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Designing an interface to combine typefaces based on typographic anatomy and letter formations

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Designing an Interface to Combine Typefaces Based on Typographic Anatomy and Letter Formations

Jillianne E. M. Sanders
Spring 2019
Designing an interface to combine typefaces based on typographic anatomy and letter formations

by

Jillianne Elizabeth Maureen Sanders

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS

Major: Graphic Design

Program of Study Committee:
Paula J. Curran, Major Professor
Andrea L. Quam

The student author, whose presentation of the scholarship herein was approved by the program of study committee, is solely responsible for the content of this thesis. The Graduate College will ensure this thesis is globally accessible and will not permit alterations after a degree is conferred.

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
2019

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NOMENCLATURE

Definitions from Typographic Design: Form and Communication and The Complete Manual of Typography: A Guide to Setting Perfect Type

Typographic Terminology

Character  Symbol, sign or mark in a language system: the alphabet for example.

Font  A font is a cookie cutter, the description of a typeface, in computer code, photograph, or metal, used to image the type.

Typeface  A typeface is the cookie: the alphabet with a certain design.

Typography  The art and process of typesetting by any system or method.

Stress  Gradual variation in the thickness of a curved part or stroke, most visible in the letter “O”.

X-height  Height of lowercase letters in a font (excludes ascenders and descenders.)

Thick/Thin Contrast  The thinnest or thickest parts of the letterform.

Weight  Lightness or heaviness of a typeface (determined by ratio of stroke thickness to character height.)

Baseline  The line where letters “sit.” Above are ascenders, and below are descenders extend.

Typographic Classifications

Old Style  Classification of 15th-18th century serif designs with thick/thin contrasts, bracketed serifs, diagonal stress on the capital letter “O”, and a handwritten influence.

Transitional  Classification of serif which combines aspects of both Old Style and Modern typefaces.

Modern  Classification of serif designed at the end of the 18th century whose characteristics include vertical stress on capital letter “O”, hairline serifs and prominent contrast between thick/thin strokes.
Slab
Classification of serif characterized by rectangular serifs similar in weight to the main stroke.

Grotesque
Classification of sans serif type characterized by stroke with varied contrast in width and square-like curves.

Neo-Grotesque
Classification of sans serif to describe sub-category of grotesque characterized by less contrast in stroke width, curved strokes which terminate as horizontals, higher x-heights, and shorter descenders.

Humanist
Classification of sans serif typeface with characteristics including letterforms with diagonal stress, and two-story “a” and “g” characters.

Geometric
Classification of sans serif typeface based on circles and rectangles. Characteristics include uniform stroke width and single-story “a” and “g” characters.

Typographic Anatomy
1. Apex The point at the uppercase letter “A.”
2. Arm A horizontal stroke unattached at one or both ends such as in the letters “T” or “E.”
3. Ascender The stroke of a lowercase letter that is above the mean line like the letter “k.”
4. Bowl Rounded stroke as seen in “g,” “o,” and “q.”
5. Counter Negative space completely or partially closed by the letterform as in “G” and “C.”
6. Crossbar Horizontal stroke that connects two sides of a letter seen in “A” and “H” or bisecting in “F” and “T.”
7. Descender Stroke on a lowercase letter that falls below the baseline such as “g,” “j,” “p,” “q,” and “y.”
8. Ear Found only on Roman two-story “g”s projecting from the bowl on the upper right side.
9. Eye Found only on the lowercase “e.” It is the enclosed part of the letter.
10. Fillet  Contoured edge that connects the serif and stem of a bracket serif: commonly seen in “A” and “K.”


12. Leg  A lower diagonal stroke seen on letters such as “K,” and “R.”

13. Link-  The connecting stroke which connects the bowl and loop of the lowercase roman “g.”

14. Loop  Same as the bowl but only found on lowercase roman “g.”

15. Serif  Short strokes extending from and at an angle on the ends of upper and lower major strokes of each letter.

16. Shoulder  Curved stroke extending from a stem such as uppercase “R” or lowercase “m.”

17. Spine  Only found in the letter “S.” the central curve that connects the upper and lower portions of the letter.

18. Spur  A projection smaller than a serif found on the curved stroke of the uppercase letter “G.”

19. Stem  A major vertical or diagonal strokes of the letterform such as in “T,” “R,” “Z,” “I” and “A.”

20. Stroke  Linear elements within a letterform.

21. Tail  Diagonal stroke or loop at the end of a letter such as in “R” or “Q.”

22. Terminal  End of a stroke that does not end with a serif.
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this creative component is to explore the theory that letterforms and typographic anatomy influence which typefaces work well together, and how to most efficiently provide designers with necessary tools to make those decisions. In this paper, I propose a website concept and app resource for both novice and experienced designers. It is difficult to find a comprehensive website, book or blog if an individual is not aware of its existence, as my research will show. My creative component focuses on the collection of this widespread information and combines it into one resource that promotes designer collaboration. This resource tool would help designers keep up to date on current trends, books, and font releases from anywhere they work with a mobile app or website. My proposed website also features a tool that would help designers determine which fonts to combine based on letter formation and type anatomy. I drew upon relevant literature, typographic explorations, and a survey I conducted. My survey of working professionals and academics provided results that suggest a broad scope of taste, historical and regional influence. The survey also explored the influence of designer intuition, and the role it plays when choosing an effective typeface.
INTRODUCTION

Twenty-six letters comprise the English alphabet. There are millions of combinations, arrangements and abbreviations that create symbolic patterns fundamental to human existence, languages, and more specifically, words. Typography plays a crucial role in how words are read, interpreted, felt, and experienced in daily life. The use of a specific typeface can indicate many things in addition to what is physically or digitally written through shaping, weight, size, and letter contrasts. For example, Baskerville can express something very different than Futura Bold, even when it involves the same text.

Typeface choice primarily depends on the eye of a designer when combining one or more typefaces together, as my inquiry will show; but, how does a designer know what typeface to use? Is it experience? Does it depend on a systematic approach? How much personal preference is involved? Current design dictates that one must also consider whether a piece will appear in print or digital form, or a combination of the two. Type selection depends upon knowing how to use typography in a way that is striking, readable, sometimes understated, and often beautiful in addition to designing for a project or client’s need. Through a survey of professionals and academics, I collected a small sample of data on how working professionals choose typography, combine typefaces, and what resources they use to stay updated about type trends. This then informed my inquiry into combining typefaces. In this paper, I will explore typographic classifications and terminology, how the letterform and anatomy itself can help a designer determine what typefaces work well together, and how all of these pieces and design resources came together to form an app and website for designers.
INSPIRATION AND INFLUENCES

What the Font App and Website
My interest in typography began when I enrolled in an introduction to type class in the Spring of 2018. I became aware of a website called “What the Font” in class, and more recently with the website’s mobile app user interface, a user interface that is fairly simple in design (What). What the Font provides several different options in searching for type. However, its main tool allows a curious individual to upload a .jpeg file to the site and select some of the type in that image. The site will then generate a variety of typefaces the specimen could be and where it might be purchased. The app works in a similar manner but provides no instruction on how to use the app when it is first opened. There is no home screen upon opening and no directions on how to use it; however, the camera on the phone opens immediately. I would have had more trouble understanding the app were I not already slightly familiar with how the website worked. This website and app, along with research and discussions, helped me formulate the final concept of this project.

Comparing Typefaces Exploration
An assigned project for a Fall of 2018 typography course also influenced me. I was to choose four typefaces from a provided list of typefaces, two serif and two sans serif, and compare and contrast them. The focus of the exercise was to simply understand the differences and similarities between fonts, not to determine if the fonts worked well with each other. At this time, I became more interested in the nuances of different type classifications and how they can work together, and in some instances, how they conflict. I also became more familiar with why various typefaces are preferable for web or print.

Tiff Website
A website I found while working on the previously mentioned project contributed a final influence. Tiff (https://tiff.herokuapp.com) is a website created by Mu Ye that provides a visual comparison between two typefaces of several letters (Ye). This website provides a different opportunity compared to What the Font. I used What the Font when I did not know what a typeface was, but I wanted a general idea. Tiff, on the other hand, compares typefaces the user already knows. Though this site is primarily built for Google Web Fonts, many of the fonts pre-installed with InDesign are also available (Yong). Overall, the site is somewhat simplistic and has some user intuition issues, but it supports specific tasks well in spite of a limited database.
RESEARCH

Literature Review
I began my research by exploring typographic blogs and websites that were readily available, easy to find, or indicated current trends—including typewolf.com, which provided a wide variety of typographic articles and resources such as Type Pairing Lookbook (Type Pairing), and Top 10 Quirky Grotesque Fonts (Top 10). Other blogs and websites provided a wide range of information from trending fonts (10), to type classifications (Typedia). They progress through the history of the letterform, to contemporary typefaces we have today (Bidwell). Most of these websites and blogs were used as a means to corroborate information across a wide platform. Much of the information was redundant, but there were a few sites that presented information on current type news, new trends, or type combinations. Using this material as a basis, I turned to books written by well-known designers. Some contained more specific information written by type designers including Typographic Design: Form and Communication; The Anatomy of Type: A Graphic Guide to 100 Typefaces; The Complete Manual of Typography: A Guide to Setting Perfect Type; and Typographic Specimens: The Great Typefaces. These books provided a fairly consistent definition and breakdown of terminology, classification, and typographic anatomy (See Nomenclature on page ii). I used this breakdown to compose several questions to help designers determine what typefaces should be used together—for either print or web—based on typographic anatomy, contrast, and the letterforms themselves. I also referenced two case studies which focused on legibility differentiation between serif and sans serif (Bailey) and letterforms and their influence on legibility (Puškarević). Christopher Bailey’s study found that sans serif fonts, specifically Arial Unicode MS used in the study, were easier for individuals with both normal and low vision to read in a printed format. Bailey also referenced a number of studies that generated conflicting results as to how serifs affect readability. One study found that serif fonts were easier for older individuals to read (Arditi), but Bailey stated that these studies used different definitions of legibility. Others stated that serifs helped individuals with macular degeneration attain faster letter recognition (Mackeben). This led me to a study conducted by Irma Puškarević et.al, which explored the distinctive features of letterform and the complexity of formal letter formations. These studies helped me understand the distinctive features of various fonts, specifically serif and sans serif, and how distinctiveness affects the speed and differentiation of readability, one of the most fundamental elements of typography. This led me to conclude that when combining typefaces—after the designer considers the format of a project, specifically if it is for web or print—fonts with high contrast must be considered next to ensure easy distinction, readability and hierarchy reinforcement.
Survey
I created a survey based on the above stated thesis for professional and academic designers to better understand their specific design processes, and how my thesis might be influenced by their responses. I sent the survey by email to 18 individuals and received eight responses. Of those responses, four were from academics, and the remaining four were from professionals.

The survey consisted of thirteen questions focusing on how design professionals and academics choose and combine fonts, what resources they recommend in relation to typography—be it books, blogs, websites or other publications—and what font trends they notice in their own work. I focused on well-known designers and recognized academics to provide contrasting views between the two categories. Both categories contained a mix of different age demographics and were designed to determine if there were trends based on historical context as well. (Survey questions available in Appendix A.)

Books, blogs and designers alike state that there are “rules” to typography (Ovsyannykov). There are tried and true design decisions that no designer dares to break. However, type is constantly changing: improvements are being made to existing fonts and programs as well as new releases. These advancements have influence culturally (Type), stylistically, historically (Hustwit), and in the study by Christopher Bailey, readability (Bailey). A standard “rule” of design when combining typefaces is to start with a serif and sans serif (van Gaalen). I wanted to design my study to determine if these “rules” are true among most designers, and what other considerations designers use to make successful font combinations.

The creation and distribution of a survey enabled me to ask specific relevant questions, and to collect more timely data than that available in published interviews (Top). In 2014, Jeremiah Shoaf conducted a survey of 41 designers and asked what their top three favorite typefaces were (Top). Overall, 88 fonts were mentioned. Shoaf created a list of the top 11 fonts: the three most popular being Avenir, Brandon Grotesque and Adelle. Only three of the top 11 fonts were mentioned by individuals I surveyed: Akziden Grotesk, DIN, and Gotham.

The survey I distributed was important because it helped influence the format for my design. I focused the questions in the survey on how a designer uses their intuition and what influences they have used to develop it. I wanted to know what professional and academics used for resources when making typographic choices, and if there were specific ways that they stay informed with type news. I also wanted to see if any personal preferences determined what fonts designers considered good or bad and if that personal ideology reflected in their work.

Survey Results
The individuals I surveyed provided a variety of responses, mostly focusing on what fonts are overused or what fonts should be used more often. Fonts they believed should be used more often included Gotham, Bebas, Helvetica, Univers, Garamond, Baskerville, Bodoni, Didot, Palatino, Maiola, Meta, DIN, Arnhem, and Geogrotesque. Fonts they felt should be used less
often were the usual suspects of Comic Sans and Papyrus, but there were a few surprises as well: specifically, Gill Sans. Most individuals indicated they use a system when determining a typeface, asking themselves a series of questions related to project needs; most of them mentioned the use of a cultivated design intuition. Resources included familiar titles such as Bringhurst’s, The Elements of Typographic Style, and the website/blog typewolf.com run by Jeremiah Shoaf and What the Font, which I mentioned earlier. Overall, I found that most of the results were interesting but not unexpected, such as the list of bad typefaces including Comic Sans and Papyrus. However, there were a few surprises such as the wide scope of blogs and websites used in deference to books referenced by professionals, and a variety of applicable advice statements such as the one offered by respondent 5 who stated, “Use a few typefaces often to fully understand how and when they work, and then move on when it seems appropriate.” The comments provided insight into the opinions of current designers and their positions on the use of a variety of typefaces. (Summary available in Appendix B.)

**DESIGN**

**Website**

Once my research and survey collection was complete, I designed a website and app. Most of the survey participants referenced websites or blogs when discussing where they get their type information and resources, few mentioned printed material of any kind. This is why I chose to create a digital resource instead of a book or other printed material. A website can have a broader consumer base and is more readily available and accessible at almost any time. This website is designed to be a resource to progress a designer’s workflow by providing information from a variety of sources in one location. The resources it would contain include: typographic anatomy, terminology and classifications, a typographic specimens catalogue of serif and sans serif fonts. A catalogue of websites, books, and blogs are available to keep both novice and experienced designers informed of typographic news.

**App**

I also wanted to carry this accessibility over to an app. Most apps are designed to be an on-the-go experience, something an individual can interact with quickly, for a specific purpose. My app, as part of its future implementation, is designed to take a photo of typography wherever a user may see it, recognize what that typeface is, save that information to the user’s phone, and provide information as to where that font can be purchased. A designer would then have access to those found fonts through their account on the app. The app provides a different set of features in partnership to the website. The information from the app is meant to be an on the go resources that a designer might need in a moment. As opposed to the broad amount of information the website contains, the app serves a much more focused purpose.
Type Hype
To create the name, I made a list of words and word pairings that relate to typography. I chose Type Hype because not only does it rhyme but helps to illustrate the fashions and phases that typography experiences. I also added a plus to the app name to indicate its extension as a tool to work with the website.

Logo
With the constant production of new typefaces, digital innovations to old typefaces, and the longevity of others such as Helvetica, the popularity of some typefaces comes and goes. The prolific use of Helvetica in the design world influenced the creation of the logo. I wanted to keep the logo simple with the use of line, but to also maintain the shape of the letters as well. Helvetica is well known for its line and how simple it is. It is recognizable almost immediately any time it is seen. I wanted to retain that recognition of the letterform in some way while also exploring the interaction of the letter “T” to “H”. I chose to create a semi-thick line with a serif in blue and orange lines for the sans serif theme and to retain the detailing between letters, but to also provide visual weight to the logo and name itself.

Color Palette
The website, app and logo all use a combination of blue, orange, and two tones of grey. I chose these colors because they are easy to distinguish which helps when comparing typefaces and are easy to read at a variety of opacities. I used blue to illustrate serif fonts and font related actions, orange for sans serif and account features, and greys for supplementary or secondary interactions and highlights. (Sketches and designs available in Appendix C)

CONCLUSION

Future Implementations and Direction
I would like to implement this project as a fully functioning website and app that could serve as a type resource for both novice and experienced designers, providing a way to stay informed with typographic news that is both easy to find and accessible in one location. The website would be a means to share knowledge, experience, and technology that would advance the world of type and continue its evolution into the realm of digital advancement. My research, survey, and design exploration enabled me to determine guidelines as opposed to rules that can guide a designer through the combined typeface process. A common theme throughout the project was that much of the decision making is up to the designer. However, specific pieces of typographic anatomy such as x-height, ascenders and descenders, and contrast are basic points of comparison that can help designers make informed decisions when combining typefaces.
This concept invites several possibilities for actually creating a working website and app, such as a collaborative opportunity among designers. It also suggests several issues, such as how to keep up with a variety of other websites, books and blogs, and who holds the licensing to typefaces and other information. This could entail a monthly newsletter for a more concentrated form of information, or a bi-weekly site update for overall information. Another concern is who would vet this information and how it might be collected and organized as a long-term resource. The survey provided useful information; however, it represented a small sample size and would have benefited from a larger group of participants. Typography is a broad topic to address, and this platform provides an opportunity to improve communication and consumption within it. It will require further improvement as the fields of technology and typography continue to advance.

Although some claim we are living in an age when print is dead, good typography is not. Typography that is well considered, well designed, and well paired can be (and is) applicable to the world of print and the advancing digital age. As professional and academic designers alike stated in my survey, there are instances of bad type, but most of the time it is just type not used in the right way. It is our responsibility as designers to advance type so that the intended message is received. Furthermore, designers must avoid using type in ways that are detrimental to its consumption; to do that we must work together to educate not only other designers, but consumers as well. Type is always evolving, improving and changing, and if it is to continue advancing, we must be aware of how our intuition and decisions influence the world around us. This creative component serves as one way to educate both novice and experienced designers in a single location, providing current and trending resources, and providing tools to help designers make efficient decisions when combining typefaces.
APPENDIX A

SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. How do you determine what typeface to use? Is it a method or system?

2. Is there a type resource (web, books, blog etc.) that you reference often?

3. Do you have a favorite type designer?

4. Who is your inspiration when designing a font?

5. What makes a typeface good or bad?

6. Do you have a favorite typeface? If so, what is it and why?

7. What is your least favorite typeface and why?

8. Is there a typeface you use often in your current work?

9. Is there a typeface that you often pair with it? If so, what is it? Is it for web or print?

10. What is a typeface that should be used more (or less) often?

11. Is there a typeface that you use often with a large font family?

12. What is the best advice you’ve received, used, or given in relation to type?

13. Please feel free to add any comments or address other questions not asked above in the space provided.
SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES
Respondent 1 Location: Pappillion, NE
Respondent 2 Location: Richmond, VA
Respondent 3 Location: Cedar Falls, IA
Respondent 4 Location: Ames, IA
Respondent 5 Location: Des Moines, IA
Respondent 6 Location: Omaha, NE
Respondent 7 Location: Banner Elk, NC
Respondent 8 Location: Cedar Falls, IA

1. How do you determine what typeface to use? Is it a method or system?
   Most respondents stated that they choose fonts based on a method, the project needs, or the result of a series of questions or decisions.

2. Is there a type resource (web, books, blog etc.) that you reference often?
   Resources included a variety of websites such as ilovetypography.com, What the font, and typewolf.com. Respondents also included Robert Bringhurst The Elements of Typographic Style.

3. Do you have a favorite type designer?
   Most respondents said no, but some listed included: Firmin Didot, Paul Renner, Fred Smeijers, Thomas Thiemich, Radim Peško, Herb Lubalin and Nina Stössinger

4. Who is your inspiration when designing a font?
   Most of the respondents chose to pass for this question but two indicated that they had experience designing fonts and stated that geometry and architecture are both influential. Other respondents replied culture and Ed Fella

5. What makes a typeface good or bad?
   Responses for this question included: readability, originality, balance, proportion, kerning, visibility, craft and application. Another respondent stated: “Bad: Inconsistencies in formal qualities lack of ligatures non-designed punctuation marks single story italic/oblique.”

6. Do you have a favorite typeface? If so, what is it and why?
   The list of responses included: Gotham, Helvetica, Univers, Garamond, Bodoni, Baskerville, Didot, Meta, and Frutiger.
7. What is your least favorite typeface and why?
   This included the usual list of Comic Sans and Papyrus, along with decorative typefaces as a category, but also two instances specifically mentioning Gill Sans.

8. Is there a typeface you use often in your current work?
   Univers was mentioned three times in the responses. The list also included: Meta, Gotham, Bebas, DIN, Helvetica, and Geogrotesque.

9. Is there a typeface that you often pair with it? If so, what is it?
   Is it for web or print?
   Serif and sans serif pairings in general were common along with Bebas and Mark My Words, and Palatino and Univers.

10. What is a typeface that should be used more (or less) often?
    Gotham was mentioned in both categories. Palatino was more often, and the entire category of Handwritten was to be used less often.

11. Is there a typeface that you use often with a large font family?
    Most respondents replied yes, but didn’t provide responses.
    Those that did included: DIN, Berthold, Akzidenz Grotesque, Geogrotesque and Univers.

12. What is the best advice you’ve received, used, or given in relation to type?
    Responses included:
    • “Have a keen eye to select type.”
    • “Let it breathe.”
    • “Use a few typefaces often to fully understand how they work and when then move on when it seems appropriate”, “Conveying the understanding of how typographic hierarchy equates to shades of grey… understanding kerning by pretending to pour water is the worst advice I have gotten that still doesn’t help me … squint lest does instead.”
    • “There are no laws of typography, because there are no definitive typographic solutions. Think principles and rules of thumb instead.”
    • “Continual education across one’s career is extremely important. I suppose that boils down to ‘give a shit.’ Also, don’t expect other to love the same things you do, and as for designers/clients, clients want to be right and want to feel as ‘smart’ as the designers they hire (or at minimum, they want respect). How a designer creates rapport with the ones holding the purse is less about taste (though it is exceptionally important) and more about communication. Look at Stefan Sagmeister/Jessica Walch’s work, and that of Rich Valecenti. How do those relationships develop and how are they maintained?”
13. Please feel free to add any comments or address other questions not asked above in the space provided.
Only one individual responded to this question, which was to expand on their response to combinations – “Generally, boils down to contrast, period, geometry, with some associated rationales as to how to cleave along the spine of those ideas when combining them. My advice (if useful) is when one sees something that is great, study it a derive a method from the artifact.”
App Info Architecture

Welcome
  ↓
   Home

Font Finder
  ↓
  | Font List

My Fonts
  ↓
  | Font List

Account
  ↓
  | Font List

Settings
Web site info architecture

Home

Type news of the week

Type Cambo's

Type specimen

Serif
- Old style
- Transitional
- Modern
- Slab

Sans
- Neo-grotesque
- Grotesque
- Humanist
- Geometric

Type transparent

Web

Print

Webfont

Blogs

Resources
Cover pg

wireframes website

1. Home
   1. Type Composite
   2. Type Specimen
   3. What Text to Use
   4. Resources
   5. Type Anatomy
   Terms

2. Type Combo
   Font
   Font #1
   Font #2
   # HZ
   Overlay
   Suggestions

Footer

Logo
Capitals
Words
Layouts
etc.
Wireframes (Web Cont)

3. Type Specimens

- Classifiers
  - Redesigned
  - Redesigned
  - Redesigned
  - Redesigned
  - Redesigned

4. What font to use

- Project
- Brand
- Identity (Brand)

- Script or Sans
- Very many weights
- Monospaced

5. Type Resources

- A-Type

6. A-Type Anatomy + Term

- Type
- Classification
- Anatomy
**Type Hype**

**APP DESIGN**

**Font Finder**

**Font Recommendation**

**Settings**

---

**IMAGE HERE**

Take a photo, then select the text of the font you want to find.

**Your Font Is...**

- **Baskerville**
  - ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
  - abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

- **Didot**
  - ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
  - abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

- **Goudy**
  - ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
  - abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

**Get the Font**

---

**TEXT SIZE**

**IMAGE SIZE**

**CLEAR FONT CACHE**

**LINK ACCOUNT**
MY FONTS

ALL FONTS

SERIF

SANS SERIF

MY FONTS ALL

Adelle PE
AGETFQRW a g e t f q r w
Avenir
AGETFQRW a g e t f q r w
Baskerville
AGETFQRW a g e t f q r w
BEBAS NEUE
AGETFQRW
Bodoni
AGETFQRW a g e t f q r w
Calluna Sans
AGETFQRW a g e t f q r w
Caslon
AGETFQRW a g e t f q r w
Didot
AGETFQRW a g e t f q r w
### MY FONTS SERIF

| Font       | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Adelle PE  | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Baskerville| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Bodoni     | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Caslon     | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Didot      | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Farnham    | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Garamond   | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Goudy      | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |

### MY FONTS SANS SERIF

| Font       | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Avenir     | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Bébas Neue | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Calluna Sans| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Effra      | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Futura     | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Gibbs      | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Helvetica  | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
| Impact     | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U |
HOME PAGE

DESIGN NEWS
- New Font from Adobe
- Type News from Typewolf
- New Publication from Ellen Lupton
- Interview with Erik Speikermann
- New Episode of Design Matters
- Article of the Week

DESIGN OF THE WEEK

FONT OF THE WEEK:
Brandon Grotesque
Get the Font
TYPE HYPE
WEBSITE DESIGN

TYPE PAIRINGS

TYPE PAIRS

FONT NAME HERE

SUGGESTIONS

Serif
Old Style –
Transitional –
Modern –
Slab –

Sans Serif
Neo-Grotesque –
Grotesque –
Humanist –
Geometric –

FONT ONE: ADELLE SANS

AGETFQRW
a g e t f q r w
REGULAR

FONT TWO: ADELLE

AGETFQRW
a g e t f q r w
REGULAR

COMBO

AGETFQRW
a g e t f q r w
WHAT FONT SHOULD I USE

WHAT FONT SHOULD I USE?
Start by choosing the project you need a typeface for:

- **WEBSITE**
  - **CLASSICAL**
    - **OLD STYLE OR TRANSITIONAL SERIF**
  - **ASYMMETRICAL**
    - **GEOMETRIC OR GROTESQUE SANS**
  - **HUMANIST/GEOMETRIC SANS WITH HIGH CONTRAST SERIF**
  - **OLDSTYLE SERIF WITH SEVERAL WEIGHTS**
- **BOOK**
- **PRINT**
  - **TRANSITIONAL SERIF OR HUMANIST SANS**
  - **OLDSTYLE SERIF OR GROTESQUE SANS**
- **BROCHURE**
- **INFOGRAPHIC**
  - **SANS SERIF (PROBABLY HELVETICA)**
- **LOGO**
  - **FUN**
  - **SERIOUS**
  - **SLAB SERIF WITH GROTESQUE SANS SERIF**
  - **YOUR FAVORITE FONT (SOMETHING WITH STYLE)**
- **TYPE PAIRS**
- **TYPE SPECIMENS**
- **TYPE TERMS**
- **WHAT FONT TO USE**
- **RESOURCES**
**TYPE TERMINOLOGY**

- **Baseline**: The line where letters sit. Above are ascenders, and below are descenders extend.
- **Baseline Line**: Line that runs along the bottoms of descenders.
- **Capline**: Line that runs along the top of uppercase letters and ascenders of lowercase letters.
- **Character**: Symbol, sign or mark in a language system; the alphabet for example.
- **Font**: A set of typeset letters, the description of a typeface, in computer code, photograph or metal, used to image the type.
- **Meanline**: Line that establishes height of the body of lowercase letters.
- **Stress**: Gradual variation in the thickness of a curved part or stroke, most visible in the letter "O".
- **Thick/Thin Contrast**: The thinnest or thickest parts of the letterform.
- **Typeface**: A typeface is the collection of a font with a certain design.
- **Typography**: The art and process of typesetting by any system or method.
- **Weight**: Lightness or heaviness of a typeface (determined by ratio of stroke thickness to character height).
- **X-height**: Height of lowercase letters in a font (excludes ascenders and descenders).
## TYPE SPECIMENS OLD STYLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE PAIRS</th>
<th>TYPE SPECIMENS</th>
<th>TYPE TERMS</th>
<th>WHAT FONT TO USE</th>
<th>RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TYPE SPECIMENS ➤ SERIF ➤ OLD STYLE</td>
<td>Goudy Old Style</td>
<td>WEIGTS</td>
<td>CHARACTERISTICS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z</td>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>Diamond Shaped Dots</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Regular Italic</td>
<td>Short Descenders and Tall Ascenders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bold</td>
<td>Low Contrast</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extra Bold</td>
<td>Upright Slant to the Base of “E” and “L”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITC Berkeley Old Style</td>
<td>Book</td>
<td>Calligraphic Weight Stress</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z</td>
<td>Book Italic</td>
<td>Classic X-Height</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Smooth Weight Transitions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Italic</td>
<td>Tall Ascenders and Descenders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bold</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bold Italic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black Italic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palatino</td>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>Trace of Handwritten Characteristics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z</td>
<td>Italic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TYPE SPECIMENS TRANSITIONAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Font Family</th>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>Italic</th>
<th>Semibold</th>
<th>Semibold Italic</th>
<th>Bold</th>
<th>Bold Italic</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adobe Caslon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong Ball Terminal, Nearly Vertical Stress, Moderate X-height, Moderate Contrast, Fairly Large Bowl, Long Extenders, Nearly Rectangular Serifs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baskerville</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fairly Large X-height, Modest Serifs with Asymmetrical Bracketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Monde Journal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sharp Wedge-shaped Serif, Nearly Horizontal Top Serif, Very Large X-height, Open Bowl, High Contrast, Strong Angle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TYPE SPECIMENS MODERN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Font</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Weights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Didot</td>
<td>Serif</td>
<td></td>
<td>Regular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Italic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filosofa</td>
<td>Serif</td>
<td></td>
<td>Regular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Italic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farnham</td>
<td>Serif</td>
<td></td>
<td>Regular</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Italic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SemiBold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SemiBoldItalic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bold</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very High Contrast
Large Dot, Placed far from Body
Heavy Ball Terminal
Scalloped Terminal
Vertical Stress

Moderate X-height, Narrow Body
Long, Unsethated Serifs
Ball Terminals of similar size on "a" and "y"
Mix of Ball Terminal and Serifs
Prominent Tail at End of Leg

Large X-height
Ball Terminals on "y" and "y"
Moderate Extenders
Fairly Tall "t"
Heavy Wedge Serifs
# Type Specimens Slab

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adelle PE</th>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>Italic</th>
<th>Light</th>
<th>Light Italic</th>
<th>SemiBold</th>
<th>Semibold Italic</th>
<th>Bold</th>
<th>Bold Italic</th>
<th>ExtraBold</th>
<th>ExtraBold Italic</th>
<th>Heavy</th>
<th>Heavy Italic</th>
<th>Thin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clarendon</th>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>Regular Oblique</th>
<th>Light</th>
<th>Light Oblique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Squat Lower Bowl
- Large X-height
- Short Extenders and Moderate Width
- Rounded Slightly Square Dot
- Terminal Serif
- Arm Terminates with One-sided Serif
- Round Dot
- Large X-height
- Short Extenders
- Horizontal Terminal
- Ball Terminals
## TYPE SPECIMENS NEO – GROTESQUE

### Antique Olive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Regular
- Regular Italic
- Light
- Medium
- Bold

**Characteristics:**
- Terminals cut vertically
- Very narrow 'A' and 'S'
- Very large x-height
- Narrow body
- Very short ascenders
- Oval dot very close to stem

### Helvetica Neue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Regular
- Italic
- UltraLight
- UltraLight Italic
- Thin
- Thin Italic
- Light
- Light Italic
- Medium
- Medium Italic
- Bold
- Bold Italic
- Condensed Bold

**Characteristics:**
- Moderate x-height and descenders
- Fairly wide body
- Rounded shapes clearly circular
- Mildly curving leg
- Bowl occupies upper half of body
## TYPE SPECIMENS GROTESQUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE SPECIMENS</th>
<th>SANS</th>
<th>GROTESQUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monotype Grotesque</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z</td>
<td>WEIGHS</td>
<td>CHARACTERISTICS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>Uppercase Characters are of Near Equal Width</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Italic</td>
<td>G has a Spur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Short Descenders and Ascenders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Light Italic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bold</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bold Extended</td>
<td>Condensed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Condensed</td>
<td>Light Condensed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extra Condensed</td>
<td>Extra Condensed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supria Sans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>Square Dot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regular Italic</td>
<td>Flat Apex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Low Contrast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Light Italic</td>
<td>Short Descenders and Ascenders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium Italic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bold</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bold Italic</td>
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</table>
# TYPE SPECIMENS HUMANIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gill Sans</th>
<th>WEIGHTS</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>Vertical Terminals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italic</td>
<td>Tail is a long slow curve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Very Light Stroke where Arm meets Stem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Italic</td>
<td>Flat Apex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SemiBold</td>
<td>W had Pointed Apex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold</td>
<td>High Contrast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Italic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UltraBold</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Myriad</th>
<th>WEIGHTS</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>Large X-height</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italic</td>
<td>Angled Terminal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Round Dot, Relatively Close to Stem, Even with Cap Height</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Italic</td>
<td>Mild Asymmetrical Contrast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SemiBold</td>
<td>Rounded Glyphs slightly Oval</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Italic</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>
# TYPE SPECIMENS GEOMETRIC

## Avenir

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEIGHTS</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book</td>
<td>Round Dots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman</td>
<td>Moderate X-height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Oblique</td>
<td>Moderate Width</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oblique</td>
<td>Moderate Extenders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Flat Apexes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Oblique</td>
<td>Minimal Contrast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Arm and Leg Form a Point at Stem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Oblique</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy Oblique</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## ITC Avant Garde Gothic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEIGHTS</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book</td>
<td>Very Large X-height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Open Bowl (closed in heavier weights)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold</td>
<td>Rectangular Dot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Horizontal Terminals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TYPE SPECIMENS AVENIR

Avenir

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z
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

M R a c e h k o p r s t w z
REFERENCES


Typedia. Typedia, typedia.com/learn/only/typeface-classifications/.


The text of Designing an Interface to Combine Typefaces Based on Typographic Anatomy and Letter Formations is set in Avenir, a typeface drawn by Adrian Frutiger and released in 1988 by Linotype GmbH. Avenir is based on fonts from the 1920’s and is influenced by geometric san serif fonts such as Futura and Erbar. This book and composition were designed by Jillianne Sanders. Manufactured at Design on Main Ames, Iowa on acid-free 80 pound drawing paper.