

Typography and best practice

Typography is crucial in our interactions with products and interfaces. More than 90% of online information is in text form. It enhances user experience and usability, capturing users' attention and potentially helping achieve business goals. Because there is some ambiguity in typographic terminology, this reading will go over the essential terms that are especially important to you as a UX UI designer.

As a result, typography makes language visible and plays an essential role in design. Your Style Guide should also include a Typography study.

Lettering and typography

It's critical to distinguish between lettering and typography. Both are popular today and often mixed up. They do, in fact, deal with letterforms, but in different ways. Typography is the layout and arrangement of content using pre-made letter systems such as typefaces and fonts. Lettering, however, entails creating letterforms for a specific use and purpose.

Typography terminology

The term "typeface," also known as a font family, derives from physical print and refers to the faces of physical letter blocks. A typeface is made up of fonts, just like an album is made up of tracks or a book is made up of chapters. A typeface has multiple font weights and a consistent style across all characters, numbers, and symbols. Typefaces include Arial, Times New Roman and Comic Sans.

Aa

Helvetica

Aa

Futura

Aa

Garamond

Aa

Bodoni

Aa

Univers

Aa

Gotham

Aa

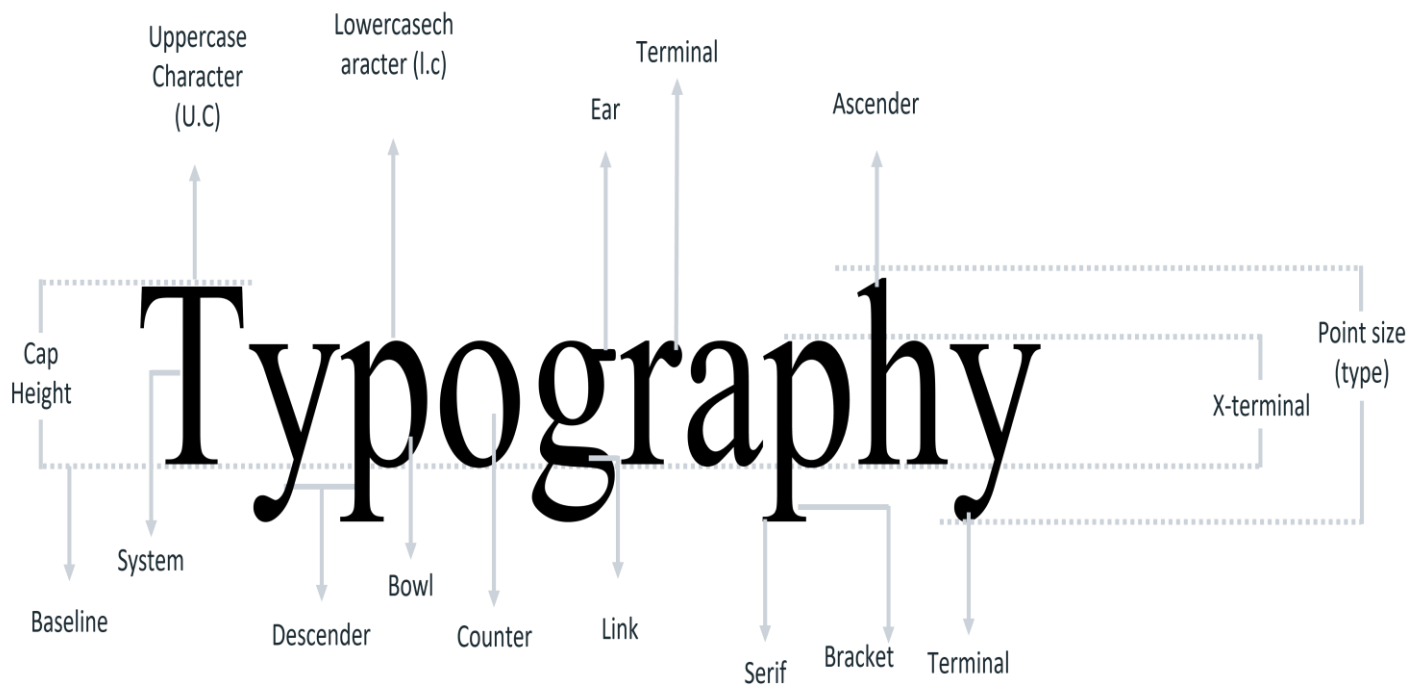
Century

Aa

Baskerville

Typography elements

Before examining the best design practices for improving user experience, let us look at the typography elements.



Baseline

The baseline is the point at which the text line rests. It calculates the distance between the written content and other elements on the interface.



Cap height

The cap height of a typeface refers to the height of the capital letters. The cap height indicates the height of flat letters such as M, H, T, or I, as opposed to round letters such as S, O, or Q, or pointy letters such as A and V, which overshoot. It should be noted that the cap height is less than the typeface's maximum height.

Cap Height



X-Height

The X-height, also known as corpus size, is the distance between the lowercase "x baseline" and meanline. Because typefaces with very large x-heights have less white space between lines of type, this measure can be important for legibility. Because many letters have overshoots or rounded tops, measuring the top of flat characters like x, y, or z is easier, hence the name.

X-Height



Ascenders and descenders

An Ascender is a part of a letter that extends above the x-height or cap height, such as the stem of a lowercase b or d. Descenders are vertical downward strokes that extend beyond the baseline, such as the lowercase g or p.

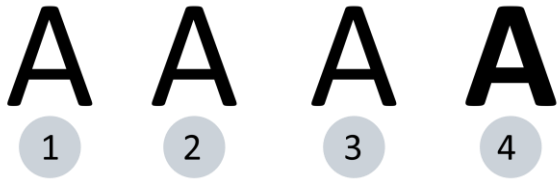
Ascender line



Descender line

Weight

The overall thickness of a typeface's stroke is referred to as its weight. Weights can range from extremely light to extremely heavy. The most well-known weights are: Light, Regular, medium, bold



Tracking

Tracking is the spacing between all a font's characters. Properly chosen tracking can make the copy visually appealing. Letter spacing, also known as tracking, is the consistent adjustment of the space between letters in a piece of text.

Little Lemon

Little Lemon

LittleLemon

Kerning

Kerning is the space that exists between two specific letters. It differs from tracking in that it does not apply to all characters.

The letters 'A' and 'V' are shown in a serif font. A vertical dashed blue line is positioned between the two letters, indicating the space between them without kerning.

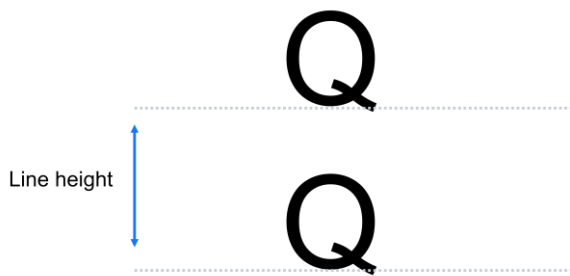
No Kerning

The letters 'A' and 'V' are shown in a serif font. A vertical dashed blue line is positioned between the two letters, indicating the space between them with kerning applied.

With Kerning

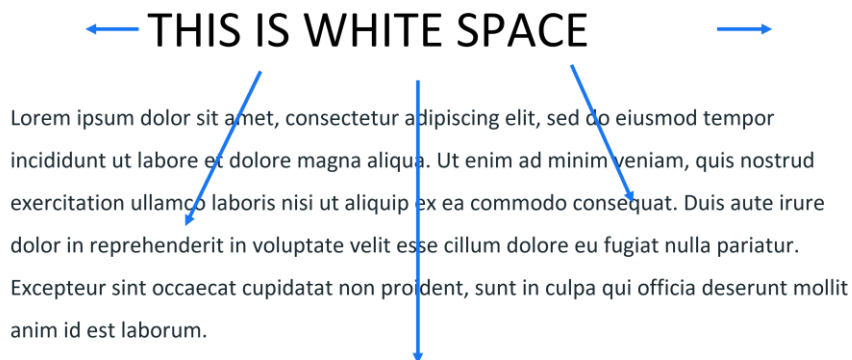
Leading

The space between two lines of text is known as leading.



White space

In typography, white space refers to the space between blocks of text. When used correctly, white spaces can make content more appealing and improve readability.



Stroke

A straight or curved line forms the main body of a letter.

Serif

A stroke or foot-like element is connected to the end of the main strokes of some typefaces. Serif fonts are often more readable than sans-serif fonts because the tiny "feet" guide the reader's eyes to the next character. However, because of their small size, they may not always render properly on screens.

Sans serif

A typeface that does not have any strokes or extra elements at the bottom of a letter. Because of the lower resolution of screens, sans serifs are frequently used for digital interfaces. As technology advances and screens with higher resolutions become more common, this may no longer be a deciding factor when selecting a font.



How typography can be used to improve user experience

Because Typography contains so many elements, many designers overlook this discipline because mastering it takes time and practice. Remember that good typography is format-specific, and usability equals legibility. Let's go over a few key steps to ensure your next UI has legible typography that conveys the appropriate mood for your text.

Hierarchy

The size of a text has a significant impact on the user's reading experience. Hierarchical elements should be used to separate the blocks and improve communication. The titles or headers, subtitles, and body text comprise a basic typography hierarchy. Because headings are at the top of the typographic hierarchy, they are larger and heavier.

Remember to start with a font size that is comfortable for your body text. As a general rule of thumb:

- For desktops, use a font size of 16 points or higher for body text
- For iOS devices, use a text size of at least 11 point
- For Android devices, use at least 14 points for the main text

Because different sizes of body text are common, choose typefaces that work well in different sizes.

Text colors

Color selection is also essential. Colors are associated with various emotions as well as a visual hierarchy. As a result, it is a good idea to use different colors for titles, body text, links, buttons and error messages. Also, remember that the text color must contrast with the background color; this is critical for a good reading experience, and even though it may seem obvious, there still are a lot of non-legible buttons out there.

Line length

Take note of the length of the text lines. Set a length limit so that it isn't too long and interferes with the reading experience. To determine the best line length for a text, use a simple formula based on font size: multiply it by 30. So, if your font size is 10px, the ideal reading line length is 300px.

Avoid text walls

You should avoid creating a "wall of text." A wall of text, also known as a gray wall effect, is a single block of text that is devoid of any white space or other design elements. By inserting paragraph breaks at appropriate intervals, you can avoid the gray wall effect. You can also use the following design elements: images, quotations, headings and subheadings and bullet points. When working with long paragraphs, try to include anything that isn't text and breaks up the solid block.

Final thoughts

With these guidelines and typography know-how at your disposal, you're ready to start experimenting with typefaces, fonts, and styles in search of the ideal reading experience. However, one final caveat is that you could follow all of the above guidelines and still overlook some aspects of typography that an average user will notice immediately. As a result, the final stage of any text design iteration is comprehensive user testing.

Find a broad group of internet users who can provide feedback on the readability of your text; combining human input into your typography will ensure that your website is an easy and enjoyable read.