



Typography

Times New Roman and Univers Condensed are the current Visual Identity System (VIS) fonts. Times New Roman (a TrueType font) is automatically installed with both the Microsoft Windows and Macintosh OS X operating systems. The OpenType version of Univers Condensed is now available for download.

[Download the OpenType fonts](#)

Installing the fonts: Follow the instructions for your operating system: [Mac](#) | [Windows](#). You can also contact the [USGS ServiceDesk](#) for installation help.

Typography for Technical Products

Univers Condensed is a sans serif typeface that provides a strong and clear contrast to Times New Roman. It is used for shorter text settings such as headlines, subheads, charts, and graphs. It is the preferred typeface for captions. The Univers Condensed typeface reproduces well at even the smallest of sizes.

Times New Roman is a traditional serif typeface that comes in roman, italic, bold, and bold italic versions. Times New Roman is used for publications with lengthy text settings. Times New Roman Bold, though useful to provide contrasting emphasis in text or short subheads, is not recommended for use in headlines or for lengthy amounts of text.

Typography for Nontechnical Products – Use of “Art Fonts”

This can help emphasize the character of a product’s content. For example, a historical script font could be used to emphasize key words within the title of a map that marks the anniversary of a natural disaster, or a playful font could be used within the title of a product for children. The guidelines for the use of nonstandard fonts (“art fonts”) are as follows:

1. Art fonts may be used beyond just the title of a report to include chapter headings and first-level headings below chapter headings. This applies only if the chapter title or heading is 7 or fewer words.
2. Art fonts may be used for call outs or pull quotes, but should be used only for very short blocks of text, approximately 8-12 words max.
3. Only one art font per product can be used in addition to U Condensed and Times new Roman.
4. Initial caps at major chapter starts is okay.
5. No art fonts in headers or footers.
6. Art font usage should be used sparingly, no more than one use per page generally.
7. No centered or flush right text, art font or otherwise.
8. All uses should be sent to OCAP for review for now.

Use of Art Fonts in USGS Publications

1. Art fonts may be used beyond just the title of a report to include chapter headings and first-level headings below chapter headings. This applies only if the chapter title or heading is 7 or fewer words.
2. Art fonts may be used for call outs or pull quotes, but should be used only for very short blocks of text, approximately 8-12 words max.
3. Only one art font per product can be used in addition to Univers Condensed and Times new Roman.
4. Initial caps at major chapter starts is okay.
5. No art fonts in headers or footers.
6. Art font usage should be used sparingly, no more than one use per page generally.
7. No centered or flush right text, art font or otherwise.

Art Font: Ex Ponto (Title use)

Art Font: Ex Ponto (Chapter heading / first-level heading below chapter heading use)

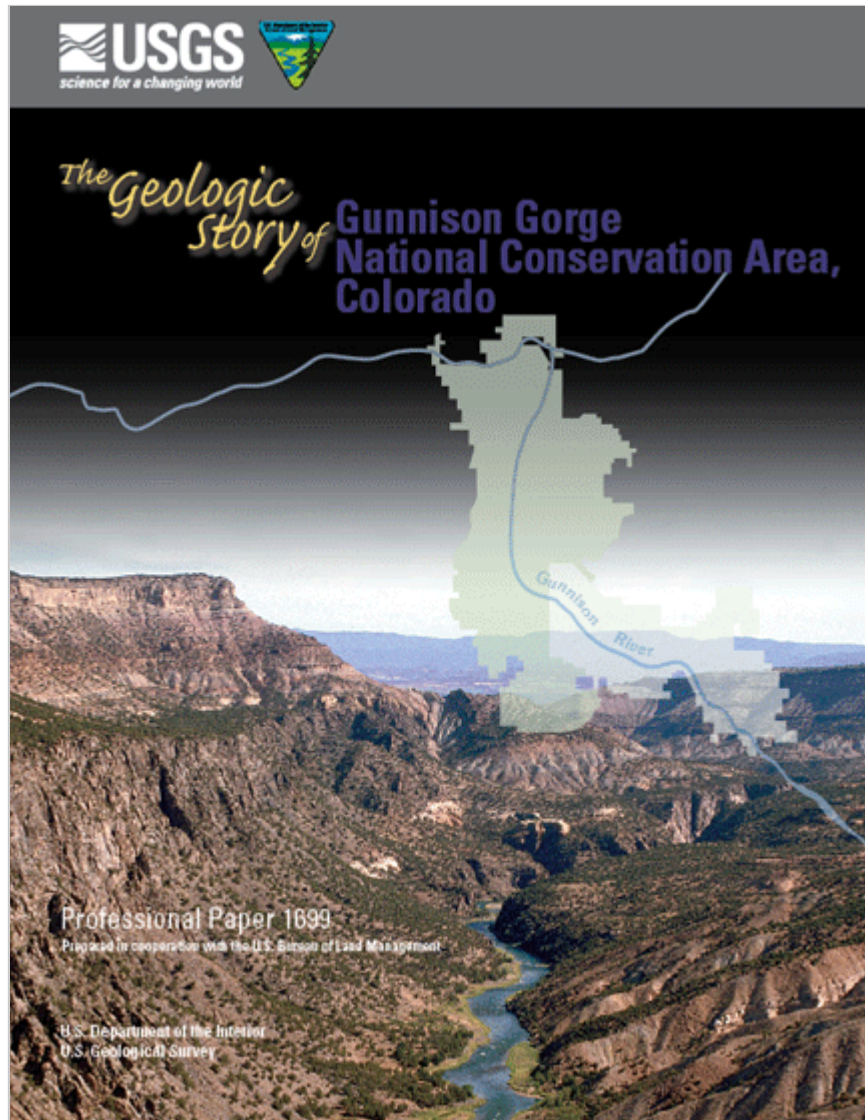
VIS Font: Times New Roman

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Example of using art fonts in USGS publications.

Note: All other VIS guidelines apply.

Here are some examples of how “art fonts” might be used.



Example of using art fonts.





Example of using art fonts.

Typography Specs

Use Upper and Lower Cases

Use upper and lower-case type in a flush left, ragged right arrangement. Avoid the use of all capital letters. All-capital text settings may slow reading speed by as much as 13 percent. The shapes of capital settings provide fewer shape clues than upper and lower-case settings. All-capitals can take up to 30 percent more space.

Visual Size

The x-height of Univers Condensed is larger than the x-height of Times, so text set in Univers Condensed will appear larger than text set in Times when each is set at the same size. Reduce the size of the Univers Condensed typeface to make it visually equal to the Times typeface.

Bold and Italics

Bold and italics should be used to provide emphasis. Lengthy amounts of text in either style reduce legibility.

Contrast

Anything that reduces contrast reduces legibility. Text over a tint or color background will decrease legibility, as well as accessibility for those with color-blindness, and should be used with discretion. Lengthy amounts of text reversed out of a black background, though providing strong emphasis, can cause eye strain.

Text Justification

Flush left, ragged right text settings are recommended for all USGS material. With a flush left, ragged right setting, normal word spacing is ensured.

Combining typefaces

The use of Univers Condensed Bold for heads and subheads with Times New Roman text provides a strong contrast that aids readability.

Line length

Text lines that are too long inhibit readability. The number of characters per line should be between 40 and 70 characters. Lines that are too long often cause “doubling,” where the same line is read twice.

Paragraphs

For lengthy texts, paragraph indentation is used. For publications with shorter amounts of text, such as fact sheets, skipping one line between paragraphs is the clearest way to separate different thoughts.

Leading

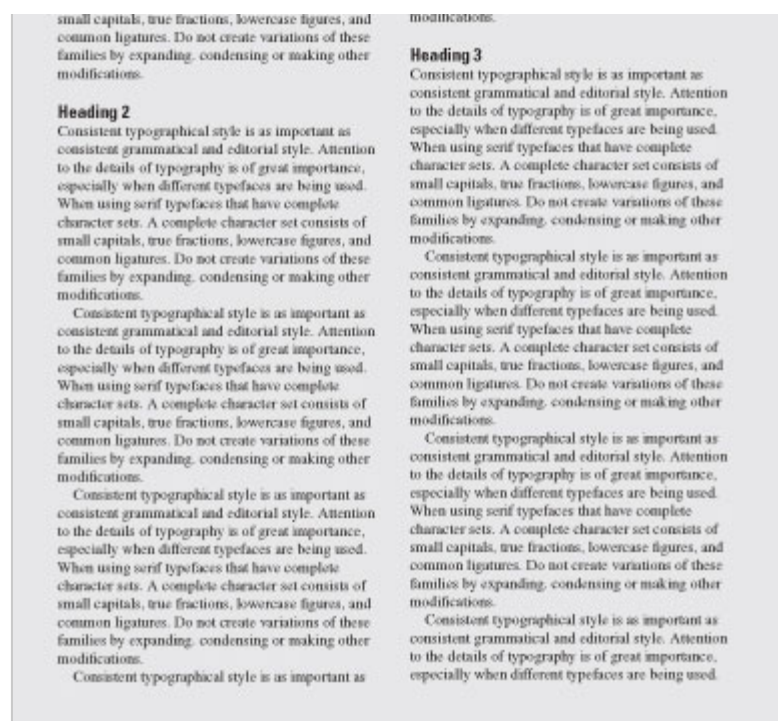
Leading is the amount of space left between lines of type. Typically two points of leading is appropriate for most text settings.

Example of a Main Heading

Heading 1

Text type set flush left, ragged right. Consistent typographical style is as important as consistent grammatical and editorial style. Attention to the details of typography is of great importance, especially when different typefaces are being used. When using serif typefaces that have complete character sets. A complete character set consists of

consistent grammatical and editorial style. Attention to the details of typography is of great importance, especially when different typefaces are being used. When using serif typefaces that have complete character sets. A complete character set consists of small capitals, true fractions, lowercase figures, and common ligatures. Do not create variations of these families by expanding, condensing or making other



An example of good typography use. This example uses well-leaded text lines of an appropriate length combined with contrasting heads and subheads. The text is set flush left, ragged right to ensure uniform word spacing. The text setting shown here is 10 pt. Times Roman with 2 pts. leading. Univers Condensed Bold is recommended for heads and subheads. The use of Times New Roman Bold in place of Univers Condensed Bold provides less contrast. It is acceptable but not recommended. If Univers Condensed is used in short text settings, do not use a serif face for heads and subheads. Use Univers Condensed Bold for heads and subheads, as it provides the clearest contrast.

U.S. Geological Survey Intranet

URL: <http://communities.usgs.gov/blogs/vis>

Page Contact Information: **Visual Identity Helpdesk**

Page Last Modified: Wednesday, February 26, 2014