Indian Ayurvedic Surgical Text – Sushruta Samhita, the author of which is widely lauded as “Father of Indian Surgery”. This text details variety of incisions based on location or site of the body giving due respect to the law of nature for uncomplicated healing. Based on site, the incisions are classified into three major categories as Tiryak [Oblique] [1], Chandramandala [Circular/Oval] and Ardha Chandra [Semicircular] [1], the sites of which are shown in Table No.1. Apart from these types, certain other types of incisions are described in the context of surgical management of fistulous track, they being Langhalaka [‘T’ Shaped], Ardhalangalaka [‘Inverted L’ Shaped], Sarvatobhadraka [Bracket shaped], Go theerthaka [Longitudinal], Kharjura Patraka [Serrated] [2,3]. In these periods incisions were designated based on the shape of certain object or part of a plant or animal.

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The consequent period saw a mammoth growth in advancement of surgical techniques and influence of technology in surgery resulting in various modifications and improvisations in the older techniques. A numerous incisions are developed in post Sushruta’s period based on the English Alphabetics, mainly these analogies are easy for perception and application. This literary review will analyze the incisions developed based on Alphabetics and its research pattern.

Aim & Objective
To compile and analyze the incisions named after Alphabetics

Method
The search was performed in September 2018 using Google Scholar. Search items were ‘Shaped Incision’ with prefix of each English Alphabet. No time frame was kept for search and selection of studies. Only articles containing the surgical procedure with specific Alphabet shaped incision were included. Multiple articles with same site of incision of the designated shape are excluded.

Observation & Discussion
Basic characteristics of a proper incision is to provide an adequate access to the procedure intended, wide enough to complete the drainage, evenly dividing the tissues and which does not involve or injure the vital structure and lastly with due respect to the time of surgery. [5] The results the searches are tabulated in Table No.1 wherein number of studies screened, site on which specific alphabetical incision is practiced and name of certain procedures relating to the subject are mentioned. The list explains various sites for each specific shape of alphabet, and only one procedure for each site has been mentioned as an example. In a specific site several procedures can be performed, the structures involved in that site can be accessed for correcting any pathological event. Hence number of procedures to a specific site varies in relation to underlying structures in it. In ancient Indian Medicinal period, incisions were named after articles which were routinely used in day to day activities, be an object or a material or grain based on unique method of teaching as Analogical method. This is one of the best forms of perceiving knowledge among the forms cited in Ancient Vedic treatises.

Analogies facilitate both in teaching and learning aspects as in these aid in translating medical or surgical concepts into well-known or practiced facts, enables the medicos to perceive the subject in a better form. [5] With the advancement of science and development of surgical science many analogous shapes have been evolved which simulate the letter of English language. An incision should offer adequate operating space without hindering the vital structures in the vicinity and should be sufficient enough to relieve the pathological lesions or event in the site of the procedure. These incisions indicate they have been developed observing the due respect to the principles of surgery. The knowledge of the specific letter shaped incision serves its role as a mnemonic and educational module.

Along with shape its quality also has a role in acceptance of surgical outcome in a patient. All the shapes of incision discussed in this study follow a linear or sequential pattern and provides the adequate surgical field. Specifications and measurements of incision should be precise and according to the site of surgery, underlying pathology, surgical outcome, cosmetic appearance. The incision type or shape has also its impact on patient persuasion for the proposed surgery.

Reasons behind the shapes
The basic reason behind development of the incision is mainly minimal tissue injury with significant surgical outcome. The next reason is analogy, a science or form of teaching which has lost its glory in the recent periods. Shapes follow a linear shape pattern with no serrated or superfluous bent or curves. There are certain shapes which are used in numerous sites like the shape of ‘I’ and few other shapes can be utilized in only few sites.

Limitation of the Study
Among all these incisions, the inception of each letter shaped incision could not be retrieved. The first scientific published article on the subject cannot be considered as the sole authority or date on which such incision is being developed.

Conclusion
A best incision plays a vital role in surgical outcome. Incision must provide sufficient field for the procedure, it should be even in depth, should enable easy differentiation of structures incised with the underlying structures and lastly it should not injure the vital structures. Shapes of these alphabetical incisions adhere to Langer’s lines.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Shape</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>A Shaped Incision [n-77]</td>
<td>Anterior Vaginal wall, Below urethral meatus, on Sclera, lower border of the jaw, Heart</td>
<td>Urethral reconstruction [6], Vaginal reconstruction [7], Neoplasms of the tongue [8], Repair wound of the heart [9]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>B Shaped Incision [n-3]</td>
<td>Upper and Central Breast</td>
<td>Tumors of Breast [Regnault B Technique or Grisotti flap] [10]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>C shaped Incision [n-635]</td>
<td>Cochlea, Axilla, Sacral region, Scalp, interphalangeal joint, bilateral nasal septal mucosa, Post auricular region, frontal region, Occipital region, Retrosigmoid approach, hand, anal verge, Umbilicus, Portal pedicle, Scrotum, Epicanthus, Second and third left costal cartilages, Coronal suture line, At the level of S4-S5, Supraventricular region, mastoid region, ventral aspect of hip, dorsum of wrist, Operculum, Urethral diverticulum, Anterior vaginal wall, lower eyelid</td>
<td>Cochlear implant surgery [11], Sentinel node biopsy [Breast carcinoma] [12], Sacral tumors [13], lateral cranial base surgery [14], Deep brain stimulation [DBS] surgery [15], Glomus tumor surgery [16], interphalangeal joint arthroplasty [17], Pituitary adenomas [18], Vestibular Schwannoma surgery [19], Intraventricular drug administration in Meningosis, Inferior cerebellar artery anastomosis [20], Microvascular decompression in Idiopathic Hemifacial spasm [21], Segmental aponeurectomy, Dupuytren's disease [22], Anal stenosis [23], SIFUTS surgery in radical nephrectomy [24], Infratemporal tumors [25], Hepatotomy [26], Hypospadias [27], medical epicanthoplasty [28], Ear reconstruction [29], metallic foreign body removal [30], Transsaccral Cystectomy [31], Upper plexus injury [32], Cortical Resection [33], Synovial Chondromatosis Surgery [34], Chondromyxoid fibroma [35], Femoral head prosthesis [36], tendon transplants for radial and ulnar nerve paralysis [37], formen magnum tumors [38], dacrocystorhinostomy [39], Urethral diverticula surgery [40], Branchial cleft fistula surgery [41], Vesico vaginal fistula surgery [42], maxillectomy [43] Eyelid rotation flap [44]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>D shaped Incision [n-33]</td>
<td>Anterior capsule of eye, Midline in between gluteal region, Breast, Posterolateral neck, Upper incisor tooth, Bronchus, Nail matrix</td>
<td>Capsular shrinkage and intraocular lens design [45], Pilonidal sinus surgery [46], Mastectomy [47], regional lymphadenectomy [48], Trans-oral Maxillectomy [49], Endobronchial tumor resection surgery [50], Intranasal Dacrocystostomy [51], Prune belly syndrome surgery [52], Traumatic disorders of nail [53]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>E shaped Incision [n-3]</td>
<td>Flexor tendons of hand</td>
<td>Tenoplasty [54]</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>F shaped Incision [n-7]</td>
<td>Hard palate, Outer border of rectus abdominus muscle</td>
<td>Nasopharyngeal fibroma [55], bile duct surgery [56]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>G shaped Incision [n-2]</td>
<td>Temporal region of Head, Inter arytenoids cleft</td>
<td>Venous graft for insufficient superficial temporal artery [57], repair posterior laryngeal cleft [58]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>H shaped Incision [n-520]</td>
<td>Penis, Outer layer of dura, Lumbar region, neck, Perineum, Trachea, Hand, Galf, Femoral joint capsule, dorsum of finger</td>
<td>Peyronie's disease surgery [59], revascularization in Moyamoya disease [60], surgery for anterior interbody lumbar fusion [61], radical neck dissection for differentiated thyroid cancer [62], Sigmoid vaginoplasty [63], Ileocecal vaginal construction [64], Paediatric tra- cheostomies [65], Tracheostomy [66], Mallet finger fracture surgery [67], anatomic study of intermuscular septum of leg [68], Femoral prosthesis [69], Arterial flap [70]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I shaped Incision [n-174]</td>
<td>Gums, Pulmonary vein, Dorsum of penis, Third or fourth tracheal ring, Vessel wall, Sacral region, Pericardium, neck, angle of jaw, nasal mucosa, nasopharyngeal mucosa, Left coastal margin, Gluteal fascia, eyelid, Umbilicus, right coastal margin, Axis of the femoral neck, anatomical snuff box, Perineum</td>
<td>Implant surgery [71], Pulmonary vein obstruction [72], Peyronie’s disease surgery [73], Post laryngectomy speech surgery [74], Vessel wall suturing [75], Sacral tumors [76], Pericardectomy [77], Pharyngoo-oesophago- laryngectomy [78], Parotidectomy [79], Posterior choanal atresia [80], Clival tumor surgery [81], Dacrocystorhinostomy [82], Splenectomy [83], Gluteal fascial transposition for trochanteric bursitis [84], Autopsy incisions [85], Cilia transplant [86], Total laparo-scopic gastrectomy [87] Right side Hepatectomy [88], surgical treatment for femoroacetabular impingement [89], Partial or total Laryngectomy with tracheostomy [90], replacement of Trapezium [91], Reconstruction of Perineoscrotal region [92]</td>
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| 10. | J shaped Incision [n-679] | Subcostal region, lower abdomen, uterus, Perineum, Behind fibula, fourth intercostal space, midline above the pubis symphysis, Parallel to right inguinal ligament, Achilles insertion, upper midline from sub-xiphoid region, subtal joint space, aortic sinus margin, Right and left lower quadrant of abdomen, Pulmonary vein, Groin, ascending aorta, Medial border of tendon calcaneus, lens, Breast, distal phalanx, distal end of humerus, 10th to 12th rib, Lateral aspect of neck, Anterior to ribia, elbow, conchal region, posterior to medial malleoulus, over sacral promontory, pulp of finger, posterior uterine wall, Cervical spinous processes, upper 1,2, and 3 ribs, knee, Liver transplantation [93], Right heptectomy [94], Vaginal Hysterectomy for Cervical Carcinoma [95], Surgical procedure for Placenta previa [96], Mediolateral Episiotomy [97], Right trisegmentectomy for Hepatic haemangioma [98], Surgery for recurrent instability of the ankle [99], Aortic valve surgery [100], Kidney transplantation [101], Portal vein ligation [102], Ovarian transplant [103], Surgery for Achilles tendinitis [104], Cochlear implants [105], Right hemicolecctomy [106], Subtalar distraction bone block arthrodesis [107], Surgery for aortic stenosis [108], Repair of ventral incisional hernia [109], finger pulp infections [110], transposition of great arteries [111], Extraperitoneal lymph node dissection [112], Insertion of Bjork-Shiley aortic prosthesis [113], Correction of equinus deformity [114], Phacoemulsification [115], Mastopexy [116], management of subungual kerato-canthoma [117], surgery for distal humerus fractures [118], Repair for vesicovaginal fistula [119], extended digital sympathectomy [120], retroperitoneal surgeries [121], Surgery for Pulmonary tuberculosis [122], repair of calcaneal fractures [123], Transhiatal oesophagectomy [124], reconstruction of anterior talofibular ligament [125], debridement of osteoarthritic [126], conjoined twin delivery [127], bone peg grafting for osteochondritis [128], surgical correction for pinna malformation [129], Laryngotracheoesophageal cleft surgery [130], Lagged syndesmatic fixation [131] mammoplasty [132], robotic ventral rectopexy [133], surgery for torsion of gravid uterus [134], resection of primary carcinoma of lung [135], J-Lift/Internal face-lift [136], nerve sparing bilateral extravesical detrusorrhaphy [137], surgical correction of congenital anomalies of spine [138], Thoracoplasty [139], Surgical correction of cruciate ligament injuries [140], Ilia lymph node resection [141] |
| 11. | K shaped Incision [n-1] | Upper lip | Vermilion reconstruction [142] |
| 12. | L shaped Incision [n-1,560] | Manubrium sterni, centre of Popliteus muscle, Pronator quadratus muscle, Pleura and intercostals muscles, right lower lateral crus of nose, Calcaneum, neck, inter-artenoid region, Subscapularis muscle, frontal region of head, right upper quadrant, body of mandible, parallel to piriformis tendon, in pes fascia, elbow joint, Resection of apical chest tumors [143], Reduction of tibial plateau fractures [144], Distal radius fractures [145], surgical approach to upper thoracic spine [146], surgical correction for nasal tip [147], Internal fixation of calcaneal fractures [148], resection of lesions at cranio-cervical region [149], Hemilaryngectomy [150], surgical correction of shoulder instability [151], right hemicolecctomy [152], excision of pineal region tumors [153], radical en boc resection of lung cancer [154], lesions of upper basilar artery [155], Treatment of carcinoma of ampulla of vater [156], Thoraco-abdominal nephrectomy [157], humeral avulsion of glenohumeral ligament repair [158], repair of temporomandibular joint ankylosis [159], total arthroplasty [160], excision of cervicothoracic neuroblastoma [161], cruciate ligament repair [162] correction no facial condylar fractures [163], Pectoralis major transfer for paralysis of elbow [164], Aortic arch reconstruction [165], calcaneal osteotomy [166], |
| 13. | M shaped Incision [n-44] | Glans penis, Auricle, posterior fossa dura, Behind anterior hair line near temporal area, waistline, hard palate, parallel to superior petrosal sinus, perineum, Sublabial sulcus, Gluteal region, base of zygoma proceeding along the inferior rim of the orbit, Sclera, in the mucosa at the junction of tongue, Scalp, Gluteus medius, Elbow, Glansplasty [167], Auricular reconstruction [168], Auditory mid-brain implantation [169], Malarplasty [170], Abdominoplasty [171], Implant esthetics [172], Excision of vestibular shwannomas [173], Vaginal reconstruction [174], clef lip surgery [175], Surgery for saddlebag deformity [‘M’ shaped thigh lift] [176] Neo-yoke repair for severe hypospadias [177], resection of squamous cell carcinoma [178], Urethralplasty repair [179],Vitrectomy [180], Surgery for scleroma pharynx [181], Cataract surgery [182], Alopecia reduction [183], Total hip arthroplasty [184], Repair of nerve injuries at the elbow [185], Correction of Gender dysphoria [186] |

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<th>Related Procedures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N shaped Incision</td>
<td>Retroauricular area, site of stoma, anterior and posterior walls of distal stomach, Scalp, Perineum, Trachea, Parotid region</td>
<td>Excision of Menigiomas involving the clivus, Suture rings for heart valves, Ileo-cutaneous ureterostomy, reconstruction after subtotal gastrectomy, Decompressive craniectomy, Perineorrhaphy, Bjork flap, Surgery for Benign lesions of Parotid gland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O shaped Incision</td>
<td>Around formed tracheotomy</td>
<td>Surgery for Thyroid papillary carcinoma invading trachea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P shaped Incision</td>
<td>No human study reported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q shaped Incision</td>
<td>Scalp</td>
<td>Trephining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R shaped Incision</td>
<td>No study reported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T shaped Incision</td>
<td>Sternum, anterior capsule of Shoulder joint, Femoral neck, Groin, patellar gingival, Subcostal region, Thyroid cartilage, Promontory of sacrum, over the splenic flexure, cervical part of vagina, Anterior aspect of tongue, Temporalis muscle, Temporomandibular joint, Apex of Kyphosis, Inferior to chin, Forearm, left renal vein, Cervical dura, above zygomatic arch, base of jejuna mesentry, root of the penis, right parietal scal parallel to hair roots, hip capsule, temporal fascia, back of the left atrium, Periosteum of the ilium, Along the radius bone, Ciliary body and iris, membranous portion of the diaphragm, Corpus cavernosum albuginea, Scalp, Trachea, lateral aspect of left colon, Coronary artery repair, T-plasty for shoulder instability, Cervical osteotomy, Groin dissection, Transpalatal distraction, Right hepatic lobectomy, Thyroplasty, Suspension of resectum, Laparoscopic adrenalectomy, Transvagal mesh technique for pelvic organ prolapse, Glossopexy, Superior temporal artery-to-middle cerebral artery bypass, Median sternotomy, Anterior capsulolabral reconstruction, Temporomandibular joint ankylosis correction surgery, anterior decompression and posterior instrumentation of tuberculous spine, Neck dissection, Oral cavity reconstruction, Side-to-end renalorta anastomosis, excision of tumor of cervical spine, Internal hemipelvectomry, Portal-to-systemic venous shunt, Cavernous artery revascularization, Maxillary sinus reconstruction, omega lateral approach to hip, Lateral orbital decompression, pulmonary venous drainage surgery, Distal radial osteotomy, excision of tumors of the ciliary body and iris, Laparoscopic varicocelectomy, Transabdominal approach to coronary artery bypass, Al-Ghorab shunt plus intracavernous tunneling, Multiple bur hole surgery for Moyamoya disease, Tracheotomy, Subtotal esophagectomy and esophagogastrostomy, Anterior acromioplasty</td>
<td></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>U shaped Incision</td>
<td>Anterior vaginal wall, Perineum, Preauricular and retroauricular area, tip of the fibula, toe nail, basopharyngeal fascia, Knee joint, Right mastoid process, Anterior part of neck, below inferior pulmonary vein, Vulva, around urethral meatus, Medial to anterior superior iliac spine, anterior abdominal wall, nasal mucosa, beneath the umbilicus, labiocutolar sulcus, Pericardium, frontal sinus, bladder mucosa, margin of urethral plate, Hard palate, posterior wall of the bladder, fundus of tongue, suprasternal notch, upper margin of patella, mastoid region, above the isthmus of thyroid gland, Volar plate, anterior margin of anthelix, vaginal introitus, lumbosacral area, from oesophagus to the cardia, parietal region, anterior chest wall, anterior to ollactory fossa, posterior surface of upper lip, Lacrima sal, around rectum, Pulmonary artery, Aneurous of calf muscle, Occipito-frontal region</td>
<td>Supranaortal transvaginal urethrolysis, Island flap anoplasty, Face lift surgery, Anatomic reconstruction of anterior talofibular ligament, removal of toe nail, Modified Ingelman-Sunberg operation for vesicovaginal and urethrovaginal fistula, Surgeries related to cruciate ligament, Pharyngogastric anastomosis, Paltical cricoideotomy, Thyrotachal anastomosis, Radical neck dissection, Bronchoplasty, Vaginoplasty, repair of distal hypospadias, Radical operation of epithelioma, reduction of surgery induced peritoneal adhesions, Dacrocystorhinostomy, Laparoscopic distal gastrectomy, clitoplasty, prostatectomy, management of angiofibroma, Cystoplasty, high pharyngogastrotomy, Bilateral of cervical lymphadenectomy, radical neck dissection, Volar plate arthroplasty, transvaginal rectocele repair, operative procedure for achalasia, surgery for phantosma, anterior flap anastomosis, perineal prostatectomy, repair of rupture of Achilles tendon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>V shaped Incision</td>
<td>Around frenulum, Anal verge, Tongue, proximal forearm, posterior vaginal wall, anterior rectus sheath, dorsum of proximal phalanx, cystic duct, Sclera, bladder urothelium, distobuccal line, angle of second molar, aortic sinus, glans penis, base of umbilicus, temporal fascia, dura mater, Limbus of eye, aorta, anterior wall of femoral artery, perineum, triceps tendon, parietal bone, scalp</td>
<td>Transpalatal distraction, Repair of tongue tie, Hemannhoidecstomy, Repair of congenital macroglossia, Radial forearm flap, Rectocele repair, VY correction for varus deformity, Cataract surgery, CBD exploration, Sclerotomy, Ureterovesical anastomosis, impacted third molar tooth surgery, Retropubic prostatectomy, hypospadias repair, Mitrofanoff procedure, reconstruction of supravalvar aortic stenosis, vaginal reconstruction, elbow-arthroplasty, distal scaphoidectomy, Genitoplasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>W shaped Incision</td>
<td>Medial orbital wall, Labial wall, deviated nasal septum, dura mater, central hairline, columella, urethra, axilla, tendinous insertion of triceps, perineum, nasal bridge, base of penis,</td>
<td>Correction of blowout fractures of orbital wall, Dacrocystorhinostomy, Genioplasty, Septoplasty, decompression operation for the brain, Cataract surgery, Forehead lift, Left open rhinoplasty, Glanduoplasty, surgical repair of buried penis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>X shaped Incision</td>
<td>Auricle, trachea, perineum, umbilicus, hymen, posterior longitudinal ligament, Intervertebral disc, blind vaginal pouch, nasal fat pad, transartial septum</td>
<td>Keloid excision and reconstruction, starplasty, vaginal reconstruction, neoumbilicoplasty, repair of imperforate hymen, Lumbar disectomy, abdominoplasty, dacrocystorhinoplasty, Disc repair system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Y shaped Incision</td>
<td>Dura mater, sclera, breast, neck, McBurney’s point, inferior and superior left pulmonary vein, anal verge, antimesenteric border of small intestine, retroauricular region, perineum, temporalis muscle, Glans penis, periorbital region, urogenital sinus, body of sternum, detrusor muscle, distal palm, right atrium, anterior part of rib cage, lateral canthus, around parotid gland, pelvis, coronary sinus</td>
<td>Intraocular lens fixation, Mastectomy, Radical neck dissection, Y-appendicoplasty, pulmonary venous drainage, Fissurectomy, Strictureplasty, surgical management of enlarged clitoris, intubation in preterm babies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Z shaped Incision [n-383]

Intervertebral disc [361], Aerola, Popliteal fossa, posterior wall of the airway, bladder, ankle joint, metacarpophalangeal joints, proximal forearm, mastoid process, External ear, anterior aspect of elbow, umbilicus, gluteal fold, thigh, plantar fascia, Palmaris longus,

Nipple reduction surgery [362], repair for popliteal artery entrapment syndrome [363], Laryngotracheal reconstruction [364], mastoidectomy [365], ear reconstruction [366], acetabular arthroplasty [367],
n – Refers to number of searches found

<table>
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