

A Five Minutes Guide to Better Typography

Typography is the technique of arranging type for

Effective communication

and a bit of delight.

Type? I has them!

a b c d

e f g h

i j k l m

n o p q

a b c d

e f g h

i j k l m

n o p q

a b c d

e f g h

i j k l m

n o p q

But,

**Type is a beautiful group of letters,
not a group of beautiful letters.**

Think in blocks:

**Type is a beautiful group of letters,
not a group of beautiful letters.**

**Type is a beautiful group of letters,
not a group of beautiful letters.**

— Matthew Carter



Headless Body in Topless Bar


Headless Body
in Topless Bar

(Headless Body
in Topless Bar)

Type is not an exact science.
It is aligned when it *feels* aligned.

Bonjour

Urnip greens yarrow ricebean rutabaga
endive cauliflower sea lettuce kohlrabi
amaranth water spinach avocado daikon
napa cabbage asparagus winter purslane
kale. Celery potato scallion desert raisin
horseradish spinach carrot soko. Lotus root
water spinach fennel kombu maize.



Bonjour

Urnip greens yarrow ricebean rutabaga
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napa cabbage asparagus winter purslane
kale. Celery potato scallion desert raisin
horseradish spinach carrot soko. Lotus root
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horseradish spinach carrot soko. Lotus root
water spinach fennel kombu maize.

Realign if necessary:



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Start with one typeface;

Pick one that has lots of **weights**. Four at least.

Light
Regular
Medium
Bold

equals a typeface

Use contrast:

**Do Not Read
The Next
Sentence.**

You little rebel. I like you.

In doubt, skip a **weight**:

BOLD

Bonjour

MEDIUM

J'aime le fromage

LIGHT

Unip greens yarrow ricebean rutabaga
endive cauliflower sea lettuce kohlrabi
amaranth water spinach avocado daikon
napa cabbage asparagus winter purslane
kale. Celery potato scallion desert raisin
horseradish spinach carrot soko. Lotus root
water spinach fennel kombu maize.

In doubt, multiply by **two**:

100pt

Bonjour

50pt

J'aime le fromage

25pt

Unip greens yarrow ricebean rutabaga
endive cauliflower sea lettuce kohlrabi
amaranth water spinach avocado daikon
napa cabbage asparagus winter purslane
kale. Celery potato scallion desert raisin
horseradish spinach carrot soko. Lotus root
water spinach fennel kombu maize.

Pay attention to your line-spacing:

Turnip greens yarrow ricebean rutabaga endive
cauliflower sea lettuce kohlrabi amaranth water
spinach avocado daikon napa cabbage
asparagus winter purslane kale. Celery potato
scallion desert raisin horseradish spinach
carrot soko. Lotus root water spinach fennel
kombu maize bamboo shoot green bean swiss
chard seakale pumpkin onion chickpea gram
corn pea. Brussels sprout coriander water
chestnut gourd swiss chard wakame kohlrabi
beetroot carrot watercress. Corn amaranth
salsify bunya nuts nori azuki bean chickweed
potato bell pepper artichoke.

Naa...

Turnip greens yarrow ricebean rutabaga endive
cauliflower sea lettuce kohlrabi amaranth water
spinach avocado daikon napa cabbage
asparagus winter purslane kale. Celery potato
scallion desert raisin horseradish spinach
carrot soko. Lotus root water spinach fennel
kombu maize bamboo shoot green bean swiss
chard seakale pumpkin onion chickpea gram
corn pea. Brussels sprout coriander water
chestnut gourd swiss chard wakame kohlrabi
beetroot carrot watercress.

Noo...

In doubt, use a line-spacing of 1.2x to 1.5x the font size:

Turnip greens yarrow ricebean rutabaga
endive cauliflower sea lettuce kohlrabi
amaranth water spinach avocado daikon
napa cabbage asparagus winter purslane
kale. Celery potato scallion desert raisin
horseradish spinach carrot soko. Lotus root
water spinach fennel kombu maize bamboo
shoot green bean swiss chard seakale
pumpkin onion chickpea gram corn pea.

x1.2

for a short paragraph

Turnip greens yarrow ricebean rutabaga endive cauliflower sea
lettuce kohlrabi amaranth water spinach avocado daikon napa
cabbage asparagus winter purslane kale. Celery potato scallion
desert raisin horseradish spinach carrot soko. Lotus root water
spinach fennel kombu maize bamboo shoot green bean swiss
chard seakale pumpkin onion chickpea gram corn pea. Brussels
sprout coriander water chestnut gourd swiss chard wakame
kohlrabi beetroot carrot watercress. Corn amaranth salsify bunya
nuts nori azuki bean chickweed potato bell pepper artichoke.
Nori grape silver beet broccoli kombu beet greens fava bean
potato quandong celery. Bunya nuts black-eyed pea.

x1.5

for a long story

Tame the flow:

Typography is the art and technique of [arranging type](#) to make [written language legible, readable](#), and [appealing](#) when displayed. The arrangement of type involves selecting [typefaces](#), [point sizes](#), [line lengths](#), line-spacing ([leading](#)), and [letter-spacing](#) (tracking), and adjusting the space between pairs of letters ([kerning](#)^[1]). The term typography is also applied to the style, arrangement, and appearance of the letters, numbers, and symbols created by the process. [Type design](#) is a closely related craft, sometimes considered part of typography; most typographers do not design typefaces, and some type designers do not consider themselves typographers.^{[2][3]} Typography also may be used as a decorative device, unrelated to communication of information.

Typography is the work of [typesetters](#) (also known as [compositors](#)), typographers, [graphic designers](#), [art directors](#), [manga artists](#), [comic book artists](#), [graffiti artists](#), and, now, anyone who arranges words, letters, numbers, and symbols for publication, display, or distribution, from [clerical workers](#) and newsletter writers to anyone self-publishing materials. Until the [Digital Age](#), typography was a specialized occupation. Digitization opened up typography to new generations of previously unrelated designers and lay users, and David Jury, head of graphic design at Colchester Institute in England, states that "typography is now something everybody does."^[4] As the capability to create typography has become ubiquitous, the application of principles and best practices developed over generations of skilled workers and professionals has diminished. So at a time when scientific techniques can support the proven traditions (e.g., greater legibility with the use of serifs, upper and lower case, contrast, etc.) through understanding the limitations of human vision, typography as often encountered may fail to achieve its principal objective: effective communication.

X_X

Turnip greens yarrow ricebean rutabaga
endive cauliflower sea lettuce kohlrabi
amaranth water spinach avocado daikon
napa cabbage asparagus winter
purslane kale. Celery potato scallion
desert raisin horseradish spinach carrot
soko. Lotus root water spinach fennel
kombu maize bamboo shoot green
bean swiss chard seakale pumpkin
onion chickpea gram corn pea. Brussels
sprout coriander water chestnut gourd
swiss chard wakame kohlrabi beetroot
carrot watercress. Corn amaranth
salsify bunya nuts nori azuki bean
chickweed potato bell pepper
artichoke. Nori grape silver beet
broccoli kombu beet greens fava bean
potato quandong celery.

Use between **40**...

Turnip greens yarrow ricebean rutabaga endive cauliflower sea
lettuce kohlrabi amaranth water spinach avocado daikon napa
cabbage asparagus winter purslane kale. Celery potato scallion
desert raisin horseradish spinach carrot soko. Lotus root water
spinach fennel kombu maize bamboo shoot green bean swiss
chard seakale pumpkin onion chickpea gram corn pea.
Brussels sprout coriander water chestnut gourd swiss chard
wakame kohlrabi beetroot carrot watercress. Corn amaranth
salsify bunya nuts nori azuki bean chickweed potato bell
pepper artichoke. Nori grape silver beet broccoli kombu beet
greens fava bean potato quandong celery.

...and **70** characters per line.

12px size is too small

Turnip greens yarrow ricebean rutabaga endive cauliflower
sea lettuce kohlrabi amaranth water spinach avocado daikon
napa cabbage asparagus winter purslane kale. Celery potato
scallion desert raisin horseradish spinach carrot soko. Lotus
root water spinach fennel kombu maize bamboo shoot green
bean swiss chard seakale pumpkin onion chickpea gram corn
pea. Brussels sprout coriander water chestnut gourd swiss
chard wakame kohlrabi beetroot carrot watercress. Corn
amaranth salsify bunya nuts nori azuki bean chickweed
potato bell pepper artichoke. Nori grape silver beet broccoli
kombu beet greens fava bean potato quandong celery.

14-25px size is better

Turnip greens yarrow ricebean rutabaga endive cauliflower
sea lettuce kohlrabi amaranth water spinach avocado daikon
napa cabbage asparagus winter purslane kale. Celery potato
scallion desert raisin horseradish spinach carrot soko. Lotus
root water spinach fennel kombu maize bamboo shoot green
bean swiss chard seakale pumpkin onion chickpea gram corn
pea. Brussels sprout coriander water chestnut gourd swiss
chard wakame kohlrabi beetroot carrot watercress. Corn
amaranth salsify bunya nuts nori azuki bean chickweed
potato bell pepper artichoke. Nori grape silver beet broccoli
kombu beet greens fava bean potato quandong celery.
Bunya nuts black-eyed pea prairie turnip leek lentil.

In doubt, align **left**.

Now for some nerdy stuff:



Hyphen



En Dash



Em Dash

—

—

—



The **hyphen** is used for compound terms:

— — —

check-in

money-back

pull-up

Did you know? Hyphenated words
are new words in the making:

full moon

time-out

breakfast



language darwinism

The **en dash** is used to represent a range or a connection:

– — —

1926–2017

Pages 37–61

Paris–Shanghai

The **em dash** can beautifully replace commas, parentheses, or colons:

— — —

The em dash is underused
in typography—such a waste.

Finally, pay attention to kerning:



A

Aw|

Awa

Awai

Await|

Await

Await

Await

|

1 |

18 |

18, |

18,1 |

18,15|

18,150 |

18,150

18,150

18,150

keming. (kěm-ǐng).

n. The Result of
improper kerning.



**I SEE BAD
KERNING**



I SEE BAD KERNING EVERYWHERE

Wrap-up:

Don't nerd over typefaces, just
pick one / Think type as blocks /
Align with your eyes / Hierarchy
first / Use contrast / Fine-tune
with spacing. And voilà.

Thank you

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