

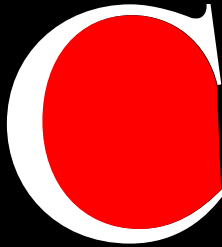
The **Typography** Dictionary

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Aperture



Description: Similar to a counter, the aperture basically is empty space within a letter only difference being the aperture contains an opening where the letter does not close of the empty space within.

Aperture



Definition: The aperture is the partially enclosed, somewhat rounded negative space in some characters such as n, C, S, the lower part of e, or the upper part of a double-storey a.

Apex

A diagram illustrating the concept of an apex. It features a large, stylized letter 'A' in white, centered on a black background. The top of the 'A' is marked with a small red triangle, indicating the apex. Above the 'A', the word 'Apex' is written in a serif font. A red line starts from the left, goes up to the top of the 'A', and then continues horizontally to the right, highlighting the path of the strokes.

Description: The apex can be related to that of the tip of a character or the up pointing direction around or within a character.

The apex doesn't always have to be isosceles in shape as the tip can also be angled at 90 degrees just so long as the strokes defined are meeting together.

Apex



Definition: The apex is the point at the top of a character such as the uppercase A where the left and right strokes meet is the apex.

The apex may be a sharp point, blunt, or rounded and is an identifying feature for some typefaces.

Arm



Description: The arm is basically an extension of a character where the extension veers out or away from the bulk of the character.

The arms weight is normally lighter than the stem so with that being said, the majority of the arm can be classified as a stroke

Arm

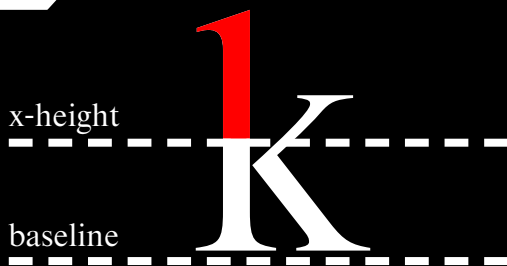


Definition: The arm of a letter is the horizontal stroke on some characters that does not connect to a stroke or stem at one or both ends.

The top of the capital T and the horizontal strokes of the F and E are examples of arms. Additionally, the diagonal upward stroke on a K is its arm.

Sometimes arm is used interchangeably with bar or crossbar or cross stroke.

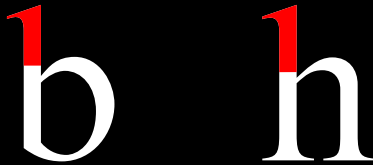
Ascender



Description: Ascenders are basically what their name implies, ascending portions of the character from the bulk of the latter that is below the x-height.

The ascenders have their own line height known as the ascender line which lays slightly above that of the cap line.

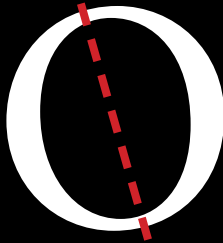
Ascender



Definition: In typography, the upward vertical stem on some lowercase letters, such as h and b, that extends above the x-height is the ascender.

The height of the ascenders is an identifying characteristic of many typefaces.

Axis of Stress



Description: Axis of stress basically is an abstract point A to point B sort of concept that implies direction from one stroke to the next stroke over the space of a counter.

The direction is based off of how the stroke begins to change in determined by its angle and how the angle effects the stroke.

Axis of Stress



Definition: An imaginary line drawn from top to bottom of a glyph bisecting the upper and lower strokes is the axis.

For typefaces that exhibit changes in the thickness of curved strokes, the inclination of the axis of the lowercase o is used to measure the angle of stress.

A completely vertical axis indicates a design with an angle of 0 or vertical stress. When the axis leans to the left or right the design has angled (positive or negative) stress.

Baseline

A diagram illustrating the concept of a baseline. The word "Baseline" is at the top. Below it, a solid red line runs horizontally. This line then turns diagonally down and to the left, then horizontally left, then diagonally down and to the left again, forming a stepped path. This path leads to a large white capital letter "S" centered on a black rectangular background. Below the "S", a dashed red line extends horizontally across the width of the black background, representing the baseline.

Description: The baseline is basically an imaginary line that all the characters within a group of text sit on where the bulk of the characters lay on the base.

Not all parts of the characters sit on the baseline where descenders will go below the baseline.

Baseline

Baseline

Definition: In typography, the baseline is the imaginary line upon which a line of text rests.

In most typefaces, the descenders on characters such as g or p extend down below the baseline while curved letters such as c or o extend ever-so-slightly below the baseline.

The baseline is the point from which other elements of type are measured including x-height and leading. The baseline is also significant in the alignment of drop caps and other page elements.

Bowl



Description: the bowl is basically the stroke the exists around the counter of a character so long as that character has a stem.

The reason why a stem needs to be within the character for it to be a bowl is because the bowl extrudes from the stem.

Bowl

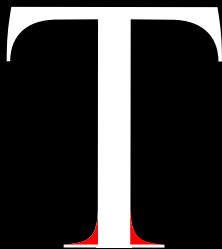


Definition: In typography, the curved part of the character that encloses the circular or curved parts (counter) of some letters such as d, b, o, D, and B is the bowl.

Some sources call any parts of a letter enclosing a space a bowl, including both parts of a double-story g and the straight stem on a D or B.

The curved strokes of a C are sometimes also referred to as bowls although they aren't closed.

Bracket



Description: Brackets are the area that smoothly connects the serif to the part of the character that the serif is adjacent too.

The brackets, as said above, are normally smooth and make it so that the character feels in synchronization with the itself synchronizing the space that connects the serif to the character.

Bracket



Definition: The bracket is a curved or wedge-like connection between the stem and serif of some fonts.

Not all serifs are bracketed serifs.

Brackets can have different shapes with deep or gentle curves.

Brackets may taper all the way to the end of the serif or attach at a midpoint before the serif ends.

Cap Line

A red line starts from the left, goes horizontally to the right, then diagonally down and to the right, and finally horizontally to the right again, passing behind the 'C' in the diagram below.

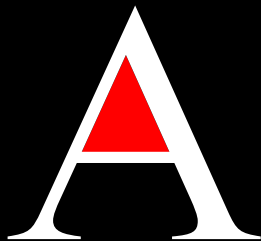
Description: Cap line refers to the imaginary line that is defined from the top of a uppercase letter. The cap line sits slightly below the ascender line.

Cap Line

A diagram illustrating the 'Cap Line' in typography. The words 'Cap Line' are written in a white serif font on a black background. A dashed red line runs horizontally above the uppercase 'C' and 'L', indicating the height of uppercase letters. A dashed white line runs horizontally below the lowercase 'p' and 'l', indicating the height of lowercase letters. The background of the slide features a diagonal split between light gray and dark gray, with a solid dark red horizontal band at the bottom.

Definition: An invisible line marking the height of uppercase letters within a font.

Counter



Description: The Counter is the empty space that exists within a character that is normally closed off from the outside of the character.

If the counter is not closed off from the outside of the character, the counter can be referred to as an aperture.

Counter

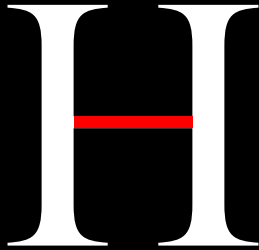


Definition: In typography, the enclosed or partially enclosed circular or curved negative space (white space) of some letters such as d, o, and s is the counter.

The term counter may sometimes be used to refer only to closed space, while partially enclosed spaces in m, n, or h are the aperture.

The shape and size of the counter and bowl (curved stroke enclosing the counter) can affect readability and is also an identifying factor for some typefaces.

Crossbar



Description: The crossbar is essentially a bar that lays horizontally in a character that either connects parts of the character together or acts as an extension of the character.

The weight is normally less than that of a stem classifying it as a stroke.

Crossbar

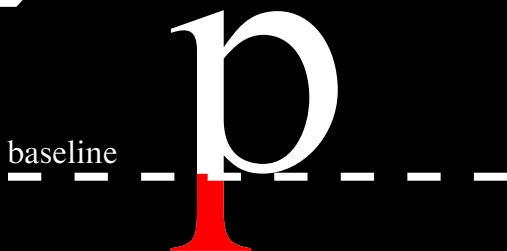


Definition: The (usually) horizontal stroke across the middle of uppercase A and H is a crossbar. The horizontal or sloping stroke enclosing the bottom of the eye of an e is also a crossbar.

Although often used interchangeably, the crossbar differs from an arm and a cross stroke because each end connects to a stem or stroke and doesn't (usually) intersect/cross over the stem or stroke.

The varying positioning, thickness, and slope of the bar is an identifying feature of many type designs.

Descender



Description: Descenders are extensions of a character that extend below the bulk of the character that sits on the baseline.

Descenders have their own line height known as the descender line which defines a point that all descenders of characters will sit on.

Descender



Definition: The portion of some lowercase letters, such as g and y, that extends or descends below the baseline is the descender.

The length and shape of the descender can affect readability of lines of type and is an identifying factor for some typefaces

Serif

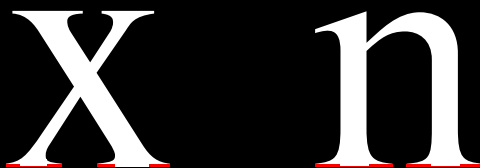


T

Description: Serifs are extending parts of a character that mark the ends of a character to ensure a solid base that the ends of the characters can contain the latter as a whole.

Serifs come in all shapes and sizes depending on the character and aren't always included in a font family depending on said font families style and characteristics

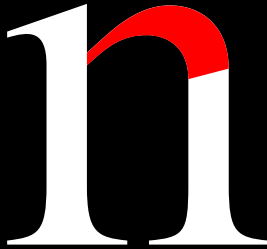
Serif

The image shows two large, white serif letters, 'X' and 'n', centered on a black background. Below the main vertical and horizontal strokes of both letters, there are short, red dashed lines. These lines represent the 'serif' or 'extra stroke' mentioned in the definition, which is a characteristic feature of serif typefaces.

Definition: In typography, a serif is the little extra stroke found at the end of main vertical and horizontal strokes of some letter forms.

Serifs fall into various groups and can be generally described as hairline (hair), square (slab), or wedge and are either bracketed or unbracketed.

Shoulder



Description: A shoulder is a curved stroke that extends from the stem of a character that connects the stem to another portion of the character.

Shoulder



The image shows two calligraphic letters, 'm' and 'h', in white on a black background. The letter 'm' has a red highlight on its right shoulder, and the letter 'h' has a red highlight on its right shoulder. The shoulders are the curved strokes that connect the top of the letters to the main body.

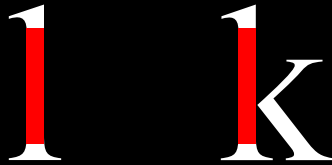
Definition: The curved stroke aiming downward from a stem.

Stem



Description: The stem is the wide stroke that defines a vertical or angled portion of a character. If a character contains a stem, it is normally the widest portion of the character.

Stem



Definition: The stem is the main, usually vertical stroke of a letter form.

S troke



Description: The stroke is a part of a character that acts similarly to a stem but less emphasis as its width is proportionally less to most parts of the character.

Strokes normally connect a stem to another part of a character (another stem, serif, ex.) but can also connect curved parts of a letter together like an e.

Stroke

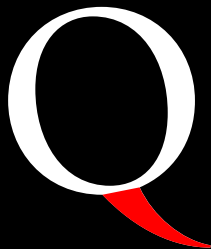


Definition: The main diagonal portion of a letter form such as in N, M, or Y is the stroke. The stroke is secondary to the main stem(s).

Some letter forms with two diagonals, such as A or V have a stem (the primary vertical or near-vertical stroke) and a stroke (the main diagonal).

Other letter parts such as bars, arms, stems, and bowls are collectively referred to as the strokes that make up a letter form.

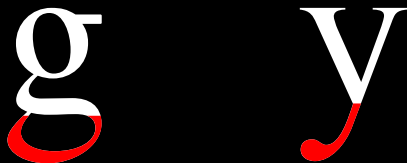
Tail



Description: Tails are essentially extensions of a character that extend out from the bulk of a character to act as extra finesse to define a character.

Descenders are normally considered tails as they extend out from the character and add extra finesse to its overall form.

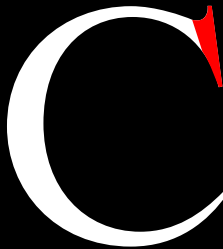
Tail



Definition: In typography, the descending, often decorative stroke on the letter Q or the descending, often curved diagonal stroke on K or R is the tail.

The descender on g, j, p, q, and y are also called tails.

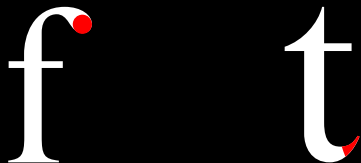
Terminal



Description: Terminals are essentially a serif as they act as extensions from the end point of a character to define the characters points as a whole with the character.

There are several types of terminals that may exist within a typeface including tear, beak and ball terminals

Terminal



Definition: In typography, the terminal is a type of curve. Many sources consider a terminal to be just the end (straight or curved) of any stroke that doesn't include a serif (which can include serif fonts, such as the little stroke at the end of “n” as shown in the illustration).

Some curved bits of tails, links, ears, and loops are considered terminals using the broader definition.

Vertex



Description: The vertex in a lot of cases can also be referred to as the apex as both share the same characteristics.

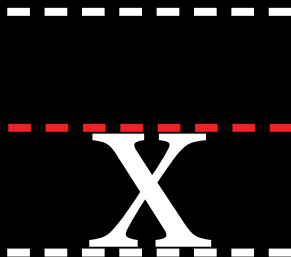
The main difference that can separate the two is their use case where normally the vertex is referred to where two angled strokes meet together to connect a character normally at the bottom.

Vertex



Definition: The outside point at the bottom or top of a character where two strokes meet.

X-height



Description: X-height refers to the invisible line that acts as the distance that the bulk of a lowercase letter exists as from the baseline to the top of the letter.

The x-height shares similarities to the baseline as it is the second most noticeable characteristic found in terms of line height of characters.

X-height

The word "x-height" is written in a white serif font on a black background. A red dashed line runs horizontally across the top of the lowercase letters, indicating the x-height. A white dashed line runs horizontally across the bottom of the letters, indicating the baseline.

Definition: In typography, x-height is the distance between the baseline of a line of type and tops of the main body of lower case letters (i.e. excluding ascenders or descenders).

The x-height is a factor in typeface identification and readability.



