Typography

“TYPOGRAPHY IS TO WRITING AS SOUNDMARKS ARE TO MOVIES.”

HOEFLER TYPEFACE DESIGNER
Design & Typography

- Type works as a design element of composition
- Hierarchy
- Dominance
- Unity
- Variety
- Balance
- Proportion
Hierarchy

- The most important part of the verbal content is given the most prominence.

- Depending on the vehicle, the verbal content receiving the most prominence could be a headline, title, compelling sentence, word, phrase, etc.

  ○ Color & Size
Balance

- Balance determines the visual distribution of type and how it will appear in relation to the other visual elements
  - Symmetrically
  - Asymmetrically
Variety
variety

- Trick to mixing typefaces is to make the difference look obvious and purposeful.

- Using opposites – typefaces that have different but complementary typeface characteristics.
Typography

• Letter and word forms

• Type functions as
  - Line
  - Texture
  - Shape
Type as Line

Helvetica

1957

Max Miedinger

A Line Is Not Merely An Outline
Type as Texture
Type as Shape
Typeface Families & Attributes

- Blackletter
- Roman
- Script
- Serif - Sans Serif - Square Serif
- MISCELLANEOUS
Blackletter

- **Black letter**, also known as **Gothic script** or **Gothic minuscule**, was a script used throughout **Western Europe** from approximately **1150** to **1500**. It continued to be used for the **German language** until the **20th century**. **Fraktur** is a notable script of this type, and sometimes the entire group of faces is known as Fraktur. Black letter is sometimes called **Old English**,
"roman" type has two principal meanings, both stemming from the stylistic origin of text typefaces from inscriptional capitals used in ancient Rome:

- one of the major families of traditional typefaces as a synonym for serif or antiqua fonts.
Script typefaces are based upon the varied and often fluid stroke created by handwriting. They are organized into highly regular formal types similar to cursive writing and looser, more casual scripts.
Serif

- In **typography**, **serifs** are semi-structural details on the ends of some of the strokes that make up letters and symbols.
- A **typeface** that has serifs is called a **serif typeface** (or **seriffed typeface**). A typeface without serifs is called **sans-serif**, from the French *sans*, meaning “without”.

![E with serifs and sans-serif comparison](image-url)
Square Serif

- In **typography**, a **slab serif** (also called **mechanistic**, **square serif** or **Egyptian** typeface) is a type of **serif** typeface characterized by thick, block-like serifs. Serif terminals may be either blunt and angular (**Rockwell**), or rounded (**Courier**).

- Slab serif typefaces generally have no bracket (feature connecting the strokes to the serifs). Some consider slab serifs to be a subset of modern serif typefaces.
In print, sans-serif fonts are more typically used for headlines than for body text.

The conventional wisdom holds that serifs help guide the eye along the lines in large blocks of text. Sans-serifs, however, have acquired considerable acceptance for body text in Europe.
Helvetica!
Typeface Attributes

- Size
- Color
- Font
- Text Block size
- Justification
- White space
Size

- Type is measured in points (1 point = .0138 inch) – printed text blocks are between 9 and 12 points

- Display text appear from 14 points
  - Banner type headlines can be up to 72 points
  - Combining upper and lower case flows better – upper case is useful for short text
Color

- Implies type color and background color – black type over white background works best (other combinations are tiring to the eyes)
  - stark contrast is most desired
Font

- Refers to all the letters and symbols within a specific typeface.

- Attributes such as plain text, bold, italic are considered part of available fonts.
Oldstyle

transitional

modern
Text Block Size

- This refers to line width and column length
  - Measured in picas (1 pica = 12 points) – average line width is 24 picas or about 12 words

Type can be timeless or trendy. It can express a mood or an attitude. It can function as shape or line in a composition, or as pattern or texture.
2 columns are more readable than 1
Justification

- Text is left, center, or right justified

  - Left is most common – but used without variation is formal and rigid

  - Right also called “ragged” is associated with an informal or modern style
White Space

- Areas not filled with text or graphics

- Space between letters is called kerning – variations in kerning can be a design factor – giving a modern look

- The space between 2 columns is termed the alley

- The space between pages is called the gutter
Post-Gutenberg (before 1456)

- Words and images were equal partners in communication
• **Gutenberg (1456-1760)**
  - The influence of the printed word – images as afterthoughts
Artistic (1891-1983)

- Characterized by Art Nouveau decorative style and later artistic movements in the 20th century
• Digital (1984-present)
  ○ Characterized by technological tools and creation of typefaces based on computer software
Newspaper typography

- Nameplate: Most newspapers are identified by their nameplates. When people look at a newspaper, the first thing they see is the nameplate.

- First used in England and then in America, the most popular nameplate is in Old English style.

  - Many newspapers today still have this style. Examples of newspapers that use this style include:

    - The New York Times
    - Los Angeles Times
    - Irish Examiner
    - The Sydney Morning Herald
Newspaper typography

- Text: The majority of all body text in newspapers is serif type, with most papers using one of four or five basic faces.

- Research has shown that it takes slightly longer to read sans serif type, and serif type is more visually pleasing to the eye as it has a horizontal flow.
Oldstyle

Transitional

Modern
**Newspaper typography**

- **Headlines:** Headline type is the most dominant typographic element on the page. Headlines should be chosen to reflect the overall personality of the paper. Both serif and sans serif type are used for headlines.

- However, serif faces are seen to be more expressive and less impersonal (Aldrich-Ruenzel 79).

  - “For the best legibility, headlines should have a tight leading to correspond to correct word-and letterspacing” (Aldrich-Ruenzel 80). There should be a little white space on either side of a headline in order to give the page some breathing room.
Newspaper typography

- Standard: Standard typography is used to announce regular features or daily columns. It aids readers by showing them where certain stories are as they glance through the paper.

- A good choice for standard typography would be a sans serif face to contrast with serif text. Sometimes standard typography is set apart with a different style (bold, italic, caps) or in reverse type (white letters on a dark background).
Historical Perspective

- 4 stages
- Drawing
- Writing
- Hot Type Production
- Cold Type Production
Drawings

• Drawings represent 2 kinds of visual messages:

• Pictographs – pictures that stand for objects

• Ideographs – images that represent abstract ideas
Pictographs & Ideographs
Problems with iconic representation

- Lack of standardization
- Producing images requires an artist
African Petroglyphs
Writing

- Sumerians
- Egyptians
- Chinese
- Phoenicians
- Greeks
Sumerians

- Cuneiform = wedge shaped stylus – pushed into wet clay tablets

- Required strict schooling from childhood on – with 100’s of characters to learn
Egyptians

- Much like the Sumerians but used papyrus reeds instead of clay tablets

- Hieroglyphs (hierglyphics)
  - Script difficult to translate as it could read from right to left – left to right – top to bottom or bottom to top
2 types of hieroglyphics

- Hieratic & Demotic
  - Hieratic is the most familiar used for official business and religious documents
  - Demotic – less illustrative and its characters were highly abstract and symbolic
Original Chinese was never reduced to symbols – it remained a written language comprising of more than 44,000 individual symbols for centuries.

- Scribes who knew the language were highly respected – possessed much political power because they controlled the information that became history.
Chinese Pictographs

- Pictographs known as logograms, are symbols that represent an entire word
  - None of the symbols represent the sounds of the language
  - 210 B.C. the language was simplified to about 1,000 basic characters – still used today
  - Their pictorial calligraphic style is considered an art form
The Phoenicians

- Phoenicians - greatest advance in history of communication – the alphabet
  - While the Egyptians used 5,000 symbols – the Phoenicians used only 22.
  - The compact easily learned alphabet ended the political power of the scribes
  - Most importantly – more individuals could produce writings that a large audience could read
Phoenicians: one of the greatest advances in history – the alphabet

Z
Zayin
Weapon

W
Waw
Hook

H
He
Window

D
Daleth
Door

G
Gimel
Camel

B
Beth
House

Aleph
Ox

Y
Mem
Water

L
Lamedh
Ox-Goad

K
Kaph
Palm of Hand

Y
Yodh
Hand

T
Teth
Unknown

H
Heth
Fence

T
Taw
Mark

SH
Shin
Tooth

R
Resh
Head

Q
Qoph
Monkey

S
Sadhe
Fishhook

P
Peh
Mouth

Ayin
Eye

Samekh
Support
The Greeks

- They increase the Phoenician alphabet to 24 letters

- Their sense of symmetry – promoted the idea that letters should be placed in an imaginary horizontal baseline – achieving a sense of order

- Introduced the elements of uppercase and lowercase – capitals were written in stone and lowercase were written in papyrus

- They were the first to recognize that alphabetic letters possessed both informational and aesthetic qualities
The Romans

- Romans absorbed much of the Greek culture including the alphabet – and added the letters W and much later the letter J and thus our modern day alphabet of 26 letters takes its final form